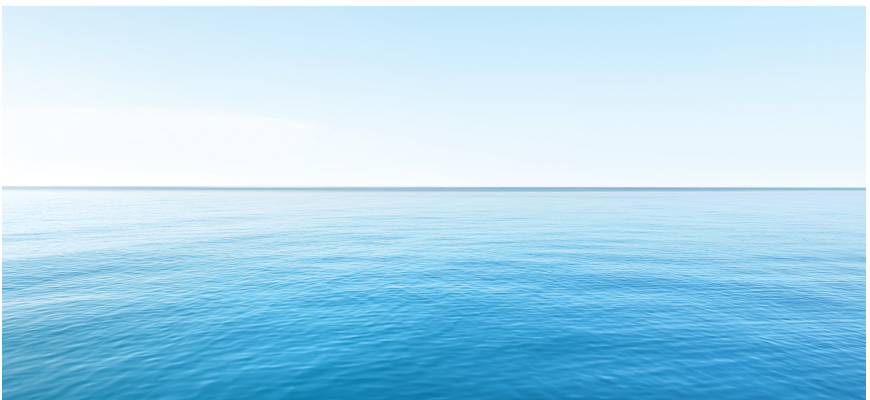




GADI HITMAN

ISRAEL AND ITS ARAB MINORITY, 1948–2008

Dialogue, Protest, Violence



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Printed in the United States of America

To my wife, Dana, and my children, Shahaf, Nitzan, Almog, Ofek, Geva

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Introduction

Historians, political scientists, sociologists, and legal scholars have tried—each from their special point of view—to understand the relationship that exists between a regime and its minorities. This issue is as subject for academic research if only because most countries in the world have a population that is heterogeneous and in which there are differences in components such as religion, ethnicity, language, nationality, leaders, traditions, and myths. These differences lead to a complex network of relations between the different groups and between the regime and the minority groups including the phenomena of protests and violence. Majority-minority relations are well-known in Belgium, South Africa, Turkey, Russia, Israel, and in many other countries.¹

The heterogeneous differences of the population are a constant challenge to every government that wishes to make proper arrangements with its minority groups, including with its national minority groups. In the research literature there are four well-known models for forming these relations. The first is the building of a nation whose main goal is the unification of different groups into one national group.² The second model is that of egalitarian pluralism that does not see the difference that characterizes the relations between the majority and the minority as a negative reality but as an opportunity for the growth of a heterogeneous culture. In this kind of environment any group can preserve its unique characteristics while, at one and the same time, be part of a nation in which different culture groups live together.³ The third model is nonegalitarian pluralism in which states create structural discrimination between the different groups in the population. The significance of this is that at least one group will be always discriminated against and will be related to in a nonegalitarian way.⁴ The fourth and last model is separation

in which the leaders decide to create a nation based upon one ethnic group alone.⁵

Israel is included in the countries that are called multicultural because of the heterogeneous makeup of the populations. Since the declaration of the State of Israel's independence in May 1948 there have been research attempts to understand the network of relations that exists between the government and the Jewish majority group from one hand and the Arab minority group on the other hand. Legal scholars have tried to examine whether there is tension between "Jewish" and "democratic" values⁶ and, if it does exist, what can be done to bridge the discrepancy between the two values.⁷ Sociologists have tried to examine the ethnic-national divide that has existed in Jewish-Arab relations since the establishment of the state,⁸ with emphasis being placed upon the effect that this will have upon the minority group in their daily lives and on their occupational development. Historians and political scientists have tried to clarify the nature of the relationship between the government and the minority without making the necessary connection between the two parties.⁹ Some of them researched the Israeli policy,¹⁰ while others focused upon the process of modernization that took place in the Arab minority or the effect of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on it, but their studies did not cover the entirety of the relations between the government and the majority group, on the one hand, and the minority group, on the other.¹¹

The network of relations between the government of the State of Israel and its Arab citizens has been both complicated and charged since the declaration of independence in May 1948 and the foundation of the state after the war. The development of this relationship has been the product of complex historical processes and there are those that argue that the Arab minority in Israel negate the basic ideology of the state and do not accept the agreement of the Jewish majority at least in regard to one basic tenet—that being that the state is founded upon the values of Zionism.¹² The term *Nakba*,¹³ which not only expresses the Jewish victory on the field of battle but also the political process that accompanied it and is expressed in Ben-Gurion's declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel, is engraved in the Arab collective memory. This memory is passed on as a heritage to the following generations and, since 1998, when Israel celebrated its jubilee, the Arab minority scrupulously marks this day with protest marches. These historical developments have had a decisive effect upon the fashioning of the relationship between the government and the Arab minority in Israel. The characteristics of the political violence of this minority and its motivation need to be examined on this background.

It is possible to divide the attitude of the Arab population to the State of Israel into six periods since the establishment of the state by dividing it into dialogue, protest, and the use of violence. The first period that lasted from the establishment of the state until 1956 was characterized by the search for a

way to adjust and for the expectation of a miracle that would prevent the need to identify with the Jewish state that had just been established. During this period what stood out were the Arab citizens of Israel's concerns about the possibility that they would be expelled from their homes and so they adopted a pattern of behavior whose goal was to survive in the new reality. This situation prevented them from acting violently especially since Israel had shown itself to be strong during its war of independence and that the Arab states did not have the ability to destroy it. As a result, at the same time, the Arab citizens of Israel chose the option of waiting during which they examined whether the Arab states were capable of responding to the defeat in the war that led to the establishment of the State of Israel.¹⁴

The second period began in 1956 and ended after the June War in 1967. Israel's victory in the Kadesh War (The Suez War) was, in the eyes of the Arabs, the final seal on the fact that Israel existed. Azmi Bishara, a former member in the Israeli Parliament, for instance, tells that he remembers how "It was suddenly clear that Israel would not disappear" and this feeling became even more real after the war in June 1967 in which Israel had a clear victory over the Arab armies.¹⁵ This period was marked by a flowering of the Israeli economy which made the rapid integration of the Arab minority into the developing labor market possible and the easing of restrictions by the military government also contributed to this. During this period the first signs of limited political violence appeared and the most outstanding event was on May 1, 1958 when stormy protests broke out in Nazareth during the "May Day" celebrations.¹⁶

The third period began after the Six Day war and ended with the "Land Day" events in March 1976. Some of the researchers believe that it was during this period that the process of the Palestinization of the Arab citizens of Israel began. The removal of the barriers between them and their relations in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip made it possible for them to absorb the atmosphere and the deep national consciousness of the residents there and the political ideas which matured into new organizational frameworks. During this period the Arab minority radicalized its attitude toward the State of Israel and this expressed itself, among other things, in political activism.¹⁷ During this time 320 Israeli Arabs were tried for security offenses and were charged, among other things, with carrying out terrorist activities and joining Palestinian organizations that were hostile to Israel. The most extreme group expression of violence during this period took place on "Land Day" in 1976.

The fourth period began after "Land Day" and ended with the First Intifada in December 1987. This period was characterized by the maturing of the process of Palestinization of the Arab Israeli citizens and the strengthening of their nationalist feelings. One of the practical expressions of this, if not the only one, was the establishment of national and local political organizations. The pattern of political protest adopted by these organizations during this

period included demonstrations and strikes that did not employ terrorism. During this period an especially serious violent event took place as a reaction to the First Lebanese War in 1982.

The fifth period began with the outbreak of the Intifada in 1987 during which there was a significant growth in the number of violent acts of a nationalistic character and a large number of protests in the form of strikes and demonstrations took place on a social and political background. During this period these protests also became larger and more demanding. This period was characterized by growing tension between the Israeli establishment and the Arab minority expressed, among other things, by verbal extremism used by Arab public figures, including members of the Knesset.¹⁸ There were significant points of escalation registered in some of which there was the use of violence by the Arab minority. The period came to an end with the events of October 2000 when there were the most serious clashes between the Arab minority and the establishment since the May 1948.

The sixth and last period began after the events of October 2000 and have been continuing since then. It has been characterized by the lessons learned by the Arab leadership and the Arab public from the results of the serious events and their ramifications for the minority with the establishment. Some of them related to these lessons during testimonies they gave to the members of the Orr Committee¹⁹ while others expressed similar things publicly. One of them, Awad Abed al-Fatah, the general secretary of "The National Democratic Covenant" (from here on: Balad) party, explained that they should continue to support the Palestinian struggle through demonstrations, but that they did not intend to call for any escalation of going out into the streets.²⁰ During this period, or at least up until the beginning of 2009, attempts at dialogue were made between the parties and it was clear that was a greater effort being made by the government ministries to improve the conditions of the minority in a range of civil subjects. Conversely, despite localized instances, which had the potential of becoming serious, the Arab minority continued to observe the pattern of carrying out legitimate demonstrations that did not deteriorate into violence.²¹ Together, with this, the recognition of the political streams that it was important to actualize the collective rights of the Arab minority was recognized and this was reflected in the documents describing their vision in 2006 which were initiated by the committee of the heads of Arab local councils and the Higher Follow-Up Committee."²²

The purpose of this research is to analyze the network of relations that exist between the Arab minority and the government in Israel from 1948 until 2008. The choice of a period of six decades is deliberate. From the establishment of the state the relationships have undergone a process of formation, whether this has been the result of direct contacts between the two parties or following the effects of external events linked to the Israeli government or the minority group, such as, for instance, developments in the Pales-

tinian arena. Over a period of sixty years (and, in fact, until today) there has been an ongoing dialogue between the government and the Arab minority which has moved between consultation, protest and violence. The aim is to identify when discussions did take place, who initiated them, when and why violent phenomena began and, finally, under what circumstances and events did acts of political violence by the Arab minority take place.²³ The analysis of violent incidents will also include the public climate in which these took place and, in other cases, those in which the potential for violence was halted. Despite the previous studies done on the Arab minority and its attitude towards the state, there has not been any comprehensive work done that thoroughly analyzes the fundamental, characteristic reasons that have led to the protests and the violence and there has been no study done that analyzes the mutual relations that move along the continuum between dialogue, protest, and violence.

Finally, in everything that relates to the component of violence the literature that exists on the Arab minority focuses upon aspects of terrorist activities.²⁴ Some of the studies analyze events involving group violence such as “Land Day” in 1976 or the “October Events” in 2000 and see them as expressions of a growth in Palestinian nationalist feelings, whether they come in the wake of events in the territories or in the Arab world or as part of the continuous effort to improve Israeli Arabs’ status as citizens.²⁵ There have been no attempts in these studies to arrive at any general explanation or to locate any common denominator for these events.

NOTES

1. Sammy Smooha, “Jewish–Arab Relations in Israel as Jewish and Democratic State,” in Ephraim Ya’ar and Zeev Shavit (eds.), *Trends in Israeli Society*, (Tel Aviv: Open University, 2001), p. 234 [Hebrew].

2. Hamish Telford, “The Federal Spending Power in Canada: Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying?” *Publius: The Journal of Federalism* 33:1 (Winter 2003), pp. 23–44.

3. A democratic country that behaves in this way is the United States, in which, for example, cultural freedom is given to the Native Americans on the reservations where they live. When they leave the reservations, they can both preserve this culture and be part of the American nation. This also relates to preserving religion and does not affect the freedom of occupation and equal opportunity in work. See: Gloria T. Beckley and Paul Burstein, “Religious Pluralism, Equal Opportunity and the State,” *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 44, no 1, (March 1991), pp.185–208.

4. Among researchers into Israeli society there is general agreement that Israel is one of the countries that is creating nonegalitarian pluralism. Sammy Smooha believes that what we are talking about is an ethnic democracy in which all the citizens have political rights, but where the Jewish majority group enjoys structural and significant preference. See: Sammy Smooha “Ethnic Democracy, Israel as a Prototype” in: *Zionism—A Contemporary Dispute*, Pinhas Ginossar and Avi Bareli (eds.), *The Ben-Gurion Heritage Center*, 1996, pp.277–311. Other researchers, in contrast, argue that an ethnocracy exists in Israel and that, in such a regime, it is ethnic membership, and not citizenship that is the central key to the division of resources and power. In such a regime there are the signs of democracy (such as elections) but the structure is

not democratic. See: As'ad Ghanem, Nadim N. Rouhana and Oren Yiftachel, "Questioning 'Ethnic Democracy': A Response to Sammy Smooha," *Israel Studies* 3.2 (1998), pp. 253–267.

5. This kind of separation was carried out, for example, after the establishment of Bosnia-Herzegovina because of the understanding that only such a separation would allow a normal routine of life that would not be violent. See: Chaim Kaufman, "Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars," *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Spring, 1996), pp. 137–138.

6. Yehonatan Liss, "Ahmed Tibi—The Democratic State for the Jews and the Jewish for the Arabs," *Haaretz*, December 22, 2009 [Hebrew].

7. Alexander Jacobson and Amnon Rubenstein, *Israel and the Family of Nations* (Schocken, 2003 in Hebrew). The book deals with the question of the definition of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. The argument presented by the authors is that both of the foundations—Jewish and democratic—are compatible. The analysis is made in the light of international law about the principle of self-definition of nations and the norms of human rights that are accepted throughout the modern democratic world. There are many examples examined here of different democratic states throughout the world, many of which deal with such questions as: nationalism and citizenship, the rights of national minorities, connections with national diasporas, the status of religion in the state and tradition and early history as opposed to modern national identity. The book argues that the cancellation of the right of the Jewish nation to its own national state—side by side with a state that has actualized its right to self-determination of the Palestinian people—means the trampling of the value of equality disguised as the defense of it.

8. Smooha, "Jewish-Arabs Relations," pp. 231–363.

9. Henry Rosenfeld, *They Were Peasants: Study in Social Development of the Arab Village* (Hakibutz Hameoohad, 1973) [Hebrew].

10. Atallah Mansour and Uzi Benziman, *Israeli Arabs: Sub-Tenant* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1992 in Hebrew). The book describes the Israeli policy towards the Arab population from 1948 to 1990; Yair Boimel, *Blue-White Shadow 1958–1968* (Haifa: Pardess 2007 in Hebrew). The book ends with the policy practiced up to the end of the military government in January 1968; Ra'anana Cohen, *Strangers at their Homeland* (Tel Aviv: Dyonon, 2006 in Hebrew). The book focuses on the political aspects of the relations between the groups and goes back to the years of the military government to survey the beginnings of the political organization of the Arabs into the Zionist parties and the satellite parties that characterized this period, in the Communist Party, Maki and also Al-Ard, the first nationalist party that was established at the end of the 1950s and its journey toward becoming a party that was blocked by the High Court of Justice.

11. Zeev Rosenhach, "New Developments of Israeli-Palestinian Sociology: An Analytical Review," in *Trends* 37 (1995), pp. 174–190 [Hebrew].

12. Sammy Smooha, "Attitudes to Arab-Jewish Relationships in Israel and October 2000 Clashes: The Broken Dream?" in *Studies of National Security* 1 (2001), pp. 1–4 [Hebrew].

13. In Hebrew: *Catastrophe or Holocaust*. This the term used by Arab Israelis (and Palestinians in the territories) to describe the Israeli War of Independence in May 1948 after which the State of Israel was established. After the war in 1948 the Lebanese writer and academic, Constantine Zuraik, published a book under the title *The Meaning of the Defeat*, in which he analyzed the reasons for the defeat of the Arabs in the war. After the 1967 war Zuraik wrote another book titled *The Meaning of the Re-Defeat*.

14. Mohammad Amara. *The Political Violence among Israeli Arabs—Motives and Nature* (Givat Haviva, 1997) [Hebrew].

15. Ari Shavit, "Azmi the Citizen," *Haaretz*, May 29, 1998, p. 5 [Hebrew].

16. This event was the first event in which political violence by Israeli Arab citizens against the State of Israel was registered. The event will be analyzed later in this book.

17. The Palestinians' national awakening was already identified at the beginning of the 1970s. In the Ministry of Education, for instance, they understood that if they didn't change the goals and curricula that had been in use in the Arab schools until then, the alienation of the younger generation would grow. This new trend toward a national awakening among the Arab students was defined by official sources as worrying and anti-Israeli. See: "Zu Haderech" (This is the Way), February 14, 1971 [Hebrew].

18. The public discourse of Arab politicians in those years supports Palestinian uprising (Intifada) against Israel. See: Dan Schuftan, "The New Identity of Arab Members in the Israeli Parliament," *Tchelet*, (2002), p. 7 [Hebrew].

19. The National Committee of Inquiry for October 2000 Events (2003) [Hebrew].

20. *Fasl Al-makal* (Balad party's newspaper), April 13, 2001 [Arabic].

21. Two of the events during this period, the "Defensive Shield" campaign in Judea and Samaria in 2002 and the "Cast Lead" campaign in the Gaza Strip in 2008, will be analyzed in the book.

22. *The Future Vision of the Arab-Palestinian in Israel: The Local Committee of Arab Settlements in Israel*, (2006), p. 3, 5 [Hebrew].

23. Israeli society has been witness to violent events perpetrated by the Arab minority in the background of politics since the establishment of the state. In March 1976 the government took steps to appropriate land near the Arab village of Sakhnin and the procedure met with a violent reaction from the Arabs in a number of places throughout the country. Six Arabs were killed, tens of people on both sides were injured, and much public property was destroyed in the serious civil disorder and clashes between Arab demonstrators and Israeli security forces. In October 2000 tens of thousands of Arab Israelis carried out serious acts of civil disorder and riots in close to seventy places throughout the country. These riots included serious clashes with security forces, the throwing of stones, the burning of rubber tires, and the blocking of main road junctions. In the course of the events, twelve Arab Israelis were killed (and one Palestinian resident of the territories) by police firing at the rioters and one Jew was killed by a stone thrown from a car. The factors that led to these violent outbreaks and the events themselves will be extensively analyzed here in the framework of the work.

24. Amara, *The Political Violence among Israeli Arabs*.

25. Samuel Lehman-Wilzig, "Copying the Master: Patterns of Israeli-Arab Protest, 1950–1990," *Asian and African Studies* (1993), Vol. 27, pp. 129–147.

I

The Theoretical Framework

*A Historiographical Overview
of the Arab Israeli Citizens*

Chapter One

Historical Theories of State-Minority Relationships

The attempts at research to understand the violent activities of Arab Israeli citizens as a group and, in fact, any minority national group, in its relations with establishment factors have to deeply probe a number of basic terms that define the connection between the government (and the dominant groups) with the minority groups. The professional literature that deals with such relational systems focuses upon ethnic, national, and religious concepts, while emphasizing the differences among the research groups. This is because ethnic, national, and religious differences have, throughout human history, been the basis for violent confrontations between different groups, when they struggle over resources and power. This description is also relevant to the system of relations that exists between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority in Israel. Both groups are different in their ethnic, national, and religious characteristics and in other components such as language, customs, culture, and history. All of these characteristics have links with the phenomenon of the political violence that has taken place in the communities of the Arab Israeli citizens whether on the background of deprivation involving civil issues or the expression of identification with the struggle of other groups such as the Palestinians living in the territories.

CITIZENSHIP

The origin of the word *ethnicity* is in the Greek word *ethnikos* which originally meant the “worshipper of gods” or “pagans” and this was the accepted meaning in English up till the middle of the nineteenth century. During this period the term *ethnic* gradually came to acquire other meanings and took on

characteristics close to the meaning of *race*.¹ Different researchers that have examined the concept agree that “ethnicity” is connected to the categorization of people and groups. An ethnic group is one that shares myths that have been “passed on as a heritage,” a common history of real events that have taken place (in addition to the myths), a common culture that includes language, religion, customs, and traditions, a territorial connection and a feeling of solidarity.

Eriksen’s anthropological approach claims that the first connotation associated with the concept “ethnicity” is “subjects connected with minorities” and relations between races. He defines “ethnicity” as “a system of social relations between agents that consider to be culturally different from people in other groups.”² In order for the members of that group to call themselves different, they have to be in touch, and not minimally, with groups that have different characteristics from them.” Members of the ethnic group become such when they identify a common rival or enemy.³

Four Types of Ethnic Groups

Eriksen identified four types of groups which he defined as “ethnic.” The first group was that of urban minorities that included non-European immigrants that had come to the continent, Latinos in the United States, and immigrants from the peripheral areas to the main cities in Africa. Research done on these groups focused on the ethnic prejudice expressed by the host society, and on racism in subjects that touched upon identity cultural change. The second group was the group of natives—those who were a minority as well—whose political power was relatively weak and who were only partially integrated into the dominant nation.⁴ The third group was made up of the ethno-national movements.⁵ These movements had political leaders who claimed not only that they had the right to a national state of their own and should not be dominated by others, but also that their claim was based upon a territorial demand. The last group is made up of ethnic groups in pluralistic societies. The term *pluralistic* relates to countries in which there is a heterogeneous population from a cultural point of view such as in Indonesia, Jamaica, and Kenya. This also means that these groups participate equally in the political and economic system and see themselves as being culturally different. The groups included in this category have no irredentist aspirations. When the political leaders of an ethnic group demand taking control of a country the ethnic group becomes a national movement. In this way it connects between the concept “ethnicity” and the concept of “nationality.”

The Israeli Arab citizens answer to the requirements of categories two and three. They are an ethno-national group as well as a native minority which lives in Israel, which defines itself as a democratic and Jewish country in line with the majority of people who live there.⁶ The Israeli Arabs also

have an ethnic connection that is different from the majority group. From the moment that political leaders from the Arab sector in Israel raised demands of a civil, national nature the Arab ethnic group became a national minority and, not only this, the Arab minority shares the same components needed to identify it as an ethnic and national group which are language, customs, a historical past, myths, religion (at least for the Muslim majority that makes up the minority group), and the identification of the Jewish rival with which it is engaged in a national and civil struggle over the same territory.

Ethno-national conflicts have become a common phenomenon throughout the world since the Second World War. The growing consciousness about human rights, the process of decolonization that also took place in Africa, and the acceleration of modernization that has made possible a growing exposure to what is being done in different parts of the world are all some of the reasons for the spread of the phenomenon of such conflicts.

Four Models of Ethno-National Conflicts

In the connection between ethnic and ethno-national conflicts one can describe four different models of ethno-national conflicts. The first consists of separatist movements whose main efforts are directed towards becoming an independent political entity through separating themselves from the country in which they live.⁷

The second model is that of groups that wish to gain power, autonomy, and political or territorial influence. This is a confrontation between different ethnic groups in the framework of one country or between one ethnic group and the government. The battle between the parties is over the accessibility to and control of political, territorial, and economic opportunity in the same country.⁸

The third model is ethnic conflicts that began as a result of armed confrontation and this includes the results of war between two or more countries.⁹ The fourth model is the ethno-national conflict in whose framework the weaker party tries to survive and makes no demand for any political gains. In this model we are not necessarily talking about a national minority or about a group that is asking for territorial sovereignty. Such groups, for example, include the Turks in Germany or the Gypsies in Romania who want economic and social rights for themselves.¹⁰

Regarding the four models one can identify some of the characteristics described in the second and third models as being relevant to the Arab Israeli citizens. They are an ethnic group within a pluralistic society that has become a minority in the country following an armed conflict and are also a public in which ethno-national movements exist and that wish to have political influence including political frameworks that aim to create autonomy of different kinds such as cultural and economic.

Consciousness and National Identity

Gellner has defined nationalism as an ideology and political movement that aims at unifying the parts of a people into one unit that is a nation and to create congruence between the territory and the political institutions.¹¹

The principle of nationality can be violated in several ways. One is that the political border, and the sovereign territory, of some country does not necessarily include all the members who belong to that nation. Another is that the sovereign border includes members who do not belong to the nation. There are, of course, violations of the principle that include both of these situations and this is the situation in Israel where the sovereign territory of the country does not include all the Jews while, at the same time, non-Jewish minorities live in that territory.

A collective identity is not necessarily a national identity but without it a national identity cannot exist. A collective identity can be based around a family, a tribe, a local settlement, a common tradition, and a common religion and it includes in it components such as a shared historical memory, belief in an ideology, and common goals. It also creates the differentiation between “us” and “them.”¹² Aggasi believes that “nation and nationality are different forms of identity which are closely connected since they are defining frameworks for the belongingness of the individual.”¹³ Azmi Bishara, a member of the Arab minority, argues that nationalism is an attempt to realize the connection between individuals and a nation upon a direct basis of total and sacred loyalty. This connection is what binds all the partners, such as family or another communal organization, together. The nation, according to Bishara, is “all the citizens who make up the sovereign political framework or, at least, those who aspire to being citizens in a sovereign country, which is being a nation.”¹⁴ The nation, according to this definition, is different from nationality in that it adds the desire for sovereignty. Bishara’s view of this is relevant to this research for three reasons: he is a member of the Arab minority in Israel, this minority has been continuously dealing with the question of its national and civil affiliation and Bishara was, himself, involved in cases of political violence in the past.¹⁵

The Crystallization of Nationality and Types of Violence¹⁶

In the existing literature there is an argument between the question of whether nationality is a modern or an ancient phenomenon. This research does not aspire to taking a position about which of the two positions is more correct but the very presentation of them is, in short, relevant to the analysis of the system of relations between the nationality of the Jewish majority and that of the non-Jewish minority in Israel, including its history, dialogue, and the protests and the use of violence in a political context. This is so for two

reasons: the theoretical frameworks of the two approaches can underline the crystallization of the different nationalities of the Arab minority and the Jewish majority. From a practical point of view one can analyze the phenomena of political violence as it has been registered by the Arab minority on the basis of ethno-national and religious differences between the two groups. This is in addition to the historical developments of our times, the central one being the armed conflict that led to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 and which created a new geopolitical and social reality in the territory in which the two groups live.

There are a number of ways to examine the crystallization of the phenomenon of nationalism one of which is the instrumental approach put forward by Gellner. This approach emphasizes the influence of politics upon nationality. It deals with the strategies invented and directed "from above" and there are two things that are fundamental to it that can be defined as subapproaches: the first makes a microanalysis of the ethnic politics and includes the way that politicians harness the nationality to the needs of internal struggles for power. The second fundamental, which is more relevant to this research, carries out a microstudy of the crystallization of nationality where, in the process of crystallization, the state creates ethnic and national groups to serve its purposes. The assumption, according to this explanation, is that nationality has been given birth to by operations carried out by political groups (the state, interstate groups) so that they can achieve their goals. According to this approach nationality is the product of the modern conditions that characterize states, among them an orderly economic system, secularization and bureaucracy.¹⁷

Another way to explain the crystallization of nationality is through the primordial approach which focuses upon ethnic links which often act as bases for the rights and duties that exist in civil and political order. These characteristics, which are defined as primordial links, highlight communal life, language, myths, shared memories, and customs, which create a shared ethnic foundation. Primordial links are based upon group feelings and shared beliefs. Research that focuses upon links deals with the meaning of the central essential symbols in the lives of human beings and discusses the importance of these primordial links such as blood connections, marriage, the significance of religion, the structure of clans, and shared historical components. In most cases these links are easy to understand, always look credible and contain things that can establish ethnicity which can be followed by nationality and preserve it. These links are based upon the power of group feeling and upon a shared belief and they exist as something more than balanced thinking and rational interests.¹⁸ Nationality is characterized as a subjective, emotional power that establishes group social identity and is affected by the clash of civilizations that are confined by cosmological religious dogmas. The religious and cultural barriers are so high that the chances

of finding some compromise when there is a conflict between different cultural groups are very low because of the deep commitment to traditional values and the lack of readiness to give up anything to the other party, who is perceived as being mistaken and unable to understand what is “right.”

The primordial approach does not allow aliens to join their peoplehood in any way. When nationality is defined in ethnic terms it can no longer be a matter of choice, but a biological necessity. A human being cannot exist without nationality and, according to the ethnic approach, nationality is viewed as an innate, inherited characteristic that is passed on genetically, through blood, from one generation to the next.¹⁹ This approach, for example, characterizes Germany and Israel and, in recent years, has had to face considerable difficulties mainly when, in the state of the ethnic people, there is a minority whose peoplehood is different from that of the majority of the population and it requests or demands a political status equal to the majority group, or at least an improvement of his present status.

The primordial approach is suitable for making an analysis of the situation of the Arab minority in Israel. The existence of shared historical memories and the traditions of “the people” are also fundamental to the national (and religious) ideas and values that have led to the growth of political frameworks in the Arab sector. Among these factors are the “Higher Follow-up Committee” and national (and religious) movements such as Balad, the “Sons of the Village” and the “Islamic Movement.”²⁰

These, among other things, give expression to this in their newspaper advertisements and the memorial days of the Arab minority all the while that they make different demands from the establishment. In cases where physical political violence has been registered it is accompanied by the emphasis being placed upon those same national and religious values that are different from those of the Jewish majority.

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Like the ethnic and national components, the religious component is also relevant to the analysis of the network of relations between the majority and minority groups and can help to analyze cases in which violence, instead of dialogue, has been used to gain political goals, also by the Arab minority in Israel. A possible definition of religion is “a system of symbols whose function instills strong, deep-rooted, and long-lasting motivations and mental states, through the formulation of views about the general world order and the clothing of these in such a factual guise that the mental states and motivations appear to be especially well-suited.”²¹

From the end of the Second World War in 1945 and continuously since 2000 religion has returned to playing a crucial role in the formation of poli-

tics and societies. Examples of this can be found in subjects such as religious rights in the United States, the revolution in Iran, violent Islam in Algeria, Afghanistan, and Egypt, and ethnic conflicts in former Yugoslavia, Northern Ireland, Israel, and Poland.²² In certain countries religious affiliation is a significant factor in the inflaming and escalation of conflicts. Examples of this exist in the extended conflicts that are taking place in different places in the world such as Kashmir, Chechnya, and Israel.

Since the beginning of the 1990s a series of incidents in which violence was used for political purposes on the background of religious aspirations have taken place. Religious extremists have seen violence as a legitimate means of protecting their religion and religious values from negative influences whose source, they claim, is modernism. In this way they prepare the ground for potential conflicts with those who have different beliefs from them. On the contrary, dialogue with incumbent regimes was not a real option for this groups or movements. Such groups can be found in Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism and are composed of young, educated people from the middle class who are professionals and businesspeople.²³

The penetration of modernism into developing countries in which there are Muslim societies, including Israel, did not take place in a religious-cultural vacuum. In these countries there was a heritage of belief systems, values and symbols that fashioned their personalities and the identities of their citizens both as individuals and as groups (majority and minority). Wentz expressed it thus: "The human being is more than a biological entity, and religion is one of the sources to understand our biological existence and to contribute meaning to life." He used the image of "walls of religion" which are psychological walls shared by whole communities that help the believer to differentiate between the order of human existence and chaos. In his view there are people, called extremists, who will do everything in order to defend those walls even if they have to pay any price. Anything that they perceive to be a threat to the individual or group usually sparks a violent reaction, including in the political arena. In most cases the threat exists in the eyes of the believers and not in the eyes of those threatening, in other words, innocent subjects might also be interpreted as being a threat to the believer such as, for example, the prohibition of non-Muslim prayers in places connected with Islam.²⁴

According to some of the researchers, violence is an internal component within religion and that acts such as offering sacrifices (animals) or myths such as the crucifixion of Jesus are incidents that have provided human society with the opportunity and acceptable way of expressing the violent instincts imprinted within it.²⁵ The connection between religion and conflicts (ethnic and national) are not limited to the need to defend the religion from possible enemies. The religion provides the individual with the motivation to carry out actions and includes a code of behavior regarding "what is permis-

sible and what is forbidden.” The more pious a person is and the more he believes, the more difficult it is for him to separate religion from his motives and personal deeds.

In the modern era political Islam is one of the expressions of a violent and extreme movement even if it is not the only one. It is possible that this has arisen from Sharia law (the Islamic religious law) because religion is the state and these two concepts cannot be separated.²⁶ The unique thing about fundamentalist Islam (in contrast to Judaism and Christianity) arises out of a number of reasons which include: the obligation to carry out a holy war (Jihad) against the infidels; the fact that Islam is a religion that demonstratively gives priority to the public good over that of the individual; the fact that Islam is not only a religion in the sense of carrying out ritual practices but a religion that is part of all the frameworks of life such as society, commerce, education, economics, and music.²⁷

Islamic terrorist organizations have been operating continuously since the 1980s in Egypt, Israel, Chechnya, Afghanistan, (former) Yugoslavia, Lebanon, Algeria, India, and other places. In addition to this, terror is not the only violent expression of these movements since they also use other patterns such as mass protest demonstrations. In some of the countries, even when they do not hold the reins of power, the Islamic movements have been successful in their efforts to influence government policy against non-Muslim groups. A striking example of this is the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt which in different periods throughout the twentieth century succeeded in coercing the government to impose a prejudicial policy against the Christian minority (the Copts) who, as a religious (not national) minority, suffered throughout history from systematic exclusion and were denied equality of opportunity in employment especially in government offices. Added to this, of course, is the wave of protests experienced in the Arab world since December 2010 which has been characterized not only by the use of arms and terror—such as, for instance, in Libya and Syria—but also by wide popular protests such as what took place in Egypt and Jordan.

Religion does not always provide the primary explanation for the outbreak of violence by protest movements, including those that are called national minorities, but there are incidents that act as factors that can help us understand the phenomenon. This exists in incidents in which religious affiliation integrates into the charged network of relations that potentially could lead to an explosive situation between the majority group of a country and the minority group that has been living there for many years. In such cases religion becomes an instrument that can be exploited by those interested in exacerbating the conflict and creating the foundations of protest, including violent protest, in order to gain different achievements, including in the political arena.

This theoretical-historical analysis is also relevant to the discussion about the Israeli Arabs. This population is identified as an ethno-national group that has the components of a primordial basis such as tradition, language and a shared culture together with the component of territorial nationality because they are a native minority. Over the last three decades the religious component has become dominant in the national identity of the Muslim citizens of Israel, which are the decisive majority within the minority community. This component has become an influential factor, together with other influential factors, on the way the population conducts itself and on the leadership in its decision making about the patterns of protest and the use of violence. And yet, it is still a challenge to gauge whether the religious component contributes to the choice of violent protest patterns more than the national component. Based upon an analysis of the way the political and religious power brokers among the Israel Arab citizens since the 1980s have conducted themselves, it is clear that the two things complement each other and act as a basis for decision making, including whether to turn to violence or not.

A NATIONAL MINORITY AND ITS RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT

The academic literature in different areas such as law, history and political science deals widely with the issue of minorities throughout the world and divides them into three types: immigrant minorities,²⁸ original minorities (natives), and national minorities. In the last decade of the twentieth century international bodies often dealt with the question of the future of the minorities throughout the world. This concern also dealt with the efforts made to agree about the definition of the term *minority*. A possible definition for a minority group in a population is “a group that is inferior in number to the rest of the population in the country, that is in a nondominant position and whose members, who are citizens of the country, with ethnic, religious and linguistic characteristics that are different from the rest of the population, and who are known, even if this is only suggested, to wish to preserve their culture, traditions, religion and language.”²⁹ This definition is relevant to the Arab citizens of Israel because of the differences that exist in all the categories between them and the Jewish majority in the country and because of their desire to preserve those components, such as religion, language, culture, and traditions.

Original minorities, or natives, are peoples who live in territorial spaces over which, for many years, they felt they were sovereign, but the living areas of which have been conquered by an immigrant group that has chosen to impose a way of life, a political agenda, and a new sovereignty in place of the original native minority. The result of such a situation is that the native

population, which until recently has been its own master in the area in which it is settled, now finds itself deprived of its status and sovereignty.³⁰ The Israeli Arabs are a native, original minority because of the fact that they were born in the territorial space that, in 1948, became a sovereign entity in the form of the State of Israel. This is what makes the connection between the word pair “original-native” also relevant to the question of what a national minority is.

The direct contact with another national group, which in the case of this research is also the majority group, endows the minority group with unique characteristics which, over time, increasingly sharpen its recognition that the previous situation needs to be restored. The practical expression of this is the collective demands made by that original-native group of the new state with its new characteristics (mostly alien) that the original minority finds itself living in, sometimes having had no other choice.³¹

The question of the definition of what a “national minority” is more complicated. After the First World War the League of Nations composed a document entitled “The Protection Regime of Minorities.” This document, in line with international law, saw minorities as legal entities and they were classified as “national minorities,” “religious minorities,” or “linguistic minorities.”³² This document dealt with the need to provide protection to minorities as human beings and not as citizens or groups with national aspirations. In 1995 the European protection convention which discussed the question of national minorities did not succeed in defining them because of the significant differences of opinion between the formulating groups. Apparently this was also because of the new reality that was created in Europe after the inflow of Muslims from around the world to the continent. The treaty states that the protection of national minorities is necessary in order to preserve peace and the democratic stability and security of the continent; suitable conditions that make it possible for minorities to express, preserve, and develop their identities need to be created; the countries must act to maintain full and effective equality and avoid all forms of prejudice.³³

National minorities sometimes contain within them separatist factors as well. Separatism is an approach by a social group, a tribe, ethnic group, religion, or state to close itself off and jealously adhere to its culture, while avoiding any cooperation with different groups or integrating into its surroundings. The conceptualization of separatism is influenced by the values of the majority group or that which has hegemony in the country as this finds expression in the legal system, the culture, the religion, and the control of resources. The more dominant and stubborn the hegemonies group is the more any behavior that is not normative for the majority group, even if it involves a minor infraction, is viewed by the majority as separatist behavior by the minority group. The definition of a movement or minority as “separatist” is not objective and, in the nature of things, is in the eyes of the beholder.

In other words, an action that is viewed by someone as “separatist,” might be interpreted by someone else as “nonseparatist.”

For quite some time the terms *separatists* and *integrationists* are used in academic and public discourse to characterize political power factors in the Israeli Arab sector. The northern branch of the Islamic Movement, also called the “Ra’ad Salah Branch” after its leader, the Sons of the Village movement and the Balad party are all parts of the separatist factor.³⁴ While Balad is represented in the Israeli Parliament (the Knesset), a component that can be described as integrationist, its ideology and its efforts to establish independent institutions to administer the life of the Arab population do, in fact, have a separatist orientation. The term *integrationists* relates to the communist stream which in the early years was called the Israeli Communist Party (MAKI), later the New Communist List (RAKAH) and finally the Democratic Front for Equality (HADASH). In this camp there are also the southern branch of the Islamic Movement (which, despite its ideology, has chosen the pattern of integrative action), and the Committee of the Local Council Heads.³⁵ These support the integration of the Arab minority into Israeli society and its government institutions and oppose the establishment of independent institutions for the Arab minority because they see these as steps towards separatism.

DEMOCRACIES AND MINORITIES

Minorities of different kinds can be found all over the world in almost every sovereign country. The network of relations between them and the regime is decisively determined by the freedom of action—limited or widespread—that the character of the regime permits them. The conventional assumption is that in nondemocratic regimes the freedom of action of minority groups is more restricted than what is usual in democratic regimes. These refer to the practice of religious ritual and the use of protest in the framework of making demands of the government in order to change the political, social, economic or any other agenda.³⁶

In modern times there are different kinds of democracies including liberal democracies³⁷ which are of four different types: individual liberal democracies,³⁸ republican liberal democracies,³⁹ federal democracies,⁴⁰ and multicultural democracies.⁴¹ In almost every democratic country there is at least one minority group. Since the end of the Second World War a substantial number of minority groups has made demands, on different levels and regarding different subjects, of their governments. Among the reasons for the acceleration of making demands were the growth of a new generation of educated people among the native populations who had developed an awareness about their political and civil rights, support for the struggles of native

minorities by the different communities that make up the population of the country they live in, and the amendment of regulations and the legislation of laws initiated by politicians who revealed sensitivity to the issues involved. The awakening of the national feelings of these minority groups was accompanied by patterns of protest which, in most cases, were not violent although, in some places the protests did become violent.⁴²

Israel is considered to be one of the democratic countries and in recent years there has been a widespread debate among those researching democracy in Israel over which of the four models presented above should include the nation. According to some of the researchers none of the above models accurately reflects the situation in Israel, including the relationship between the establishment and the Arab minority. Another group argues that Israel is a multicultural democracy and that one of the clear expressions of this is the process of integration that the Arab minority is going through, including its participation as an active player in the political system in Israel.⁴³ Yet another group suggests a fifth model for Israel called an “ethnic democracy” in which the state, on the one hand, gives political and civil rights to individuals and certain collective rights to minorities while, on the other hand, establishes the principle that one of the ethnic groups controls the state.⁴⁴ In the view of those who support this approach there is an ethnocratic regime of the Jewish majority group in Israel in which the government advances only the interests of this group.⁴⁵ All of the researchers agree about one thing and that is that in all the models of democracy the right to protest against the regime is permitted to all minority groups in the framework of the struggle to improve their political and civil situation. This is also the situation that exists in the network of relations between the Arab minority and the Israeli establishment. For this reason Israel is a democratic state, despite the fact that the state is not a full democracy.

SUMMARY

This chapter discusses the basic components that reflect differences and contrasts between communities and groups that live in the same territory. Those differences, which are characterized by different religions, different ethnic origins, and separate national crystallizations, have—throughout history—been potential grounds for the development of tensions between different groups. In some cases these tensions reach the point where violent means are used to achieve political goals and change the public social agenda in a given country.

The Israeli Arabs are an ethno-national group and also a native population that lives in Israel, which defines itself as a Jewish and democratic state. They also have ethnic and national affiliations that are different from the

Jewish majority group and, as such, they have, since the 1990s, been continually making demands of an ethnic and national nature including the demand for collective rights, their recognition as a national minority group, and a change in character of the Jewish state to becoming a binational state.⁴⁶ From the moment political leaders in the Arab sector in Israel began to make demands of a national and civil nature, the Arab ethnic group became a national movement, and not only this, for the Arab minority divides these demanded components so as to differentiate it as a national ethnic group. These components are language, customs, a past history, myths, religion (Islam and Christianity), and the identification of the rival Jewish majority with which it is involved in a national struggle over the same territory. When these components produce mutual interests and there is a readiness to contribute to the minority group's success (in this case) then this might be expressed in the form of establishing a political framework that will be aimed at improving the living conditions and quality of life of the members of that minority group.⁴⁷ Moreover the distinct identity of the Arab minority rests upon the many primordial components that have been analyzed above. Different leadership factors in the Arab sector—in the Parliament, the municipalities, and in the religious sphere—usually, as I will show anon, add a stream of instrumental arguments to the primordial pattern in order to make the differences between the Jewish majority group and the Arab minority group greater and, in this way, realize their political interests. This historical reality is also the legacy of the State of Israel which, since its independence, has had a complicated network of relations with the Arab minority living within it. The constant search for a policy that will make it possible to carry out democratic principles together with the continuous effort to preserve the unique national character of the state has, over the years, led to a complicated network of relations with the Arab minority. This has, at times, escalated into protests and violence that have led to loss of life. From a historical viewpoint this escalation lent its weight to the formation of a mutual relationship between the Arab minority and the Israeli government.

NOTES

1. Thomas Eriksen, "Ethnicity, Race, and Nation: The Ethnicity Reader," in Montserrat Guibernau et al. (eds.), *Nationalism, Multiculturalism, and Migration* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), p. 28.

2. Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origin of Nations*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), pp. 22–30.

3. Thomas Eriksen, "Place, Kinship and the Case for Non-Ethnic Nations," *Nation and Nationalism* Vol. 10 (2004), pp. 56–57.

4. Examples of minorities such as this are the Aborigines in Australia, the Basques in Spain, "The Samai" in Northern Scandinavia, and the Native Americans in the United States.

5. Included in this group are the Sikhs in India, the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the Tamils in Sri Lanka. The numbers of minorities included in this group is constantly growing throughout the world.

6. Roni Shaked, *On the Fence: The Palestinians in Israel—National Radicalism*, (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2012), p. 28–29 [Hebrew].

7. Under this category are the Kurds in Northern Iraq, the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the Armenians in the Nagorno Karabach region in Azerbaijan.

8. Among the cases in this category are the Chechnians in Russia, the Islamic movements in Egypt and Algeria, and the Hutu and Tutsi tribes in Rwanda and Burundi.

9. The classic case is the war that took place during the 1990s in the Balkan region between the Bosnians and the Serbs and the Croats and the Serbs. The result was the breaking up of Yugoslavia, a country that had collected six different nations together during the Communist period and had actualized self-determination in the establishment of seven new states. In June 2006, following the results of a referendum, Serbia and Montenegro decided to separate and establish two separate, sovereign entities as a result of which Yugoslavia broke up into the following countries: Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia, Slovenia, Croatia, and Kosovo.

10. Earl Conteh-Morgan, *Collective Political Violence: An Introduction to the Theories and Cases of Violent Conflict* (New York: Routledge, 2004) pp. 1–29. Conteh-Morgan classifies the different empirical cases into four groups but this division can arouse criticism mainly in relation to the two last categories which are based upon few test cases about which there is doubt that they are enough to establish a separate cluster to relate to.

11. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), p. 1.

12. Baruch Kimmreling, “The Formation of Palestinian Collective Identities: The Ottoman and Mandatory Period,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 36:2 (April 2000), p. 49.

13. Yossef Aggasi, *Between Religion and Nationalism: Towards Israeli National Identity* (Tel Aviv: Papyrus, 1984), p. 24 [Hebrew].

14. Azmi Bishara, “Between Nation and People: Passing Thoughts on Nationalism,” *Theory and Criticism*, 19:6 (Tel Aviv, 1995) p. 30 [Hebrew].

15. For Bishara’s involvement in Land Day (1976) and the October 2000 events, see: Gadi Hitman, *The Involvement of Separatist Political Actors among Israeli Arabs in October 2000 Events* (Haifa University, 2007) [Hebrew].

16. In the framework of this subchapter only the instrumental approach that places emphasis upon the political influence of the formation of nationality and the primordial approach that highlights the basic values of blood ties will be briefly presented. There are other approaches that analyze the formation of nationality and I will note two: *imagined nationality*, a term coined by Benedict Anderson, according to which the story (the narrative) that peoples tell about themselves are composed of national content that are constructed through manipulation of the collective memory. The other one is the ethnosymbolic approach which argues that, while nationality is a modern phenomenon, the past also has considerable importance attached to it. For more on imagined nationality, see: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, (London and New York: Verso, 1983). On ethnosymbol nationalism, see: Anthony Smith, *Chosen People*, (London: Oxford University Press, 2003).

17. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 3.

18. Clifford Geertz, “The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Politics in the New States,” in Clifford Geertz (ed.), *Old societies and New States: the Quest for Modernity in Asia and Africa* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), pp. 105–157. In his next book Geertz tries to examine this approach through carrying out field research from 1965–1967 in Morocco and Indonesia, see: Clifford Geertz, *Thoughts about Islam: Religious Developments in Morocco and Indonesia* (Tel Aviv: Resling, 2007).

19. Lea Greenfeld, “The Modern Religion,” in Neri Horowitz (ed.), *Religion and Nationalism in Israel and the Middle East*, (Tel Aviv: Rabin Center, Am Oved, 2002), p.43 [Hebrew].

20. In the second half of 1982 the Arab members of the Knesset from the Labor Party and the Hadsh, the Communist Party, initiated an idea to establish a common body that would unify their activities with those of the Committee of the Local Heads of Councils. The immediate catalyst was the desire to establish a body that would coordinate protest activities against Israel on the background of what they called “The War of Annihilation in Lebanon,” mainly after the severe events in Sabra and Shatilla. This body very quickly became a roof organization also for representatives of political movements that already existed in the Arab minority (the Sons of

the Village, the Islamic Movement). This body became the highest leadership framework of the Arab minority. For more on the Higher Follow-Up Committee and political frameworks in the Arab sector see chapter 2.

21. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 92.

22. The Polish case is the exception because of the involvement of the church establishment in the protest demonstrations of the workers (The Solidarity Organization) that took place in the 1970s. The church came out publicly against the Communist government and helped the organizers of the protest with its great power that had been preserved since the Middle Ages. For more on this see: Hanna Diskin, "The Committee for Defense on Workers in Poland Following June Clashes and in Historic Perspective," in *State, Governance and International Relationships*, 12, 1978, pp. 78–96 [Hebrew].

23. Martin Marty and Scott R. Appleby, *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

24. Richard Wentz, *Why Do People Do Bad Things in the Name of Religion?* (Macon, GA: Mercer, 1987), p. 41.

25. Rene Girard, *Violence and Sacred*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 1995), p. 259.

26. Regarding this context Bernard Lewis argues that, in contrast to the West, peoplehood is divided into several subgroups since, in Islam, the religion is divided into subpeoples. In his view the reason for this is that, throughout history, the Muslims did not think in terms of any ethnic-territorial identity since during Islam's first hundreds of years the Muslim community was one complete political unit and this ideal has remained in the modern era as well. See: Bernard Lewis, *The Crisis of Islam* [Mashber Ha-Islam in Hebrew] Tel Aviv: Dvir, 2003, pp. 22–23. The brutal deeds of Islamic State in Iraq and Syria are tangible instance for this argument.

27. Gabriel Ben Dor, "The Uniqueness of Islamic Fundamentalism, Religious Radicalization in the Greater Middle East," *British Journal of Middle East Studies* 8:2 (1996), pp. 239–252.

28. Immigrant minorities are those people who immigrate to a country that is not viewed as their own. They do not make territorial demands towards the country and are generally satisfied with basic claims that involve functional citizenship (identity cards, social service rights). Immigrants of this kind try to preserve the cultural heritages they brought with them from their homelands. One example of this is the Black population who left Africa to settle in France. Minorities of this kind are not included in the research framework of this study.

29. Francesco Capotorti, *Study on the Rights of Persons Belonging to Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities* (New York: United Nations, 1991), p. 96.

30. Whether the sovereignty of the original minority over the territory has been authorized or not by international bodies this minority was, in reality, the sovereign power over the territory until the arrival of a new, alien factor who, from its point of view, was the sovereign power. As far as this research is concerned, during the mandate neither the Arabs nor the Jews had sovereignty over the land.

31. Amal Jamal, "Collective Rights for Original Minorities: Theoretical and Normative Aspects," in Elie Rekhess and Sara Osatzcy-Lazar (eds.), *The Status of the Arab Minority within Nation Jewish State* (Tel Aviv University, Dayan Center for Middle East and Africa Studies, 2005): 28 [Hebrew]. In this article Jamal lays out the tension that existed between the establishment and the minority by comparing it to countries like New Zealand, Australia, and Canada. He finds common lines of comparison between these minorities and the Arab minority in Israel and notes the uniqueness of this minority in its separation from the majority group in its ethnic, religious, and national characteristics.

32. Mohammad Dahleh, "The Collective Rights of the Arab Minority in Israel," *Peace School Journal*, Neve Shalom (2013), pp. 1–5 [Hebrew].

33. Council of Europe, *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*, 1995.

34. Ami Ayalon, who headed the Israel security Agency, differentiates between two polar positions, one that prefers to be separate from the state and the other that wants to integrate into

it. See: Ami Ayalon, Israeli Arabs and being an Israeli in <http://www.kibbutz.org.il>. [Hebrew]. Also see: Gadi Hitman. "Israel's Arab leadership in the Decade Attending the October 2000 Events," *Israel Affairs* 19.1 (2013): 121–138.

35. For the political power factors in the Arab sector in Israel see the in chapter 2.

36. A conspicuous example is China which does not show tolerance towards the Muslim minority that is living in its territory. In the summer of 2012 the Chinese government prevented the Muslims living in the north of the country from carrying out the obligations of the month of Ramadan. The restrictions on the Muslims in the north-west of the country were made more stringent following violent acts carried out by some of the Muslim minority in 2009 in their demand for human rights. See: Kathrin Hile, "China Bans Religious Activities in Xinjiang," *Financial Times*, August 2, 2012.

37. Democracy is a form of government that offers a useful solution to the fundamental political problem of trying to arrive at collective decisions peacefully. The fundamental idea is self-government and, in its literal sense, this is not only about choosing leaders by those being governed but about the strong connection between them without being able to separate the two terms governor and governed. The conventional expression of democracy is "the government of the people, by the people and for the people" but this expression is also different in different democracies in subjects such as freedom of expression, freedom of the press, an independent legal system, and the unbiased enforcement of the rule of law. See Manfred G Schmidt, "Political Performance and Types of Democracy? Findings from Comparative Studies," *European Journal of Political Research* 41, (2002), p. 147.

38. A regime of this kind lacks a defined national character and its point of contact is citizenship. In a democracy of this model the populace is a secondary entity and it has no more significance than being just citizens. The state is not officially identified with any ethnic group. The state's source of legitimacy is agreement with its official constitution or living in a shared territory with no deep feelings of belonging to the nation. The democratic framework is not a national state but a state with superficial and universal connections that arise out of considerations of convenience between citizens who are a collection of human beings.

39. This is the form of a regime in which ethnic affiliation is a private matter. The state does not interfere and does not legislate laws on ethnic matters but develops one nation through the determination of which language is spoken, national identity and institutions that are shared by its citizens. The state exerts pressure to assimilate the minority into the majority while, at the same time, also allowing the ethnic groups to preserve their cultural uniqueness or separate existence to the degree that they are interested in it and are prepared to pay the price involved in maintaining the change and separation. In the liberal republican democracy the individual is the cornerstone of the society. See: Ruth Gavison and Tali Bablur, *Collective Rights of Minorities*, 2005 [Hebrew]. This document has not been published but was presented, with wide agreement, to the Constitution Committee of the Israeli Parliament in the framework of discussions about the constitution during the month of August 2005. The work deals with the status of the Arab minority in Israel and deals with aspects of basic rights, individual rights, and group rights. Both of the authors propose legal arrangements for the Arab minority on the basis of appropriate representation in the state institutions and equal employment rights. This entire proposal is to be anchored in precedents from international law.

40. While in this model ethnic division is a principle in the institutional organization of the state and individuals are judged on the basis of their abilities and enjoy individual political and civil rights, ethnic groups are also officially recognized and enjoy certain rights such as control over their educational network and public services allocated to them according to their relative representation in the population. The state is not identified with any one of the groups and tries to settle the differences between them. The neutrality of the state, from the ethnic point of view, allows states of this model to give their citizens complete equality.

41. This is a kind of halfway model between a liberal democracy and a consensual democracy. In this regime the overlap between the state and the nation becomes increasingly blurred. The right of the minorities to be different is recognized and they have collective rights but these arrangements are neither official nor anchored in law. The state does not see itself as belonging to any particular nation and does not enforce any shared cultural integration of ethnic and cultural groups living within the framework of the one state.

42. The use of terror was, for instance, still recognized in the period that preceded the Second World War as was seen in Northern Ireland in 1916. Another prominent case in the second half of the twentieth century was the terrorist activity of the Basque underground in Spain. Robert T. Gurr mapped the minority groups that live in countries whose regimes are defined as democratic. See his book: *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflict*, (Washington, DC: Institution of Peace, 1993).

43. Benyamin Neuberger, "The Arab Voice: Between Integration and Delegitimization," in Elie Rekhess (ed.), *The Arabs in Israeli Politics: Dilemmas of Identity* (Dayan Center, Tel Aviv University, 1998), p. 31 [Hebrew].

44. Smooha "Ethnic Democracy," pp. 277–311. Hillel Frisch argues that the platform of the combined party of the Communists and Balad in the general elections to the Knesset in May 1996, which included a demand to recognize the Arab minority as a national minority, undermines the Declaration of Independence of Israel because, in his view, this demand is a subversive attempt to establish a binational state. In contrast Judge Aharon Barak did not find any contradiction between the Jewish and democratic identity of the state when the component of equality is the key point in democracy. See: Hillel Frisch, *Israel's Security and Its Arab Citizens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), See also: Aharon Barak, "Israel as Jewish and Democratic State," *Law Thoughts* 24 (1) (September 2000) pp. 9–14 [Hebrew].

45. Ghanem, Rouhana and Yiftachel, "Questioning 'Ethnic Democracy,'" pp. 265–267.

46. Oded Haklai, *Palestinian Ethnonationalism in Israel*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), pp. 4, 7, 112.

47. As'ad Ghanem, *The Palestinian-Arab Minority in Israel, 1948–2000: A Political Study*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), p. 164.

Chapter Two

Characteristics of the Arab Minority in Israel and the Political Frameworks

Research scholars of different backgrounds—among them Israeli Arabs, Palestinians, Jewish Israelis, and others—agree about a number of the unique characteristics of the Arab citizens of Israel that might create difference and the potential for violent conflict between them and the majority group in Israel. The Arabs in Israel are an indigenous group that sees itself, historically, as having been under the hegemony of a majority group a substantial part of which was not born in the country. In general the indigenous nature of a minority considerably strengthens its self-awareness and the validity of its demands much more than those minorities that, for example, exist as the result of their immigration to prosperous countries in order to improve their situation. This is the case of the Arab minority in Israel. The Arab term *sumud*, that is the determined hold upon ancestral lands when faced with challenges from the Jewish majority which they, in fact, see as a society of immigrants, holds a high place in the world of the Arab minority in Israel.

The Arab minority in Israel is a relatively new historical phenomenon and, in contrast with other minorities in the region, such as the Christians in Lebanon, the Alawis in Syria and the Kurds in Iraq, that have had the status of being minorities for hundreds of years, the Arab sector in Israel only became a minority after 1948. They carry with them the heritage, the attitudes and expectations of those who have always been part of the majority (at least the Muslims among them) and even with the growth of the Jewish settlement during the Mandate the number of Arabs was greater than the number of Jews living in the country. The change that turned them into being a minority was not easy to internalize and the rebellion against it expressed itself, among other things, in the refusal to accept the label of “minority citizens” in the language of the state institutions. The awareness that they are

a part of the large human collective that is the majority in the Middle East also nurtured their dissatisfaction with their being defined as a minority.

The transition from being a majority to being a minority is one of the significant results of the difficult defeat that the Arabs experienced in their wars against the Jewish settlement. The very existence of a state in which they found themselves having the status of a minority is a constant reminder of their painful downfall or, as one of their leaders put it, "The state was established upon the ruins of the Palestinian community."¹ The establishment of the State of Israel, which was celebrated by the Jewish People as the realization of a generations-long dream, is engraved in the historical memory of the Arab minority as the worst collective trauma in its history, as its *Nakba* (catastrophe). In the eyes of the Arab minority the birth of the State of Israel with its Jewish character and majority was the direct result of the polar confrontation between two national movements that gave birth to a long-lasting bloody conflict. The contents and symbols of the state, which are also anchored in law and glorify victory in this conflict, in the eyes of the minority signify their defeat.²

The decisive result achieved by the Zionist movement in the battle over the establishment of the state had an aftermath since the Zionist ideals of settlement and the ingatherings of the exiles were principles that organized the life of the Jewish state. The practical application of this policy meant the taking control of most of the land in the country and the vacating of locations to place the masses of immigrants. The Jewish majority saw programs like the Judaization of the Galilee as legitimate goals for the State of Israel while the Arab minority found itself in the reality of land appropriation, of being "present absentees" and experiencing building limitations and thus saw the state as something that represented interests that hurt its interests. It also found it difficult to accept the definition of Israel as the state of the whole Jewish people, something which gave the Jewish immigrants and new civil rights that the Arabs themselves did not enjoy. This state of affairs fed the Arab minority's feeling that Israeli democracy was not democratic for the Arabs to the same degree that it was for the Jews. This led to an increase in the Arabs' protests about their inferior status some of which were expressed violently.

The Arab minority in Israel is part of the Palestinian people from a national point of view when narrowly defined, and part of the wider Arab world while the State of Israel is involved in a serious conflict with both of them. In the six wars that Israel has fought against the Arab countries the Israeli Arabs, in almost all cases, have avoided infringing upon law and order in the framework of the demonstrations of identification with the Arab side. These demonstrations, together with other activities, reflected sympathy for the national aspirations exhibited by the Arab regimes. The peace agreements Israel signed with Egypt (1979) and Jordan (1994) reduced the polarity in

which the Arab minority found itself, but the continuation of the conflict with the other Arab countries, and the accompanying threat of war, have prevented its total cancellation. Even more difficult has been the divide caused by the continuation of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Since the establishment of the state Israel has had to deal with manifestations of violence such as the Fedayeen raids in the 1950s, the terror attacks of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the clashes of the first (1987) and second (2000) Palestinian uprising (Intifada). In all of these confrontations many people on both sides were killed and there was much suffering. The feelings of the Arab Israeli citizens, whose linkage to the Palestinians over the border and Green Line is not only national but also social and familial, were expressed in the well-known saying of Abed Al-Aziz Al-Zuebi: "My country is at war with my people."³

The last point, which is also relevant in the framework of the discussion about the use of violence in protests, is the reality in which the Arab minority lacks real collective rights. Israel's laws grant the Arab minority five collective rights: the status of Arabic as an official language in Israel; the separation of the education system that includes elementary and secondary schools in which the curriculum is taught in Arabic; the preservation of the Turkish method according to which a person's personal standing is subject to the religious laws of his community; a collective exemption from army service and the first signs of the obligation to involve individuals from the Arab minority in the general social institutions.⁴ The Arab sector also enjoys the right to a religious legal system but these rights have not been anchored in the principle recognition of their right to collective rights as members of a different people. The state has recognized the separate existence of the Arab sector as a public that does not have to assimilate into the majority society but has not based this separate existence upon the foundation of legal obligation. This way of relating to Arab citizens has given birth to the complaint by them that the state sees them as only being a "demographic" group and not a national group and this has increased their feelings of deprivation over the years.

Research literature offers a number of ways to map factors of the political forces that see themselves as part of the leadership map of the Arab minority in Israel. It is important to provide a political map since the presentation of the active players will, in the following chapters, make possible an analysis of their behavior in each of the events that had the potential for dialogue, protest or political violence. The larger the number of political frameworks became, and the more the difference in their ideology and structure grew, the more developed the research that could differentiate between these frameworks became.

Reiter has proposed three approaches to the political division of power factors in the Arab sector all of which developed along a historical continu-

um, during which the political awareness of the Arab minority grew and led to the growth of new frameworks, which wanted to advance different ideologies. The first approach divides the political map of the Arab minority into two camps that existed from the establishment of the state to the middle of the 1970s. The first camp was called the “Moderate Camp” which included Arab public personages, such as Yussouf Khamis, Rustam Bastuni and Abed Al-Aziz Al-Zuebi, who were members of Jewish-Zionist parties in the 1960s. There were other public personages from the Arab sector who were members of satellite parties and served as members of the second (1951) and third (1955) Parliaments (Knesset), among whom were people such as Seif A-Din Zuabi, Jaber Ma’adi and Mussad Kassis, who were members of the Democratic List for Israeli Arabs. These developed an ideological approach centered upon the acceptance of the idea that the Arab minority in Israel was an ethnic and cultural minority living in a Jewish country. The second camp, or stream, was the “Radical-National Camp” that, during those years, included political groups such as the Communist Party, Hadash (with its earlier name of Rakah and, even earlier, Maki), the Sons of the Village movement, the Progressive List for Peace (Ramash), and the Al-Ard Movement.⁵ This camp did not accept the political reality of the Middle East, opposed the existence of the State of Israel and did not accept its Zionist character.⁶

The second approach proposed a division of the political map into three camps and is relevant to the period of the 1970s and 1980s. The first camp was the “Moderate Camp” represented by Arab personages who were active in the framework of Jewish-Zionist parties and who accepted the existence of the State of Israel; the second camp was the “National Camp” led by Progressive list for Peace (Ramash) during those same years which strived to cancel the current character of the state; and the third camp was the “Extreme Nationalist” party which included Arabs who had, in the past, been members of Al-Ard and belonged to the Sons of the Village, who were interested in establishing a Palestinian state in the territory of Mandatory Palestine.

The third approach saw the division of the political map of the Arab sector into four camps that have existed since the 1980s. The first included politicians who accepted the current situation in which the Jewish-Zionist character of the state was maintained. The second was the “Dissenters” that moved between the Zionist establishment and the opposition such as, for example, the Communist Party. This camp did not reject the character of the state but strived to affect the advancement of the interests of the Arab minority via electoral power. The third camp was the “Oppositionists” that accepted the existence of the state but carried out a struggle to introduce significant changes into its character through becoming organized into parties that were neither pro- nor anti-Zionist, as had been the case in the past with Ramash. The fourth camp was called the “Negators” and included the Sons of the Village and Balad movements and whose guiding ideology was that of

the “Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine” which rejected the existence of the State of Israel.

An additional fourth approach is that that of Asad Ghanem and is not only based upon whether the political stream is close or distant from the state but also upon an additional diagnoses such as ideology, an organizational foundation and the level of radicalism. This approach differentiates among four political streams the first being the Israeli-Arab stream, that accepts the existing situation, was represented in the past by the Arab Democratic Party (Mada) of Abed Al-Wahab Darawshe and today is represented by the same Arab activists in the Zionist parties. The second stream is the Communist stream which is interested in organizing the state on the basis of binationalism as a strategic choice. The third stream is the national stream which draws its views from the Arab National Palestinian Movement and is interested in autonomy for the Arab Israeli citizens. The movements that are leading this approach today in the Arab sector are Balad and the Sons of the Village. The fourth stream is the Islamic stream which relies upon religious values and principles and calls for the organization of the state on the basis of the Islamic religion. Together with this the supporters of this stream do not ignore other components of their identity and they perceived themselves as Arabs and Palestinians who hold Israeli citizenship. This stream is naturally represented by the Islamic Movement with its two branches.⁷

Another way to depict the development of the leadership of the Arab minority in Israel is via observation of its institutions and the institutionalization of new political bodies.⁸ In the middle of the 1970s the committee of the heads of local councils was established to be the body that would represent the minority before the government authorities in order to improve the situation of the municipalities in civil matters. In the process of preparations made by the Arab leadership to prevent the appropriation of land in March 1976,⁹ the work done by the heads of the councils became political-national in character. In 1982 the Higher Follow-Up Committee was established after the events in Sabra and Shatilla, refugee camps for Palestinians in Lebanon. After six years, in 1982, two kinds of leadership were established for the Arab minority: the first was in the form of the official leadership that wanted to focus upon civil activities but, in practice, found itself also dealing with activities of a nationalist character. The other was a new leadership that placed emphasis upon Arab nationality, for example in the form of Mada, when its leader Darawshe resigned from the Labor Party. The continuation of the process was in the 1990s with the establishment of nongovernmental organizations that are inseparable from the political scene of the Arab minority and try to advance different subjects in order to improve the lot of this minority.

I have already showed, in previous study, a third way to map the political factors by examining their patterns of activity vis-à-vis the establishment

which can range through disregard, apathy, dialogue, protest and violence. In recent years it has been possible to distinguish between camps that negate any contact with the establishment, which include the Islamic Movement/northern branch, the Sons of the Village and Balad (despite its sitting in the Knesset) and the dialogue camp which includes the Committed of Heads of Local Councils and the Islamic Council/southern branch.¹⁰

POLITICAL FACTORS

The Israeli Communist Party

The Communist stream with its reincarnations and different names is the longest lasting political body in the Arab sector with its roots having been established in Israel already in 1919 when a group of Jewish leftist activists established the Socialist Workers Party. Four years later, after it had overcome differences of opinion and divisions, the activists unified the ranks and established the Palestinian Communist Party known as Pakap.¹¹

In the middle of the 1920s Arab members also joined this party and it became a political body in which there were members who belonged to different ethnic and national groups. This was important in itself throughout history since it created a permanent tension between, on the one hand, the ideas of Communism and, on the other, the ethno-national difference between its members. The Jews were a majority in the Communist Party from the beginning until the middle of the 1960s when deep ideological rifts developed between the Jewish and Arab members of the party which eventually led to the disintegration of the structural, but not the ideological, cooperation.

In an attempt to bridge the tension between the national struggle that was taking place between the two groups and the need for a united ideology based upon the communist platform, it was decided to adhere to a common ideological line. During these years Pakap moved between Communism and nationalism and the line that was finally chosen was ultimately dictated by Moscow and moved between cooperation with the Arab national line (1924–1928) and separation (1928–1935) and back to cooperation in 1935. A year later, when the 1936 riot events broke out, Pakap decided to join the Arab nationalist wave and to take an active part in the armed struggle against both the Jewish community in the Mandatory Palestine and the British. These events led to a rift between the Arab and Jewish members of Pakap over the preference of the first for the Arab nationalist line over the classic class struggle of Communism. This rift lasted for five years and was only mended after the declaration of the State of Israel in the framework of the unification conference of the party in October 1948 in which the foundations of the Israeli Communist Party (Maki) were set out. During those same years the party's activity in the

West Bank continued after some of the activists moved to larger cities such as Bethlehem and Ramallah where they carried on their political activity in the territory that was controlled by Jordan.

The establishment of the State of Israel forced the Israeli Communist Party to adjust to the new political reality. Maki quickly found itself in a situation in which it was the only significant political force taking part in the battle for the Arab minority in the new state of Israel and there were several reasons for this. Firstly, the Communist platform placed the party in a position in which it was defending the interests of the weaker classes, including the Arab minority. Secondly, the party provided the Arab minority with explanations for its new situation while, at the same time, offering it possible solutions based upon class equality. Thirdly, Maki maneuvered between Communism and Nationalism according to the events taking place at the time and, in this way, preserved its strongholds of support in the Arab minority. This maneuver was possible to a large degree because Maki was a Jewish-Arab body. Fourthly, the party made sure it got to most of the households in the Arab sector through the use of the propaganda it used in its activities with the population. This activity was assisted by the publication of three newspapers¹² and the renewal of the organized political activity of its many cells and branches spread throughout the country. Fifthly, it was a legitimate political party and the only one in the Arab sector that was a player in the parliamentary arena.

The constant tension revolving around the dilemma between the choice of nationalism and the adherence to the communist ideology accompanied the party after the establishment of the state as well and despite the unification conference. As long as the nationalist stream and the communist stream had shared interests the differences of opinion they had were pushed aside. But when the parties identified different interests because of political developments in the regional arena, as happened, for instance, with the unification between Egypt and Syria in February 1958, the friction between the streams resurfaced and even seriously escalated. The nationalist camp, based upon Arab members of the party—among whom were Emile Habibi, Tawfik Toubi, Tawfik Ziad and Emile Jarjura—pushed forward and encouraged violent activities in order to advance and maximize the interests of the party and the Arab minority.¹³

These rifts continued with different strengths until the final disintegration of the founding nucleus in 1965. Tawfik Toubi and Meir Vilner stood at the head of the national camp and Mosheh Sneh and Shmuel Mikounis led the communist camp. Even with this it is not possible to explain the split on the basis of differences in ideology alone, because personal conflicts among the leaders also contributed to the split during the middle of the 1960s. The result was that two communist parties were created: the first was Maki which based itself upon the nucleus of Jewish members and a small number of Arab

members who supported the Communist line. This group focused its activities on preserving its mixed image but its activity in the villages in the Arab sector shrunk and eventually the party disappeared from the political scene and its place was taken by parties that had similar platforms. The second movement was called the new Communist List, Rakah in brief, and this list increased its activities in the Arab sector and took the traditional place of Maki.

After the June 1967 War Rakah deepened its connection with the Soviet Union and its identification with the pro-Arab line led by Moscow. Since then the party has continued to adhere to the traditional values: the establishment of a Palestinian state side by side with the State of Israel within the June 1967 borders, the realization of the right of return of the Palestinian refugees who left the country during the War of Independence, the negation of war as a means to solve the conflict between the two national movements and the participation of Jews in the party.

The Communist party in its various names was the strongest and most significant party in the Arab sector up until the middle of the 1970s when other new political bodies began to appear. The success of the Communists inside the Arab minority can be explained by four factors: an ideological-political platform that adapted itself to the zeitgeist, the efficient organization of the party, sociopolitical changes that developed in the Arab sector and a strategy for carrying on the struggle that provided an answer for the changing needs of the population. From the 1980s onward the Communist stream found itself in a permanent struggle with new power factors that had arisen in the Arab sector to preserve its political power among the population and this struggle took place on several levels. On the national level it had to contend with other political streams for the Arab vote in the national elections while in the internal Arab sector it abandoned its struggle over the character of the Higher Follow-Up Committee. On the local level there was the traditional competition in the municipal elections as well as over the character of the Committee of the Heads of Local Arab Councils and the struggle it was carrying out with the government over national and civil issues.

Al-Ard

The first seeds of the Al-Ard (literally: the Land) movement were already sown in 1959 when a group of Arab students from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem were influenced by the atmosphere that then existed in the Arab world and mainly by the national line demonstrated by the Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser. In July 1959 they established a new political movement called "Usrat Al-Ard" (the Family of Land). Among the founders were a number of prominent Christians including Mansour Kardoosh, Habib Kahouji, Sabri Jiryis and Shukri Hazzan. The movement was registered as a

book importing and publishing company and in 1964 presented itself as an opposition to the State of Israel. At the beginning the movement operated on three levels: the first being the preservation of the new framework as exclusively Arab. In contrast to Rakah the members of Al-Ard were not interested in including Jews among them since they saw Israel as an entity that should not be recognized. This attitude rejected any form of dialogue with state's authorities. Second, was the struggle they carried out against the traditional political network in the Arab minority which the founders of Al-Ard saw as a framework that no longer suited the needs of the Arab minority. The third level was the activity against Rakah which was identified as a strong political force whose power had to be eroded in the sector. One of the first expressions of this was the adoption of a separatist line that called upon the Arab public to boycott the Parliament elections in 1965 in opposition to the position of Rakah which traditionally took part in the general elections.

In 1959 the movement began to publish a newsletter that was characterized by its fighting and inflammatory approach to the state and which expressed support for a united Arab community between Egypt and Syria. The Al-Ard newsletter was not published regularly and even used a different name for each edition in order to avoid the need to ask the government for an operating license. The editors of the newsletter vehemently attacked the Israeli government using expressions that were offensive to the country's leaders and demanded the return of land to its owners. Naim Makhooul, one of the founders of the movement, for example, wrote that "our land will quake under the feet of the exploiters."¹⁴ In the second edition the Arab public was called upon to boycott the general elections to the Fourth Knesset and an editorial entitled "The believer will not be bitten twice in the same viper's nest" expressed contempt for the Arab parties connected to Zionist parties. The public was also called upon to behave in an orderly manner on election day which was an expression of the fact that the leaders of Al-Ard were not interested, at least at that stage, in violent activity.¹⁵ The December issue of the newsletter claimed that the Arabs who were left in Israel after the defeat in 1948 were living in a situation that was similar to that of the Nazi concentration camps in Europe. The then prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, was called "weak-hearted"¹⁶ and an article written by Anis Shakur, a student at the Hebrew University, stated: "Live and let live, maybe you'll live."¹⁷

The editor of the newsletter, Salah Baransi, and his coworkers were ultimately charged by the establishment with publishing an unlicensed newspaper. The newspaper was closed down and those responsible for its publication were sentenced to a fine and a suspended prison sentence. Following the steps taken by the authorities the leaders of Al-Ard sought legal channels of operation with the help of legal advisors. In 1960 they tried to establish a commercial company and were disqualified by the company registrar but an appeal presented to the Supreme Court by Mansour Kardoosh, one of the

founders of Al-Ard was approved and, in 1962, the “Al-Ard Ltd. Company” was registered.¹⁸ Next Al-Ard tried to establish an Ottoman association,¹⁹ which was an obligatory step that had to be taken according to the law at that time in order to establish a political party. The application was made to the director of the Interior Ministry in the Haifa region who responded that the goal of Al-Ard was to damage the existence of the State of Israel and that if it became clear that its members were acting as one body they might be liable to have legal steps taken against them.

After a long legal struggle in which both the ideology of Al-Ard and the position of the state, which saw the movement as threat, were revealed, the Minister of Defense signed an order that made Al-Ard illegal. This order also led to the liquidation of the commercial company that the movement’s leaders had established. Some of its members tried to establish a new party to run in the 1965 elections to the Knesset and the list received the name of “The Arab Socialist List” but the Central Elections Committee disqualified the list with the explanation that this was the continuation of the Al-Ard movement.

This was the end for the Al-Ard movement in its movement version but not the end of the activity of its people in other frameworks. Some of its leaders left Israel, others left politics and a few tried to connect up with Palestinian terrorist organizations but were caught and jailed. After the June 1967 War the General Security Service thwarted by Al-Ard people to establish terror cells for the Fatah organization in the State of Israel and in the operation six Arab Israeli citizens were arrested.²⁰

The Sons of the Village (Abna’a el-Balad)

This movement was established in 1972 by a group of young educated people who were working in the free professions.²¹ The leader was a lawyer called Muhammad Kaywan who lived in Umm El-Fahem in which the first nucleus of the “Sons of the Village” appeared. The movement did not publish a properly formed platform and relied upon the strength of local groups established in the villages of Tira where the group called the “Sons of Tira” had been established, in Taibeh with “Al-Nahada” (Resurrection) and in Nazareth with “Al-Sawt” (The Voice). The first time the “Sons of the Village” faced a political test was in the municipal elections of 1973 when lists of the movement ran for election in a number of villages with a similar platform. However, it only succeeded in placing its representatives in the local councils of Umm el Fahem and Taibeh.

The ideological line of the “Sons of the Village” was based upon the following ideas: the denial of the sovereignty of the State of Israel over all the territory of Palestine, including lands inside the “Green Line,” unequivocal identification with the PLO and the acceptance of the platform of “The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.” According to the movement’s

platform the Jewish People had no right to self-determination and that it is necessary to strive to establish a secular democratic state in all of Palestine within the borders before 1948. The way to achieve this goal was defined as an “armed Palestinian revolution” in which all the members of the Palestinian People would take part—in the territories and in the State of Israel. The leaders of the movement inscribed the following motto on their banners: *Al-Khalil methl Al-Jalil* (“Hebron is the same as the Galilee”) in order to emphasize the shared national identification of the population on both sides of the “Green Line.” Raja Aghbaria, also one of the leaders of the movement, stated that the Sons of the Village identify with the ideology of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and “does not recognize the existence of the State of Israel or the Knesset as the legislative body of the country.”²²

During the first years of activity of the movement, its leaders maintained close contact with public personages in the West Bank the most prominent being Bassam Shaka’a, who was the mayor of Nablus. When Shaka’a was arrested by the Israeli authorities in November 1979 the movement organized a demonstration of identification with him in the village of Umm el Fahem which was attended by hundreds of their supporters. A clear expression of the negative and separatist line of the movement that did not recognize the existence of the State of Israel was its nonparticipation in the general elections to the Knesset but this issue led to the appearance of three camps within its ranks, in the middle of the 1970s, all of which agreed with the ideological principles of the Sons of the Village—which is the liberation of Palestine—but disagreed about how it should be realized.²³ Another stream, headed by Hassan Jabbarin and Ghassan Aghbaria, supported the struggle being fought by members of the Knesset who were representatives of the movement in the belief that this idea would serve the interests of the movement. The second stream, headed by Raja Aghbaria completely rejected the idea of a parliamentary struggle because this step as a form of recognition of the Zionist entity. The third camp looked for a middle road between the two oppositionist approaches and, ultimately, found them mostly swallowed up by the camp that supported the parliamentary struggle. All three camps were inspired by primordial components.

The separatist policy of the Sons of the Village was expressed in its attempts to establish independent institutions for the Arab minority and one of the most prominent was the attempt to establish an independent Arab university in Nazareth which failed because the movement did not succeed in mobilizing the financial resources. Despite this, the Sons of the Village continued their activity, the main purpose of which was to deepen Palestinian awareness in the Arab sector, and starting from 1988 it began to publish a weekly called *Al-Raya (The Flag)* which it used to spread its viewpoint. From this year onwards a drop in the political power of the Sons of the Village on the municipal level became noticeable because, among other

things, of the appearance of the Islamic Movement and the growing moderation of the PLO leadership that signaled its desire to enter into political negotiations with Israel.

From the 1990s until today, it is usual to see the Sons of the Village as one of the power factors of the Arab minority's political network but the level of its influence upon the Arab minority's agenda has shrunk and it has not succeeded in widening its circle of supporters whose size is significantly smaller than the other political frameworks in the Arab sector.

The Islamic Movement

The first organization of an Islamic political movement in Israel was created under the direct influence of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, which was founded in Egypt by Hassan Al-Banna in 1928.²⁴ At the height of the Arab Revolt that took place from 1936 to 1939, Al-Banna brother visited the then Palestine and laid the foundations for organized Islamic activity. According to different estimates the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in 1946 numbered twenty-thousand members in twenty-five locations.²⁵

The 1948 War did not put an end to the organized Muslim activity and the Liberation Party (Hizb Al Tahrir), which operated in the West Bank and was also an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, continued its Muslim religious activity.²⁶ The new situation that was created in the West bank territories and in the Gaza Strip after the June 1967 War accelerated the renewed development of the Islamic organizations in the territory and indirectly encouraged their growth in areas of the State of Israel. Among the reasons for the acceleration of the process was the disappointment with ideologies and political movements such as liberalism, nationalism, and socialism.

The growth of the Islamic Movement among the Arab citizens of Israel is also connected to the Islamic wave that gathered strength in the Middle East during the 1970s and reflected itself in the revolution in Iran in February 1979. During these years the phenomenon of returning to Islamic practices among the Israeli Arab citizens, mainly the young people, widened and the slogan "Islam is the solution" was adopted. The driving force behind this activity was Sheikh Abdallah Nimer Darwish from Kfar Kassem. Together with others, the most prominent of whom were Sheikh Ra'ad Salah, from Umm el Fahem, and Sheikh Kamal Khatib, from Kfar Kana, absorbed Islamic values during their studies in the Islamic College in Hebron as well. In 1979 Darwish gathered tens of religious penitents around him in an underground framework called *Usrat el-Jihad* which, in Arabic is the "Group of Holy Warriors."²⁷ Its members collected arms, burned fields and killed an Arab in Umm el Fahem that they suspected was a collaborator with the government. The heads of this group were arrested in 1981 and jailed for

different terms of imprisonment. This was the first concrete expression of involvement in violent activity against the State.

After their releases from jail in 1983 and 1984, the members of the group changed the pattern of the activity they employed to realize their ideology. Sheikh Darwish arrived at the conclusion that the way of the Jihad would not lead to any achievements and ordered the movement to work within the framework of the law that was expressed in a number of areas.²⁸ The first area was the strengthening of the "Da'awa" (a call for Islam) preaching of Islamic values and this activity was carried out during these years mainly among the younger generation in the framework of a campaign to conquer and train hearts. The network of Da'awa institutions included different areas such as the development of health services (general clinics, dental clinics and baby care clinics) and the provision of welfare services to the needy. The Islamic Movement established a chain of nonprofit organizations that helped to make a range of activities available. During this period the members of the movement avoided establishing institutions such as a leadership, an executive and cells in order not to arouse the suspicions of the government. This activity was carrying out under an ideology to refrain as much as possible from any interaction with state authorities.

Beginning in 1983 the heads of the Islamic Movement adopted the new goal of gaining control of the local councils and in the elections that took place that year the movement, for the first time, presented its own list and achieved good results in two councils. In the next round of elections in 1989 the movement gained control of six councils, the most prominent being Umm el-Fahem where the movement is still in control today. Entering the municipal elections had a double benefit: the creation of the movement's leaders' direct connections with different government ministries and the allocation of governmental budgets for the public through the local councils controlled by the movement. This gave them leverage to establish the political power of the movement among the Arab Israeli citizens during those years without recognizing the central Jewish sovereignty.

In the same period, and even more so since the outbreak of the Intifada in 1987, the connection between the Islamic Movement and the Islamic stream in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip became closer. In 1992 the heads of the movement issued instructions to vote in the Knesset elections but refrained from recommending which list to choose. Four years later, close to the general elections in 1996, a difference in principles flared up within the movement over the question of whether to form its own list to run in the elections which was a turning point in the history of the development of the movement. Sheikh Darwish ruled in favor of forming a list that would run and, in this way, paved the way for dialogue option with the state and splitting the ranks in the movement into two factions. One, headed by him, known as the southern faction because of its center being in Kfar Kassem and the other headed

by Sheikh Ra'ad Salah which was also called the northern faction because of its center being in Umm el-Fahem, which is located in the northern part of the state.

The ideology of the Islamic Movement is identical to that of the central stream of the Muslim Brotherhood movement and its ultimate goal and strategy was to establish an Islamic religious state in Palestine, even if its leaders refrain from publicly presenting this goal within the bounds of the State of Israel. This and other goals are the common denominator for all the Islamic movements in the Middle East which are all offshoots of the mother movement, the Muslim Brotherhood. There are a number of basic principles that make up the ideology of the Islamic Movement. The movement sees Islam as a worldwide entity whose injunctions are obligatory in all areas of life. It is interested in basing society on the model of the early Islamic community (Salfia) and to establish the state institutions upon the foundations of Islamic religious law (Sharia). The ideology also supports the unification of all the Islamic peoples into one camp that will create the Islamic nation. Since it has this view, it opposes the rule or hegemony of the western powers, called "Salibia" from the Arab word for cross which is considered to be a Christian symbol. In the concrete context of life in Israel the ideology of the movement negates Zionism and the State of Israel and sees the state as a transitory entity. In order to realize these principles the movement strives to uproot western cultural influences and lay waste to secular phenomena. As part of this it aspires to spread Islamic ideas through a network of preachers and propaganda. In some of the cases where there was a clash between their values and the ruling governments this led to the leaders of the movement giving legitimation to the use of violence in order to achieve the movement's goals.²⁹

A prominent article that analyzes the ideas of the Islamic Movement in a similar way was written by Issam Abu Raya, a member of the Arab minority in Israel. He argues that "this movement aspires to the establishment of a state that will operate according to Sharia law instead of the existing regimes. The Muslim Brotherhood movement sees the State of Israel as a foreign body that has been transplanted into the region by the west in order to fight the Muslims and Arabs. According to the movement, the State of Israel has no right to exist. Moreover the liberation of Palestinian lands and the extinction of the State of Israel are, in its eyes, necessary conditions for dealing with the social, economic and political maladies that the Arab and Islamic world suffer from."³⁰ This is a pure reflection of the primordial approach that discern between Muslims and Jews.

The structure of the Islamic Movement in Israel, like its ideology, is also based upon that of the "Muslim Brotherhood." Its central mechanism is the Da'awa which is divided into the "Usrat" which are actually groups of basic both open and closed cells. The open cells accept all those who wish to join

as members of the movement while the closed cells are reserved for veterans and trustees who are marked as having the potential to become leaders of the movement. The concept of the need for closed, secret cells is taken from the theories of Al-Banna, who decreed that the preaching was to be openly practiced and the organization was to be secret.

Since the 1980s the Islamic Movement has established an alternative system to that of the government's as part of its efforts to found an autarchic economy. Through the nonprofit organizations, and later companies, they established kindergartens, schools, clinics and welfare services all provided at symbolic prices. The movement also built many mosques that are used as meeting places for religious lessons in which the ideology is inculcated into those new members who join them, sports facilities and even an Islamic football league. Since 1989 the movement has published a weekly called *Sawt El-haqq wa-Al-Hurriyya (The Voice of Justice and Freedom)* and, after the split that took place in its ranks in 1996, the weekly became the voice of the northern faction. The southern faction of the Islamic Movement has its own weekly organ called "Al-Mithak" (The Faith) and the split still exists today as does the publication of the two papers.

Balad

The National Democratic Covenant (Balad) was established in 1995 by a group of left-wing Arab activists, both Christian and Muslim. The most prominent among them, who had been activists in the "Equality Covenant,"³¹ were Dr. Azmi Bishara, the Sons of the Village, ex-members of the communist list (Hadash), ex-members of the "Progressive List for Peace," activists from "The Committee of Forty" and other activists from marginal groups in the Arab sector in Israel.³²

In the elections for the fourteenth Knesset in 1996 the movement ran for the first time in one list with Hadash despite the fundamental differences in the ideological approaches of the two groups. The linkup between the two parties was done because of political calculations. Balad, as a group that had just been established, wanted to take advantage of the established organizational apparatus of the communists in order to get into the legislature. *Hadash* hoped to increase its political strength via its linking up with the new political group and Azmi Bishara was indeed elected to the Knesset, after he was placed fourth on the list. After the election there was a rift between the two sides also because of financial disagreements and Bishara decided to end the cooperation with Hadash. Since then Balad has participated in all the elections and has succeeded in gaining between two and three mandates. In the last elections for the twentieth Knesset (March 2015) Balad gained three mandates.

The Balad platform defines the party as a national patriotic Palestinian party that aspires to a just solution for the Palestinians. The basic premise is that the Arab citizens of Israel are badly discriminated against by the government both as individuals and collectively as part of the Arab nation. The solution proposed by the party is the emphasis of the Arab national component (and not necessarily the Palestinian) and its presentation as a basis for the unification and organization of the Arab Israeli public. It aspires to transforming Israel into “a state of all its citizens” as opposed to what it describes as a state with a Jewish character. Balad demands recognition of the Arab population as a national minority with national collective rights and full equality in line with international law and the relevant decisions and declarations of the United Nations, with emphasis placed upon the 1992 declaration of the rights of minorities. This position of the party appears in the opening section of the party’s election platform. Other prominent components in the party platform are emphasis upon the need to fight for the fostering of Arab nationality, the organization of the Arab public as a collective with rights equal to the Jewish public, the granting of cultural and institutional autonomy to Arab Israeli citizens and the expression of solidarity with the Palestinian struggle. In the past, this identification has more than once led to the open expression of support for terrorist organizations and the condemnation in harsh language of government policy.³³

In the view of Balad the definition of the Arab public as a national minority provides it, according to the UN resolution, with the right to autonomy in all areas of life that make it different from the rest of the citizens in the country in which it lives. In the area of education the party strives for the establishment of an Arab university, the independent management of Arab schools, the determination of curricula and the appointment of teachers. In the area of religion the party demands the right to appoint religious court judges (Kadis) and manage its holy sites. In the area of communications Balad demands the right to open up independent radio and television stations and this is also the case in other civil areas like health and welfare. This was also expressed in the political platform composed by the party for the elections to the seventeenth Knesset (2006) in one section that said,

The Arab minority has the right to take an active part in the decision making process that affects it. The state will not reach decisions that profoundly affect the lives of the Arabs without the active participation (in the decision making process) of the Arabs as a people. The Arab minority has the right to reject any decision that will be made without its active participation or which is against its legitimate interests and rights.³⁴

During the first years of its existence Balad focused its regular activity upon a series of subjects that directly touched upon the Arab minority as a whole and especially upon the effort to cancel the Jewish character of the State of

Israel. Awad Abed Al-Fatah, the general secretary of the party, explained the decision to work towards this as the need to leave an opening for advancing a solution in the draft plan for a binational, Jewish-Arab state in all the territory of Palestine. In a booklet published by the party in November 1999 the following was written: "As long as Israel continues to be a Jewish state, instead of being the state of its inhabitants, the Palestinian national minority in it will not get its rights as individuals or as a group since Israelization will be no more than a fictive option."³⁵ In a proposed law by the Balad faction in the Parliament (October 1999), it demanded the cancellation of all the privileges and concessions granted to the Zionist institutions such as the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Fund. At the same time the leaders of the party expressed public opposition to all attempts to integrate members of the Arab minority into the varied state institutions.

The leaders of Balad actively worked towards implementing a series of initiatives which were separatist in nature. The party began to publish the weekly called "Fasl Al-Makal" (The Determined Words) which printed twenty-thousand copies during the second half of the 1990s. *Balad* established a nonprofit organization called the "Arab Cultural Association" which operated summer camps and activity groups and took youths on excursions to abandoned villages. In all these events the emphasis was placed upon the fostering and strengthening of Palestinian and Arab nationalism. Another nonprofit organization established by Balad called "Baladna" (Our Country) consisted of young Arabs who were youths and students and whose role was to be active in strengthening the Palestinian and Arab nationalism among the next generation through, among other things, the publication of a monthly magazine, the organization of exhibitions connected with the Palestinian struggle and fund raising campaigns for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Parallel to deepening its hold in the field, the leaders of Balad radicalized their public messages against the state and the government including "support for security prisoners, the call for a physical struggle against the appropriation of land and active participation by party members in this struggle, support for terrorist organizations in the Middle East arena (for example Hizballah) and condemnation of Judaism and Zionism."³⁶ Because of all this the Israeli establishment wanted to disqualify the candidature of Balad for the Sixteenth Knesset in 2003 but the Supreme Court, in a seven-to-four decision, rejected the appeal. In March 2007 the Defense Ministry establishment published the information that during the Second Lebanese War, in the summer of 2006, the leader of the party, Bishara, had passed on information to "Hizballah."³⁷ In response to this publication Bishara left the country and, since then, Balad has continued to work towards advancing its ideological platform while acting in accordance with the law.

The Committee of Heads of Local Councils

The first signs of the Committee of the Heads of Local Councils appeared in 1972, when a group of heads of Arab local councils organized themselves so that they could present their demands to the Local Councils Authority together.³⁸ The first assembly in which they officially announced the establishment of the committee was in 1974 when it was established as a national body whose purpose was to advance municipal matters in the Arab sector. Among its members were influential heads of local councils such as Ibrahim Nimer Hussein from Shfara'am, Hana Mois from Rame, Jamal Tarabia from Sakhnin, Zaki Diab from Tamra, and Tareq Abed Al-Hai from Tira. They were a human mosaic of traditional leaders, young educated people and "independent" activists who were not affiliated with any particular party.

During the first years of its activity the committee tried to advance its goals through dialogue with the authorities and the active members prepared working papers that were given to the then prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin with the following detailed demands: the cessation of land appropriation, the cancellation of charges against those involved in the events of "Land Day" in 1976 and recognition of the Arab minority as a national minority.³⁹ Even though the committee was originally founded to advance municipal and civil matters its leaders, more than once, found themselves taking part, also as initiators, in protest activity about claims of civil discrimination and identification with the national demands of the Palestinians.

The Committee of the Heads of Local Arab Councils is still active today and is part of the general network of the Local Councils Authority. Its leaders maintain ongoing work relations with different government ministries and the areas of activity they are involved in focus upon the effort to improve the quality of life of the Arab citizens in the State of Israel. On its part the government recognizes this committee as part of the tapestry of local government and makes sure that the discussions are held on civil and municipal subjects and that they do not overflow into issues of national affiliation.

The National Committee for Land Protection

The committee to protect the land was established during the second half of 1975 and was initiated by Rakah which, in those days, was the leading political power in the Arab sector. The purpose was defined and focused on the struggle against the government's policy of appropriating land in the Arab sector. The immediate excuse for establishing the committee was the government's announcement at the time that they intended to appropriate a considerable amount of land in order to enlarge the cities of Upper Nazareth and Karmiel. The committee was headed by the Priest Shchadeh Shchadeh and included 121 members representing different bodies in the Arab sector

that included professional bodies such as those of businesspeople, students, doctors, and heads of local councils.

This council was a central factor in the preparations made for “Land Day” in 1976 and its activists encouraged the Arab public to come to the area that was the center of the dispute between the Arab minority and the state on the day determined as the time of carrying out the order of appropriation. The encouragement activities were carried out by people going from village to village, by distributing posters and publishing notices in the Arab newspapers. After “Land Day” the committee was permanently active in determining the agenda and the protest activities that took place to memorialize the day up until the issue of dealing with land moved over to the Higher Follow-Up Committee.⁴⁰

The National Coordination Committee

The National Coordination Committee was the brainchild of people who remained in Israel after the War of Independence in 1948 and were the founding nucleus of the Al-Ard movement in the 1960s. Two of them, Salah Baransi, a Muslim from Taibeh, and Mansour Kardoosh, a Christian who lived in Nazareth, wanted to establish a new political framework that would give expression to their antistate beliefs. The two recruited support from political groups in the Arab sector and in 1980 negotiated to establish a political roof organization for all the movements. The participants ultimately formulated a political manifesto in which they presented a common approach to finding a way to solve the Palestinian problem.⁴¹ This platform received the name the “Umm el Fahem Covenant” after the city that hosted the gathering and defined the Palestinian problem as the very heart of the conflict between the Jews and the Arabs. The solution to this problem, according to the platform that was affirmed, would begin with the realization of the right of return to the refugees and the granting of self-determination to the Palestinian People. The Arab citizens of Israel, they wrote, were part of the Palestinian People and the PLO was to be the representative of the Palestinian People.

The National Coordination Committee was established on the basis of this platform. Members from of nine different organizations joined the committee, among them politicians, students, poets, and authors. The committee set out to coordinate its activity with Committee for National Direction in the West Bank. The pattern of operation that it adopted was to initiate and arouse constant agitation among the Arab Israeli citizens through organizing demonstrations, strikes and appeals to international bodies. To its misfortune the committee was under the surveillance of the security services in Israel and as soon as they had collected enough incriminating evidence about its activities

declared them to be illegal in April 1981. The order was aimed at the committee as an association and was not applied individually to its activists.

The Higher Follow-Up Committee

In the middle of 1982 Arab members of the Knesset from the Labor Party and Communist Party, which had changed its name at that time to Hadash (the Democratic Front for Equality), initiated the idea to establish a common body that would unify their activities and those of the heads of local councils. The immediate catalyst for this was the desire to found a body that would concentrate the protest activity against Israel on the background of what it called the “war of annihilation in Lebanon” mainly after the events of Sabra and Shatilla. The body very quickly became a roof framework for representatives of political movements that already existed in the Arab sector (such as the Sons of the Village and the Arab Students Union) and became the highest leadership framework for the Arab minority.

The subjects that the committee placed as having the highest priority for treatment were presented at the first meeting the Higher Follow-Up Committee convened (October 30, 1982) and these were: the improvement of the financial situation of the local authorities in the Arab sector, opposition to the widening of the jurisdiction of the Misgav regional council in the Galilee and beginning the struggle to widen the jurisdiction of the Arab villages. The committee made sure to make its voice heard against the government’s policies each time they thought they were doing harm to the Palestinians or Arabs. Another area dealt with by the committee during the 1980s and 1990s was the presentation of appeals to international bodies in order to receive assistance for its activities in social and civil areas such as health care.

The Higher Follow-Up Committee is, still today, the central leadership body of the Arab minority and convenes whenever necessary to determine the agenda of the protest activities of the Arab sector. The chairman of the committee at the beginning was Ibrahim Nimer Hussein, a man who traditionally tried to carry out a continuous dialogue with the Israeli government and preferred to avoid violent activity. He was followed by Mohammad Zidan, who was considered to be a passive figure that could be influenced. He held the position from 1999 to 2001 and was appointed to a second term from 2013 to 2015. Between 2001 and 2009 Shawki Khatib, who also believed in dialogue with the government, held the position. The personality of the chairman of the committee had a crucial influence at each juncture at which the question of whether to resort to violence or not was a subject of discussion in the minority leadership institutions.

Civil Voluntary Organizations

Arab social organizations have existed since the beginning of the twentieth century but they were few and far between and had a religious orientation which was either Christian or Muslim.⁴² These kinds of organizations existed continuously throughout the twentieth century and, at least according to the claim made by Zidan and Ghanem, they had no influence with the government until the 1980s. Some of the researchers into Arab society claim that the Israeli government prevented the Arab minority from establishing independent associations, while others believe it was actually the Arab political culture, which believed that it was the central government that was supposed to worry about the needs of the citizens that prevented the establishment of associations. Other researchers believe that these associations focused upon the provision of services instead of the government and thus contributed to the perpetuation of the gaps that existed between the majority and minority groups and made the role of the government superfluous.⁴³ I believe that the Arab minority did not release the establishment from its responsibility to provide services and the clear proof of this is the activity of the associations in the areas of education and legal matters which appealed to the judiciary and asked for help to oblige the state to allocate resources to the Arab population.

From 1989 onwards there was a growth in the number of voluntary associations in the Arab sector, also because of the law governing voluntary associations that was passed in 1980 and regulated their registration. By 1998 more than 650 new Arab voluntary associations were registered which in that year represented 65 percent of all the Arab voluntary associations registered. By 2004 their number had doubled to 1,300. Most of the political frameworks were involved in establishing the associations but new social organizations also appeared which were not necessarily politically connected to this or that party. Internal sectorial and reasons external to the Arab sector contributed to the growth in number of the social organizations not only quantitatively but also to their ability to exert influence upon both the Arab minority and government policy.

Among the reasons that were external to the Arab sector were the following: first the distress of the Arab population as a result of the government's policies up to the 1990s. The feelings of discrimination and deprivation felt by the Arab population, despite their having received basic democratic rights from the state, fed the need to organize in order to provide the minority with alternative services.⁴⁴ One can therefore see this reason as being one of the factors that steered the activity in the direction of creating channels that were separate from those of the government because of the lack of content that the government was providing for the needs of the Arab citizens. Another external reason was the aforementioned 1980 passing of the law governing volun-

tary associations. This law created order in the process of registering voluntary associations and made it easier. The Israeli establishment was strict in its examination of voluntary associations that were politically identified with parties and streams that were considered to be security threats, such as the northern branch of the Islamic Movement or Balad. Thus, for example, at the beginning of 2000 the registrar of voluntary associations decided to close down seventy-five Arab associations and refused to register another thirty.⁴⁵

In everything involving the internal reasons one should pause to look at the significant growth in the number of educated people and the rise of the younger generation. Once education became a central value in Arab society a generation of young academics developed that wanted to realize what they had learned in the institutions of higher learning. The bureaucratic barriers that prevented them from working in the civil service, despite the significant steps taken by the establishment to allow this integration, led them to taking on management and leadership roles in the Arab community; the result was the entry of educated people into the frameworks of the voluntary associations in order to bring about a change in the situation of the Arab minority through self-construction. The growth of the associations also led directly to the development of research projects about Arab women in the Arab minority, something that been absent in the academic dialogue of earlier decades. Among the associations that were established were also those that caused consternation in the public dialogue about women and gender, initiated applicable research projects and aroused interest in research itself. Some of these studies were also carried out by Arab women research scholars.⁴⁶ As a direct result of this some of the associations were especially established for the empowerment of women in the Arab sector.

Today there are thousands of voluntary Arab associations registered in Israel and most of them operate in six central areas: religion, culture, housing and development, welfare, education and research and the defense of civil rights. These operate side by side with associations active in health and the environment. The following table illustrates the different areas of activity in 2010 based upon a cross section of 260 associations that are a representative sample of all the associations in the Arab sector.⁴⁷

Table 2.1. The Central Areas of Activity of the Civil Society Organizations in the Arab Sector in 2010

Religion	42%
Culture	19%
Housing and Development	5%
Welfare	9.5%
Civil Rights	6%
Education and Research	17.5%

Other 7%

Of all the many voluntary associations that deal with public dialogue the most prominent are those that deal with legal issues involving the defense of Arab citizens through the application for legal aid. These associations have a political orientation that strives for equality and integration and the most prominent among them are Adala (Justice) and Mussawa (Equality). It is also worth mentioning the Arab center for Alternative Planning which operates in the area of planning, lands, housing, growth and development, sometimes in cooperation with the Israeli establishment. The center asked for recognition from the Ministry of the Interior for its operation as a public body and received such recognition in 2004. The goals of the center as formulated when it was established also combine integration and independent activity in matters such as equality in the allocation of resources dealing with land, planning and development, cooperation in planning processes and Jewish-Arab cooperation in the economic and social development of the whole population. The center works toward the empowerment of the Arab population in order to protect its basic rights. Despite making order in the master plans for Arab villages in the first decade of the twenty-first century, led by the Ministry of the Interior, the center regularly publishes independent studies in which they attack the policies of the government and form recommendations for the development of those villages in which the master plans need to be put into action in cooperation with the government.⁴⁸

SUMMARY

This chapter has described the political power factors that exist in the Arab sector in Israel that have been involved in protest or violent acts in order to further their political and social goals. In a considerable number of the violent events that have taken place in the Arab sector against the government, there has been a direct involvement and connection with different people who belong to the leadership frameworks of the different bodies presented above. These people influenced not only the exhibitions of violence but fashioned the agenda of the Arab minority and the network of relations of the sector with the government.

Up until beginning of the 1970s the Communist stream was the central framework of political power but later, following the introduction of new ideas mainly from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, new political frameworks which adopted these ideas came into being in the Arab sector and the most prominent among these were the Sons of the Village. An additional process that began in the 1970s was the establishment of civil and national institutional leadership bodies that acted as a roof framework for the range of political streams in Arab society. Among these were the Committee of the

Heads of Local Councils and later the Higher Follow-Up Committee. The 1980s were marked by the appearance of the Islamic Movement under the influence of the revolution in Iran and the growth of political movements that had a Palestinian national character, such as the Progressive List for Peace of Mohammad Mia'ari and the Arab Democratic Party of Abed Al-Wahab Darawsha. In the 1990s the political map became even larger after the appearance of a new framework called Balad which adopted national motifs under the influence of the break up of the Soviet Union and the creation of new national states in Europe and Asia. These years were also marked by the establishment of voluntary associations that dealt with the advancement of civil matters and over recent years the representatives of some of these associations have joined national political frameworks.

The multiplicity of social-political ideas that have led to the large number of political bodies in the Arab sector has, more than once, made it difficult to arrive at agreement about the patterns of activity needed, including protest or the use of violence against the establishment. The basic common denominator of belonging to a minority was not always enough to produce a wide consensus that could move effective protest or violent activity forward in the framework of the demands made of the establishment. Together with this, in a number of cases in which the level of friction between the minority and the establishment was high, the importance of certain people in these frameworks in the determination of the agenda and whether to use violence or not was evident—and this will be described further on.

NOTES

1. Orr Committee, p. 28.
2. This analysis appears, among other places, in the opening chapter of Orr Committee, pp. 22–30. See also: Nadim N. Rouhana, *Palestinian Citizens in an Ethnic Jewish State: Identities in Conflict*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997; Azmi Bishara, “On the Question of the Palestinian Minority in Israel.” *Theory and Criticism* 3.1 (1993); Amal Jamal, “Nationalizing States and the Constitution of ‘Hollow Citizenship’: Israel and Its Palestinian Citizens.” *Ethno politics* 6.4 (2007): pp. 471–493.
3. Orr Committee, p. 26.
4. Ilan Saban, “The Collective Rights of the Arab-Palestinian Minority: The Existence, the Non-Existence and the Taboo,” *Law Thoughts*, 26, (July 2002), p. 244 [Hebrew].
5. The movement was active in the Arab sector at the beginning of the 1960s until it was made illegal in 1965.
6. Yitzhak Reiter, “The Ideological-Political Alignment,” in Rami Hochman (ed.) *Jews and Arabs in Israel* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1988) pp. 345–362 [Hebrew].
7. Asa'd Ghanem, “Ideological Parties among Arab-Palestinian Minority in Israel,” *State-Society*, (Haifa: Haifa University, 2001) [Hebrew].
8. Alexander Bligh, “Arab Members of the 15th Knesset,” p. 7.
9. This event was eventually “Land Day.”
10. Gadi Hitman, “Israel Arab Leadership in the Decade Attending the October 2000 Events,” *Israel Affairs* 19.1 (2013), pp. 121–138.
11. Elie Rekhess, *Between Communism and Arab Nationalism: Rakah and the Arab Minority in Israel 1965–1973* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1993) p. 24 [Hebrew].

12. The three newspapers were *Al-Ittihad (The Union)*, *Al-Jadid (The New)* and *Al-Rad (Tomorrow)*.
13. Rekhess, *Between Communism and Arab Nationalism*, p. 30–33.
14. Akhbar Al-Ard newsletter, (news of the land) October 17, 1959, p. 4 [Arabic].
15. Kalimat Al-Ard newsletter, (word of the land) October 31, 1959, p. 1 [Arabic].
16. Kifah Al-Ard newsletter (struggle for the land) December 7, 1959, p. 3 [Arabic].
17. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
18. Mansour Kardoosh versus the Registrar of Companies. Appeal 241/60 High Supreme Court, *Justice Journal* 15, p. 1151.
19. An Ottoman association was established for social and voluntary purposes and, for all intents and purposes, according to the regulations of Ottoman law governing associations (1909) for non-profit organizations. The sources of income for the association were inheritances, gifts, income received from the property and activities of the association and any other source.
20. *Ma'ariv* newspaper, December 27, 1967 [Hebrew].
21. Shetandhal, p. 25. See also: Mohammad Darwish, *The Palestinians in Israel – the Arab Voice and the election for Israeli Parliament* (Nablus, research center for Palestinian issues, 1996), p. 10 [Arabic].
22. Darwish, *The Palestinians in Israel*, p. 20.
23. *Al-Awdah* newspaper. October 29, 1983 [Arabic].
24. Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brother*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1969). The book deals with the roots of the development of the movement in Egypt, the attempt to strike roots in Egyptian society, the use of violence to advance political goals, the relationship with the government up until the clash with the regime headed by Gamal Abdul Nasser.
25. Rafael Israeli, *Muslim Fundamentalism in Israel*, (London: Brassey's, 1993).
26. Amnon Cohen, *Political Parties in the West Bank*, (Jerusalem: Magness, 1980) [Hebrew]. The book presents the historical, ideological and organizational roots of the Palestinian movement and the ideological platform of the different streams of this movement. In this way, for example, the religious-Islamic platform of the Muslim Brotherhood or the social-political platform of the Arab Nationalists became the Front for the Liberation of Palestine.
27. Nachman Tal, "The Islamic Movement," *INSS*, (February 2000), pp. 8–12 [Hebrew].
28. Israeli, *Muslim Fundamentalism*, p. 26.
29. Ya'acov Yaniv, "The Islamic Movement in Israel," *Maof*, 2008, p. 166 [Hebrew]; Orr Committee, p. 76.
30. Issam Abu Raya, "The Northern Branch of the Islamic Movement: Security Conflict or Ideological Conflict," in Elie Rekhess (ed.), *The Arabs in Israeli Politics: Dilemma of Identities* (Dayan Center, Tel Aviv University, 1998) pp. 263–264 [Hebrew].
31. A Jewish-Arab movement that was established in 1989 by Azmi Bishara and Jamal Zahalka which proposed a binational state. Zahalka is serving as Knesset member of Balad since 2003.
32. The Committee of Forty is a body that is carrying out a struggle against the government to receive their recognition for forty Arab villages throughout the country that are not recognized or legal.
33. The party's platform appears on the official site of the party, January 2007, www.tajamoa.org. It can also be seen on the internet site <http://m-mee.blogspot.co.il> as it appeared on November 11, 2013.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
35. Balad special publication: *The Platform, Principles and Goals*, November 1999, p. 3 [Hebrew] These things also appeared in the booklet containing the platform of Balad for the Knesset elections of 2006. Appears on the official site of the party www.tajamoa.org. Accessed on December 2, 2009.
36. Orr Committee, pp. 522–523.
37. Itamar Inbari and Tal Volvovich, "The Suspicion: Bishara Spied for the Enemy during the War," www.nrg.co.il. Accessed April 25, 2007 [Hebrew].
38. Reiter and Aharoni, *The Political World*, p. 29.

39. Avner Regev, *Israeli Arabs—Political Issues* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institution for Israel Research, 1989), pp. 28–32. Also see: Shetandhal, pp. 276–277 [Hebrew].

40. Reiter and Aharoni, *The Political World*, pp. 29–30.

41. *This World* newspaper, April 22, 1981 [Hebrew].

42. Elias Zidan and Asa'd Ghanem, *Donation and Volunteering in Arab-Palestinian Society in Israel*, Israeli Research Center for the Third Sector (Be'er Sheva, Ben-Gurion University, 2000), p. 8 [Hebrew].

43. Shany Payes, "Palestinian NGOs in Israel: The Politics of Civil Society," *Library of Modern Middle East Studies* (New York: Taurus Academic Studies, 2005).

44. The feelings of deprivation in the Arab minority since 1948 are three dimensional: the present situation vis-à-vis its situation in 1948, its current position in comparison with the status it wishes to achieve (politically, economically, and socially) and its situation compared to that of the Jewish majority. For more on the relative deprivation theory, see: Robert T. Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflict* (Washington, DC: United States Institution of Peace, 1993).

45. *Fasl Al-Makal* newspaper, January 20 and 27, 2000 [Arabic].

46. Tajrid Yhia-Yunes, "Changes in Academic Dialogue about Arab-Palestinian Women in Israel," in *Women within Arab Society in Israel*, eds. Uzi Rabi and Arik Rodnitzky (Tel Aviv University, Dayan Center, 2011), pp. 12–13 [Hebrew].

47. It was not possible to obtain the exact number of voluntary associations in the Arab sector from the Ministry of the Interior. As a result the analysis is based upon a sample of 262 Arab associations as assembled by NPTECH which is an association that defines itself as "a voluntary association for voluntary associations."

48. The Master Plan for the Arab Settlements in Israel, The Alternative Arab Center (2012), pp. 78–84 [Hebrew].

II

**From the Establishment of the State
(1948) until Land Day (1976)**

Mutual Distrust

Chapter Three

1948–1956

The Imposition of a Military Government and the Kfar Kassem Massacre

BACKGROUND

This chapter covers the first period that begins with the establishment of the State of Israel and ends with the Sinai War in October 1956. During this period the network of relationships between the government of Israel and its Arab minority was established on the basis of mutual distrust. The young state was afraid that the Arab minority would connect with Arab countries and try to subvert its existence, while the Arab minority, for its side, was concerned about the possibility that the Israeli government would harm its civil status. During this period there were two events that took place which influenced the formation of the relationship between the government and the Arab minority: the first being the imposition of the military government in September 1948 and the second being the Kfar Kassem massacre in October 1956.

During this period the government's policy toward the Arab minority was composed of three main measures: the imposition of a military government that was only canceled in November 1966; the widespread appropriation of land including the taking control of large tracts of absentee-owned land in order to settle the population of new Jewish immigrants; and the evacuation of Arabs from their homes and their leaving the country.¹

During this decade there were no significant changes in the political map of the Arab minority in Israel and it is possible to identify permanent centers of political power that were operating within that Arab minority. The Arab leadership was made up of Arab members of the Knesset who were members

of Zionist parties (such as the United Labor Party, Mapam) and satellite parties of Zionist parties, as well as the Israeli Communist Party (Maki), members of the Knesset and the heads of villages and local councils.

The results of the war that took place in the territory of the land of Israel during 1948 created a new political reality, as a new state came into being in which everything changed. The Arab population was now 160,000 after approximately 600,000 left the territory during the war and the Arab population changed from being a majority into being a minority. This new situation created a long list of problems, dilemmas and challenges for both sides. At one pole was the new Israeli government that had just been established and had to run the shared affairs of the state by it. One of the things that it had to deal with was the formation of a policy regarding how they were going to relate to the non-Jewish minority in the territory of the new state. At the other pole was the non-Jewish population which was bruised and battered after the war and, in addition, had become a minority. This population, for the first time, found itself in a situation that was strange and was searching for ways to make things easier to adapt to the new reality.

Israel's policy toward its Arab minority after 1948 was mainly an outcome of fear from security threats. The Israeli government acted powerfully to prevent any warnings to the country and this included threats originating from the Arab citizens. This network of relations experienced a central and formative event on October 29, 1956, when the Kfar Kassem massacre took place. The affair left a gaping wound in Jewish-Arab relations. On the day before the event took place, the commander of the Central Command announced the policy concerning the Arab population that had been decided upon was aimed at making it possible for the residents in the region to continue their lives as usual, provided they absolutely kept the peace in this area. According to the request of one of the division commanders, Issahar Shadmi, he was given permission to widen the curfew that then existed to the night hours as well. That day Shadmi ordered Shmuel Malinki, the commander of a Border Guard unit, to his office, informed him of his mission and instructed him to impose a curfew in his assigned sector which included the village of Kfar Kassem as well. The time of the curfew was to be in effect from 17:00 in the evening until 06:00 the next morning. Shadmi ordered Malinki to vigorously impose the curfew, including opening fire if necessary, and added that it would be better to kill one person than to get caught up in making arrests. Malinki passed on the information about the curfew to his troops and made it clear to them that they were not to harm anybody inside their houses but that, together with this, they should shoot anybody found outside the area of his house with the intention to kill. The mission of imposing the curfew was given to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the police.

On the day of the massacre, the head of the village (the Mukhtar) received a message from the sergeant of the unit about the imposition of the curfew at

16:30, a half hour before its beginning. He said that four hundred workers were working outside the village and that he would not be able to inform quite a number of them about the change in the curfew time. The sergeant accepted the responsibility of getting those workers returning after the beginning of the curfew to pass. At 17:00 the curfew began, but many dozens of the workers from the village, who didn't know about the new curfew time, were coming back from the fields on foot and in different kinds of vehicles. Two squads of the Border Guard opened fire on those coming home from work, killing forty-three Arabs, and another four Arab citizens were killed in other parts of the village. Only after an hour of shooting, when it became clear how many people had been killed, did Malinki give the order to cease firing and the bloodshed stopped.

The censor ordered a complete blackout on the event and forbade any publication of what had happened. Only on November 12, two weeks later, was an official announcement made about the number of villagers killed who had been coming back home after the beginning of the curfew. The publication of the information was, among other things, made possible because of the success of senior members of the Communist Party getting into the village. When additional details were published in the media, Ben-Gurion, the then prime minister, issued a statement about the event and expressed his sorrow over what had happened.²

Those who opened fire and those responsible were put on trial. Division Commander Malinki was sentenced to eighteen years imprisonment, but only served three years and four months in jail. The platoon commander, Gabriel Dahan, and the squad commander, Ofer Shalom, were each sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment and five other accused were each sentenced to seven years imprisonment. They all served reduced sentences after they received pardons from the president of the state.

On exactly the same day that the massacre took place in Kfar Kassem, the Sinai War, whose historical background was the cease-fire agreements which ended the 1948 war, broke out. In the period of time that had passed since the establishment of the state until the beginning of the Sinai Campaign, there had been a gradual escalation in terror emanating from the Gaza Strip into the State of Israel. By the time the Sinai Campaign ended the IDF had achieved all the goals it had set for itself: the conquest of the Sinai Peninsula and the destruction of Egypt's military infrastructure and transportation network in the peninsula which was aimed at preventing the possibility of a surprise attack being carried out. The military superiority of Israel sent a clear message to the Arab countries and, indirectly, to the Arab citizens of Israel as well, about Israel's determination to defend its interests.

The security reality described above was, as has been noted, the crucial factor in the formation of the policy of the Israeli government toward the Arab minority. The stubborn policy of the government toward the minority

group continued throughout the first decade after the establishment of the state and necessarily carried in it the potential for violent protestation by the Arab minority, especially in light of the massacre that took place in Kfar Kassem and the light punishments given to those responsible for it.

THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY: MILITARY GOVERNMENT, THE PREVENTION OF THE RETURN OF REFUGEES, AND LAND APPROPRIATION

The formation of the government's policy toward the non-Jewish minority that remained in the country's sovereign territory was a subject of disagreement among the country's leaders. They had to deal with three central questions: what policy needed to be applied toward the minority that had remained in the country; whether to permit the return of the Arab refugees to the country's territory; and how to exploit the land that had been abandoned in order to settle Jews on it.

After the vote on the decision to divide the country on November 29, 1947, the Workers' Party of the Land of Israel (Mapai), the largest political party in Israel at that time, put together a committee of thirteen members whose task was "to examine the relations between the Arab worker and the state when it is established."³ Summarized proposals that were considered to be far-reaching at that time because of the egalitarian character of their content were adopted in this forum. Pinhas Lavon, a prominent Mapai activist and member of the Knesset from 1949 onward, had determined at the beginning of 1948 that the military arm would not be able to solve the (Arab) political question. He made the assessment that an Arab minority would continue to live in Israel and that the Jewish People would have to prove itself as a majority group. Lavon suggested two possible approaches to dealing with the Arab issue. The first was the approach of autonomy according to which the state would allow the Arabs to form autonomic institutions of their own that would operate in a state controlled by the national majority of another group. The second was the approach in which there would be equal criteria operating for all of its citizens.⁴

Lavon was not the only one that favored equal treatment in the state for the Arabs. In Mapam the subject was also discussed and in its party organ was written that the future Jewish state had to prepare plans for the Arab community that would be living in it. After the declaration of independence Mapam published a public statement which stated that it "will place itself at the head of a campaign for a true covenant with the masses of the Arab nation in the State of Israel and will work toward full equality for all its citizens."⁵

Bekhor Shalom Shitrit, the Minister of Minority Affairs between 1948–1949, favored a humanitarian approach toward the non-Jewish population and saw his main role as preserving the rights of the minorities. He believed that he could play a central role in forming the policy toward them but did not manage to realize his policy, since the Ministry of Minority Affairs was canceled in July 1949 and the treatment of the Arab population remained in the hands of the military government.⁶ A possible explanation for the cancellation of the Ministry may have been based on the belief that the military-security concept would make it significantly easier to carry out the policy of taking control of the lands and the settling of Jewish immigrants over a wide geographic distribution on these lands. Future processes such as this did exist in the vision of the young state's leadership to strengthen national security.

Ben-Gurion had led the camp that opposed this approach and related to this subject from the security point of view. This camp viewed the Arab minority as a real danger to the existence of the state because of its being part of the Arab nation that ruled the states bordering Israel. Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, for example, wrote that “the goal of the Arabs was to take control of the country in clear opposition to the UN decision . . . it was their intention to complete the work of Hitler . . . as soon as the Arab governments find the most favorable time to attack Israel they will have a fifth column in place.”⁷ The formation of the policy of the Israeli government toward the Arab citizens was ultimately influenced by the position taken by the prime minister who laid down the guiding principles for dealing with this population and it was his hawkish approach that was put into practice.

Archival material shows that in the period from 1948 to 1967 the government held only three discussions relating to the situation of the Arab minority. In February 1952 resolution 249 that compared the size of the wages of Jewish and Arab employees was accepted; in 1954 the government decided to have local elections in the city of Nazareth and in February 1958 the government decided to prepare a program to rehabilitate the Arabs in Israel economically. Other discussions were carried out at a more frequent rate in the institutions of Mapai, the ruling party, and their conclusions were brought to the leader of the party, David Ben-Gurion, for approval.⁸

On September 21, 1948, as a result of Ben-Gurion's approval, the temporary government authorized the imposition of a military government over the Arab population in order to strengthen surveillance over it. The regulation governing law and order, which was passed by the temporary state council, stated that the Minister of Defense (Ben-Gurion) was authorized to appoint military commanders (governors) for certain areas. In the first stage a military government was declared for the northern and the southern part of the state (Galille and the Negev), excluding the Jewish settlements in these areas. The rationale for this was, among other things, that most of the Arab villages

were close to the country's borders with Arab countries and that there was a danger that the shared national identity could be translated into the carrying out of hostile acts against the state and its citizens. As a response to this threat it was decided to impose security surveillance over the Arab population that was defined as hostile. One can see this decision as evidence of the authentic fear of the temporary government that there would be violent reactions by the Arab population to the results of the war. Parallel to this, the aim of the imposition of the military government was to pass on the message that the new state would not hesitate to take serious administrative steps to ensure its survival and improve its ability to deal with what it identified as potential and concrete threats. This message was translated into practical steps such as issuing identity cards to members of the minorities since the not issuing identity cards increased the chances that the authorities would expel this population.⁹

The concern about the Arab minority was also reflected in the discussions of the officers in the field. An officer by the name of Kidron wrote in the name of the head of the intelligence service to Ben-Gurion that the granting of freedom of movement to the Arabs would remove all possibility of surveillance over them.¹⁰ The fear of the Arab minority was so great that a decision was reached that forbade meetings between them and international representatives thus, for example, the commander of the military government in the held territory (the territory of the military government) directed his people not to allow direct communication between Arab inhabitants and the representatives of the Red Cross unless there was a representative of the military government present.¹¹ From a historical point of view it can be claimed that the fear was exaggerated, at least in everything regarding the ability of the Arab population to unite and threaten the state in any violent way since, during those years, the Arab minority suffered from a vacuum in leadership and was mainly busy with daily survival because of the political changes.

The military government drew its authority from regulations governing defense matters in emergency situations that became valid in 1945 and received legal standing from the temporary state council. It became the operating arm of the government in matters concerning the Arab population and over time the military government expanded the areas of its activities to include clearly civil matters so that the people working in the apparatus were themselves involved in making decisions about political, social and economic matters. One example of this can be seen in the meeting Rehavam Amir, the governor of the Galilee, had with Arab personages in his region in which he told them that the military government had prepared a program to improve things in the areas of health, agriculture and education.¹²

The basic aim of the military government was to provide immediate answers to problems that arose involving the Arab minority in the country.

The leaders, especially Ben-Gurion, considered that it was natural process to place the treatment of this subject into the hands of the military personnel accompanied by a number of civilian experts. The character of this government was defined by its title “military” and they were security conscious. Yehoshua Palmon, the first advisor to the prime minister regarding Arab affairs, explained that the decision to establish a military government was in order to preserve order and provide basic services to the Arab population. In a letter he wrote to the military governors, Palmon asked them to explain to the Arab population that the military government was meant to help them and added that Arab personages had expressed the hope that it would continue to exist.¹³ This was clearly an expression of the establishment’s constant concern about hostile—protest or violent—activity that might be carried out by the Arab minority because of the political and policy changes that had taken place after the war. By using persuasive language in the letter Palmon was trying to ensure the preservation of public order throughout the country.

Another area in which a harsh policy was practiced was in the question of the return of the Arab refugees to the country. Already on June 16, 1948, during a lull in the fighting, the government decided not to allow the return of the refugees to their homes and a month later Moshe Shertock, later Moshe Sharret, who at that time was foreign minister said that “the return of the refugees means the introduction of a fifth column into the territory of the State of Israel or the introduction of explosive material into the framework of the State.”¹⁴ Ben-Gurion, who deliberated over the question of the refugees with his advisors, argued that the Arabs were responsible for their running away and also thought that they should not be allowed to return because of the concern that they would be a fifth column.¹⁵ An interministerial conference called in 1953 to discuss the question of the return of the refugees concluded that the authorization of such a move would be like committing suicide and that it was not possible that these refugees would be a social ethnic group that would be loyal to the state.¹⁶ The issue of the refugees continuously occupied the thoughts of the political leadership at least until 1952. Even American pressure to examine the possibility of returning the refugees to Israel did not advance the Arab demands about this and, in fact, the Arab refugees that left the country during the war did not return.¹⁷ On this issue as well there was the potential for escalation by the Arab population since many families found themselves separated after the establishment of the State of Israel. Together with this, as with the complaints about the existence of the military government that did not end with violence, the issue of the refugees did not bring the mutual relations between the Arab minority and the government to the point of violent confrontation. This was mainly because the government uncompromisingly imposed a harsh policy that did not allow any sliding of the mainly verbal protest into violence. Moreover, at least according to one source, it was the government that actually used vio-

lence in order to prevent the return of the refugees, and, in this framework, between 1949 and 1956, according to the same source, between 2,700 and 5,000 Israeli Arabs were killed, most of them refugees who were trying to get to the border and return to their homes.¹⁸

A third area in which a harsh policy was decided upon was the endowing of the state with a Jewish character in order to establish the stability and life of the Jewish population living in it which, at the same time, made the life of the non-Jewish population more difficult. Among the prominent laws introduced was the Law of the Return which was legislated in 1950 and was considered to be the ultimate expression of the State of Israel being the national home of the Jewish people since this law grants all Jews the right to immigrate to and settle in the State of Israel. In contrast the Citizenship Law, which was legislated in 1952, imposed a long list of conditions upon any non-Jew who wanted to get Israeli citizenship. In such a case the process of receiving citizenship is long and complicated and receiving citizenship, in fact, takes about five years from the date of application.¹⁹

The fourth area in which a clear establishment policy was decided upon was the issue of lands. This was a central issue over which the conflict between the Israeli and the Arab sides (and the Palestinian) has lasted a long time. Since the birth of the Zionist idea in the 1880s Jewish activists have concentrated their efforts on the purchasing of land and the strengthening of the Jewish control over them. This philosophy was also that of the heads of the country who even believed that it should be used for the purposes of immigration, defense, and settlement.²⁰ One of the public expressions of this was that made by Shertock, the Foreign Minister, who said that: "We tend to see all the abandoned property as the property of the State of Israel which has the right to do with it as it sees fit."²¹ The subject of land became one of the most sensitive issues in the network of relations between the government and the Arab minority after the establishment of the state. During the War of Independence many Arabs who lived in the land of Israel lost their possessions including land. During the period after the war the Department for Arab Property was established and, parallel to this, the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency mapped a list of Arab villages that had been abandoned. This department also suggested housing settlement groups and new immigrants in these abandoned places and this was accompanied by the rewriting the emergency regulations in September 1948 that determined, among other things, that the state was permitted to temporarily take control of absentee-owned property, including land, for an indefinite amount of time.

The process of taking control of Arab lands was carried out in a number of ways, the central method being through the legislation of a long list of laws. The Land Order (acquisition for public purposes) of 1943 allowed the appropriation of land for public needs without the need for security justification. Lands were appropriated in villages such as Nahaf, Be'ne and Dir el-

Assad from 1961 to 1963 for the establishment of the City of Karmiel on the basis of this law. Emergency Defense regulations which were formulated in 1945, and especially section 125 in these regulations made it possible to declare any place a “closed area” and prohibit entry into it. These regulations made it possible to prevent the return of inhabitants to villages that had been previously abandoned. The emergency regulations (abandoned properties) of 1948 required all abandoned property owners (including Jews) to register with the police. After this the Order for Abandoned Land (1948) was published that authorized the government to issue orders that applied state law over the abandoned land and, based upon this law, a guardian was appointed for the abandoned property. An emergency regulation (1949) permitted the minister for agriculture to appropriate lands that had not been worked for more than a year and the law ordering the seizure of land in emergencies (1949) made it possible to appropriate land for the defense of the country, the security of the nation, the provision of essential services, the absorption of immigrants and the settlement of demobilized soldiers and those handicapped in the war. The “Absentee Property” law (1950) replaced the regulations in this subject and defined as absentee any person who, on November 29, 1947, had property in the territory of the land of Israel and was not present in the area on the day that the IDF conquered the area in which he dwelled. Finally the law governing the acquisition of land (the authorization of actions and restitution of 1953) authorized the minister for finance to appropriate any land that was not in the possession of its owners on April 1, 1952, and was needed for the needs of development, settlement or security.²²

Another way of taking control of the Arab-owned lands was to declare them to be in a closed area for the purposes of defense. Prominent examples of this were the villages of Ikrit and Biram from which the inhabitants fled and to which they were not allowed to return because the area was declared to be a closed military zone and the blocking of the approach to “Area 9” that covers an area of 100,000 dunams (38.61 square miles) in the triangle of the villages of Dir Hana, Arabeh, and Sakhnin.

For the Arab minority the issue of the lands was considered to be most sensitive and unifying because land is considered to be a precious and essential resource in the Arab sector owing to the fact that this sector’s economy is based upon agriculture and that most of the privately owned land belonged to Arabs. The land is also considered to be a national-symbolic value and reflects the Arabs’ hold on the land. Researchers who have dealt with this subject, mainly from the Arab minority, argue that the land regime and the planning of the government in Israel represents a threat to the fabric of relations between the minority and the majority because, over the years, it has led to an ethnic-national image based upon deprivation and distress. This is expressed by two aspects. The first is defined as the aspect of ownership in which the Arab minority feels itself to be a victim since national enterprises,

the benefits of which it does not enjoy either as individuals or as a collective, are built upon its lands.²³ The second aspect is the administration of the land by Jews. This area which includes the registration of land, leasing, planning and the determination of jurisdiction has been placed in the hands of Jews. The practical outcome of this has been that local Arab authorities that have asked to broaden their jurisdiction have been faced with procrastination and refusal by the ministry of the interior. The reason for this has been that these demands have been interpreted as the desire of the Arabs to take control of agricultural lands. This reality will only be changed in the first decade of the twenty-first century when the ministry of the interior makes arrangements in the master plan for the Arab villages.

The government's policy in the four areas: the establishment of the military government, the nonreturn of the refugees, the appropriation of land and the endowing of the country with a Jewish character were powerfully imposed in the first decade after 1948. In everything concerned with the military government the policy contained many components of power, certainly in the way it viewed the Arab minority. The military governor was, in fact, all-powerful in the area under his control and his actions could not be criticized except through a plea to the Supreme Court.

The authority of the governor covered many areas of daily life and, for example, in the area of individual rights it was determined that the governor could prohibit someone from being in some place in his area of governance²⁴ and could also order someone to be under police surveillance for up to a year. He had the authority to issue an order for the confiscation of land and the destruction of buildings if there was any suspicion that weapons or explosives had been used in them. In all matters pertaining to traffic and movement the governor was authorized to impose a curfew and could decide to close or detour any road or prohibit or reduce the use of any right of passage or waterway. In relation to the issue of closing areas it was determined that the governor would be allowed to declare part or all of an area to be a "closed area."

The military governors in the different regions did not hesitate to demonstrate the heavy hand of the government toward the minority population and there are many examples of this as evidenced by members of the Arab minority. One salient instance is how the military government intervened in the elections to the Knesset or the local councils by putting together lists that were "convenient" for them and repressed "problematic" lists. Sometimes they even removed one candidate or another from the political campaign who was not acceptable to them.²⁵

Yosef Vashitz, a member of the Arab department in Mapam, described the lives of the Arabs in Israel in this way:

Freedom of movement is seriously limited. Permits to make a journey are needed and getting them often involves the cancellation of days of work and then not always getting them. The same restrictions apply to the movement of cars and materials and this helps those authorized to travel freely to create monopolies for themselves. Apart from the regular citizens there are many kinds of Arabs who have fewer rights.²⁶

Another example that will make the power of the government more concrete can be found in the answer to a letter written by Palmon, the then advisor on Arab affairs to the government, to the Mayor of the City of Shfaram Khouri Mansour. The latter sent a letter of congratulations to the prime minister on the occasion of Israel's first Independence Day that fell on June 4, 1949, in which he asked for amnesty for residents who had infiltrated back to Israel. He received an absolute refusal and was told clearly that anyone who entered Israel without authorization is a lawbreaker and would not be given amnesty. In a letter that was later sent to the military governor of the Galilee Palmon ordered the continuation of the campaign to locate infiltrators that had found refuge in Shfaram until all were found.²⁷

Not only establishment members such as Vashitz and Palmon addressed the situation of the Arab minority. The strict enforcement of the establishment's policy toward this community is also reflected in the descriptions of Arab writers who were living in the country at that time. Sabri Jiryis, for example, points out that regulation 125 of the Defense Regulations was the most repressive, annoying and disturbing because it demands a permit that includes many restrictions relating to movement. He also emphasizes the confusion, embarrassment and humiliation that were the daily experience of the Arabs who lived in areas where there was a military government in these words: "The military police used to get on the buses, order the Arabs to get off and carry out a thorough investigation of their identities."²⁸ Habib Kahougi, also a member of the Arab minority who was one of the leaders of Al-Ard, accused the military government of being responsible for the confiscation of lands, for creating the phenomenon of unemployment in the Arab sector, for the dismissal of teachers, for the changing the voting patterns of Arabs in elections (so that they would vote for the party in power) and for penetrating all areas of life. In another place he wrote that "In several of the cases when the Arabs had to stand in line some of them passed away just because of the long wait."²⁹

The more the government became established the more the military government deepened its hold on the territory and demonstrated its power by also encouraging and enforcing the expulsion of members of the minority out of the country or to other areas within the country. The step of expulsion within the country was carried out under Regulation 109 of the military government that authorized the military governor to prohibit someone from

being present in a certain area. A member of the minority who was removed to another city within the state had to present himself twice a day at the police station in the area to which he was exiled. This step was taken at the very beginning of the military government and acted as a powerful and fearsome deterrent to the Arab minority, as witnessed by both Jiryis and Kahougi. This fear as it is expressed in the writings of both of them deterred the Arab minority from going forward with any violent activity whose purpose was to bring about the cancellation of the authority of the military governor during those years.

The power of the government also expressed itself in the prevention of public protestation against the military government. In May 1949 hundreds of people in Acre held a demonstration to demand the cancellation of the military government and the holding of elections for the mayor of the city. The government reacted by breaking up the demonstration and arresting a few of the participants and the military governor made it clear that he would not permit the Arabs to become involved with politics and admitted that the arrest of several demonstrators was done to create fear in the hearts of the Arabs.³⁰

These incidents and others show that the room for maneuvering that the formulation of the regulations gave to the military governors was great. The power of the military government affected the daily routine of the Arab citizens in the country and continued to do so even after it was canceled. There are those who believe that there are still aftereffects that have not disappeared and that the reality that it dictated still has an influence on the network of relations between the two sides. Sa'di, for example, argues that the influence of the military government on the non-Jewish minority in Israel is still in effect and that is because, among other things, in the collective consciousness of the Arab minority in Israel this period is ingrained in their memory as something painful and that during its existence "foundations were laid down for the relations between the majority and the minority through thinking patterns, processes, approaches and ideologies."³¹

In regard to the enforcement of the Palestinian refugee issue the government acted through its different bureaucratic apparatuses to prevent their return to the country. During October 1948, in the framework of the "Hiram" operation, the villages of Biram and Ikrit were conquered without a fight and the inhabitants of the two villages were required to leave by November 13. The inhabitants of the villages of Nebi Rubin, Tarbiha, Surukh and Almansoora which were in the Western Galilee were also evacuated and settled in new places.³² The specific requests of Arabs to return to their homes, as in the case of the village of Sukhmata in the Galilee, were turned down by the government.³³ On September 16, 1953, the governmental committee that discussed the request of the inhabitants of the village to return to their lands published their decision as follows: "The inhabitants of the two villages will

not be allowed to return to the houses and will be rehabilitated in existing villages. The inhabitants of Ikrit will be dispersed between the villages of Rame, Shfaram and M'rar and the inhabitants of Biram will move to the village of Jish."³⁴ The inhabitants of the abandoned village of Hamam, for example, were also housed in M'rar and these cases were not the only ones during these years. The government acted forcefully to disperse concentrations of Arab populations and, at the same time, continued the process of expelling hundreds of Arabs who had not left their homes during the war while thousands of others who asked to return home were not permitted to do so.³⁵ The power of the government and Ben-Gurion's refusal to compromise over the question of the refugees might have channeled the reactions of the Arab minority into protests and violence in order to change the policies. In practice, during the beginning of the 1950s, Arab society still lacked any leadership that could lead any real protest. The Communist stream, which was the only countrywide political force during this period in the Arab sector preferred the ideals of Communism over Arab nationalism and the outcome of this was cooperation with Jewish factors that had a similar worldview to its own and not turning its activities toward violent channels in order to advance its nationalist political aspirations.

In the area of lands during those years the government appropriated a lot of Arab land in order to build cities for the Jewish immigrants that were coming from countries all over the world. In this respect the government was applying a policy completely opposite to what had been the policy practiced during the Ottoman and British Mandate periods. Its principles resolved that all the land throughout the country was national land "except for land whose owners can prove their ownership according to the narrowest interpretation of the law."³⁶ The direct result of this was a vigorous policy of settlement during the first years of the state. Until 1967 about fifty Jewish agricultural settlements were established in the Galilee as well seven new Jewish cities (Kiryat Shmona, Hatzor, Shlomi, Migdal Haemek, Upper Nazareth,³⁷ Ma'a lot, and Karmiel). The Arab public naturally felt deeply frustrated about the government policy of appropriating land which, as aforementioned, was based upon a wide network of comprehensive laws but, up to the middle of the 1970s, this frustration had no violent political expression.³⁸

The following table shows the central questions that formed the agenda of the Israeli government after the establishment of the state and the policy that was adopted regarding each of the subjects. All together they are the components of one policy whose goal was to endow the country with a Jewish character (as well as democratic) and, through the imposition of regulations and the legislation of laws, to limit the ability of the non-Jewish minority to oppose the this policy. As analyzed above, during those years, the Israeli government carried out this policy with great force in order to ensure the firm

foundation of the state and to neutralize the potential threats that it perceived as coming from the Arab minority.

Table 3.1. Government's Policy toward the Arabs (1948–1958) and the Level of Force Used

Policy	Level of force used	How expressed in the field
Preservation of Jewish character	High	The Law of the Return; the prevention of the return of non-Jewish families and long waiting periods for those asking to settle in Israel.
Lands	High	The legislation of laws that made large scale appropriation possible; massive building of Jewish settlements.
Refugees	High	Rejection of all requests by refugees to return to the country
Security	High	Military government; long list of restrictions placed on the non-Jewish population.

CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY

The government's policy toward the Arab minority, like the level of force used, was the subject of public discussion and was not immune to criticism that was, at times, severe. The discussion dealt with whether the policy being carried out toward the Arab minority was justified and the framework of the discussion included the possibility of an outbreak of violence by the non-Jewish minority. The military government functionaries were convinced that such an outbreak was possible at any given moment while the Israeli security agency was less concerned. A report that was compiled by this organization in September 1951 assessed that the Arab population was worried about a reaction from the government and so there were no signs of the existence of any organized Arab underground.³⁹ However it does appear from these and other descriptions that the Arab minority was clearly feeling the power of the military government as the arm of the state government.

The public controversy about this subject led to the government appointing four investigative committees of different levels between 1949 and 1956 and their mandate was to examine the necessity of this mechanism and its efficiency as an instrument for carrying out the government's policy and for demonstrating its power over the Arab minority. The mention of these committees is relevant for the description of the public mood that was prevalent in Israel during the 1950s because of two incidents that took place during this time that had the potential to lead to an outbreak of violence by the Arab minority. These were the Sinai Campaign and the Kfar Kassem incident.

The first committee was appointed in March 1949 following the disagreement between the military government functionaries and the ministry for the minorities, headed by Minister Shitrit who favored a more lenient policy toward the Arab minority.⁴⁰ The chairman of the committee was General Avner Elimelech, the commander of the military government, and he, together with its members, presented recommendations that the military government continue its activities. The second committee of investigation was the one-man committee of Shaul Avigur, who was close to Ben-Gurion, which was asked to examine the issue of the military government during the first half of 1950 following the reservations that were raised by political factors before the prime minister. After carrying out investigations and visiting the territory, Avigur presented his recommendation on April 26, 1950, that the military government was most essential since it touched upon the most sensitive regions in the State of Israel.⁴¹

The third committee was established in October 1952 after Ben-Gurion turned to Pinhas Lavon, at that time a minister without portfolio, and ordered him to examine the quality of the activity of the military government. Lavon's conclusions, which were presented on November 12, 1952, were very critical and, among other things, described the functionaries of the military government as being of a low level, indicated that there were cases of corruption, determined that the military government had not succeeded in establishing a stable administration and also noted that there were many cases of malice and vulnerability that were not helpful. Accordingly, he recommended separating the treatment of the Arab minority into two parts: one would leave the treatment of security matters in the hands of the military personnel and the other would be the establishment of a civil administration that would take care of all civil matters affecting the Arab population.⁴² Lavon, like his predecessors, did not recommend the cancellation of the military government and his proposal for structural reform was not accepted.

The fourth committee, the Ratner Committee, began its work in December 1955 following continuous public criticism and the uncomfortable feelings felt in government circles. The Ratner Committee, which was active during January and February 1956, also recommended retaining the military government as it was and explained that the Arab countries were taking into account that the Arab population would help them if a war were to break out between them and Israel. The committee also determined that the Arab population was not loyal to the state and "were a real danger because of the shared interests they had with the Arab countries over the border." Another point raised by the committee was based on the assessment that, if there were no military government, the country would be witnessing a wave of refugees asking to return to their homes. Because of this, in the view of the members of the committee, the purposes of the military government were to be a deterrent to hostile acts such as infiltration and contact with the enemy, to be

a communicating and coordinating link with other factors dealing with security, to prevent the mass flow of refugees that want to return to live in Israel, to declare areas closed, to be the body that exercises control, to assist the settlement project and to be the source of support for the security of weak immigrant settlements.⁴³ These all represented the authentic expression of the Israeli establishment that the Arab minority in Israel, based on different national feelings and identity, would act with violence on its background of being identified with the Arab countries.

The main innovation of the work of the Ratner Committee was its work method since this was the first time that a committee appointed to examine the military government opened its proceedings to the Arab minority and allowed its representatives to air their opinions and judgments about the issue being examined. Altogether, the members of the committee heard evidence from thirty-nine Jews and fifty Arabs. This issue itself has importance and significance for the discussion about the relations between the Arab minority and the government. The fact that there was public criticism about the running of the military government in a democratic regime was enough to soften the dire suspicions of the Arab citizens; and the mobilization of the media, the public forum that was provided for the protest of the Arab members of the Knesset about the existence of the military apparatus, the response of the government to the criticism by its appointment of four investigative committees and the granting to Arabs of the possibility to give evidence before them created an atmosphere of dialogue that reduced the danger of an outbreak of violence during those years. The heated debate over the continuation of the military government also arose when atypical events took place in the field. One of these took place in June 1952 when IDF soldiers who were taking part in an ambush near Kfar A'ra killed two Arabs and the incident ignited the strongest kind of public debate.⁴⁴ There were also figures who opposed the continuation of the military government in the centrist camp of the government. One of them, Yigal Alon, believed that the actual existence of this mechanism was one of the factors that was causing the unrest and inflaming the nationalist passions of the Arab population.⁴⁵ Security factors, including Issar Harel who was in charge of the secret agency, thought that there was no objective reason for the continuation of the activities of the military government and that the so-called security justifications were only being used to perpetuate its activities.⁴⁶

The reality that had ultimately become fixed was the continuation of the imposition of the military government upon the Arab minority in the spirit of the recommendations of the various investigative committees and despite the dire public criticism. In practice, this policy expressed itself daily in the application of force on different levels against the minority population.

To sum up, this subsection analyzed the component of Israeli policy which could be found in four main areas of activity: the military government,

the massive appropriation of lands, the evacuation/expulsion of Arabs from their homes and the continuous efforts made to endow the country with a Jewish character. The powerful and strict enforcement of the policy made the boundaries between what was permitted and what was prohibited clear to the minority without the government having to use violence in order to achieve its goals and missions.

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP DURING THE 1950s: ATTEMPTS AT DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND MILD PROTEST

After the 1948 War the Arab population became a minority living under the government of a Jewish majority in the State of Israel. At the end of 1947, toward the end of the British Mandate there were about two million people in territory of the land of Israel, two-thirds of whom were Arabs. Two years later the population consisted of 1.2 million people and 86 percent of whom were Jewish.⁴⁷ Among those who left were those who made up the leadership of the Arab community during the Mandate and this included, among others, lawyers, doctors, merchants and landowners.⁴⁸

From being a community that enjoyed political and economic power the Arab public became a minority whose daily life was dependent upon the policies decided upon by the government of the majority. The Arab population, and certainly its leaders, has, throughout history, seen the country as their homeland if for no other reason than that they were born there. The Arab population's transformation into becoming a minority, especially an indigenous minority, meant that their feelings of frustration following the defeat in the war were magnified and in the words of Azmi Bishara "The Arab turned into a surviving remnant hanging on to his land."⁴⁹ Like most of the well-known cases throughout the world this situation increased the self-consciousness of the Arab minority and his national demands. The Arab term *Sumud*, which means "holding on to the ancestral land" has always held a high place in the order of priorities of the Arab minority in Israel and still does.

A second reason for the frustration arose from the complaint of the Arab minority that the State of Israel was established on the destruction of their people and at the cost of "Arab villages that had been abandoned."⁵⁰ Thirdly, the new political-state situation created a reality in which the Arab minority in the country was living in a Jewish country surrounded by Arab states whose peoplehood was identical to that of that same minority. On the basis of these three components of losing the war, the loss of ownership over the land and the transition into being a minority, the term *Nakba* ("catastrophe") was etched into the collective memory of the Arab minority in Israel.

The picture of this situation is helpful to the analysis of the character of the Arab leadership during the first years of the state. In fact, the Arab leaders were the first to leave the country already in the spring of 1948 and some of them did this even earlier. By the time the fighting was over the whole top Arab leadership had disappeared which led to the disintegration of the organizational frameworks that had existed during the Mandate period. These included the Supreme Muslim Council, the Supreme Arab Committee, the parties, the unions, economic bodies and youth movements.⁵¹ Palmon described the situation of the Arab citizens of Israel at the end of the fighting in the following words: "In the three areas the inhabitants were left with no food supplies, no police, no courts, no education system, no Mukhtarim (heads of clans or villages), no religious leaders, and no leadership whatsoever."⁵² Yosef Vashitz, who frequently visited the Arab villages, described the Arab minority as "weak and divided, suffering from helplessness and a feeling of crisis and disappointment in their leaders who had left the country. The Arab minority has no faith in its own ability to act and there is an expectation of help from the Jews who support it."⁵³ Rostam Bastuni, an Arab member of the Knesset (Mapam), wrote in the middle of the 1960s that "The Arab citizens of Israel were like sleepwalkers, an ethnic minority, a small part of a state that had just been established, no longer a nation."⁵⁴ Emile Touma, one of the heads of the Communist Party, wrote that the fear was that "the Zionists were trying to carry out ethnic cleansing through the annihilation of Arabs not only in Dir Yassin but also in villages throughout the Galilee."⁵⁵

In this situation of the Arab traditional leadership fleeing the country the question of what model of leadership would develop for the Arab minority during those years arose. First there was the model of leadership that looks for positive engagement with the authorities. Those people made their way into Mapai and Mapam and others who had joined satellites of Zionist parties such as Bustani, Youssef Khamis and Abed Al-Aziz Seif Zuabi, and Mussad Kassis, a member of the Democratic List, which was attached to Mapai. These people were close to the government because of their political contacts and in their attempts to further their personal interests. They focused their activities on cementing, developing and preserving the channels of communication with government factors in order to improve the situation of the Arab minority. The clear significance was that these public personages, who one can hardly call leaders, preferred carrying on a dialogue over adopting protest and violence as a way to change the political and civil conditions of the minority.

The second kind of leadership for the Arab citizens of Israel during this period was the national leadership in the form of Maki which enjoyed the patronage of the USSR. This party became the only national political force in the Arab sector except, as aforementioned, the members of the Knesset who had made their ways into the Zionist parties. The Arab members of the

Knesset from Maki did not give up on their national identity and worked toward achieving different goals such as security for the Arab sector parallel to their efforts to integrate into the country within the existing limitations in a way that would make it possible for them to maximize their achievements in economic areas.⁵⁶ As people with economic interests they, at least during the first half of the 1950s, also believed that violent activity would not serve their ambitions well.

The third kind of leadership was defined as “traditional leadership” and included the heads of clans, village personages, the heads of aristocratic families and religious leaders.⁵⁷ This leadership saw itself as committed to the new government and maintained contact with it regarding civil aspects in order to improve the conditions of the Arab population that had remained in the Arab villages throughout the country. Whenever a problem arose in some village an appeal was made to the prime minister or other governmental representatives (ministers, the advisor on Arab affairs) in order to receive assistance. The following examples, all taken from files that were collected in the office of the advisor on Arab affairs, make the traditional leaderships for help from the government concrete, as does the moderate tone used in these appeals.

On June 29, 1951, the Mukhtar of A-Shibli village, located at the foot of Mount Tabor, appealed to the then prime minister, Ben-Gurion, to return the confiscated lands to the villagers. The letter was signed by twenty-six village notables. The prime minister passed the matter over to the professionals and they replied that, after examination, there was no reason to return the lands to their owners.⁵⁸ The same Mukhtar sent another letter to the prime minister on October 11, 1953, and protested about the way the military government was handling things. In his letter he emphasized that “the people in the village seek peace . . . as we have proven during the existence of the State of Israel because we want to live in peace and friendship with the Jewish workers and farmers.” A copy of this letter was sent to members of the Knesset from the Communist Party.⁵⁹

Hajla Ibrahim Khouri, a female villager from Ilaboun, sent a letter to the prime minister on February 23, 1949, in the name of the women of the village, in which she asked for the release of members of the village from imprisonment. She noted in the letter that “members of the village committed themselves to the State of Israel in the hope of protection under its patronage.” The Mukhtar of the village, Farj Diab Srur sent a similar letter to the prime minister on December 23, 1949, with the clarification that the villagers were members of a minority that seeks peace.⁶⁰ In another case the committee of the villages of Iksal and Zalafa protested in a letter sent on April 25, 1961, about the reduction in grazing land and threatened to boycott the upcoming elections.⁶¹

These examples and the letter sent by the mayor of Shfaram which was presented above, are representative of appeals made by factors of the traditional leadership to the authorities. In the material that was retrieved no letter that was sent to the government contained any threat, even implied, to take violent action if the request of the appellant, a member of the Arab minority, was not granted.

The public activities of the Arab leadership during the first decade after the establishment of the state were carried out through a number of channels and all of them, except for the May 1, 1958, demonstration in Nazareth,⁶² were within the law. One arena of activity was the parliament where the Arab members of the Knesset made many speeches condemning the military government and demanding its cancellation. They also constantly protested against the appropriation of lands and discrimination against the Arab minority. Member of the Knesset Bastouni came out against the military government in a speech on December 1951⁶³ and Toufik Toubi, a member of the Knesset from Maki, did the same thing a number of times and even proposed motions to cancel the military government.⁶⁴ From time to time, he emphasized the point that the denial of rights to the Arab minority was leading to the negation of democracy and the freedom of all citizens of the state.

This pattern of activity of Maki also characterized its publicity for the elections to the third Knesset in 1955. The party published its platform which focused upon social issues. On the national level the heads of Maki chose to call for the cancellation of the state of emergency in Israel.⁶⁵ Several members of the party sent letters to the military governors and asked for relief for the citizens in distress. A letter such as this was sent by the poet Tawfik Ziad, a prominent member of Maki, to the military governor of the Nazareth region in response to his confinement to the region. In his letter he pointed out that injustice was not limited to one national affiliation or another.⁶⁶ Other forms of protest by the Arab minority were the dispatching of protestors to the Knesset,⁶⁷ petitions calling for the cancellation of the military government,⁶⁸ expressions of protest in the written media,⁶⁹ and appeals to the wider public.⁷⁰

In addition to these, the members of the Arab minority exploited the opportunity they had in the framework of their lobbying activity in the Ranner Committee to directly lay out the things they felt and the mood of the members of the sector before the representatives of the government. Member of the Knesset Bastouni, for example, tried to convince the members of the committee that the military government was damaging to the security of the country because it increased the hostility of the Arabs.⁷¹ He tried to support this claim by presenting data that showed that since the military government was established its operatives had not succeeded in preventing the phenomenon of infiltrations and smuggling. Youssef Khamis, a Mapam member of the Knesset, argued that there was structural tension between the character of

the military government and the identity of a democratic state. As a result, he stressed, the machinery of the military government was made up of bodies that dealt with implementation, legislation and jurisdiction which was the opposite of what takes place in a democracy that believes in the separation of powers. To make his claims more concrete Khamis described to the members of the committee the intervention of the military government personnel in the elections which was not compatible with the principles of a democratic regime. Elias Kousa, a lawyer and prominent public figure, complained to the Ratner Committee that the military government was only appointed to humiliate and repress the Arab citizens of Israel and to appropriate their property. His colleague, Souheil Kanj, a member of the Nazareth City Council, who was not connected with any political framework, argued that the inhabitants of his city were loyal to the state and that there was no reason to discriminate against them.

Mussad Kassis bitterly protested in his testimony that the military government was strengthening the hands of the opponents of the government, the Communists, because it was providing them with propaganda and incitement material against the authorities. His colleague on the list, Seif Al-din Zouabi, blamed the government because it had made a mistake when it promised the Arabs full equality and, when it failed to fulfill its promise phenomena which he defined as “gall and disrespect” developed in the Arab community. He supported the continuation of the military government with reforms carried out that would put a stop to the various abuses.

It is clear that, in a historical analysis, during the first years the leaders of the Arab public wanted to improve the situation of the minority through dialogue with the government or by expressing protest in legitimate frameworks such as in the legislature or in the media. Turning to violence, at least until the middle of 1956, had not yet been examined as an option for dealing with the challenges set before the Arab population by the government. Similar response characteristics were also used by the Arab minority during the 1950s when the second test case of this research took place: the Sinai Campaign and the massacre in Kfar Kassem, which took place on exactly the same day, October 29, 1956.

The public reaction of the Arab minority to the Sinai Campaign, as it appeared in the official organ of Maki, *Alittihad*, included the following features: the expression of identification with Egypt and condemnation of Israel, France and Britain because of their decision to attack Egypt; a call to solve the Arab-Israeli problem through agreements and not through war; and an appeal to the Security Council of the UN to intervene to stop the hostilities.⁷² Ben-Gurion himself dealt with the way the Arab citizens of Israel managed things during the period of the war and declared that quiet reigned all over the land in both permanent and nomadic villages—meaning among the Bedouin tribes.⁷³

The response of the leaders of the Arab population to the massacre in Kfar Kassem was more complicated. Formally the media censor imposed full censorship upon the publication of any details about the serious incident. While the government had already established a committee of investigation into the circumstances of the event on November 1,⁷⁴ the first public statement about the incident was only made by Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, on November 12 in a statement made to the Knesset. Only two weeks after the event was an item published on the front page of the newspaper *Al-Ittihad* with the headline being that the Investigating Committee recognized the responsibility of the border police for the crime that had been committed in the triangle.⁷⁵ In the article itself it was noted that the committee had decided to press charges against those involved in the crime and gave prominent space to the fact that the government's statement had not included details about the event. In its item, *Al-Ittihad* claimed that the government had tried to hide the details of the serious event and informed its readers that the full details of the incident had come into their possession.

The revelation of the details of the massacre in Kfar Kassem was made possible because of the activity of the Maki members of the Knesset Toubi (an Arab) and Meir Vilner (a Jew) who succeeded in getting into Kfar Kassem about two weeks after the massacre. Vilner reported the fact that there had been a visit in an article he wrote forty years later in which he wrote that when he got to Kfar Kassem together with Toubi he discovered that the streets were empty. In a short period of time the two succeeded in getting into some of the houses in the village and heard about what had happened there from the villagers.⁷⁶ An analysis of the Maki newspaper, which was the leading national political power in those days in the Arab minority, does not reveal any call for illegal protest or violence which was forbidden in a democratic country. While the newspaper did express sharp criticism of the government's conduct, both regarding the war in Sinai and the massacre in Kfar Kassem, at the same time, remaining faithful to Maki's ideology, it continued to call for a peaceful solution to the conflict. In its view this included a framework of two states for two peoples—the Israelis and the Palestinians—and a solution to the refugee problem. Toufik Toubi, in an article published in the Maki newspaper (December 31, 1956), wrote that only the uprooting of national-based repression would ensure that such a massacre would not be repeated.

During the first months after the massacre, at the beginning of 1957, the Arab minority made a limited attempt to protest at what had taken place and this included: the sending of a petition to the government which demanded that there be a public trial and a promise that such a thing would not happen again; the holding of popular gatherings in different places (Acre, Nazareth, Haifa) in which hundreds of Arab citizens took part that brought them up to date with details of the terrible event in Kfar Kassem; and the declaration of a

general strike on January 6, 1957, the day on which the army trial of the suspects accused of carrying out the massacre of the villagers began.⁷⁷

There was a similar response in the activity of Maki and the inhabitants of Kfar Kassem on the first anniversary of the massacre. A public statement published in October 1957 which was addressed to Israeli public opinion expressed sorrow at the massacre of the forty-nine victims and made it clear that the desire of those left alive was to live “as equal free people peacefully in our homeland. We will defend this desire with all our strength.”⁷⁸ The public statement made it clear that the Israeli government had not learned the lesson of the Kfar Kassem events and had not canceled the military government. Instead, it was seeking new laws in order to make the lives of farmers even harder and apparently to do harm to Arabs, most of whom worked in agriculture during the 1950s. The authors of the public statement chose the pathway of dialogue with the Jewish public and turned to “the people of conscience and members of the Knesset in order to put a stop to the harsh reality in which the Arabs in the country were living.”⁷⁹ At the same time as the publication of the public statement on the first anniversary of the events there were gatherings and commemorations as well as popular meetings to mark the occasion.⁸⁰ The ability to mobilize a large number of people (according to the newspapers there were over a thousand activists) was made possible, among other things, “thanks to the well-oiled organizational apparatus of Maki.”⁸¹

An analysis of the above activity suggests that the Arab response to the two events was restrained and not violent. The principal thing was the effort made by the Arab public leaders, and the media, to use the public forums available to them to persuade the government to be a little more lenient in its strict and inflexible policies toward the minority populations.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The government’s policy during the first decade of the State of Israel toward the Arab minority was harsh and strictly enforced. The various security mechanisms set down sharp and clear guidelines for which activities were permitted and which were prohibited. This policy, it seems, was a crucial factor that affected the behavior of the Arab population in the country during those years and deterred it from acting in violent ways. This was in the background of the memory of the defeat and catastrophe that had not only led to defeat on the battlefield but also resulted in the establishment of the State of Israel. The more time passed and the existence of the State of Israel became an accomplished fact the Arab minority’s belief became weaker until it died, in the possibility of the Arab countries reversing the situation.

In the face of these changes that took place in the first decade of the State of Israel the Arab minority was kept busy most of the time with adapting to the new situation. Much effort was invested during the first years into preventing any worsening of the situation which was difficult because of the drastic change in its status in the country but also because of the policy of the government and its strong enforcement, which was felt daily. The traditional national leadership during this period, including that of the Communist Party, can be called a “mediating leadership” since it acted as a bridge between the government and the Arab minority population. As such it did not steer its activities into channels of protest that might have led to violence and this was in contrast to a “nationalistic” leadership that might have constantly looked for ways of protesting. The Arab leadership during these years saw its central role as minimizing the damage that the government might do to the Arab public. Some of the leadership chose to do this through joining the establishment and sitting on the legislature while others did this through publishing articles in the newspapers that were being published in both Arabic and Hebrew. The ongoing efforts to exert influence through these frameworks during these years reduced the chances of anyone acting violently against government policy.

The Arab public and leadership channeled their response to the events of the Kfar Kassem massacre and the Sinai Campaign into protests permitted by law and one of these means was the declaration of a general strike and day of mourning in memory of the victims only two months after the massacre.⁸² The public statement marking the first anniversary of the event included an appeal to the Jewish public in order to create conciliation between the majority and the minority. The Sinai War, which was an external event that might have created violent protest by the Arab minority, finished off any hope that the State of Israel was an entity that was about to disappear and, in fact, following it the state, in the eyes of the Arab minority, became an accomplished fact. This was mainly because of the military superiority of Israel over Egypt despite its having been recently supplied with advanced weaponry after having signed a weapons deal with Czechoslovakia. This resulted in the fact that there was no group political violence reported during these years and this might have been because of a combination of fear of Israeli military power and the fact that the nationalist component in the Arab minority was still dormant. The cases of violence that were reported were carried out by individuals and, among others, included the ripping of the country’s flag and the writing of hostile slogans which were viewed by the government as acts included in the category of political violence. These incidents were not enough to bring the Arab minority out into the streets in collective protest or some act of group violence that would bring about some change in the situation of the minority population.

NOTES

1. The most famous case of all was that of the inhabitants of Ikrit and Biram. There is disagreement in the research literature over the question of whether these inhabitants left voluntarily or were forcibly expelled from their homes. For this matter see inter alia: Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1986) [Hebrew]; Alexander Bligh, “Israel and the Refugee Problem: From Exodus to Resettlement, 1948–52,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 34:1, (1998), pp. 123–147.

2. Knesset minutes, Vol. 10, December 2, 1956.

3. Yossi Amitai, “The Arab Minority in Israel: Military Administration from 1948 to 1966,” in Anita Shapira (ed.) *50 Years of Independence*, (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 1998), p. 129–131 [Hebrew].

4. The document that Lavon presented to Ben-Gurion appears in the official site of Pinhas Lavon: www.pinhas-lavon.com. Accessed November 21, 2012.

5. Amitai, *The Arab Minority*, p. 130.

6. Israel National Archive, Ministry of Minorities, files 307/56, 303/21.

7. Israel National Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file 2401/19/a.

8. Boimel, *Blue White Shadow*, pp. 29–69.

9. Tamir Sorek, *Palestinian Commemoration in Israel: Calendars, Monuments and Martyrs*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), p. 45.

10. Israel National Archive, Ministry of Minorities, file 308/4.

11. Israel National Archive, Ministry of Minorities, memorandum from January, 28, 1949, file 308/20.

12. The administration of the military government, from the moment of its establishment and up to its firm foundation, affected both the daily routine of the Arab minority and the security and civil decisions made by the government about this population. See: Yair Boimel, “The Military Government and the Process of Its Cancellation, 1958–1968,” *The New East*, vol. 33 (2002), pp. 133–156. See also: Sara Osatski-Lazar “The Military Government as a Mechanism of Control,” pp. 103–132. Amir’s meeting with the Arab personages was reviewed in the newspaper *Al Hamishmar*, December 1, 1948.

13. Israel National Archive, Plamon’s letter, June 12, 1949, file 2214/c-211.

14. Israel National Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file 2451/13.

15. Ben-Gurion Diary, October 26, 1948.

16. Israel National Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file 2401/22.

17. Bligh, “Israel and the Refugee Problem,” p. 126.

18. Sorek, *Palestinian Commemoration in Israel*, p. 45.

19. There is no place in this work to discuss the different significances of the laws. Brief references to them is necessary for the research in order to point out the policies employed by the government which contained elements that created a differentiation between the way it related to the Jews and to the non-Jews. This discrimination contained the potential to increase the frustration and dissatisfaction of the Arab population even to the extent of using violence in attempts to change the policy of the Israeli establishment, as actually took place in later years.

20. Israel National Archive, Ministry of Minorities, file 297/59/c.

21. Israel National Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, file 2451/13.

22. A detailed list of all the decrees was published in an edition of the daily newspaper *Davar* in November 15, 1958.

23. Rasem Hamisi, “Al-Aqsa uprising among Palestinian Arabs within Israel: process and motives,” Orr Evidences (Tel Aviv: Keter, 2003), pp. 56–60 [Hebrew].

24. Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel* (Haifa, Hamehaber Publications, 1966) [Hebrew]. The importance of this book is in its being practically the only document written by a member of the Arab minority about the lives of the Israeli Arab citizens during the military government and its focus is the daily difficulties the member of the Arab minority at that period. Jiryis, who is a Greek Orthodox Catholic and born in Fassuta in the Western Galilee was one of the founders of Al-Ard. After the movement was made illegal, he left the country and became active in the PLO.

25. In an appeal to the Supreme Court of Justice the appellants asked for the court to instruct the military governor to cease his intervention in the elections for the head of the local council of Tira. See: the Supreme Court sitting as the High Court of Justice in the case of "Alrahim Iraqi Versus the Military Governor of the Central region": Appeal 145/56, Judgment Vol. 11 (1957), pp. 1255–1263. The court held six sessions during the year and in the judgment, the judges decreed that "the combination of the incidents that represent the complaint made before us, as detailed in the judgments made by my fellow members, provide a basis for the likelihood that, with all the honest desire of the respondent not to guarantee peace in the military government's territory, there has also been heavy-handed interference aimed at achieving a goal—the election of the Head of the Council, and this has gone beyond permissible friendly mediation."

26. Yosef Vashitz, "Majority and Minority," *Ba-Sha'ar*, (September 1, 1949), p. 6 [Hebrew].

27. Israel National Archive, Arab Affairs office, files 23/17037/c.

28. Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel*, p. 29.

29. Khalil Kahougi, *The Arabs under the Israeli Occupation since 1948* (Beirut: Research Center of the PLO, 1973), pp. 142–152 [Arabic].

30. *Al Hamishmar* newspaper, May 23, 1949.

31. Ahmad Sa'di, "Social Conceptions, Citizenship Rights and Protest: The Road to the October Events," *Eduyot Orr*, (2003), p. 185.

32. The list of villages and cities that were destroyed during the 1948 war appears, according to their geographical distribution, on the internet site: www.nakba-online.tripod.com. Accessed on July 27, 2008.

33. Hillel Cohen, *The Attenders Absents*, (Jerusalem: Van Leer, 2000), p. 49 [Hebrew].

34. Israel National Archive, file 17/108/28.

35. Charles Kayman, "After the Disaster: The Arabs in Israel, 1948–1950," *Notebooks of Research*, 10, (Haifa: 1984), p. 45 [Hebrew]. Kayman mentions one case in which the residents of Haifa asked to return to their homes which had, according to them, been pillaged by Jews but military government functionaries made it clear to them that they would be deported.

36. Yitzhak Oded, "Land losses among Israel's Arab villages," *New Outlook*, Vol. 7, No.7 (1964), p. 14.

37. Following the appropriation of land for the establishment of Upper Nazareth an appeal to the High Court of Justice was made in 1955. The government in its answer, among other things, claimed that the subject was a government complex that would house clerks and argued that they had the authority to choose where to build it. The High Court accepted this argument. For more on this see: The Supreme Court sitting as the High Court of Justice, The Committee for the protection of the appropriated lands of Nazareth versus the Minister of Finance and others, The High Court of Justice, 30/55, Judgments 9 (2), PP. 261 onward.

38. See below in the section on "Land Day" 1976.

39. Israel National Archive, Foreign Affairs Ministry, file 2402/23/a.

40. Israel National Archive, Ministry of Minorities, file 304/2.

41. Israel Defense Forces Archive, 28/60, file 53.

42. Israel National Archive, *Ben-Gurion Diary*, memories from October 27, 1952.

43. Ratner Committee Report, 1955, pp. 6–10 [Hebrew].

44. The incident caused an uproar in the political system mainly with Mapam since one of those killed was one of their supporters. Following this an investigative committee was established to look into the circumstances of the case and it found that the two killed had been in the area to visit relatives. The committee considered that the prohibition on family meetings was a humanitarian problem that had developed because of the severe restrictions imposed by the military government. Jewish members of the Knesset from Mapam disassociated themselves from the decision not to put the soldiers who killed the two Arabs on trial for crimes.

45. Yigal Alon, *A Screen of Sand*, (Tel Aviv: Hakibutz Hameuhad, 1960), pp. 320–337 [Hebrew].

46. Israel National Archive, *Ben-Gurion Diary*, November 14, 1958.

47. Kayman, *After the Disaster*, pp. 5–7.

48. Adham Saouli, "Arab Political Organizations within the Israeli State," *The Journal of Social Political and Economic Studies* 26:2 (Summer 2001), p. 446.

49. Azmi Bishara, "The Arab-Israeli: Discussions within Political Cleavage," in Ruth Gavi-son and Daphna Hacker (eds.) *The Jewish-Arab Cleavage* (Jerusalem: Israeli institution for Democracy, 2000), p. 36 [Hebrew].
50. Hamisi, *Al-Aqsa Uprising*, p. 56
51. Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem 1947–1949* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1986), pp. 27–37 [Hebrew].
52. *Haaretz* newspaper, February 4, 1966.
53. Vashitz, *Majority and Minority*, p. 6.
54. Rostam Bastuni, "The Arab Society in Israel," *The New East*, 15, 1965, p. 3 [Hebrew].
55. Emile Touma, "The Political Coming-of-Age of the National Minority," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 14, No 2 (1985), p. 74.
56. Azmi Bishara, "On the Question of Palestinian Minority in Israel," *Theory and Criticism*, 3, 1993, pp. 7–20 [Hebrew].
57. Hezy Calo, *The Development of Israeli-Arab Nationwide Leadership: Trends and Directions* (Haifa: National Security College, 1993) [Hebrew].
58. Israel National Archive, Arab Affairs Bureau, file 17037/25.
59. *Ibid.*
60. Israel National Archive, Arab Affairs Bureau, file 17037/20.
61. Israel National Archive, Arab Affairs Bureau, file 17029/20.
62. The events of May 1, 1958 in Nazareth and the area of Umm el Fahem will be discussed in the next chapter.
63. Knesset minutes, Vol. 1–2, December 1951.
64. Knesset minutes, Vol. 17–18, May 1955.
65. Program of the Communist Party. The document was written by the Communist Party during the 1950s and is not dated. The citation appears on p. 17 in the pamphlet that can be found in the library of the Givat Haviva Information Center [Arabic].
66. Israel National Archive, Arab Affairs Bureau, a letter from May 5, 1954.
67. On May 28, 1953, a delegation from the Association for the Defense of the Rights of Arabs in Israel, a body established by Maki, came to the Knesset and demanded the cancellation of the military government and what it called "the national discrimination."
68. In June 1953, 12,000 citizens signed a petition on the subject. The list appears in the Knesset minutes, volume 13–14 of June 8, 1953, p. 1521.
69. In this context the Maki publications *Al-Ittihad* and *Kol Ha'am* and the Mapam newspaper *Al Hamishmar* were predominant.
70. For example the appeal made by the Committee of the Biram Village Displaced Persons on June 6, 1949, to the Israeli public's conscience to allow them to return to their homes was like this. Their letter was also sent to the prime minister's office and they received a reply in which Yehoshua Palmon, the prime minister's advisor on Arab affairs, made it clear that, because of security considerations, it was not possible to allow them to go back to their homes.
71. The protocols of all the testimonies can be found in the files of the military government in the Givat Haviva Information Center.
72. *Al-Ittihad*. The issues of the newspaper dated November 2, 1956, and November 3, 1956, described the campaign between Israel and Egypt in great detail.
73. The Knesset minutes, vol. 21, discussion on December 12, 1956, p. 462.
74. Judge Binyamin Zohar was head of the committee which included Abba Khoushi, the mayor of Haifa and the lawyer Aharon Hoter-Yishai.
75. *Al-Ittihad*, November 13, 1956.
76. Meir Vilner, *Sinai War and Kfar Kassem Massacre* (1996), www.icf.org.il.
77. Shira Robinson. "Local Struggle, National Struggle: Palestinian Responses to the Kafr Qasim Massacre and its Aftermath, 1956–1966," *Middle East Studies* (2003), Vol. 35, p. 400.
78. Documents from Maki archive, *A Leaflet for the first Anniversary of the Massacre*.
79. *Ibid.*
80. *Al-Ittihad*, October 24, 1957; November 1, 1957.
81. Robinson, "Local Struggle, National Struggle," p. 404.
82. *Al-Ittihad*, January 17, 1957.

Chapter Four

The Nazareth Events (1958), the End of the Military Government, and the June 1967 War

BACKGROUND

Three significant events took place in the period that began with the end of the Sinai War in October 1956 and ended with the June 1967 War. First was the Nazareth Events of May 1, 1958; the second was the Knesset decision following the announcement by the then Prime Minister Levi Eshkol that the military government was cancelled on December 1, 1966; and the third was the June War of 1967. All three touch both upon the daily life of the Arab minority in Israel and the connections between them and the inhabitants of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip because of the ethnic and national connection they have with the Arab world. All of the cases had the potential for causing a widespread outbreak of violence of the Arab minority as, in fact, happened in the Nazareth events, which was the first incidence of group violence by the Arab minority, organized by the Communist Party to celebrate the May 1, Workers Day.

The advertisements for this event began to appear in the party newspaper *Al-Ittihad* about a month beforehand and announced that “arrangements are being made to mark the day with a large demonstration that will take place in Nazareth.”¹ The May 1 Committee of the Communist Party held a preparatory meeting in which Toufik Toubi talked about the importance of taking part in the festivities that marked the occasion. At the end of the meeting a small team, which included prominent activists in the party such as Ziad, Raduan Jarjura, Fouad Khouri, and Toufik Sulieman, was formed and made responsible for organizing the event.

About a week after the advertisement an additional notice appeared in the party newspaper in which the “Nazareth Workers Committee” called upon the professional unions to unite their forces for the May 1 demonstration and to come to the central parade in Nazareth. In the notice other sectors such as the educated people, students, farmers and others were also called upon to unite around the event and to contribute to its success. The notice ended with a number of slogans, among which were calls to defeat the policy of war, starvation, and national persecution.² In practice the event developed into violent disorder that included clashes between the demonstrators and security personnel in which tens of people were injured on both sides.

The official announcement of the end of the military government was made by then Prime Minister Levi Eshkol on December 1, 1966, during a Knesset session.³ This announcement marked the end of a struggle that had been carried on in a number of arenas in order to put a stop to the mechanism that had controlled the lives of the Arab minority in Israel since the establishment of the state. This struggle had been carried on already from the moment the military government began when the four committees were appointed by the government during the 1950s and were, in fact, a response to public pressure which increased in the middle of the 1950s mainly on the level of media and parliamentary activity. Those who took part in this were the Maki Party and other parties including Mapam and Herut. In this respect there was agreement between the two extremities of the political spectrum of the Zionist parties about the need to cancel the military government. Its cancellation, ultimately, was a natural step and also suited the popular mood of the Jews at that time.

The June 1967 War was between Israel and Egypt, Jordan and Syria, who were helped by Iraq. The background to the war in fact had already begun with Egypt’s defeat in the Sinai War of 1956 after which constant tension remained between the Arab countries and Israel. It is difficult to exactly place one’s finger on the first event that led to the escalation that ended in the June 1967 war but already in the middle of 1966 there was activity in the area that led to the confrontation between the parties.

The war began with a preemptive strike landed by Israel on the Arab armies on June 5, 1967, and lasted six days at the end of which Israel had achieved a decisive victory over the Arab armies. When the fighting was over it appeared that Israel had taken control of large areas consisting of the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem. These areas trebled the territory controlled by the State of Israel before the war.

GOVERNMENT'S POLICY: STRICT ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY MEASURES AND LIMITED ATTENTION PAID TO THE NEEDS OF THE ARAB CITIZENS

During the second decade of the state the government continued to adhere to the initial policy it had formed toward the Arab minority: the widespread appropriation of lands, the prevention of the return of refugees, and the continuation of the military government until its ultimate cancellation at the beginning of 1968. The logic that directed the political line adopted was identical to that of the 1950s which was that Israel was a young state that was just beginning to establish itself and was still under serious threats to its existence from the Arab countries. The Arab minority that lived in Israel had the same national affiliation to that of the people living in the Arab states and thus represented a constant potential threat to the country.

In practice, basing itself on the many laws that had been legislated on matters of lands, the state continued to appropriate lands in order to establish new settlements for the Jewish population that was continually growing. According to various estimates the state appropriated between 40 and 60 percent of all the lands that had been held by Arabs during this period.⁴

Despite the strict enforcement of the appropriation orders this activity was from time to time accompanied by proposed legislation aimed at improving the conditions of the agricultural farms in the Arab sector. One example of this was a proposal made by Moshe Dayan, the minister of agriculture at the beginning of the 1960s, in which he wanted to concentrate Arab agriculture and develop it. He put together a program called "The Program for the Development of Arab Agriculture in 1963–1964" which included the provision of the large sum of 43 million Israeli lira for the development of agriculture in the Arab sector. Ultimately the sum of money allotted was significantly lower (only about 13 million lira) and this aroused bitter feelings in the Arab public that claimed that, in the light of the accumulated experience since the establishment of the state, it was impossible to rely upon the purity of the government's intentions regarding anything involving lands.⁵

In the second area of the prevention of the return of Arab refugees to the country there was no change in the government's policy. While many settlements were established for the Jewish population, not even one settlement was established for the Arab minority. The authorities also consistently refused to accede to the requests of refugees such as those of the villages of Biram and Ikrit to return to their homes. The third significant area directly touched upon the continuation of the military government and was the object of the ongoing controversy in the media, the public, and in the political arena. After the serious events in Nazareth in 1958 (and its spillover to Umm Al

Fahem) the political leadership had to carry out another examination of the need for a military government.

Between 1959 and 1963, Ben-Gurion's position, which supported the continuation of the military government strengthened, but in opposition to his stubborn position during the first years of the state, during the mid-1950s slight changes in his approach could already be identified. Ben-Gurion already began to authorize an easing of things for the Arab minority, especially for citizens who were living in areas under the control of the military government. The dialogue about the cancellation of the mechanism became a fixture, was no longer branded as an anti-Zionist demand, as was the case in the 1950s, and, even though this process was slow and gradual, it continued until late 1966.

There were several reasons for the slow change in government policy which can be understood on the background of the public mood that dominated the country. Firstly, different ministers in the political arena who were opposed to the conclusions of the Ratner Committee called for the cancellation of the military government.⁶ Secondly, in the public, the calls for cancellation grew because of the terrible results of the Kfar Kassem massacre and the publication of material about the trial of those involved in it. Thirdly, during this period which lasted for more than a decade, there was a real improvement in Israel's economy and this development created many new employment opportunities for the Arab minority that wanted to integrate into the workforce. At the same time an identity of interests between the Arab minority and many Jewish employers developed as many workers were needed. These exerted pressure in order to make it possible for Arab workers to get to places of work more easily, and between 1959 and 1966 a dramatic growth in the number of Arab employees from ten thousand to forty thousand was recorded.⁷ One of the clear expressions of the integration of the Arab minority into the Israeli economy during this period was the Arabs joining the General Workers Federation (the Histadrut) beginning in August 1958. This reality in which the Arab minority found itself integrating into the workforce and becoming members of the trade unions such as the Workers Federation reduced the possibility that they might use violence in order to improve their situation. This was because any widespread use of group violence would be a clear sign of the danger that they represented to the security of the country and participation in protest or violence could injure them.

From the 1960s onward there was a clear rise in the strength of the public struggle against the continuation of the military government and in February 1960, there was an acrimonious debate in the Knesset about the subject when three legislative proposals demanding its cancellation were tabled. What was new about these proposals was that they came from the left (Maki) and the right (Herut) of the political map. Menachem Begin, then a member of the Knesset, representing the right wing, stated during the debate that "It is

possible to establish an efficient civil administration that will maintain, to the same degree—and better, the security measures demanded by the people and the state.”⁸ In the same debate Toufik Toubi demanded the cancellation of the military government by arguing that it was not only harmful to the democratic character of the State of Israel but was doing great harm to the relations between the Jews and the Arabs in the country.⁹ In contrast to the position adopted by his party during the violent events of 1958, this time Toubi did not call for violence to end the military government.

The proposed law did not get a majority vote in the Knesset but this did not weaken the resolve of the struggle. One of the stormiest and most acrimonious debates about the continued functioning of the military government was in February 1962.¹⁰ During this debate, members of the Knesset from Mapam (Ya’akov Hazan), the Liberal Party (Pinhas Rozen), Herut (Menachem Begin), and Ahdut Avoda (Yisrael Bar-Yehuda) introduced similar proposals for the cancellation of the military government. When Ben-Gurion responded to the proposed law and rejected it, his speech was interrupted more than once by members of the Knesset from different parties. Some members of the Knesset factions were not satisfied with their parliamentary actions and also began to act in the public arena. Herut, Mapam, the Liberals, and Ahdut Avoda organized public meetings that supported the cancellation of the military government and this received support from the newspaper *Ma’ariv* which wrote that a majority to cancel it was forming in the Knesset.¹¹ Ultimately in the vote that was taken on February 20, 1962, the proposed laws calling for the cancellation of the military government were rejected.

The government, from its side, promised to accelerate the implementation of the decision made on December 3, 1961, to increase its budgetary investment in the development of Druze and Arab villages.¹² Despite the government’s success in rejecting the proposed law to cancel the military government, Ben-Gurion decided upon a list of additional easements for the Arab minority and these included the cancellation of the night curfew and the issuing of licenses for a period of two years in contrast to the practice of issuing licenses on a daily or weekly basis.¹³ These easements show that, despite the victory in the Knesset vote, Ben-Gurion was feeling the parliamentary mood (and possibly that of parts of the public) and, as a result, chose to introduce these easements. At the same time the authority of the military government personnel was reduced and transferred to the police. These easements, which continued until Ben-Gurion’s retirement in 1963, reflected the ongoing, but slow and gradual changes that were taking place in the government at that time toward the Arab minority.¹⁴

An accelerated change to the point of a turnabout in government policy was only seen after the change of personnel in the prime minister’s office in 1963. The new prime minister, Levi Eshkol, adopted a more lenient policy in

many areas and this was supported by the public mood which made it possible for him to support easements for the Arab population. He wanted to transform the apparatus of the military government into something that could “see but not be seen” but, at the same time, because “a sharp eye was needed, and we should pray that we never need to use it.”¹⁵ One of the most practical and significant expressions of the change in policy is encapsulated in Eshkol’s October 1963 announcement of the cancellation of the requirement for members of the Arab minority, except for citizens who were security risks, to carry a personal license to move about.¹⁶

After the elections to the sixth Knesset in November 1965 Eshkol, who had been reelected to be prime minister, announced that it was his intention to find ways to cancel the military government.¹⁷ Among the reasons for coming to this decision was the assessment of the security situation that claimed that the introduction of easements for the Arab population has not led it to act violently against the Jewish majority and the State institutions. On November 8, 1966, Eshkol announced to the Knesset that beginning on December 1, 1966, the military government would be cancelled and that “the functions that it had to carry out in the past would be transferred to the appropriate civil authorities to deal with.”¹⁸ By doing this he, in fact, gave the final green light for the change in policy toward the Arab minority and for the cancellation of the machinery that had directly affected the lives of the Arab population for almost two decades.

The announcement of the cancellation of the military government did not bring about a change in practice of the government’s policy toward the Arab minority. In the months following the Eshkol’s announcement (from January 1967 onward) all the powers of the military apparatus were transferred to the police and the security service and they enforced the policy of surveillance and control over the Arab minority with even greater strength than the mechanism of the military government had. Moreover, during the first week of the June 1967 War the government decided to re-impose the military government over the Arab population because of the fear that they might want to help the Arab countries. The government was cancelled again at the end of June after it became absolutely clear that the Arab population had no intention of acting against the state in either the areas of terror or collaboration with the Arab armies.

The central change in the government’s policy toward the Arab minority during these years was mainly in its consciousness. It expressed the recognition that there was a need for gradual change in the policy while constantly examining any possibility of damage. The government’s power during this period continued to be dominant mainly in the three traditional areas: the existence of the military government (despite certain easements that had been made for the Arab population), the appropriation of lands, and the prevention of the return of the refugees to the country. Even so, this policy was not

limited to these areas only. For instance, in everything concerned with the treatment of security risks, the security services did not hesitate to act with determination and force to frustrate them, such as took place with the incident involving the Al-Ard group.

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP AND WORKERS DAY IN MAY 1958: ACTIVISM AND READINESS FOR VIOLENCE

The Arab leadership's patterns of activity in preparation for Workers Day in Nazareth (May 1, 1958) and their march was different in comparison with the patterns of protest that had characterized its behavior during the first decade of the state. In order to analyze this difference in a precise historical context one has to examine the atmosphere inside and outside the country during the months before the event. In contrast to the argument that says that the Arab minority was calm and obedient during these years,¹⁹ it should be said that these years were marked by continuous parliamentary protest and the first sparks of the expression of protest and violence in the field.

During the first half of 1958 there were a few developments that, to a degree, changed the picture of the local and regional situation. The State of Israel was approaching the celebrations of the tenth anniversary of its existence and, beginning January 1958, the security services identified a rise in the national feelings of the Arab Israeli citizens. They understood this to be the influence of the politics and media presence of Gamal Abdel Nasser, the president of Egypt, which included steps being taken to establish a united Arab community. A series of decisions made at the Cairo conference which stated (in the English formulation) that the Arabs had the right to the land of Israel and the broadcasting of propaganda to the whole region from the heart of Cairo. In addition to this, there were the political changes taking place in Algeria following the revolution led by the National Liberation Front (FLN) against French rule in Algeria.

These developments which were external in nature but had a connection with the population of the Arab minority, according to the security factors in Israel, were influencing the awakening national consciousness of the Arab citizens. They estimated that an escalation in the methods of activity, led by the Communist stream, was possible and that it would include strikes, the signs of rebellion, opposition, and public disorder. Isser Harel, who was head of the Mossad in those days, estimated in a January 1958 discussion that took place in the Mapai Committee for Arab Affairs, that "an escalation in the relations between Jews and Arabs in the country was expected."²⁰ He believed that there was a danger of sliding toward a civil war based upon the growing number of signs of irredentism in the Arab population.

In the Communist Party as well there were changes that were taking place after the death of Stalin in 1953. The twentieth anniversary of the World Communist Party revealed a split in the unity of the rank and file and it is possible that at this congress the first signs of a change in the patterns of activity of Maki began to appear. This congress, for the first time, exploded the myth around the image of Stalin and as a result of the discussions every Communist party drew the conclusions that were relevant to its country.²¹ Inside Maki an acrimonious argument broke out between the Jewish and Arab members. Toubi, for example, who had met with Arab communists from Syria, for the first time, demanded that a change be made in Maki's definition of the 1948 War. In his view they should no longer be talking about a war of liberation but an "unjust anti-Arab war."²² Toubi and his colleague, Emile Habibi, questioned the borders of the State of Israel as they had been established after the war in 1948 and Berl Belti, a member of the party, who was witness to the challenge they were expressing, interpreted this as an expression of the aspiration for Arab irredentism expressed by his fellow members.

Scholars who research this party see the 13th conference that took place on May 29, 1957, in Jaffa as the event in which, for the first time, their nationalistic expressions were publicly used. Habibi, at that time, coined the concept of the right of the Palestinian People to self-determination and used it together with the traditional statement about the right of Israel to exist. His colleague, Emil Touma, noted in his speech to the conference that the withdrawal of Israel to the 1947 armistice lines was a necessary condition for its recognition by the Arab states.²³

In January 1958 the Arab leadership of Maki held a secret meeting in the Habibi's home, about which the party center knew nothing, which discussed the possibility of carrying on guerrilla warfare in Israel that was similar to the type employed by the National Liberation Front in Algeria. In a clarification that was later carried out the meeting was not denied by those who took part in it.²⁴ Belti's testimony, which is firsthand since he was a member of the Communist Party, is a clear sign of the decision to adopt the Algerian model of struggle to Israel.

In the Hebrew press there were already articles being published in 1958 whose central message was the decision of top Arab leaders in Maki to move on to an active struggle. During this period Habibi went on a revival journey in Arab villages such as Kfar Kara and Arabeh, where he called on them to liberate themselves from the burden of conquest and published articles that called on the Arab citizens of Israel to actualize their right to self-determination as what he called the Palestinian Arab People. These national feelings were translated into deeds at a well-chosen time while ignoring the preventative steps taken by the police who, already in February 1958, hastened to arrest dozens of Maki activists on suspicion of incitement against the state.

The Nazareth branch of Maki organized the events of Workers Day and called upon the public to take part in the central parade through the city. This mass demonstration was already an illegal act even before it took place because before the day of the event the police prohibited the display of any sign of demonstration and only permitted public gatherings. The Nazareth branch, encouraged by Habibi, made a show of strength and confrontation with the police without having authorization from the higher institutions of the party. The event in Nazareth turned into a violent clash between the demonstrators and the police with the demonstrators throwing stones and damaging the police vehicles and the events spilling over into the area of Umm Al Fahem. When the storm subsided there were found to be more than three hundred injured and hundreds of the participants in the demonstration arrested. Months later the Arab heads of Maki admitted that “it was a bad mistake to choose violence.”²⁵

The Knesset had to discuss the riots in Nazareth on May 26, 1958, and the question that needed to be debated was whether the members of the minority who had been arrested in the disturbances should be put on trial. Ben-Gurion gave a speech and chose to exploit the information that had been revealed about Maki’s preparations for a violent confrontation with the security forces and pointed an accusing finger at the leaders of the party saying that:

The hooliganism was the result of the work of agents of a hostile country that are trying to incite one part of the citizenry against the state and this was not only done on May 1st. It was done two days before the City of Nazareth—which I think is totally Arab—decided on the tenth anniversary celebrations. Maki, acting as the foreign agency of a neighboring hostile country, and shouting praises in honor of the dictator of that country, decided to break the law and disrupt the celebrations.²⁶

The Maki members of the Knesset, who were present during the discussion, did not offer any objection to what Ben-Gurion said and the only one who tried to protest, in a feeble way, was Member of the Knesset Esther Vilenska from the communist stream, who claimed that the ones who were hooligans in Nazareth were the police. Ben-Gurion immediately shushed her and said: “That will be decided in a court of law.”²⁷

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP AFTER THE EVENTS IN NAZARETH: LESSONS LEARNED AND THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE

Maki continued to be the central political force in Israel’s Arab minority after the serious events in Nazareth. Its members of the Knesset and other activists continued working toward cancelling the military government in ways permitted by law in democratic countries. Most of these activities were coordi-

nated with Jewish factors both inside and outside the Knesset mainly concerning the organization of demonstrations, which rarely took place. This was a clear lesson learned from the results of the violent events and from the renewed attempts to arrive at an effective dialogue with the government.

On the parliamentary level the Maki members of the Knesset made proposals to the Knesset's agenda aimed at gaining a majority among the house's factions to cancel the military government. One such proposal was made by Toubi who, in a speech to the assembly in November 1963, claimed that "there is nothing real in the easements for the Arabs, as long as the military government continued to exist."²⁸

During those same years there was a revival of the Arab nationalist stream in the ranks of the Communist Party and the leaning toward this line, which first began in the second half of the 1950s and which was violently expressed in the events in Nazareth, received public expression at the beginning of the 1960s. At the fourteenth conference of the party (from May 31 to June 3, 1961) Habibi, Toubi, and Sliba Khamis argued that Maki should erase the words "mutual recognition" from their demand for recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian People. Their demand was rejected, but it was enough to make the nationalist feelings of the Arab members concrete. These feelings were again made public at the beginning of 1962 when Moshe Sneh, who was the head of Maki, published an article in which he attacked Ahmed Ben Bella, the president of Algeria, who had announced his readiness to send 100,000 soldiers if a decision was made to eliminate the State of Israel.²⁹ Toubi and Habibi came out against the Sneh's article and argued that "there is no place for criticism against any Arab leader, irrespective of what he says, since he reflects the Arab national spirit."³⁰

Between 1963 and 1967 the process of the development of national feeling continued among the Arab members of Maki but, during this period, they did not channel it into patterns of violent activity. One can try and point toward a number of reasons for the absence of any decision to turn to channels of violence: first, the memory of the severe riots that took place in Nazareth in 1958; second, the force employed by the government to restore order in Nazareth when the government's actions included the arrest of more than three hundred suspected of being involved in the disturbances; third, the internal political crisis that was taking place in the ranks of Maki, which led to the main activity of the party being the attempt to avoid a split—something that ultimately did take place in 1965; and fourth, Maki members were followed after government's policy enforcement toward Al-Ard, which made it clear for them how and that you can protest against the authorities.

Although Maki was the leading political force within the Arab community, the first signs of a change in the political map of the Arab minority in Israel could be seen. In July 1958, about two months after the events in Nazareth, Arab workers together with prominent activists in Maki estab-

lished the “Arab Front” which was, in fact, the first Arab national organization established in Israel. The establishment of this new political body, which only lasted a year, was done under the influence of the Arab national revival in Egypt and Syria and their tripartite union with Iraq. Arab students studying at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, who had developed political awareness, began to display admiration for Nasser, because he had promised them a battle for the liberation of the Arab nation from its exploiters, by which he meant the western countries. Sabri Jiryis, who was a student at this time, has pointed out that the ability to acquire education and to broaden his horizons helped him to understand the reality in which he lived and claimed that his political views matured and sharpened.³¹

The need for the brief episode of the Arab Front was not accidental since its founders had been the founding nucleus of the Al-Ard group. At first the group was called *Usrat Al-Ard* (The Land Family) and its members directed their activities at three target communities—the first being the State of Israel. The members of the group wanted to change the political map and the character of the state through carrying out a struggle based only upon Arab members. This in itself demonstrated a feeling of primordial nationalism. The second target group was the traditional leadership of the Arab minority whom the members of Al-Ard viewed as old fashioned and no longer suited to the times. The last target of the members of Al-Ard was Maki whom they saw as a bitter political rival to be fought.

The new ideology of the Al-Ard group already took on a practical approach in October 1959 by publishing a newspaper that appeared under different names until January 1960 (so that they would not need a permit for it) in which they lambasted the state, its institutions, and its leaders. From time to time the publications also included threats that were directed at the State of Israel which demanded that the Arabs be allowed to live and then, perhaps they would allow the Jews to live.³²

The government’s reaction to the Al-Ard group’s behavior and its publications was immediate. Salah Baransi, the newspaper’s editor, was accused of publishing an unlicensed newspaper, was found guilty and placed on probation. This step taken by the government led the members of Al-Ard to seek legal ways that would make it possible for them to operate. They made a request to establish a commercial company but the government here also made a show of force and the registrar of companies refused their request because of security reasons and the public good. Mansour Kardoosh, one the group’s leaders, made an appeal to the Supreme Court to allow the registration which was accepted and in the summer of 1962 the company was registered.³³

The Supreme Court’s decision encouraged the Al-Ard members to widen their field of activity and they made a request to receive a license to distribute a newspaper, but this was rejected. They appealed again but this time their

appeal to the Supreme Court was rejected. At the same time they also turned to international institutions and the foreign press and wanted to use them to arouse world public opinion about the plight of the Arab minority living in Israel. The next stage in the activities of Al-Ard was the attempt of their members to establish an Ottoman association because this kind of association was the only legal framework for political parties in Israel. The goal of the registration was to register a new Arab political party that would operate in the political arena and carry out the platform of Al-Ard which wanted to change Israel's Jewish and democratic character. The government refused to accept the appeal and the Haifa District Commissioner wrote to Jiryis, that Al-Ard was founded with the intention to do harm to the existence of the State of Israel.

The members of Al-Ard did not relent and again appealed to the Supreme Court but this time the judges decided to demonstrate their power of the Judiciary as an arm of the government and adopted an uncompromising position in their reply to the appeal. The court analyzed the mission of Al-Ard and arrived at the conclusion that it was disregarding the existence of the State of Israel and the rights of the Jewish People. The three judges unanimously decreed that the organization called Al-Ard was not included in the framework of the democratic boundaries of the State of Israel.

An analysis of the patterns of activity of Al-Ard shows that the members of the group acted without using violence during the first years of the state. In a range of things from dialogue to violence they chose the option of protesting through publishing a newspaper, registering a political party, and public activities. Perhaps the platform of the group, which chose to operate only on the basis of Arab membership, was also perceived as being dangerous because it contained aspects of separatism. In the eyes of the government, this activity was threatening and dangerous because the members of Al-Ard did not recognize the Jewish character of Israel. The result of the accumulation of clashes between the Al-Ard activists and the government's policy led to the use of the power of the officers of the law who declared the group to be illegal.

Even after this verdict was given, Al-Ard continued its activities until finally in November 1964 the minister of defense used the authority given him by law and signed the order to make the Al-Ard group illegal. Four of its leaders—Salah Baransi, Mansour Kardoosh, Habib Kahouji, and Sabri Jiryis—were arrested and interrogated. During 1965 the members of Al-Ard continued to try to register a list to run in the elections to the Knesset but the Central Elections Committee cancelled the list because they said it was a rehash, meaning "it was the same lady in a different dress."³⁴

THE INDIFFERENT RESPONSE OF THE ARAB LEADERSHIP TO THE CANCELLATION OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT

The announcement of the cancellation of the military government did not lead to a practical change in the government's policy toward the Arab minority. The officers of the military government who had been following the mood of the Arab minority reported that the population was relating to the announcement by Eshkol with indifference.³⁵ National and local leadership factors sent telegrams of congratulations to the prime minister's office on making the decision to lower the curtain on the reality that had lasted for eighteen years.

Al-Ittihad, the official Arab newspaper of the Communist Party—which was the most distributed paper among the Arab population at that time—gave little space to the issue of the military government. In the months before the announcement the newspaper was dealing with international affairs like the war in Vietnam and local issues like the worsening economic situation which was expressing itself in rising prices or the municipal elections in Nazareth.³⁶ The newspaper was quite indifferent to the official announcement by the prime minister from the podium of the Knesset and in an issue published on December 2, 1966, the editorial called for a renewal of the campaign to cancel the military government since—and they emphasized this—declarations were not enough; they needed to be accompanied by actual content. The article called for concrete steps to immediately remove the authority of the military governors, to cease the policy of closing off territory and to stop the wave of arrests of Arabs who had been placed on the “black-list” of the government.

On December 23, 1966, the decisions that were made by the central committee of the Communist stream in those days were published. The issue of the military government was only sixth on the list of decisions preceded by decisions that dealt with defending the peace and democratic freedom, the protection of the interests of the working class, the vote about the danger of Nazism in Germany, identification with the people of Vietnam who were fighting against the United States and the need to increase cooperation between the communist parties throughout the world. As far as the military government was concerned they satisfied themselves with just calling for its cancellation and for the beginning of real participation by Arab citizens in state frameworks. Throughout the whole period there was no call for or report made by the paper about using violence against the government in order to force it to put the decision to cancel the military government into practice.³⁷

The members of the Knesset from Rakah scorned the prime minister's announcement and were convinced that the apparatus would not be cancelled but would just be replaced by a civil apparatus. In his speech to the Knesset

Toubi argued that the only change would be that the Arabs in Israel would not have any contact with army personnel but, from now on, would have to deal with the police. He finished up by saying that there was nothing new in the prime minister's announcement since the military government would remain the same.³⁸

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE JUNE 1967 WAR: SHOCK AT THE RESULTS OF THE WAR

The way the national Arab leadership (the communist stream) related to the June 1967 war needs to be examined in the context of the changes that had taken place in the Communist Party. In the years preceding the war there was a deep split in the ranks of the party which split the historical structure of the party into two separate entities with one, Maki, remaining the political stronghold of the Jews and the other Rakah (The New Communist List) becoming the home of the Arab members and some of the Jews, such as Meir Vilner.

On this background differences of approach could be seen between the members of Maki, which was led by Sneh, and Rakah (Toubi, Habibi, and others) in matters concerning the solution of the conflict between the Israeli nation and the Palestinian nation. Sneh wanted to adopt Russian involvement in the spirit of the Tashkent Agreement which brought about peace between Pakistan and India while Rakah adopted the line led by the president of Egypt and claimed, as Toubi had, that the Israeli policy did not make it possible to get to Tashkent.³⁹

During 1966, there was enough accumulated public evidence that indicated that Rakah had taken on the accoutrements of Arab nationalism even though its ideological core was still communist. The members of Rakah deepened their identification with the pro-Arab policy of the Soviet Union. They also ignored the terrorist actions being carried out by the Syrian army and the PLO, which had been established in 1965 as an organization that would carry the nationalist struggle of the Palestinians forward. Moreover, Habibi even claimed that the terrorist actions of the PLO were being carried out as a proxy of the United States. Together with this the leaders of their party avoided calling for violence as a form of activity and even issued a public statement condemning the murderous terrorist activities of the PLO.⁴⁰

In the months of May through July 1967 their newspaper devoted a lot of space to the issue of war. At first they wrote about the possibility of a military confrontation breaking out between Israel and its neighbors; later they printed descriptions of the battles and finally they wrote about the results of the war. On May 12, 1967, the newspaper quoted senior defense sources saying that "A clash with Syria is inevitable." A week later, in the

May 19 issue there was a notice published by the Communist Party that included a call for quiet on the borders, an admonition that the threats made by the prime minister and the commander-in-chief of the army were not serving the interests of peace; and the argument that a military confrontation would only serve the imperialist interests of countries like the United States and Great Britain. The notice finished with the slogan "Yes to Israeli security! No to military action!" A week before the war broke out, in the May 30 issue, the Communist Party again called for the avoidance of military action.⁴¹

On June 6, a day after the outbreak of the war, the editorial of the newspaper was devoted to the situation of the Arab citizens of Israel because of the war and its central message was that "this population should not be seen as a hostage but, in fact, as a bridge between Israel and the Arab states."⁴² Throughout the war and, in fact, until the end of June the newspaper satisfied itself with informative reports on what was happening in the field and the diplomatic efforts to end the war. Even so there were also reports published about protests following the wave of arrests of communist activists carried out by the government to ensure quiet in the Arab sector.

Rakah accused the government of Israel of being responsible for the events and the central committee of the party announced that this was, in fact, the result of Israel's aggression and had been planned with the United States and Great Britain. Rakah, like the Soviet Union, accused the Israel of trying to topple the regimes in Egypt and Syria. The strengthening of the nationalist component in Rakah steered its reactions toward a line that identified it with the policies of the Soviet Union and this expressed itself after the war as well when the party adopted Moscow's position against Zionism and support for Israel's withdrawal to the June 4, 1967, borders. These positions were expressed in legitimate ways for a democratic society such as through articles in newspapers and public announcements without resorting to illegal frameworks of action.

The Knesset discussed the results of the war in a special debate at the end of July 1967. After a statement made by Abba Eban, the foreign minister, about the diplomatic ramifications of the war. A debate ensued in which Emile Habibi, the Rakah representative, and chose to focus upon the need to establish peace in the region. He warned that the results of the war had not solved the basic problems of the State of Israel, had made peace more distant, and had increased the danger that another war would begin soon. He ended his speech by extending his hand as a gesture of peace between the Israeli nation and the Arab nation. There was no call for violence or aggression by the Arab public toward the state in his speech.⁴³

There are no primary sources that indicate that, among the Arab leadership, there was any influential factor that had had tried to act violently against the state as an expression identification with the Arab armies. It is

possible that the rapid and decisive victory in favor of Israel had made the balance of powers between the parties clearer and, had, in fact, prevented any possibility of choosing any violent pattern of action. Together with this there may have been another reason that arose from the power the government had over the Arab minority in those days. Together with imposing the military government over the Arab population with the beginning of the war, the government arrested Arab personalities who were members and supporters of Rakah and Al-Ard on the morning of June 5 and extended their administrative detention until June 20, 1967.⁴⁴ The rapid action taken with these personalities, who may have called for violent action, significantly reduced the possibility that its use might have disturbed the routine of life throughout the country.

Quite a few of the members of the Arab minority preferred to express identification with the State of Israel following the impressive military achievements during the war and in the archives of the State of Israel there are hundreds of letters and signatures of Arab citizens which express pride in the IDF's victory. In some of the letters there are also requests made by Arabs to enlist in to national service. The priest George Hakim, for example, one of the senior people in the Christian community and a public figure since the establishment of the state, published a notice in which he called for the Christian community to donate blood for the IDF wounded as part of his view that one had to help the country that was fighting for its survival.⁴⁵

SUMMARY

During the second decade of the existence of the State of Israel changes took place in the way the state related to the Arab minority which expressed themselves in two main areas. One being a slow and continuing change in the government's policy, whose peak was the cancellation of the military government; and the other being the growing integration of the members of the Arab minority into the general workforce in the country. While the government's policy toward the Arab minority did gradually and continually change up until the cancellation of the military government the power the government demonstrated toward this minority and toward external threats made by Arab countries remained. This power expressed itself toward the Arab minority in the neutralization of localized security dangers such as there was, for example, in the case of the Al-Ard movement and the arrest of violent activists in June 1967. In the local arena at the end of June 1967 Israel's hand was uppermost in three military campaigns and this was something that, in the eyes of the Arab minority citizens, finally established its being a permanent entity in the region. Israel's power not only affected the Arab citizens of Israel but, for example, the Arab residents of East Jerusalem

as well. These were mired in a kind of stalemate during the first month after the war and the patterns of protest adopted after this at the beginning of August 1967 were characterized by civil rebellion which included calling for strikes and the nonpayment of taxes. The Jerusalem issue is relevant to the summary of this chapter only because it highlights the fact that the leadership of the Arab Israeli citizens, who closely followed the developments in Jerusalem, did not imitate this pattern of action, and did not join in the calls for civil rebellion.

The events in Nazareth in May 1958 were the first group violent events carried out in a political context and were the results of a decision made by the Arab leadership in Maki. According to at least one source, when they made the decision they compartmentalized their fellow Jewish members in the leadership of the party. The preservation of secrecy about the action was one of the reasons for its success since there was no other leadership factor in the communist party, or outside it, that could have tried to prevent the adoption of this violent action. In this event the first attempt at creating the collective identity of a deprived minority was made as was the mobilization of sufficient resources to create a protest in the field. This attempt included a long publicity campaign that preceded the event the aim of which was to create the desired protest and which emphasized the inferior situation of the Arab minority. This activity was also carried out with a demonstrative disregard for government policy which warned that it would not tolerate the holding of the demonstrations. This event and an acute political dispute, including within the Communist Party, as well as the preventative steps taken by the government (as in the case of the Al-Ard movement) were among the main reasons for such displays of group violence not being repeated in the Arab minority. One important restraint was the presence in the political arena of public factors that did not support violence and one of the people who could be counted among these factors was Elias Kousa who warned against slipping into a pattern of violent actions and published a call to the leaders of Al-Ard in which he warned that "they are crossing the line of what is permissible in actions against the government."⁴⁶ It is difficult to assess the level of influence of the things said by the members of the group but it seems that the fact that Kahougi, who was one of the salient members of Al-Ard, found himself debating with Kousa about the methods to be used in the struggle could demonstrate, quite persuasively, the public importance given to Kousa's words. *Al-Ittihad*, the only national newspaper and the mouthpiece of the communists, did not call for violent action against the authorities and its editors preferred to constantly protest against the actions of the military government and the steps taken by the authorities against the minority.

From a historical perspective, the June 1967 War, which was an event that took place outside the group being researched, was not enough to bring about a violent outburst by the Arab citizens of Israel and there are a number

of possible reasons for this. Israel was so clearly victorious on the battlefield that its military power was proven to be indisputably greater than that of the Arab armies. In addition, the government took steps that led to the arrest of political figures that had the potential ability to cause riots in the Arab sector, which turned out to be a successful, preventative move. In the political arena the split in the Communist movement made it difficult for them to mobilize the public to protest violently against the steps taken by the government in both internal and external arenas.

This period is important in regard to the development of the political awareness of the Arab minority in Israel because during this period of time the first attempt was made to establish a political body, based on Arab nationalism that believed in violent action to achieve its political goals. In this aspect the importance of the Al-Ard group as an entity on the political map of the Arab citizens of Israel was not only in its being a precedent for the attempt to establish a factor with political power that was extreme and challenged the existence of the State of Israel but also in its being a signpost for factors with political power that were to develop in the Arab minority in later years. In the two events that have been examined—the cancellation of the military government which increased the freedom of movement for the Arab minority and the June 1967 War—there was no leadership in the Arab sector which chose to use violence to advance its political goals as a response to the steps taken by the government. The absence of a fighting leadership reduces the chances of any displays of violence taking place.

NOTES

1. *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, April 8, 1958, p. 4.
2. *Ibid.*, April 15, 1958, p. 4.
3. Knesset minutes, Vol. 47. December 1, 1966.
4. Henry Rosenfeld, "The Situation of the Arab National Minority in Israel," *Research Notebooks*, 3 (Haifa, 1979); Hain Zandberg, "Scope of appropriation and its Ethnic Division: Is it really discrimination?" <http://public-policy.huji.ac.il/upload/zandberg.doc>.
5. Mansour and Benziman, *Sub-Tenant*, p. 157.
6. Yair Boimel, "The Military Administration and its Cancellation Process 1958–1968," *The New East*, 43, (2002), p. 138 [Hebrew].
7. Central Bureau of Statistics, 15 annual, 1967.
8. Knesset minutes, Vol. 28, February, 22, 1960, p. 663.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 665.
10. Knesset minutes, Vol. 33. February 20, 1962, p. 1316.
11. *Ma'ariv* newspaper, February 18, 1962.
12. Israel National Archive, Arab Affairs Bureau, file 6397/3944/2/c.
13. Knesset minutes, Vol. 33, February 20, 1962, p. 1326.
14. Israel National Archive, Arab Affairs Bureau, file 6337/1653/c.
15. Knesset minutes, Vol. 38, October 23, 1963, p. 51.
16. Israel National Archive, Arab Affairs Bureau, file 313/11/I.
17. *Davar* newspaper, November 7, 1965.
18. Knesset minutes, Vol. 47, November 8, 1966, p. 228–242.
19. Oded Haklai, *Palestinian Ethno-Nationalism in Israel*, p. 13.

20. Labor Party Archive, file 2-926-1957-148, pp. 24–26.
21. Berl Belti, *The Struggle for Jewish Existence*, (Jerusalem: Magness, 1981) [Hebrew]. The book deals with the struggle of the Israeli Communist Party (Maki) with the political changes that took place after the War of Independence and its attempts to bridge the gap between its communist ideology and its aspirations for a national home for the Jews in the State of Israel. The book naturally makes note of the tension that, from time to time, characterized the mutual relations between the Jewish members of the party and their Arab colleagues.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 49–50.
23. The 13th Maki Convention's Protocol, 1957, p. 180.
24. Belti, *The Struggle*, p. 63.
25. *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, May 6, 1958. Also see: Belti, p. 63.
26. Knesset minutes, Vo. 27, March–September 1958, p. 1900.
27. The importance of the comments made by Member of the Knesset Vilenska was not in the things she said but because she was the only one who found it necessary to interrupt Ben Gurion's speech while her Arab fellow members chose to remain silent during the debate in the Knesset. The complete discussion appears in the Knesset minutes, March–September 1958, vol. 27, p. 1901.
28. Knesset minutes, Vol. 38, November 27, 1963, p. 354.
29. *Kol Ha'am* (Voice of the People) newspaper, April 13, 1962.
30. Belti, *The Struggle*, p. 103.
31. *Ha'aretz* newspaper, December 12, 1965.
32. *Kifah el-Ard* newspaper, (The Struggle for the Land) December 7, 1959.
33. The judgment was made by three judges who explained that "It is inconceivable that the interest in publishing dangerous opinions in the country is a matter for the registrar of companies. . . . The law has placed the state's security interests in the hands of other authorities and not those of the registrar of companies." The explanation of the judges, in fact, reveals another facet of the policy of the administrative authorities, in this case the registrar of companies, who chose to invalidate the company by itself, without consulting with security factors. See The High Court sitting as The Supreme Court of Justice, Bagatz 241/60, Mansour Kardoosh versus the Registrar of Companies, Judgment, vol. 15 (1961), p. 1152.
34. The appeal made by Al-Ard which was running in the elections under the name of the "Socialist List" was discussed before three judges from the High Court on three sessions during the month of October 1965. See The High Court sitting as the Supreme Court of Justice, Elections appeal 1/65, Ya'akov Yardor versus the head of the Central Elections Committee for the Sixth Knesset. Judgment, vol. 19, part 3, (1965) pp. 365–390.
35. Israel National Archive, Arab Affairs Bureau, files 6243/30/c, 382/15/l.
36. See for example: *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, January 7, 1966; February 18, 1966; November 18, 1966.
37. *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, December 23, 1966, p. 4.
38. Knesset minutes, Vol. 47. November 8, 1966, p. 234.
39. *Zu Hadderech* (This is the Way) newspaper, March 17, 1967.
40. *Ibid.*, June 9, 1966.
41. *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, May 12, 1967, 19, 30.
42. *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, June 6, 1967, p. 1.
43. Knesset minute, Vol. 49, July 1967, p. 2781.
44. *Al-Ittihad*, June 20, 1967, p. 2.
45. Israeli National Archives, file 289/13/l. This issue with emphasis on the support of the West Bank Christians is analyzed in by Dafna Tsimhoni, "The Political Network of Christians in Israel," *The New East*, 32 (Jerusalem: Magness, 1989) pp. 139–164.
46. Kahougi. *The Arabs under the Israeli Occupation*, p. 554 [Arabic].

Chapter Five

The 1970s

The Yom Kippur War and “Land Day”

BACKGROUND

This chapter deals with two main events that took place during the 1970s and which were both significant for the Arab Israeli citizens in the context of the use of violence to achieve political goals. One is the war in October 1973 (Yom Kippur War) and the other is “Land Day” which took place on March 30, 1976. The first case is relevant to the Arab citizens of Israel because of the nationalist (and ethnic) connections with the Arab countries. The second case touches upon the issue of lands which is one of the most charged and sensitive subjects in the ethos of the Arab minority and results of which had direct ramifications for the life of this minority. Moreover there is a clear connection between the two events since the prevailing mood among the Arab citizens of Israel after the war in 1973 was characterized by feelings of victory, despite the fact that there was a clear and decisive outcome on the battlefield in favor of Israel, and these feelings nurtured tendencies that encouraged protest and violence in the case of the “Land Day”.

The Yom Kippur War broke out on October 6, 1973, and began with a combined attack by the armies of Egypt and Syria upon Israel. Five divisions of the Egyptian infantry that began to cross the Suez Canal and three divisions of the Syrian motorized infantry that attacked along the frontier of the Golan Heights benefited from an almost complete tactical surprise. The war ended on October 24, when a ceasefire was imposed upon both sides by the Security Council of the United Nations according to Resolutions 338 and 339 and by the two superpowers: the Soviet Union and the United States. At the end of the hostilities the Egyptian Third Army remained on the territory of

the Sinai Peninsula surrounded by the forces of the IDF and cut off from their sources of supply.

In spite of the harsh blow Israel received at the beginning of the fighting the results of the war were an achievement for the IDF which, from an opening position that was very difficult managed to defeat its enemy. At the end of the last day of fighting the IDF soldiers were forty-four kilometers from Damascus, the capital of Syria, and 101 kilometers from the Egyptian capital, with no Egyptian forces separating them from Cairo.

The second event, which was called "Land Day" by the Arab citizens of Israel, relates to events that took place in the vicinity of Sakhnin, Dir Hana and Arabeh and in the area of the triangle on March 30, 1976. Just previous to this time the authorities had published orders to appropriate lands throughout the Galilee (northern part of Israel) among which were 6,320 dunams (2.44 square miles) of land belonging to the Arabs to be used for the expansion of the cities of Karmiel, Upper Nazareth, and Safed. As the time grew closer Arab leadership factors tried unsuccessfully to have the orders cancelled and on the appointed date, March 30, the orders were acted upon and severe clashes took place in the area between Arab (and Jewish) demonstrators and the police and security forces. At the end of the day six demonstrators had been killed and dozens injured. Since then, every year on March 30, the Arab minority in Israel has commemorated "Land Day."

GOVERNMENT POLICY AFTER THE 1967 WAR: HARD-LINE SECURITY AND SIGNS OF CIVIL OPENNESS

The 1967 War did not bring about any essential change in the government's policy toward the Arab minority. The tendency toward more leniency that the government had begun to introduce with the rise of Eshkol to prime minister in 1963 continued and there are those who called this policy co-existence, because the aim was to create a reality of a cooperative life between two groups living in one country together with a recognition of the tensions that existed between the two populations which were different in their ethnic, national and religious identities. In practice the government's policy consisted of two main interests: firstly, security, which did not leave any place for doubt about anything involving the need to prevent both internal and external security threats; and secondly, civil interests which aspired to expand the integration of the Arabs into the different state frameworks. This policy was supported by security factors. Avraham Ahitov, who, in the general security agency, was responsible for issues involving the Arab citizens of Israel during those years, recommended that the gates of the governmental administrative offices be opened for the employment of qualified Arabs except for employment in sensitive roles. This was done based on the assump-

tion that their integration into these frameworks would likely reduce the influence of negative ideas on the educated class which was seen by the general security service as “the most dangerous class of all.”¹

Another expression of this policy was the government’s official announcement (which was not yet fully implemented) about its intention to integrate Israeli Arab citizens into all areas of life, to grant them complete equality, to improve their municipal services, to preserve the Arab culture and uniqueness and to make it possible for Arab Muslim citizens to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. One of the areas the government invested in, in order to create the conditions for the openness that would make the integration of Arabs into the life of the country possible, was the area of education. In every village, and even in the main tent encampments of the Bedouin, schools were built, veteran teachers underwent training and refreshment courses and the Arab Teachers Seminary dealt with the preparation of new teachers. During those years there was criticism expressed about the great gaps that existed between the Jews and the Arabs in the education system, but the enormous growth in the number of Arabs who knew how to read and write in the 1960s proved that the investment in education for the Arab population had proven to be worthwhile.² The government’s investment in education had an influence upon the development of a new generation of intellectuals among the Arab citizens of Israel whose political awareness, from the 1970s onward, brought about the phenomenon of the increase in demands being made, some of which were antagonistic, of the government.

Another aspect of the policy of integration was the activity carried out by the office of the Advisor on Arab Affairs. From 1963 the office began to foster activities in the Arab villages throughout the country which included lectures, study days, study circles in areas such as civics and music and quizzes on different general knowledge subjects. This was all done in the framework of the policy of coexistence and the desire to make the Arab citizens feel more affinity with the state.³ After the 1967 War those who believed in this policy argued that it had been justified because, in practice, the Arab citizens had stood by the country during the state of emergency that preceded the war (and during the conflagration itself) and did not express support for the enemy or carry out any hostile acts against the state.

This integrating activity was, however, not enough and, although it did signal the intention of the government to change the policy toward the Arab minority, it was a slight change, not to say limited. Significant positive changes could not be seen in the field. It is possible that one of the reasons for this was the lack of attention paid by the government and the bureaucracy to the needs of the Arab minority. Shmuel Toledano, the Advisor on Arab Affairs from 1965 to 1977, reflected on this saying: “It was very difficult to convince the Prime Minister to hold discussion about the Arab population in Israel.”⁴

In July 1973, three months before the war broke out, there was an attempt made to examine the results of the policy adopted toward the Arab minority as it was implemented during the 1960s. Toledano presented then Prime Minister Golda Meir with a document that reviewed the state of the Arab minority and the effect of the government's policy toward them.⁵ Among the conclusions drawn in the document there was a recommendation to take action to foster the Arab's feeling of belonging to the state and, in this way, to reduce the Arab minority's strong nationalist sentiment toward the Arab countries. The document also warned that Israel was likely to find itself with a severe problem at the beginning of the 1980s as a result of the significant rise in the number of highly educated people in the Arab population, because such people develop political awareness and, in the future, would make dangerous demands of the government. The document also expressed concern about the possible use of force and violence by the Arab minority if these demands were not accepted.

The immediate result of the presentation of this document was the formation of an interministerial committee that presented its own document in which they made recommendations for the government's policy toward the Arab minority. The basic premise of the document was the need to integrate the two populations and it included a discussion of specific subjects such as education and lands. One of the recommendations was to cease the appropriation of lands belonging to Arabs and to encourage the migration of Arabs to the large cities. The document was presented to a full meeting of the government but there was no real discussion that led to the adoption of decisions about the Arab minority. Even after the document was authorized in 1974 in the framework of a discussion of the Committee for Matters of Security there was a significant gap between the decisions made and their implementation in the field, especially in the areas that the Arab minority considered to be essential, in particular the issue of the appropriation of lands that continued uninterrupted up to the events of the "Land Day."

During these years, the security policy continued thwart potential threat to the character of the state. The return of refugees to the country was prevented and the process of appropriating lands from Arabs in order to establish new Jewish settlements continued. The appropriation of land, which was directly connected to the events of the "Land Day" in March 1976, was implemented in two phases—from 1970 to 1971 and from 1975 to 1976—as part of a wider process of appropriation which was decided upon in 1966 by Eshkol, who was interested in developing the Galilee. Eshkol's program was only authorized by the government after ten years. On February 29, 1976, the government decided to appropriate 20,000 dunams (7.72 square miles) in four areas in the Galilee: 4,700 dunams (1.81 square miles) were to be appropriated in the area of Nazareth of which 3,600 (about 77 percent or 1.39 square miles) were Arab-owned; 7,500 dunams (2.9 square miles) in the area

of Karmiel of which 1,900 dunams were Arab-owned (26 percent) and 5,800 dunams (2.24 square miles) in the area of Safed , all Arab-owned or state land. Of the total of 20,000 dunams that the government wanted to appropriate, 6,320 were owned by Arabs (31 percent). The minister of finance signed the orders of appropriation on March 11, 1976.⁶

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP: NATIONAL AWAKENING, POLITICAL ACTIVISM, AND THE READINESS TO USE VIOLENCE

The Arab leadership in Israel changed its appearance during the 1970s. It was no longer the veteran, well-known leadership made up of the heads of the Communist stream (Maki and later Rakah) nor the people who chose to join Zionist parties. From the beginning of the 1970s new political frameworks developed in the Arab sector and the first of these was the Sons of the Village in 1972. These frameworks adopted a variety of ideologies and showed readiness to choose the use of different patterns of activity from those that characterized the way the veteran leadership had handled things. Among the reasons for this were the ramifications and influences of the June 1967 War. Bastuni has described Israeli society after the war as “a society in which two communities live in Israel: a large community made up of Jews and a smaller community made up of Arabs which do not actually communicate with each other enough . . . the spiritual ghetto prevents the integration of the Arab community into the country’s life.”⁷ What he writes attests to the fact that also after the war the loose links between the two groups in the country, which were different from each other in aspects of ethnicity, nationhood, and religion, continued. After 1967 this phenomenon strengthened the question of national identity among the Arabs, especially among the educated classes who experienced feelings of alienation.

Another result of the war was Israel’s conquest and control of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Up to the war the Arab citizens of Israel had been physically isolated from the political changes that had been taking place in the Arab world and, beginning from the second half of 1967 the borders between them and the West Bank and Gaza Strip residents opened up. The contacts between the two populations became regular and included familial, economic, commercial, and educational and cultural interactions. Young Arabs who were citizens of the State of Israel found themselves studying in educational institutes such as colleges and universities and religious institutes in the West Bank. The influences of political movements that existed in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip rapidly began to affect different factors among the Arab citizens of Israel, including their turning to activities that were violent. One of the clear expressions of this was the relatively high rate of Arab Israeli citizens joining the ranks of Palestinian terrorist organiza-

tions. In the period of time, after the end of the 1967 War up until the war in 1973, 320 Arab citizens of Israel were put on trial for security offenses which ranged from joining the ranks of various organizations, to being members of the PLO, to carrying out attacks against Jewish population concentrations.⁸

The enlisting of hundreds of individuals into the terrorist organizations was a direct expression of the awakening of national feelings in the Arab minority and this feeling also grew as a result of the intensive exposure during those years to anti-Israeli propaganda in the media of the Arab countries and in the East Jerusalem press.⁹ This nationalist component and the rise in political consciousness also led to a growing recognition of the gap that existed between economic growth in the Arab centers of population and the situation in Jewish centers. Added to this was the Arab minority's recognition of the existence of a gap between their situation as a minority and the situation of the majority group in everything connected with integration into the social-political circles of the country. An internal discussion began within the Arab minority about identity formation and the search for solutions to the situation of the minority population. These processes formed the worldview of the generation of young Arabs that had grown up in a geopolitical reality in which the State of Israel existed and, out of this, a generation of young, educated people grew which not only had been educated toward achievement and aspiration but that also had a developed political consciousness.

As a result of these processes the way the Arab citizens of Israel conducted themselves changed from passivity to political activism. The Communist stream adopted an ambiguous position: on the one hand condemning acts of terror carried out by Palestinian organizations against Israeli citizens, while on the other hand, the spokesmen of the party continually attacked and condemned the conquest of the territories. The pattern of Rakah's activity at the end of the 1960s and at the beginning of the 1970s was characterized by demonstrations and petitions in support of the Palestinian struggle while emphasizing the national narrative.

The increase in national feelings was not only felt by the supporters of Rakah and those who chose to connect themselves with the terrorist organizations. An analysis of the publications published by politicians and intellectuals who supported dialogue with the government, some of whom even going as far as joining Zionist political parties, also shows their awakening of nationalist feeling. A prominent motif that appeared in the various publications determined that their links to the West Bank, which began after the 1967, had strengthened the national Palestinian connection among the members of the Arab minority. This was claimed to be so by Abed Al-Aziz Zouabi, who was a Mapam member of the Knesset and mayor of Nazareth, and Khalil Nakhleh, an Israeli Arab sociologist.¹⁰ Mohammad Wattad, also a member of Mapam, wrote that the Arab citizens of Israel were experiencing

the phenomenon of returning to their sources and of reconnection to the consciousness of suffering in the Arab countries.¹¹

The way Nakhleh relates to the national awakening is, in itself, worth discussing since he deals with the subject on two dimensions: consciousness and practicality. The dimension of consciousness is based upon the system of collective identity which is made up of beliefs and feelings connected to historical events. These are stored in the collective memory of the group and preserve its cultural cohesion even when the political frameworks disintegrate.¹² Nakhleh claims that the defeat in the 1948 War has been ingrained in the collective memory of the Israeli Arab citizens and that the loss of ownership of the land has not wiped out the collective Palestinian identity of this population. The dimension of practicality examines the way the minority conducts itself toward the majority group and considers the different options available to the minority group. These include a widespread network that includes the preservation of cultural pluralism, assimilation into the majority group and, alternatively, separatism or militancy. A survey that was carried out among the Arab citizens of Israel in 1966 (116 participants) found that eighty-one of them preferred pluralism, six opted for assimilation, thirteen for separatism, and none opted for militancy. A similar survey carried out after the 1967 War, which included 191 participants, showed a more extreme trend with fifty-three preferring the continuation of pluralism, none choosing assimilation, seventeen supporting separatism and nineteen choosing militancy.¹³ In the responses of those surveyed during 1967 there is enough to attest to a sharp change that had taken place in the group within one year and one can conclude that there was a rise, at least in the dimension of consciousness, in things that touched upon nationalism.

The awakening of the Palestinian national feelings of the Arab minority in Israel, which, in the future, would also influence the adoption of patterns of violent activity (as took place in May 1958), from time to time found expression in the field. For example, in September 1970 when President Nasser of Egypt passed away, his death, which took place at the same time as the "Black September" events in Jordan, was marked with mass mourning processions by Arabs in Israel in the villages of the triangle and in the Galilee.¹⁴ Although these events took place without violence they did express the identification of the Arab minority with their fellow Palestinians who had suffered losses in Jordan and with Nasser's ideas about Arab nationalism.

At the same time, another development that contributed to the strengthening of the national feelings was the rethinking that was taking place in the PLO about the Arabs who were Israeli citizens. The traditional approach of ignoring the Arabs who were living in Israel was replaced by the approach that recognized the importance of this population for the Palestinian struggle. A clear and concrete expression of this was made in the summary report of

the Palestinian National Council (PNC) in 1972 in which, among other things, was written: "The PNC calls for support for the struggle of the Arabs in Israel in order to preserve their national and Arab identity and to strengthen the links of national unity between the masses of our citizens living in the areas conquered in 1948, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and outside the conquered homeland."¹⁵

In 1974 the PLO was recognized by the Arab countries as the sole representative of the Palestinian people and a year later was given the status of Observer in the UN. These developments strengthened the prestige of the organization and its links with the Arab population. Rakah, which during these years still enjoyed the status of being the leading organization and the strongest political force in the Arab sector, called upon the government in Israel to withdraw from the conquered territories, to recognize the PLO and to allow the Palestinian people to realize their right to self-determination. In the municipal domain the national feeling expressed itself in the election of Tawfik Ziad as mayor of Nazareth in December 1975. The election of Ziad, who had a charismatic personality, symbolized the change that had taken place in the Arab street during those years.¹⁶

After June 1967, and on the basis of these changes and processes that the Arab citizens of Israel were experiencing, it was only a question of time before new political frameworks were established because of the development of a new generation of educated people whose political consciousness had strengthened and could be identified.¹⁷ The first practical political expression of the rising national feelings during the period being examined in this chapter was in 1971. Students from Tel Aviv and Jerusalem universities, tried to establish the Arab Academics Union. This attempt was met with sharp reactions in the Hebrew media and, because of differences of opinion within the founding core group, this attempt to establish a political body failed.

The first practical political organization was formed in 1972 when a new framework was established by the initiative of young educated Arabs. The name of the movement was the Sons of the Land, but after a little while, they became known as the Sons of the Village. This new political movement was led by Mohammed Kiwan, a lawyer from Umm el Fahem, where the first nucleus of the Sons of the Village appeared; members were students, people who had been arrested for security reasons and had spent time in Israeli jails and educated people who were described as revolutionaries. The radicalization of the consciousness was translated into national feeling (Palestinian) and was also expressed politically in the May 1977 elections when half of the Arab votes went to the Communist list which contained both Jewish and Arab members.¹⁸

The changes that took place in the political consciousness of the Arab minority after the June 1967 War provide us with a framework to analyze the

way the Arab leadership in Israel handled itself during the Yom Kippur War and the "Land Day" events.

The October 1973 War was a surprise for the leadership of the Arab minority. Even if there had been public signs of a possible attack by the Arab side,¹⁹ they did not lead to any reaction from the Arab leadership until the actual outbreak of war. An analysis of the issues of *Al-Ittihad* from the month of September and October 1973 reveal an interest in other stories entirely, the main ones being reports on the army coup in Chile, the preparations being made by the central committee of the Communist Party for the general elections to the Knesset, and the political crisis taking place in the Labor Party, which formed the government. On September 28, just a few days before the war broke out, the newspaper also dedicated a column to mark the third anniversary of the death of Nasser, the late president of Egypt.

On October 2, the paper published a report about tension on border between Israel and Syria but this was also made up of citations from the Hebrew press. Three days later, on October 5, a day before the outbreak of the war, the newspaper published reports from the media of the Arab world which warned of an Israeli attack upon the Arab countries. Beginning on October 9, and continuously for the rest of the next month, *Al-Ittihad* reported about the war, the various battles, and the situation of the balance of power on the northern and southern fronts. Articles written by the heads of the Communist Party (Habibi and Toubi) regularly called for a ceasefire and an end to the bloodshed. Habibi expressed the hope that the war would be the "last tragedy"²⁰ and Toubi (October 19) asked "How can we make this war into the last war in our region?"²¹ The solution he suggested consisted of a withdrawal by Israel from the conquered lands and entry into discussions about achieving an overall peace arrangement. In another article Habibi asked: "Haven't we (the Arabs) spilled enough blood for peace up till now?"²² At a meeting of the youth movement of the Communist Party in Tel Aviv on October 27, the young generation of the party was called upon to fight for peace. Throughout the whole period of the war, even after the end of the fighting, on October 24, there were no calls made by the Arab leaders, who were Israeli citizens, in the issues of the newspaper to act violently and so express identification with the Arab countries fighting against the State of Israel. Moreover the senior members of the Communist Party, which was still the largest political force at that time, preferred to protest against the war through publishing articles and sending messages that mainly focused upon the need for reconciliation between the fighting parties.

The feeling among the Arab citizens of Israel after the war was pride and satisfaction in the so-called victory won by the Arab side in the war.²³ These feelings were also expressed in Arabic literature and poetry. The poet, Toufik Ziad wrote the poem "The Great Crossing" (in Arabic, "Alabour al-Kabir") which is a total hymn of praise to the Egyptian army's crossing of the Suez

Canal and surprising the IDF.²⁴ The feeling of victory was also influenced by external changes which were perceived to be positive by the Arab side. The PLO had established its international status, Arafat was invited to speak at the UN General Assembly and the organization was even accepted into the UN as an Observer. In practical terms the expressions of this feeling led to the establishment of new institutional political frameworks and, among the bodies that were established after the war, were the Committee of the Heads of Local Councils (1974), the Committee of University Students and, later, bodies that were involved in the issue of land appropriation. Within two years (1974–1975) these bodies were holding many demonstrations and strikes involving their awareness about the deprivation the Arab minority were suffering. The Committee of the Heads of Local Councils, for example, made it clear in an announcement about its establishment that its goal was to fight for the promise of treatment from government ministries that would be equal to that given to the Jewish institutions for Arab local authorities.²⁵ In spite of the strengthening of the Palestinian identity there were no displays of group political violence during the October War and in the period between then and the events of the “Land Day.” The rate of involvement of Arab Israeli citizens in terrorist activities was also less when compared to the six previous years between the the two wars of 1967 and 1973.²⁶

An additional significant development that began after the 1967 War was the awakening of religious feelings among the Muslim population. The first signs of the blossoming of the Islamic component appeared in the villages of the triangle in the years after the war when Muslim clerics (Imams and preachers) from the West Bank came into the Arab villages and started religious activities. Their main messages were the call to return to religion and to see religion as the true path and refuge from the temptations of modernization.²⁷

Regarding “Land Day” in March 1976, there were preparations beginning to be made by factors in the leadership of the Israeli Arab citizens a year before the implementation of the appropriations. During this period a number of political forces were active in the Arab minority, such as the veteran Communist stream, the young Sons of the Village movement and the Committee of the Heads of Local Councils. In June 1975 the Nazareth branch of Rakah organized a conference in which methods of demonstrating common Arab protest against the intention to appropriate lands were discussed and, at the end of the meeting, the participants decided to actively mobilize public opinion and to organize a national demonstration to protest the new plans of the government. This initiative gained momentum during the summer of 1975 during which additional coordination meetings were held in Haifa and Nazareth in which Rakah activists, representatives of the academics and students, religious figures and the heads of local councils participated. At the end of a meeting held in Nazareth on August 15, an announcement was made

by the National Committee for the Protection of Lands, which warned against the government's intention to appropriate 30,000 dunams (11.58 square miles) of land, of which 17,000 dunams (6.56 square miles) were agricultural land mostly owned by Arabs.²⁸ In a subsequent meeting that took place on October 18, 1975, representatives of the Bedouin in the Negev also participated which was a step that gave the struggle of the Arab minority a national standing. At this meeting a number of decisions were made including the establishment of a national committee to protect the lands and to work toward the cancellation of the expected appropriations, to send a protest delegation to the Knesset and to prepare a document that would contain the demands of the land owners to present to the prime minister. At this stage of the activity it was clear that the leaders of the Arab minority were headed toward dialogue with the government accompanied by protests within the framework of the protest procedures used in democratic regimes.

The establishment of the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands was a very significant step since a national body had been established that crossed political streams and which concentrated and led the protest efforts against the appropriation of lands. Every local committee was active on the local level, explaining the dangers involved in the dispossession of Arab lands. The establishment of the national committee also made it possible for the heads of the local councils to continue to deal with the other municipal issues apart from the question of lands.

The actions of the National Committee to Protect the Lands were being carried out during this period of uncertainty for the Arab leadership about the government's intentions and, although it was clear that widespread land appropriations were planned, the exact extent was not known and different spokesmen of the government provided different data. In addition to this the uncertainty grew because of the exclusion of Arab factors from the discussions taking place in the various committees that were taking part in the plan for the development of the Galilee. This unclear reality encouraged the members of the committee to increase their activities and step up the protest actions and this was all taking place before the government had made any actual decision to carry out the appropriations. The *Al-Ittihad* newspaper of the Communist Party also made its contribution with its headline of the February 17, 1976 edition, "Five Thousand Fighters," a story devoted to the report about the mass demonstration in Sakhnin following the announcement of the planned appropriations. On February 21, four days later and eight days before the government made its decision, Sliba Khamis, one of the members of the committee, announced that the Arab public would demonstrate outside the Knesset on "Land Day" which would be a day of strikes and protest in the Arab areas of Israel.²⁹

It was obvious that in the months that passed from September 1975 until February 1976 there had been an escalation about the issue of appropriations

as the time of its implementation grew near. At the beginning of March the headlines of *Al-Itihad* warned against “violent reactions to the development of the Galilee which was, in fact, the Judaization of the area.”³⁰ On March 6, the members of the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands, together with the heads of the local councils, declared a general strike on March 30. In a public statement they published in the press, which was distributed to the whole Arab public, the members of the committee made it clear that they had decided to turn March 30, the day of the implementation of the appropriations, into “Land Day.” On this day, the Arabs would raise their voices to demand an end to the official policy which had become a threat to the future of the Arabs in Israel.³¹ In preparation for this a well-oiled organization was set up that included publicity in newspapers (including Hebrew newspapers) and a public relations campaign in the Arab villages in which the public was convinced to come to the area being appropriated. Another announcement was distributed on March 11 by the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands in which there was a call to the Arab public to declare a general strike on March 30, 1976, and to turn this day into “Land Day” in Israel.³²

Against the Lands Committee stood more than forty heads of local councils who believed that they had to take action to cancel the decision to appropriate lands through negotiations with the government. They sent a letter to the prime minister and met with ministers and senior public servants in an attempt to cancel the decision. Zaki Diab, the mayor of Tamra, who was a member of the camp that supported dialogue with the government, warned that “If the moderate camp feels deprived it will hold a grudge, it will act . . . and if it acts it will be a non-constructive force and then there will be a great danger from the Israeli Arab citizens.”³³ This camp was against the general strike and its members held two meetings (on March 21 and 22) which ended with them deciding not to impose the strike on their villages. They did not exert pressure on the National Committee for Protection of the Lands to cancel the strike and abandon the scenario of severe escalation in the field. Even if they did, there is no source that indicates any attempt made by them as a group or individual to take any action against the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands in an attempt to prevent the mass protest action that was planned for March 30. The main reason was apparently based upon their feeling that, if they acted against the way taken by the committee, the wider public would see them as collaborators with the government in a sensitive national matter such as lands.

As the date of the appropriation neared, the frequency of the meetings held against the intended appropriation increased and, together with this, the use of hostile language also increased. In a meeting held in Shfaram on March 27, the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands again called for a strike to defend life, the land, and the homeland.³⁴ The aggres-

sive approach of the committee in which there were representatives of all the leadership factors as well as representatives from Rakah, the Students' Committee and the heads of local councils, created a heavily charged and agitated atmosphere in the field. The practical expression of this took place in the field a day before the intended appropriation was to take place. On March 29, the Arab protestors prepared themselves to confront the representatives of the law who had to begin the appropriation. On the night between March 29 and March 30 Israeli security forces that had come to the Beit Netofa Valley, in the area that was between the villages of Arabeh and Dir Hana, came up against many demonstrators who were burning tires, throwing stones and burning cans of kerosene at the security forces. The forces returned fire and this resulted in one demonstrator being killed. The authorities, in an attempt to show strength, dispatched reinforcements to the field and imposed a curfew on the whole area.

On the morning of March 30, the villagers in the area (Dir Hana, Arabeh, and Sakhnin) disobeyed the curfew that had been imposed on them and gathered in the main streets where they clashed with the representatives of the law. They besieged police cars, attacked soldiers and border police and threw fire bombs in cans and bottles at them. The forces opened fire at the rioters and at the end of a day of fighting there were six people killed in addition to the Arab citizen who had been killed the night before.

The events in the three villages quickly spilled over to other areas and, in the Galilee, incidents of disturbance of the peace were reported in a number of villages (Reineh, Kafr Kana, Mashhad, Tura'an, and Ein Mahel) as well as in the triangle in the villages of Taibeh, Kalansawa, Tira, and Jaljulia. During the time that serious confrontations were taking place in the field the members of the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands did nothing to restrain the demonstrators. Tawfik Ziad, for example, who was a member of the Knesset, a member of Rakah and the mayor of Nazareth, rejected a call from the representative of the ministry of the interior to make a declaration cancelling the strike.³⁵

SUMMARY

From a historical point of view the beginnings of the "Land Day" events can be seen as having already begun nine years before in the months following the June 1967 War. This period of time was characterized by changes in the political perceptions of the Arab minority in Israel and these expressed themselves on a number of levels. Their awareness grew about the inferiority of their situation compared to that of the Jewish majority, which was different from them in aspects of ethnicity, nationhood and religion; during these years new contacts were established with the Palestinians living in Judea and Sa-

maria who were also members of the same ethnic group; and new political frameworks developed and were constructed during these years in which charismatic figures appeared who became leaders in the Arab sector.

The 1973 War, in itself, did not lead to occurrences of political violence among the Israeli Arab citizens but, its results, which included feelings of pride in what was perceived to be Arab superiority and a so-called victory and names given to it such as the “Ramadan War” (the Arab month in which it took place), accelerated the political activity in the Arab minority. This consisted of two interconnected tiers one of which, as previously noted, was the establishment of new political frameworks and the other was the expression in the field of this activity through the frequent demands made to the government and the holding of protest activities that were permitted by law up to “Land Day.” The 1973 War was therefore an external event that affected, even if indirectly, the construction of a process which ended up with the choice of violent action in order to achieve political goals.

Like what took place in May 1958 in Nazareth, in the case of “Land Day” the Communist stream, which was already called *Rakah*, was the directing factor behind the violent protest. As the strongest political body in the Arab sector the leaders of the party chose to fight against the land appropriation with all their might as remarked by one of their leaders.³⁶ This was the first time in which leadership factors in the Arab public made it clear that they were prepared to fight against the government’s policy of appropriation even at the cost of choosing direct confrontation with the government’s security services. From a historical point of view one can see the “Land Day” events as a turning point in the development of the relations between the Arab minority and the Israeli government since, from now on, the component of choosing to use violence to advance political goals was added to the range of the minority’s patterns of action.

In the case of “Land Day” the choice of using the violent pattern of action came following a strongly implemented government policy involving the sensitive collective national issue for the Arab minority of land appropriation—something which also affected them individually. In this case, in contrast to what had happened in May 1958 in Nazareth, there was a leadership that was using restraint and trying to prevent escalation in the field before it erupted but whose political power was insufficient when faced with the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands. This same restraining leadership factor understood the trap it had befallen when it had had to maneuver between its basic desire to protest in a controlled fashion and its inability to stand up to the demands for a pervasive violent struggle over the sensitive national issue. The determined opposition to the line chosen by the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands was likely to brand the restraining leadership as traitors in the same way that Arabs who had chosen to receive compensation from the authorities for land that had been appropri-

ated were branded in the 1960s. Moreover the appropriation of lands symbolized the essence of the meaning of the struggle for the Arab minority in two essential dimensions: in the symbolic dimension the issue of the lands was a main component of the collective identity; and in the practical dimension the land was the main source of income for many Arab farmers.³⁷

After the 1967 War the nationalism of the Israel Arab citizens was colored by a Palestinian shade and an Israeli one. As it did in May 1958 the Communist leadership exploited the collective identity and the emotional bond of the population to the land in order to mobilize resources for the protest activities. This activity was possible because the Israeli government authorized the holding of a legally permitted demonstration but the organizers of the event exploited the political opportunity that fell into their hands to turn it into a violent event.

“Land Day,” which was organized by the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands, was, until that time the biggest mass activity held by the Arab citizens in Israel’s history. For the first time a number of political bodies had come together to form one national leadership and, in contrast to the events in Nazareth in 1958, this was not the fight of the Communist Party alone. There are no signs to indicate that any member of the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands had tried to cancel the violent approach that had been chosen and, although there were a number of attempts made by the senior members of Rakah to talk to the police and promise them not to enter the villages in which the events had been planned, but no more than that. Moreover the headline chosen by *Al-Ittihad* to describe the events was “The Second Kfar Kassem Massacre,”³⁸ was an expression of the decision made by Rakah and the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands not to express regret for the pattern of activity chosen.

“Land Day” was also the first case in the history of the Arab minority in which the issue of the lands (the soil) made a connection between the Palestinian national component in their identity of attachment to the land and the civil component of demanding equal rights as a national minority group. In this respect the presence of a leadership factor that had an effect was a direct influence on the choice of the pattern of violent action. From this point onward every time there was some escalation in the relations between the authorities and the minority populations, whether on a national or civil background, the alternative of using violence became more legitimate and turned into one of the options discussed in the leadership framework until it became a routine pattern of action. This situation is different from the lessons learned after the events of May 1, 1958, in Nazareth, when the leaders of the Communist Party, which was the only national leadership factor, expressed regret over the decision to stir up the street.

The events of “Land Day” also had ramifications for the Israeli establishment. Since 1948 until these events took place the Israeli government estab-

lishment had employed a consistent and continuous policy regarding the appropriation of land but, following the loss of life and the extent of the riots, a change took place in the government's policy toward this. After the events government factors tried to explain that the aim of the process of appropriation was to develop the Galilee for all its citizens and were not being done to harm the Arab public. The Ministry of Housing, together with the Israel Lands Authority, put together a plan to relieve the distress caused by the lack of land for the Arab sector, and, in July 1976, the authority announced that it would allot lands to the local councils for building and development.³⁹ Six months later Avraham Ofer, then minister of housing, announced a program of his department to assist young couples with special repayment conditions and, in parallel, a plan to build 1,200 new apartments in Nazareth was completed.⁴⁰

In February 1977 it was announced that, together with the government's decision about appropriation, an arrangement had been arrived at between the Israel Lands Authority and about a third of the Arab landowners that had received orders of appropriation. The compensation that was given for appropriating the lands was calculated according to their value after development, which assured an enlarged compensation for the landowners. In fact, the events of "Land Day" proved to be a turning point in the way the government related to the issue of land appropriation since, after this, the previous policy virtually came to an end in the Galilee and the triangle at least up until the beginning of the 1980s.

NOTES

1. Mansour and Benziman. *Sub-Tenant* p. 74.
2. Ya'acov Landau. *The Arabs in Israel: Political Thoughts*. (Tel Aviv: Ma'arachout, 1971), pp. 54–56.
3. Israel National Archive, Arab Affairs Bureau, file 17019/3.
4. Mansour and Benziman. *Sub-Tenant*. p. 77.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 76. All attempts to get the original document were unsuccessful. The document itself is widely cited in Mansour and Benziman.
6. Elie Rekhess. *The Arabs and Land Appropriation in the Galilee: Background, Events, and Consequences 1975–1977* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1977) [Hebrew]. Rekhess goes extensively into the question of the appropriation of lands from the establishment of the state and examines the tensions that arose in connection to this between the government and the Arab minority. In his publication he does not include an analysis that looks at the part played by the Arab leadership at that time in the instigation of violent activities and does not analyze the factors that led to the choice of violence.
7. Rostam Bastouni, "Socialism and Israeli Arabs," in Ze'ev Goldberg (ed.), *The Western Socialism*, 16 (Beit Berl, 1970), pp. 65–71 [Hebrew].
8. Shetandhal, *Between the Hammer and the Anvil*, p. 303.
9. Landau, *Political Thoughts*, pp. 45–46.
10. Abed Al-Aziz Zouabi, *The Arab Citizens of Israel under Double Loyalty Dilemma* (Ma'alot, 1971) [Hebrew]. Khalil Nakhleh, an Israeli Arab who immigrated to the United States, wrote a paper in which he dealt with the dilemma of a double identity which has influenced the choice of patterns of activity. See Khalil Nakhleh, "Cultural Determination of

Palestinian Collective Identity: The Case of the Arabs in Israel," *New Outlook*, 18:7, (1975), pp. 31–40.

11. *Almirsad* was the name of a Mapam journal in Arabic and this article was published in it on August 31, 1972.

12. Edward Spicer, "Persistent Cultural System," *Science*, Vol. 174, No. 4011, (1971), pp. 795–800.

13. Khalil Nakhleh, *Cultural Determination*, pp. 37–38.

14. This is the name given to the harsh violent events that took place in the Hashemite Kingdom in the month of September 1970 during which the Jordanian army slaughtered the PLO terrorists who had established themselves in within the borders of the kingdom. Following the reports about what was taking place in Jordan the Arab citizens of Israel chose to react with marches, but quietly. See Eli Rekhess, "The Arabs in Israel and the Arabs in the Territories: Political Linkage and National Solidarity 1967–1988," *The New East*, 32 (Jerusalem: Magness, 1989), pp. 171–175 [Hebrew].

15. Gideon Shilo, *The Arab Citizens of Israel and PLO*, (Jerusalem: Harry Truman Institution, 1982), pp. 75–78 [Hebrew].

16. Yitzhak Reiter, *National Minority, Regional Majority: Palestinian Arabs versus Jews in Israel*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2009), p. 39.

17. Mohammad Al-Haj, *The Arab Education System in Israel* (Jerusalem, Floreshaimer Institution, 1994), pp. 14–15 [Hebrew].

18. Hillel Frisch, *Israel's Security and Its Arab Citizens*, (Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 65. Frisch describes how discussions about the radicalization of the Arab minority began after the 1977 elections but it is only partial since extreme political frameworks had already been active in the minority beforehand and there had already been two cases of widespread group political violence in 1958 in Nazareth and on "Land Day" in March 1976.

19. Uri Bar Yosef extensively analyzed the signs that the IDF's intelligence wing had had in the year preceding the outbreak to the war. For more see Uri Bar Yosef, *The Observer Who Fall Asleep* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2001) [Hebrew].

20. *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, October 12, 1973, p. 1.

21. *Ibid.*, October 19, 1973, p. 4.

22. *Ibid.*, October 23, 1973, p. 6.

23. Amara, *Political Violence*, p. 30. This feeling was not only felt by the Arab public in Israel but also throughout the Arab world there was a similar mood and, according to some of the historians who have researched the phenomenon this euphoria did damage to the Arab world which did not manage to exploit the results of the war in order to go through a process of modernization. See, for example Fouad Ajami, *The Arab Predicament*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

24. The poem first appeared in the *Al-Ittihad* newspaper on December 23, 1973. When it was published once again on October 4, 1974, it aroused a widespread public controversy because of its content which expressed complete identification with the Egyptian success in the battlefield. For more see Avraham Ynon, "Tawfik Ziad: We Are the Majority Here," in (ed.) *Arabs in Israel: Continuity and Change*, in Aharon Laish (ed.) (Jerusalem: Magness 1981), pp. 213–241 [Hebrew].

25. *Al-Ittihad newspaper*, June 21, 1976.

26. A comparative analysis of involvement in terrorist activities indicates a drop in the rate of involvement of Arab Israelis: 55 involved in the period between 1973 and 1976, an average of 14 a year, as opposed to 320 Israeli Arabs involved from 1967 to 1973, an average of 54 per year.

27. Thomas Mayer, *The Awakening of the Muslims in Israel* (Givat Haviva, 1988), pp. 31–32 [Hebrew].

28. *Al-Ittihad*, August 19, 1975.

29. *Ibid.*, February 24, 1976.

30. *Ibid.*, March 2, 1976, p. 1.

31. *Ibid.*, March 9, 1976. One of the members of the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands was Azmi Bishara, who was representing the students. In his testimony before the Orr Committee, which examined the clashes that took place between the security services and

the citizens in October 2000, Bishara stated that the National Committee for the Protection of the Lands had decided upon a strike to take place on March 30, and added that he remembered the clashes with the security services very well. For more see Orr Committee, meeting 55, December 2001.

32. www.icf.org.il/landday25. Accessed June 20, 2008.

33. *Al-Ittihad*, February 20, 1976, p. 2.

34. *Ibid*, March 29, 1976, p. 1.

35. *Ma'ariv*, newspaper, March 31, 1976.

36. Meir Vilner, one of the prominent Jewish members of Rakah, verified it in his article under the title "The First Land Day." Accessed at www.icf.org.il on June 20, 2008.

37. A survey carried out among the Arab citizens of Israel in 1976 revealed that close to 57 percent of the respondents noted that either they personally, or someone in their family had experienced land appropriation by the government. In this same survey 40 percent of the respondents also defined themselves as "Palestinians." For more see Sami Smooha, *Arabs and Jews in Israel*, vol. 1 (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989), pp. 86–87. The composition of these data, which reflect the connection between national affinity and the feelings of deprivation on the background of land appropriation, explains the ability of the leadership to mobilize the public, with no particular effort, for harsh political activity against the government on "Land Day."

38. *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, March 31, 1976.

39. *Al-Anba* newspaper, July 13, 1976.

40. *Yediot Aharonot* newspaper, January 19, 1977.

Chapter Six

“Land Day” in 1982 and the First Lebanese War

The Sabra and Shatilla Massacre

BACKGROUND

This chapter deals with the memorial events for “Land Day” in 1982 that were stormy and violent when compared to the “Land Days” that had been regularly marked since 1976 and with the 1982 Lebanese War and its effect upon the Israeli Arab citizens. The events of the 1982 “Land Day” powerfully reflected the changes in the politics and consciousness that the Arab population was undergoing in regard to the question of its national identity. The events of the war in Lebanon, emphasized by the massacre in Sabra and Shatilla, concretely and powerfully demonstrated the national, ethnic and religious bonds of the Arab Israelis and the Palestinians, who were the victims of the massacre. This chapter also includes events that took place during the fourth period of the secondary periods that were presented in part I and it is a period that was characterized by maturation of the process of Palestinization of the Arab minority.

The two events also make it possible to examine the way the new political frameworks, established by the young, educated people with their developed social and political consciousness, handled things. During this period, these factors pursued new ways for their struggle which included violent patterns of activity against the government through which they could express their demands in both national and civil concerns. Thus the chapter deals with the establishment of the new political frameworks, their platforms, and patterns of activity in the field during festivals and memorial days and in cases when

there was escalation in the relations with the government over issues that were disturbing to the Arab minority.

Since the bloody events of “Land Day” in 1976 the Arab citizens of Israel have been marking the harsh events annually with memorial ceremonies, visiting the graves of the dead and holding demonstrations organized by political groups. Over the years, as the connections with the inhabitants of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip deepened, they also held events to identify themselves with “Land Day.” The memorial in 1982 was originally planned by the political factors to be a quiet day that would be marked by an assembly to honor the memory of those killed on the first “Land Day” and by a series of memorial ceremonies. The original program was changed following the escalation that took place in the field, both in the area of Israel and in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This escalation arose because of two issues which were the source of distress and frustration in the Arab sector. One was the growing tension in the West Bank because of the many clashes between the Israeli security forces and the Palestinian inhabitants and the other was the increasingly serious distress caused by the lack of housing for Arabs in the mixed cities in Israel.¹ In the end the memorial events planned took place, but were characterized by protest and growing tension in the relations between the government and the Arab minority.

The Lebanese War, which broke out on June 6, 1982, was a war between Israel and Syria and the Palestinian terrorist organizations which were operating from Lebanese territory and carrying out acts of sabotage on targets in the territory of the State of Israel. One of the significant events during the war took place on September 16, 1982, two days after the assassination of Bashir Jumayil, the leader of the Christians in Lebanon, when a group of armed Christians connected with the Falangist forces entered the Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps and murdered hundreds of the camps’ inhabitants, most of whom were Palestinians. There are no exact numbers for how many were murdered but the estimates range between seven hundred and eight hundred Palestinians. Israeli forces were not involved in the murders, but Israel was held responsible for them, even if indirectly, since it allowed the Falangists to enter the camps. The massacre reverberated widely throughout the international arena as well as with the Arab citizens of Israel who also reacted to it in violent ways.

GOVERNMENT POLICY AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 1980s: THE RECOGNITION OF GAPS BETWEEN THE ARABS AND JEWS

Following the events of “Land Day” in May 1976, the government of Israel held a discussion about the situation of the Arab Israeli citizens which took place on May 23, 1976. The government discussed the situation of the Arab

minority based upon the assumptions of work carried out by Shmuel Toledano, the then Advisor on Arab Affairs. He believed that the issue of the Arab minority in Israel was an exceedingly complex day of reckoning for Israeli society.² During these years, there had been a significant change in the way the professionals in the state's institutions viewed the approach that had to be taken toward the Israeli Arab citizens. The essence of this change can be found in the understanding that there was a need to present policy papers on a large number of issues that had to be dealt with over and above the components of security, as important as that might be, that would take a close look at the way the government relates to the Arab minority. Up until 1967 the security component had been of crucial importance for the government in its relations with the minority populations.

Moshe Kol, the minister of tourism until May 1977, and Toledano wanted to propose a policy mainly based upon making efforts to integrate the Arab Israeli citizens into the various state frameworks. This was based on the professional assumption that the national identity of the Arabs was different from that of the Jewish majority and that, considering the significant awakening of the collective consciousness of this population in everything connected with their being part of the Palestinian people, this was not likely to change in the future. Based on this view, from 1976 until the beginning of the 1990s, policy papers were written by different advisors on Arab affairs. After the May 1977 elections the advisors were Moshe Sharon and then Binyamin Gur Aryeh, who were the advisors to Menachem Begin, the then prime minister. All the papers that were presented to the prime minister described the situation of the Arab minority in the State of Israel and took into consideration the components of peoplehood, religion, civil needs, security threats and demographic developments as well as policy recommendations. One of the prominent common denominators of these papers was the attempt to create a differentiation in policy toward the Arabs who were showing loyalty to the state and those who were not.

In the same discussion that took place in May 1976, Kol suggested a program whose main principles were the absorption of a thousand qualified Arabs into the civil service, an improvement in the educational conditions for Arab students, appropriate arrangements in the issue of lands and the encouragement of economic initiatives between Jews and Arabs.³ Following this discussion the government made three decisions: Firstly, to establish a ministerial committee to coordinate the actions regarding the Arab citizens of Israel; Secondly, to adopt a policy whose purpose was to accelerate the integration of Arabs into the life of the state on the basis of full and equal citizenship while respecting their cultural and religious uniqueness; and thirdly, to create a public Jewish-Arab advisory council.

The proposed program presented to the table of the government without consulting Arab representatives before the cabinet meeting and, after the

discussion, in which Kol's program was adopted, the prime minister met with the representatives of the Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Councils and brought them up to date about the decisions that had been made by the government. In practice, these decisions were not implemented and the ministerial committee was not established while the public committee which had been decided upon was only convened once. After the working committees on the different subjects had been decided upon, they too were not convened.⁴ This was the first time (but not the last) in which a gap appeared between declarations made about the integration of minority citizens into state institutions and its actual implementation. Even though this was the case the declarations and the publicity they received created an atmosphere of dialogue between government factors and the representatives of the Arab minority, a step that had the potential to reduce the agitation and hostility within this population.

After the political upheaval in May 1977 Moshe Sharon became the Advisor for Arab Affairs. He firmly believed that, since 1948, the government had not managed to determine any model for the desirable relations between itself and the Arab minority. Sharon adopted a line that supported the integration of Arab citizens of Israel into the life of the country and chose to voice his ideas in an unusual way in a visit to the home of one of his Arab students in the city of Shfaram. During this visit he promised to realize the idea of civil equality for all citizens in the country and even promised to resign his post if his vision failed.

The policy recommended by Sharon aimed at the full integration of the Arabs into the framework of the country and was based upon two basic insights. The first touches upon national identity and the component of the citizenship of the Arab minority and the second upon the demographic balance between the two population groups. It was made clear in the document he prepared, that it was possible to expect the Arabs to be only loyal as citizens of the country and that there was no chance that they would identify emotionally with the state and its symbols. Accordingly, he estimated that the component of citizenship was the only basis upon which the fabric of a shared life could be established. Sharon expected there to be a reduction in the demographic difference between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority and believed that the demographic forecasts about the reduction and the connection between this and the growing trend toward Palestinian nationalism, that was gaining ground in large parts of the Arab population, was providing this population with the feeling of power.⁵ He pointed out the fear that actually was arising from the change in the character of the country and wrote: "that the image of a small minority, lacking in the ability to act against a decisive Jewish majority has been replaced by the new identity of a large public with influence that is rapidly growing every year."⁶ These things reflected the fear that the power that the Arab population might have could

be steered toward violent protest in order to change the social, economic and political situation of the Arab minority.

Based upon this, Sharon presented two possible ways the Arab citizens of Israel could express their loyalty to the country: readiness to serve in national service tasks and by signing declarations of loyalty accompanied by "appropriate behavior." In his view the ultimate test of the expression of (civil) loyalty by the Arabs to the state would be the pattern of their voting to the Knesset. He even suggested punishment steps, in the framework of a violation of loyalty, which would allow the government to cancel benefits that would be granted to the Arab minority.⁷

In the paper he presented to the government Sharon suggested a series of concrete recommendations and, among other things, he wrote the budgeting of resources in a way that would answer the needs of the Arab minority and he believed that the compulsory education law for girls had to be fully complied with. He also suggested that Arab women be assured suitable employment which was a step that would encourage them to go out to work and reduce the birth rate. Regarding the policy in security matters Sharon recommended a number of steps in order to deal with the phenomenon of radicalization that he had identified in the Arab population including the first buds of ignoring the law and demonstrable disdain for its representatives. In this framework he suggested the frustration of any organization by Arab bodies on a national level, the cancellation of benefits from Arabs who did not demonstrate loyalty to the state, the frustration of any attempt to establish any cooperative framework that included Arab citizens of Israel and Palestinians living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the reexamination of the possibility of mobilizing Christian Arabs into military service.

Sharon's position on the government's policy toward the Arab population was not paid much attention to by the political echelon and his detailed position papers were not discussed in any government forum, as he himself attested to afterward.⁸ Yitzhak Reiter, who was working at that time in the office of the Advisor on Arab Affairs, attributed Sharon's lack of success to the problematic political complexity that prevailed at that time. As he saw it, differences of opinion on authority between Sharon and the director-general of the prime minister's office, Eliyahu Ben-Elisar, prevented the possibility of bringing the groups relevant to the issue together, such as the Knesset and the government.⁹ A historical analysis shows that it was not only the bureaucratic differences of opinion that prevented the discussions that were supposed to improve the situation of the Arab citizens, but that there were also differences of political opinion and a government climate of disinterest in the situation of the minority.

Moshe Sharon carried out his promise to resign his post if he failed in his attempts to realize the policy positions that he had developed. His position as advisor was taken over by his deputy Gur Aryeh who, like his predecessor,

put together a policy paper that also addressed the complexity of dealing with the population he was responsible for. The paper included an analysis of the Arab minority from a number of points of view: the inherent security risks including the potential for the use of violence by the Arab minority, the need to behave toward it as was expected in a democratic country and the question of preserving the Jewish character of the country. Gur Aryeh understood that there was no way to obscure the national (Palestinian) identity of the Arab citizens and so he focused his analysis upon the creation of a civil loyalty. In contrast to that of his predecessor, the paper that drew up contained detailed recommendations in the area of security as well.

There were three basic premises to Gur Aryeh's paper regarding the government's attitude toward the Arab population. The first was that the confrontation between the Jews and the Arabs had been inevitable; secondly he supported the integration of the Arabs into the country's frameworks, even after he got the impression that this was a step that the Arabs were interested in to improve their position; and thirdly he had identified a trend toward escalation in the way that the Arabs viewed the state but that this escalation was not something that, necessarily, had to lead to a violent confrontation.¹⁰ Gur Aryeh defined policy goals toward the Arab population for the government in two channels. On the one hand, it was necessary to prevent the Arabs from embarking on a struggle for national rights so that an escalation in the national conflict would also be prevented within the borders of the country, but on the other hand, it was also necessary to devise an orderly network of relations between the state and the Arab minority, to strengthen the moderate factors within it and to work toward reestablishing the belief of the Arab citizens in the honest intentions of the government to integrate them into its institutions. As part of his approach, he supported the absorption of qualified Arabs into the civil service, the economic advancement of the Arab sector, the settling of the issue of the lands and the authorization of a master plan for the Arab centers of population. He also argued that there was no place for flexibility in the security policy and recommended the use of every legal step to thwart the phenomenon of subversion against the state or any attempt to change its Jewish character.¹¹

Gur Aryeh's recommendations did not receive enough attention either and there is no evidence to support the existence of any effective discussion about the way the minority populations in Israel should be treated during his period in office. Yosef Ginat,¹² who was the Advisor on Arab Affairs after the 1984 Knesset elections, attested to the fact that the documents prepared by his predecessor "were not accompanied by deeds."¹³ This was another expression of the lack of attention paid by the authorities to the Arab minority despite the recognition by professional factors of the need to close gaps between the minority and majority groups. From a historical point of view the interesting thing is that, paradoxically, after the events of "Land Day,"

which exacerbated the relations between the government and the Arab minority, the issue of the minority remained low in the order of priorities of the government offices. This was what happened instead of the government becoming more attentive and trying to create a dialogue that would alleviate the charged atmosphere between the parties.

Even without any declared policy by the government, and without having any orderly discussions about the concerns of the Arab population, the various government ministries found themselves implementing a policy of assisting the Arab population as dictated by the realities of the situation. Between 1978 and 1981 a sum of fifteen million shekels was budgeted to connect Arab villages to the national electric grid. From 1976 to 1980 nine hundred new classrooms were built in the Arab sector.¹⁴ During these years the Ministry for Welfare carried out research that mapped out the needs of the Arab population in the area of public services.¹⁵ In contrast to this, during the same period, the demolition of illegal buildings in the Galilee continued, the Green Patrol, whose task, among other things, was to supervise grazing areas, to identify illegal building and to deal with trespassing, was created as a "Black Patrol" to intervene and control the communal lifestyles of the nomadic Bedouin and shepherds.

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP: GROWING NATIONALISM AND THE USE OF VIOLENCE

The events of "Land Day" in March 1976 opened up a new period in the patterns of protest of the Arab citizens of Israel and three main phenomena characterized this period: changes that took place in the political map; the strengthening of the Palestinian national component; and the awakening of the Islamic movement.

The political map that had begun to change after 1967 War stabilized after "Land Day." During this time the Sons of the Village, the students' organizations and the Committee of the Heads of Local Councils were active side by side with the Communist Party. At the beginning of 1979, a new political body was established. A group of students who defined themselves as nationalists established the Progressive National Movement, whose ideological approach expressed full identification with the Palestinian struggle in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and whose strategy of action was to distribute its platform not only in student circles but throughout the whole Arab public as declared by Ibrahim Nasser, one of the leaders of the movement.

The new power factors established their positions in the political arena and wanted to influence the public agenda, by also using scathing means of protest. The Committee of the Heads of Local Councils, for example, was

influenced by the personalities of a number of heads of councils who wanted to adopt a more assertive and militant line of action in their contacts with the authorities in order to improve the civil issues that touched upon the daily lives of the Arab citizens. Among these were people such as Jamal Tarabiyeh from Sakhnin, Jalal Abu Tuama, from Baka al Gharbia, and Ahmad Masalha from Daburiyya. The more theses deepened their involvement in activity the more the committee developed the character of being a body that was fighting for the rights of the Arab citizens of Israel in all areas of activity including on the national and civil levels.¹⁶

The second phenomenon that attested to the change taking place in the Arab minority was the strengthening of its Palestinian national component. The assertive position adopted, which had led to the loss of life in the "Land Day" events, reinforced this component and the national feeling nurtured and supported the political activity that expressed itself in the making of civil demands from the authorities and protest activities in the field. The connection between political factors, such as the Sons of the Village and Rakah, with political factors in the West bank and the Gaza Strip, became closer after "Land Day." The political power factors among the Arab citizens of Israel drew encouragement and impetus from the actions and expressions of identification with them from the Palestinians during the events of "Land Day."

One of the prominent activities that took place from 1977 onwards was the establishment of shared volunteer camps for youths which were devoted to the strengthening of the nationalist component and took place in Nazareth, Jaffa and Umm el Fahem in which thousands of youths took part.¹⁷ Another example of the closeness of the two populations was found to be in the political arena after the Palestinian National Council decided (in April 1977) to strengthen its links with the anti-Zionist forces in Israel. As will be analyzed anon, this strengthening of forces would have an influence on the violent reaction of the Arab citizens of Israel to the Lebanese War especially following the events in Sabra and Shatilla.

Another important phenomenon that characterized the Arab minority from the end of the 1970s was the Islamic awakening and this can also be attributed to the connections that developed between the Israeli Arab and the inhabitants of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The unfettered connection that developed between the two populations led to the exchange of national and religious ideas. After the June 1967 War, religious movements that had been active in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip since 1948 found a new arena in which to act. Among these movements were the Muslim Brotherhood, the Liberation Party and charity institutions that sent their people into the Arab villages in Israel and began to spread the message of Islam. This component was something new for Arab citizens of Israel mainly because, in

the meetings they had with the Palestinians, they discovered that this population, especially that in the Gaza Strip, was more pious than they were.

The expressions of protest and violence that were the outcome of these social and political changes soon appeared in the field. From 1976 to 1982 there were many events among the Arab citizens of Israel that could be attributed to the new phenomena having taken root such as the establishment of new political forces, the crystallization of a Palestinian national identity and the appearance of the Islamic movement. These events created new patterns of protest in the field that were used by the Arab minority in its struggle against the policies of the government and this was true for matters involving foreign affairs, such as the example of the Palestinian issue, and internal state issues that directly affected the situation of the Arab population. An analysis of some of the prominent events from this period will contribute to understand the patterns of activity adopted by the Arab minority during the "Land Day" events in March 1982 and in the reaction to the massacre in Sabra and Shatilla.

In February 1978, fifty-five intellectuals in the Arab minority signed a public statement against Anwar Sadat, the president of Egypt, as a response to his ignoring the PLO and the Palestinian issue during his historic visit to Israel in November 1977. The intellectuals ended their statement with the call for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, a rare call for Israeli Arabs until then.¹⁸ Another expression of the national mood took place in January 1979 when the Progressive National Front sent a letter to the Palestinian National Council, which was meeting in Damascus, and called for it to adopt a resolution supporting the continuation of the armed struggle until their legitimate rights were achieved. In a press conference that they held they made it clear that they did not regret their action and added that they did not see the State of Israel as their home. The event caused such uproar in the government that there were calls to expel the Arabs from the country.¹⁹

In January 1978, activists from the Sons of the Village took part in the elections for the student council at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and the University of Haifa and netted impressive results. After the events of "Land Day" and, under the influence of the successes in the student elections, new associations were established by young people in Dir el Assad, Ara'ra and Taibeh which adopted a similar ideology to that of the movement.²⁰ The Sons of the Village did not hesitate to express their identification with the Palestinian struggle, even in public, and in November 1979, movement activists organized a demonstration in Umm el Fahem to protest the arrest of the mayor of Nablus, Bassam Shaka'a, without any attempt being made to prevent it by the government.

The new forces no longer followed the line Rakah had led from the mid-1960s. The new associations chose the approach of growing confrontation

with the authorities and publicly announced that they no longer recognized the state and were not interested in receiving assistance from it or any agreement about their actions. They summarized their demands with the declaration that “they feel alienated from the state.”²¹ Making mention of these incidents is important because they reflect the patterns of activity of the new political bodies in the Arab sector that adopted a stance of boldness and confrontation toward the government and created a public atmosphere in which there was the possibility for the increasing protest to spill over into violence.

The first attempt to advance any cooperative political activity in the Arab sector in order to bring about the realization of the rights of the Palestinian people and the advancement of the Arab minority in Israel took place in the middle of 1980. A group made up of a hundred public personages, led by the communist supporters, composed a document entitled the “June 6th Document.” About five thousand Arab citizens signed the document that quickly became the draw card for a gathering called the “Congress of the Masses.” Position papers that were made for the Congress had stressed the right of the Arab minority to be equal citizens in Israel. The organizers prepared a list of nine national and civil sections among which was a demand of the government to recognize the Arab citizens of Israel as a national minority. The congress was planned to take place during September 1980 in Nazareth but it was prohibited after the authorities identified the activity as being subversive to the character of the country. The then Prime Minister Menahem Begin who, at that time, was also the acting minister of defense after the resignation of Ezer Weizman, signed a decree on December 1, 1980, which declared that the “Nazareth Congress” was a “an unauthorized association.”²² Prior to the order the government took a series of steps to exert pressure on the Arab public and to make it clear to them that the intention to organize this kind of gathering meant that a red line was being crossed. The actions taken by the government included the removal of inciting students from the university campuses, the issuing of detention orders for several of the activists and the decision to strengthen the Jewish presence in the Galilee by establishing new settlements. The steps taken by the government were accompanied by a public relations campaign which prominently carried the message that Rakah’s call for identification with the PLO was something negative. The Israeli establishment presented the organizers of the congress as Palestinian nationalists who identified with the aims of this organization and who wanted to harm the security of the State of Israel.²³

The next real attempt took place at the end of 1980 when representatives of the Sons of the Village and Al-Ansar²⁴ as well as other people, such as Mansour Kardoosh, gathered together in Umm el Fahem and composed a political document that mostly dealt with the Palestinian problem and ways to solve it. The document came to be called the “Umm el Fahem Treaty”²⁵

and one of its sections declared that the Palestinian problem was the heart and soul of the conflict between the national liberation movement and the Zionism. Those who composed the document declared that the beginning of the solution to the problem could be found in the right of Palestinian refugees to return, in the granting of self-determination to the Palestinian People and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. According to the Umm el Fahem Treaty, the PLO was the legitimate and only representative of the Palestinian People and the Arabs in Israel were an integral part of the Palestinian People.

An analysis of the "Treaty" shows that it mainly focused upon the national facets of the relations between the Arab minority and the government and did not include the specific demands of the Arab population in Israel regarding civil and economic issues probably because those who composed it were interested in emphasizing that the Arab minority in Israel was an integral part of the Palestinian Arab People. From this point of view the document reflected the prevailing mood among the Arab population at that time. Surveys carried out in the same period indicated that most of them defined themselves as "Palestinian Arabs" or as "Palestinians."²⁶

The lengthy procedures involving the sections of the treaty gave birth to a new political framework called the Committee for National Coordination which was a kind of roof body that acted as a framework for the activities of nine political bodies and did not include the Communist Party.²⁷ This Committee for National Coordination wanted to operate according to a program that was similar to that of the Committee for National Guidance that was operating in the West Bank and even to cooperate with it. After months of following the activities of the committee the government decided to thwart the activity and, in April 1981, the then Minister of Defense, again signed a decree that made the Committee for National Coordination illegal on the basis of it being a threat to the security of the country. The only reaction to this step taken by the government was an article, written by Sliba Khamis, a communist, in the party's newspaper that condemned the government's decision.²⁸ The thwarting action taken did not lead to any violent reaction by the Arab minority.

Palestinian national consciousness was not only expressed in protest activities but also in attempts to establish alternative institutions to those offered by the government. In 1978 a new political framework called The Voice was registered in Nazareth as an Ottoman society and its members, who wanted to establish an independent Arab university in the Galilee, expressed a number of reasons for this that had a nationalistic character. George Knaza'a, one of the members of the founding core group believed that there was a need for a university that would fight the negation of nationalism and Nagua Makhool, a female member of the founding nucleus, explained that a Palestinian national university was needed. Sammy Mara'i, a lecturer at the

University of Haifa, noted that it was important to prepare Arab students “that would realize their essential being and would no longer study at Israeli universities that imposed a Zionist ideology upon them.”²⁹

Despite the government’s determined opposition to and its prevention, in principle, of the establishment of an independent Arab educational institution the idea did not die and different circles have tried to revive it from time to time. One of the prominent attempts, in this context, was that made by Mara’i, in May 1982. He suggested that they make a demand from the government to establish an Arab university in the Gallile, but this attempt was also rejected by the authorities who argued that all the universities in the country were open to all citizens and that was no need for a separate institution for one group or another. These ideas came up again in the years that followed in different forms, such as the example of the demand for a Council for Higher Studies for the Arab population.

The activities of the new movements in the Arab villages, like their participation in the elections for professional frameworks almost always took place without any intervention by the authorities. The patterns of action that they adopted in practice were acceptable according to rules of a democratic regime and they included the holding of gatherings, demonstrations and assemblies. The terminology they used emphasized national (Palestinian) motifs, the denial of the Jewish state and the demand for equality of rights for both the Jewish majority and the non-Jewish minority in the country. There were no calls for the use of force to advance political goals at these events although, at some of these events, there were a small number of localized confrontations with the police, but these ended after a short period of time and did not turn into violent protests. It was only when the authorities identified an intention to undermine their authority, as in the case of the Congress of the Masses, that they used their power to thwart the activity.

Since 1979, the activity of the Islamic movement was manifested along two parallel lines. The first line was an appeal to the Arab population in order to attract penitents and the other was an appeal to them to oppose the Israeli government. A group of young people influenced by Islamic rising in the Arab countries, and numbering about two hundred at its largest, established an underground cell called the “Jihad Group.” Its members believed that Palestine was an Arab Islamic entity and had to remain one and its clarion call was made up of nationalism, state and belief. Ultimately the members of the underground cell were arrested and some were tried and jailed for periods of imprisonment, which was a development that actually helped them accelerate the work of the movement. Sheikh Abdullah Nimer Darwish, one of the leaders of the group, later adopted a nonviolent approach in his relations to the government and chose the strategy of securing as big a public of believers as possible. In time this choice turned out to be a successful one since the

Islamic movement became a major political force in the Arab sector from the middle of the 1980s and still is today.

THE EVENTS ON "LAND DAY" (1982) AND DURING THE WAR

The year before the 1982 War was full of political activity by all the power factors in the Arab sector and this reflected the nationalist mood of the public. One of the prominent expressions of this was the call made by both the Sons of the Village and the PLN to the Arab voters to boycott the general elections that had been set for June 30, 1981, claiming that there was no real possibility for change in the situation as a result of their taking part in the parliamentary game. The public responded to this call, albeit only partly, and the rate of voting of the Arabs was 68 percent as opposed to 74 percent in the 1977 general elections.

The heads of the Communist stream were disappointed in the number of votes they received in the sector and explained it as the result of the party not adopting a militant stance against the government as had been expected of them by the supporters of the Sons of the Village and the PLN and other parts of the Arab public as well. This reflects a "late understanding" of Rakah, that the minority tend to protest and not to dialogue with the Israeli establishment. Following this insight, the leaders of the stream decided that the events of "Land Day," which were scheduled to take place on March 30, 1982, would be devoted to a protest about the discrimination against the Arab population in housing. The lack of housing in the cities of Jaffa and Lod had long ago turned into a subject that was being used by the Arab minority to provoke the authorities.³⁰ Under the auspices of the National Committee for the Protection of Lands, local committees were established in the field in order to facilitate the protest.

The Communists' decision to steer the struggle toward the purely civil arena, as a result of the feeling of continual deprivation, fit in with the national feelings that were rising at that period. From the beginning of 1982 there was a rise in amount of force being used by the Israeli forces against the Palestinians in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip and this aroused condemnation by the leaders of the Arab public in Israel. The practical expression of the new activist approach could be seen about a month before the "Land Day" memorial ceremonies at the end of an assembly of identification with the homeless in Acre, the leaders of Rakah decided that "Land Day" would be commemorated with a procession through the villages of the Arabs who had been killed. The National Committee for the Protection of the Lands adopted the Communists' outline for the activity based on the assessment that it would be difficult to mobilize the public for a more violent protest activity. During the month of March 1982, however, the security situation in

the West Bank and the Gaza Strip had deteriorated and daily clashes were occurred between Israel's security forces and the Palestinian population. During these harsh conflicts two IDF soldiers and six Palestinians were killed in different places in the West Bank.

These developments increased the tension and ferment in the Arab street within the State of Israel as well. The Communist stream, which was aware of the mood in the field, chose to commemorate "Land Day" in a more militant fashion than had been originally planned. The Committee for the Protection of the Lands adopted this aggressive approach and decided to hold a general strike on "Land Day" which induced protest from leadership factors, mainly from the local heads of councils, who wanted to avoid escalation and preferred a memorial day characterized by memorial ceremonies. These heads of councils believed that a strike might ignite the atmosphere in the field and were concerned with the possibility of it declining into violence. Because of this, they preferred an ongoing dialogue with the government representatives. Mohammad Watad, explained that "Every person has to raise his voice about what is happening in the field, but the Arab citizens of Israel have to distinguish between our strategy here and the strategy of the Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza."³¹ An analysis of the facts reflects differences of opinion between those who led the activist stream which wanted a vehement protest and probably took into account the possibility of it becoming violent, and the heads of local councils who wanted to preserve the channels of communication with the government ministries not only because they understood that the protest might paralyze their villages and cause financial losses, but also because of the fear that an escalation would obstruct future channels of communication.

The 1982 "Land Day" was characterized by local incidents that included stone barricades erected on main traffic arteries, the burning of tires and stone throwing at the security forces and cars in several villages. A possible explanation for the limited number of events and their quick end was the decision by the police not to enter the Arab villages and to allow a limited protest. Another explanation comes from the fact that in March 1982, in contrast to March 1976, the Arab leadership did not call upon the public to engage in confrontations with the security forces and chose to confine itself to a call for a strike as a form of identification with the Palestinian struggle in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The War, which, after 2006, began to be called the "First Lebanese War," is also a test case in which the patterns of action taken by the Arab minority as a reaction to steps taken by the Israeli government are worth analyzing. The first reaction of the Arab citizens of Israel to the reports of the IDF's attacks on the PLO command centers in Lebanon was a mixture of feelings of helplessness, confusion, shock and anger. Many of the Arab citizens were concerned about the fate of members of their families that were living in

Lebanon.³² Among the Christian community there were signs of identification with Israel, as there had been in the June 1967 War and in a number of villages in the Galilee, Christians contributed money for the IDF soldiers. This community was torn between making the above expressions of identification and the fundamental solidarity that they demonstrated toward the suffering of the Palestinians with whom they shared an ethnic origin. The Israeli Public Committee to Aid Lebanon issued a public statement in support of the campaign and expressed sorrow at the deaths of IDF soldiers, which was also signed by Christian public figures.³³ In the first stages of the war it was clear that part of the Arab public in Israel were choosing to express solidarity with their country and thus there was every likelihood that they would not turn to violence.

This public mood soon passed and was replaced by expressions of condemnation of the Israeli policies and the force being employed in Lebanon. A public statement was made which called upon the Israeli government to stop the war immediately and open negotiations with representatives of the Palestinian people. This public statement was signed by heads of local Arab councils and people who traditionally supported dialogue with the authorities and distanced themselves from violent actions such as Watad, who was a member of the Knesset, Yussef Khamis, a member of the Central Committee of Histadrut Labor Federation and Mohammad Habaishi, the Kadi of Acre.³⁴ The Committee of Local Council leaders, which also called upon the government to stop the war immediately, decided to take action to raise donations for those wounded in Lebanon and to transfer the collected money using the auspices of the Lebanese Red Cross.

A day after the war began, the Political Bureau of Rakah condemned the aggressive war waged by Israel and accused it of trying to eliminate the Palestinian people, crowning the Falangists in Lebanon and striving toward a military conflict with Syria. At the same time the members of the Knesset of the party proposed a motion of "no-confidence" in the government. Only a month after the war, in July 1982, was there any Arab expression in the field in the form of a demonstration in Nazareth organized by the communists in which the participants called for those responsible for the war to be put on trial and for a withdrawal from Lebanon.³⁵ In the next protest event, which occurred in Nazareth on July 31, ten thousand attended, according to the Israeli police. There was a lot of rage at the event and the tone of some of the speakers was extreme with the use of inflammatory language and threats against the government. Jamal Tarabia, the mayor of Sakhnin, declared that "They won't succeed in killing Arafat; we are all Arafat."³⁶ Placards were waved about whose message was complete identification with the Palestinian struggle and the opposition of the Palestinian fighters in Lebanon against the IDF forces. On one of the placards, for instance, they wrote that "Whoever goes into Beirut will come out in a coffin."³⁷

The Arab minority's protest at the way Israel was handling things in the war continued throughout the summer of 1982 in an atmosphere that became more charged and agitated the more the reports told of attacks on Palestinians in Lebanon. The feelings of the Arab citizens of Israel's identification with the suffering of the Palestinians in Lebanon expressed themselves in the field in different ways such as protest gatherings, hunger strikes, symbolic commemorations for the victims and an increase in the demonstrations at which the Palestinian flags were flown.

The change in the protest patterns took place following the events at Sabra and Shatilla and there are researchers who claim that the Arab minority's reaction of protest, which became violent, was spontaneous.³⁸ In practice the outbreak took place following a series of planned steps. When they were informed about the dimensions of the massacre the leaders of Rakah convened a meeting of the Committee of the Heads of Local Councils and decided, two days after the massacre, to declare a general strike as a sign of protest and identification with the suffering of the victims. They also decided upon the cancellation of all the events and festivities that had been planned to celebrate Eid el Adkha (Feast of the Sacrifice), the flying of black flags, symbolic mourning processions and funeral prayers in memory of those killed. Rakah proved its ability to mobilize the masses, as it had done on "Land Day" in 1976, and smaller political frameworks, such as the Sons of the Village, the Muslim Youth, and the PLN also supported the decision to hold a general strike.

On September 21, 1982, two days before the day of the strike, Rakah published a public statement in which it called upon all the Arab public to join the strike in order to express their disgust at the massacre, which they claimed had been carried out by Israeli forces, and was viewed by the population as a frontal attack upon all Palestinian people wherever they were. Tawfik Ziad used acrimonious language publicly and compared Sabra and Shatilla to the horrors carried out by the Nazis at Auschwitz and in other death camps. He used derogatory epithets for the leaders of the Israeli government and warned that whoever didn't support the expressions of protest would be considered to be someone who was provoking the will of the (Palestinian) people. Ziad even signaled the possibility that violence would be chosen, when he stated that "Our brothers have made sacrifices and so have we sacrificed when we defended our land and our homeland . . . we are ready to make our contribution to the procession of victims . . . we are a nation of fighters. I look at your faces, young people who can destroy walls."³⁹ Similar things were published by people from the PLN and the Sons of the Village.

The day of the strike on September 22 turned into a day in which a great number of violations of the peace were reported as well as more violent clashes than had taken place on "Land Day" in 1976. During the strike there

were no less than 146 cases of different types of clashes and confrontations between the demonstrators and the security forces registered by the police in the northern region. These included the throwing of stones (47), lighting fires (18), blocking junctions and roads (19), the burning of tires (17) and more. There were 59 Arabs and 43 policemen hurt in the many events and on the same day the police arrested 75 people. The widespread political violence also included extreme phenomena such as the erection of roadblocks at the entrance to Baka al Gharbia and the beating of Jewish drivers, the blocking of major traffic arteries in Wadi A'ra and the main street of Nazareth, the loading of trucks with stones and throwing them at passing cars, attacking police and IDF vehicles and the beating of policemen, most of whom were Arabs. For the first time Bedouin also took part in the violent events and this was important because this was the first time that the sector had joined the circle of the protest of the Arab citizens of Israel, including events that were illegal and violent.

SUMMARY

The period from "Land Day" in 1976 until the First Lebanese War in 1982 was characterized by new patterns of protest of the Arab citizens of Israel. In this period new political bodies were established that were made up of charismatic and authoritarian figures that accumulated power until they themselves became part of the leadership of the Arab minority in Israel. These new frameworks were composed of students, university graduates and the heads of local councils which, as one united group, established patterns of protest about deprivation in civil matters while using elements of nationalism in their protest. In a large number of the events that were reported during this period the participants wore keffiyeh on their heads, expressed support for the armed struggle of the Palestinian terrorist organizations and identification with the PLO and demanded that Israel agree to self-determination for the Palestinian People. The new political frameworks created bolder patterns of protest for the Arab minority that demonstrated national, ethnic and religious difference and a constant striving to change the political and social agenda in the State of Israel.

This mix of nationalism and citizenship was the message that stirred the feelings of the Arab citizens of Israel at the beginning of 1982 and reached its peak in September of the same year when the dimensions of the massacre in Sabra and Shatilla became known. An analysis of the way the Arab leadership handled things during this period indicates that there were a number of power blocs that wanted to choose different ways of acting. In fact, already at the end of the 1970s, two leading streams of thought developed, one being the traditional approach led by the Communists and the other being the

national approach represented by the new frameworks such as the Sons of the Village, the PLN that wanted to adopt militant and violent patterns of action. There were often differences of opinion between the two camps which made it difficult for them to work together, but from time to time they did succeed in agreeing upon cooperative courses of action, mostly following the development of some event. In addition to the two power blocs there were two streams in the Arab minority that were also active during this period which, at this stage, were not yet dominant enough to influence the agenda and patterns of protest in the field. One was the veteran leadership which preferred to carry out the struggle using legal methods while carrying on a dialogue with the government such as, for example, the suggestions made by Ibrahim Nimer Hussein, who was the chairman of the Committee of the Heads of Local Councils from the middle of 1981. The other was the Islamic Movement.

“Land Day” in 1982 was the first incident since the bloody events of 1976 in which the Arab leadership called for a general strike. The decision to strike was based upon the combination of the feelings of deprivation both in relation to the situation of the Palestinians in the West Bank and because of the distress of those who had no homes in the Arab minority in Israel. The means used to encourage people to strike included the use of antigovernment motifs and virulent language. This time, in contrast with the events of the first “Land Day,” moderate factors in the leadership came out against the decision to strike. The Committee of the Heads of Local Councils did not respond to the call to strike and more than twenty heads of Arab local councils ignored it and instructed people to carry out their usual routine. The stand taken by these factors, as a form of restrained leadership that wanted to prevent any violent expression, can explain why the violent events were ultimately contained. This also strengthens the assertion that, in a reality in which there is a restrained but active leadership that is not interested in acting violently, the chances that political violence will take place is considerably less likely.

The massacre in Sabra and Shatilla was the first external event that affected the Arab citizens of Israel in a way that would give impetus to their leadership, both traditional and charismatic, to choose the use of political violence. In practice the violence was used as a reaction to the government’s power which was perceived to be working against the Palestinian people outside the borders of the country. The attempts made by moderate political forces to restrain the events had only very limited success and this was for two reasons. The first was the determination of the leadership factors in the sector to choose violent patterns of action and the second was the palpable ferment and rage that was difficult, probably even impossible, to halt in the face of the horrifying picture that was coming from Lebanon. The factors that encouraged the use of violence exploited the collective identification that

was shared by the Arab sector and those killed in the refugee camps in Lebanon in order to advance their militant pattern of action.

The government's policies adopted during the period under review were a direct continuation of the policies adopted after 1967. The military government was gone but, at the same time, there were no ongoing discussions in forums (the government, the cabinet) in matters concerning the Arab minority in Israel. While the government did follow the development of the strengthening of nationalist elements in the consciousness of the Arab minority, they also allowed the establishment of new political frameworks including those that wanted to dictate patterns of protest action. Their activities were carried out with hardly any intervention by the authorities, except for solitary cases when the government acted vigorously to prevent any acts of subversion or separatism. In parallel to this, while the ongoing activities to thwart isolated hostile terrorist activities continued, there were also steps toward reconciliation taken and the forceful steps taken to carry out the appropriation of lands were stopped after March 1976. While this may have, to some degree, moderated the escalation in the field it certainly did not prevent the clear trend toward the Palestinization of the Israeli Arabs. This process was manifested from 1982 with violence following the massacre in Sabra and Shatilla.

NOTES

1. *Mixed cities* is a well-known term in Israeli public discourse for cities where Jews and non-Jews live together.

2. Mansour and Benziman, *Sub-Tenant*, pp. 76–77.

3. *Ha'aretz* newspaper, May 24, 1976. At the time this book was written the protocols of the government's meeting were still confidential and Kol's statement was only reported in the newspaper.

4. Mansour and Benziman, *Sub-Tenant*, p. 76.

5. Prime Minister's Office, Arab Affairs Bureau, *The Plan for the Arab Minority* (1979), pp. 10–11.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, p.17.

8. Mansour and Benziman, *Sub-Tenant*, p. 82.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 82–83; Yitzhak Reiter, *National Minority, Regional Majority*, p. 74–75

10. The Prime Minister's Office, The Bureau of the Advisor on Arab Affairs, *The Israeli Arabs—Situation Review, Goals and Policy Proposals*, (1978).

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6.

12. For more on the policy proposed by Ginat during his period in office see next chapter.

13. Mansour and Benziman, *Sub-Tenant*, p. 86

14. Between the years 1981 and 1984 the office of the Advisor on Arab Affairs used to publish a monthly pamphlet about what was going on in the Arab sector. The publication included up-to-date reports about the activities of the government ministries in the Arab centers of population side by side with information about cultural, artistic, economic, musical and other activities. The information about the classrooms can be found in The Prime Minister's Office, the Bureau of the Advisor on Arab Affairs, *A Selection of things about what is happening in the Arab sector*. March 2, 1981, p. 13. The data about the classrooms do not include buildings for students in the Bedouin villages in the north of the country.

15. The Prime Minister's Office, the Bureau of the Advisor on Arab Affairs, *A Selection of things*, April 3, 1981, p. 31.
16. Rekehss, "The Arabs in Israel," p. 188.
17. Arab students who had established the Progressive Movement for Peace and Palestinian interns left the volunteers camp that took place in the summer of 1981 after the authorities forced them to take down the flag of the PLO and, in its place, to raise the flag of the State of Israel. For more see the issue of the *Alitalia 'a* newspaper of August 28, 1981.
18. *Ma'ariv* newspaper, March 2, 1978.
19. *Ibid.*, January 24, 1979.
20. Sabri Jiryis, "The Arabs in Israel: 1973–79," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 8:4, (1979), p. 32.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 34–35.
22. Shetandhal, *Between the Hammer and the Anvil*, p. 242. See *Maariv* May 12, 1980. Nadim Rouhana, a member of the Arab minority, also dealt with this problem. See his article: Nadim N. Rouhana, "The Political Transformation of the Palestinians in Israel: from Acquiescence to Challenge," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18:3, (1989), pp. 38–59.
23. Alexander Bligh, *The Development of Israeli Arab Leadership during the Intifada as an Independent Political Player within the Israeli and Palestinian Political Systems*, (unpublished).
24. A group of people, who had left the Sons of the Village movement.
25. *Haolam Hazeh* (This World) newspaper, April 22, 1981.
26. The nine bodies were: Sons of the Village, the Progressive National Movement. (PNM) that was made up of students, Hathiya-Taibeh, the Dir el Assad Front, the Society for the Memorialization of Rashad Hussein (and Arab Israeli intellectual), the Voice Union (publishers of books of Arabic poems), the Anis Kardoosh Fund (named after Mansour Kardoosh's uncle), the Prisoners' Friends Society, and the Nazareth Academics Society. The source of this material can be found in the Bureau of the Advisor for Arab Affairs, *A Selection of Events in the Sector* 3, April 1981, p. 118 [Hebrew].
27. Defense Ministry, List of Decrees, April 12, 1981.
28. *Selection of Events in the Sector* 3, April 1981 [Hebrew].
29. The idea was raised in a lecture given by Sammy Mara'i at the University of Haifa on May 18, 1982 and appears in Shetandhal, *Between the Hammer and the Anvil*, p. 245.
30. *Selection of Events in the Sector* 14, March 1982, pp. 17–18 [Hebrew].
31. *Selection of Events in the Sector* 17-18, June–July 1982, p. 1 [Hebrew].
32. Daphna Timhoni, "The Christians in Israel between Religion and Politics," in *Dilemmas of Identity*, Elie Rekehss (ed.) (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Dayan Center, 1998), p. 37 [Hebrew].
33. *Al-Anba* newspaper, July 2, 1982.
34. *Selection of Events in the Sector* 17-18, June–July 1982, p. 4 [Hebrew].
35. *Selection of Events in the Sector* 19, August 1982, p. 13 [Hebrew].
36. *Selection of Events in the Sector* 17-18, June–July 1982, p. 11 [Hebrew].
37. Yizhak Reiter, *National Minority, Regional Majority*, p. 99.
38. *Al-Ittihad*, September 21, 1982, p. 1.
39. *Selection of Events in the Sector* 20-21, September–October 1982, pp. 4–6.

III

**From the First Intifada to the “Cast
Lead” Campaign (2008)**

Civil Dialogue and Nationalist Violence

Chapter Seven

1987–2000

Worsening Relations between the Establishment and the Arab Minority

BACKGROUND

This chapter examines six events that took place from 1987 to 2000 and had great importance for the Arab minority in Israel and in every one of them there was a potential for the outbreak of violence. Beginning immediately after the outbreak of the intifada in the territories and ending with the events of October 2000, these are still considered today to have been the most serious confrontations to have taken place in the relations between the government in Israel and the Arab minority group and are considered to have been a turning point in the relations between the parties from the point of view of two aspects of the relationship. One was the use of protest and violence as a pattern of activity in the way the minority managed its relations with the government and the other was the government's formation of a policy of narrowing the gaps between the Jewish majority group and the Arab minority which was applied from 1992 onwards at a greater pace—which was not considered fast enough in the view of the Arabs.

The first event is the outbreak of the First Intifada in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in December 1987. The incident that is considered to be the spark that ignited the intifada was the funeral procession for four Palestinian workers from the Jibalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip who were killed in a car accident after their car was hit by an Israeli truck. Rumors spread throughout the Gaza Strip that this was a deliberate act of vengeance for the murder of a Jew who had been stabbed to death two days earlier in the market in Gaza. The importance of this event for the Arab minority in Israel

was because of its shared ethnic-national (and also religious) identity with the Palestinian residents in the territories.

The second incident was the violent incident that took place on the Temple Mount in October 1990 between Muslim worshippers and the police who were trying to restore order in the compound. Twenty-one Muslims were killed in this incident one of whom was an Arab Israeli and others Palestinians from the territories. The incident took on the Temple Mount, which was considered to be a Muslim holy site and the Arabs in Israel (Muslims and Christians) who declared themselves to be nonreligious, attested to its holiness.

The third event was the Persian Gulf Crisis that began in August 1990 with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The shared ethnic identity of the Arab minority in Israel and the Iraqi and Kuwaiti peoples and their being part of the Arab nation produced the potential for a violent reaction by the Arab minority. An analysis of the way the Arab minority conducted themselves during the war will be made by first dividing this into two periods. The first begins with the crisis in August 1990 until the firing of missiles into Israel in the middle of January 1991, and the second is from this time until the end of the war. The reason for this is the change that took place in the attitude of the Arab minority and its behavior toward the war from the moment Israel, unwillingly, became actively involved because of the firing of missiles at it from Iraq.

The fourth incident took place in September 1996, also in Jerusalem, when the Western Wall tunnel in the Old City was opened. The decision to open the tunnel that was right next to the Temple Mount aroused tension in the Arab sector and the potential for violent reaction. An analysis of the behavior of the Arab leadership at the time the tunnel was opened will include not only the decisions made by the Higher Follow-Up Committee, but also the behavior of two other political factors. These were the Islamic Movement that, by this time, had become a significant political power factor and was leading the struggle to protect the Al-Aqsa mosque, and Balad. Because of this it is possible to mark this event as an additional turning point in the patterns of activity of the leadership of the Arab sector because, for the first time, the potential for violence not only based itself upon nationalist or civil aspects but also upon a religious (Islamic) dispute.

The fifth event took place in the summer of 1998 on the Alroha lands west of the city of Umm el Fahem. This was preceded by a decision made by the establishment to covert this land into training grounds for the IDF and to reject the demand of the city, led by the Islamic Movement, to attach the above lands to its municipal jurisdiction. The differences of opinion over the fate of the lands led to the violent events that will be analyzed later in the chapter.

The sixth and last event, which ends the period, is the October 2000 riots which were not only widespread geographically and lasted for two weeks, but were the most serious in the Arab sector from the point of view of the number of casualties since the establishment of the State of Israel.¹ The immediate catalyst for the outbreak of the riots was the visit to the Temple Mount made by Member of the Knesset, Ariel Sharon, on September 28 to examine the renovations that the “Wakf” administration had carried out in the compound. His visit aroused much ferment in the area of the Temple Mount and during its duration clashes developed between the security services and Muslims who had come to the place. On September 29, the riots spread throughout East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and quickly spilled over into areas within the Green Line. Violent confrontations were recorded in about seventy Arab villages for about two weeks and included the throwing of stones, the burning of tires, the blocking of major junctions and damage to public property. During the events twelve Israeli Arabs and one Palestinian who lived in the West Bank were killed by gunfire from the police shot at the rioters, and one Jew was also killed when stones were thrown at his car. As a result of the events the government decided to appoint a committee of investigation consisting of Judge Emeritus Theodore Orr, Professor Shimon Shamir and Judge Hashem Khatib, an Israeli Arab.

GOVERNMENT’S POLICY UP TO 1992: A GROWING UNDERSTANDING OF THE NEED TO NARROW THE GAPS

In contrast to earlier chapters this chapter deals with a longer period of time during which there were political changes in the Israeli establishment. In the 1988 general elections the right wing bloc led by the Likud was victorious, four years later the Labor Party won the elections and, after another four years, the candidate from the Likud was again chosen as prime minister. These changes also had an influence upon the policies that were formed and applied to the Arab minority in the field and this, in turn, had an influence upon the appearance of violence by the Arab population.

An analysis of the government’s policy from 1987 to 2000 needs to begin at an earlier time with an examination of the policy in the years preceding the outbreak of the intifada, because it was this that laid down the foundations upon which the relations toward the Arab minority were built during the years being examined in this chapter. After the elections to the eleventh Knesset in 1984 the position of the Advisor on Arab Affairs was held by Yosef Ginat who, from January 1985 onwards, was supported by a committee of director-generals, led by Avraham Tamir (then director-general of the prime minister’s office), to deal with Arab affairs in Israel. Ginat’s central argument was that the governments of Israel, from the very beginning, had

not made any decisions about the Arab minority except for the decision to cancel the military government. He prepared a document which, in the main, was similar to the premises of his predecessor in the position. This was a population whose national attachment is Palestinian and should be seen as such and accepted. He also believed that it would be impossible to prevent processes of distancing and polarization between the Jews and the Arabs as long as the Palestinian issue was not resolved.²

Ginat argued that full identification with the State of Israel and its Zionist goals should not be expected from the Arab citizens but what should be demanded was civil loyalty to the state and its laws. He recommended that the Arabs be integrated into various areas of activity in the state frameworks in order to quickly reduce, as far as possible, the gaps in the different areas of life such as welfare, education, health and employment. He also supported the introduction of national service for the Arab population and managed to bring this to the cabinet for discussion but, as had happened in the past, this time as well, the ministers decided to not decide. Ezer Weizman, who at this time was acting as the minister in charge of the Arab population, explained that the reason for this was simple: "The subject of the Arab citizens of Israel was not a pressing issue for either the cabinet or the prime minister and so there was no need to make a decision."³ Ginat's time in the position ended at the beginning of 1987 without him succeeding in bringing a policy paper to the government that dealt with the Arab minority and would be a platform for discussion and the taking of decisions in everything regarding the establishment's treatment of the minority population.

Ginat's replacement in the role of advisor, Amos Gilboa, took over the task in the first half of 1987 and he also tried to prepare a policy paper for the treatment of the Arab population. He enlisted the help of Professor Arnon Soffer who presented two alternatives as policies. The first he defined as "constant surveillance" (and this was what had been done since 1948) while the other received the name of "pluralism."⁴

This document was similar in character to earlier documents on the subject and included a recommendation to gradually integrate the Arab citizens into the state frameworks and, at the same time, authorize building by the Arabs in their villages, in order to prevent their moving to Jewish cities and to reduce the friction with Jews. Soffer's paper warned about the phenomenon of separatism among the Arab citizens which, in his estimation, had already come to demanding political separation because of the spreading of these ideas among the Arab educated classes. What was new in the paper was his pointing out—for the first time in a policy paper (as far as we could ascertain)—the existence of the Islamic component in the ranks of the Arab citizens, the struggle for which, at least according to the author, "would take on the characteristics of Jihad in the spirit of Islam."⁵

Gilboa himself also formulated a policy document based upon the document prepared by Soffer and discussions he held with political power factors in the Arab sector. He was aware of the prevalent mood that characterized the Arab minority and described it as a strengthening of bitterness and frustration together with the intensification of the feelings of national uniqueness. Gilboa identified the political, organizational, and economic and demographic power that the Arab minority was accumulating in order to advance its goals including, according to him, the gradual building of an infrastructure for separate Israeli Arab autonomy.⁶ Along with the potential threats the document also pointed out the duty of the state, as a democratic regime, to allocate the resources necessary for the needs of the minority population. Like Advisor Ginat, he also estimated that as long as there was no peace agreement between Israel and the Arab countries, it would be impossible to overcome the polarization that existed between the Jews and the Arabs within the territory of Israel and that this polarization might escalate into violence.

Gilboa's document came up on the agenda of the cabinet only one time and became irrelevant at the time because of a political crisis that was not connected with the Arab minority and after which Minister Arens who was responsible for the Arab affairs, resigned.⁷ From the end of 1982 until 1987, without any thorough discussion being held in a forum of decision makers, the government made several attempts to deal with the urgent issues that were brought up by the leaders of the Arab public. In November 1982, for example, the Committee for the Interior of the Knesset discussed the distress of the Arab local councils and its members concluded that the Finance and Interior ministries would give immediate assistance by transferring the needed budgets to them.⁸ During the first half of 1984 the Ministry of the Interior made agreements with the heads of seventy Arab villages in the north of the country about the allocation of lands and land reserves for these villages. An effort was made by the Ministry of Housing to alleviate the shortage of housing in the Arab sector and, at the beginning of 1984 they began to provide budgets for the building of housing units for the Arab population. During these same months the Ministry of Commerce and Industry recognized the industrial zone of Shfaram as a B-level development area which was a decision that led to significant acceleration in the establishment of factories and enterprises which created places of work for the residents of the town. These actions and others in the civil areas were carried out through a process of dialogue with Ibrahim Nimer Hussein, the chairman of Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Councils.

At the end of 1987 a significant process took place when Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Minister of Finance Moshe Nissim and the minister in charge of Arab Affairs, Moshe Arens, agreed upon a program for the development of the Arab minority. Agreement were made about the allocation of special development budgets for the Arab minority and, with the agreement

of all three ministers, the original sums for the project were even increased by eleven million shekels. This, in fact was the first time that the political level had intentionally initiated an enterprise that would answer the needs of the Arab minority, and had even put together a wide-ranging development program to narrow the gaps. From this point of view one can see this program as a turning point, even if the implementation of its various parts only began in the 1990s.

Following the outbreak of the intifada in December 1987, change took place in the government's policy toward the Arab minority and the growing recognition of the need to reduce the gaps in the different areas of life gave way to a concern about the escalation of the security issues in the territories, which also had ramifications for the Arab minority. The sharp increase in the number of public disturbances and security events within the State of Israel during 1988 also made its considerable contribution to this. During this year 226 terror attacks were carried out as opposed to only 69 in 1987 and 507 incidents that had a nationalist background, such as the throwing of rocks, the holding of demonstrations and the flying of PLO flags were also recorded as opposed to 101 such incidents in the previous year.⁹ The Arab citizens of Israel were involved in some of these events (not in terror attacks) and their participation in them, like the general atmosphere that existed in the shadow of the Intifada, contributed to the strengthening of the approach that supported seeing the Arab minority as a security threat.

The security concerns also directly influenced the handling of civil issues such as education, housing and health. At the end of December 1987 Roni Milo, a deputy minister in the office of the prime minister sent a letter the minister of finance, which contained data about the non-Jewish population in preparation for a government decision to support the allocation of budgets for the Bedouin population and moderate factors in the State of Israel. The letter included an analysis of the trends that existed in the Arab minority, and its main argument was that, because of the process of Palestinization that was taking place in this population, there was a national need to assist and strengthen the moderate factors in the sector through making significant allocations of financial resources. In this letter the deputy minister made a clear differentiation between positive and moderate factors in the Arab minority and negative factors which represented security risks and the possibility of active threats of violence.

Only in December 1988 did the government begin to deal with the civil issues connected with the Arab minority. The new minister, Ehud Olmert, believed that providing budgets was not sufficient to improve the situation of the minority population, but that attention had to be paid to the problems of the Arab society and solutions had to be found to solve them. He succeeded in raising the question of the Arab minority for discussion in the security cabinet and, even though the thorough discussion took three meetings to

complete. The conclusion that was reached was that the subject was of no interest to the ministers. Olmert himself defined it in these words: “There is awareness of the specific problems, but there is no interest in more general consideration.”¹⁰

At the end of the discussions in the cabinet, then prime minister, Yitzhak Shamir, instructed Olmert to put together a committee that would present recommendations for dealing with the Arab sector. The members of the committee included Dan Meridor, the police commissioner and the head of the general security services. There were no representatives of government ministries responsible for dealing with civil matters that were essential to the daily lives of the minority population included and there was no representation of the leadership of the Arab minority. The committee presented its recommendations, which included the need to allocate financial resources and the establishment of a mechanism that would be attached to the minister in charge of the minorities, to the prime minister. According to Olmert the then finance minister, Shimon Peres, was against the recommendations and, because of a political dispute, the recommendations were not implemented.¹¹

In June 1990, with the end of his task as the minister responsible for the minorities, Olmert presented the government with a long-term program for dealing with the Arab population. The title of the proposal was “The Advancement of the Minority Population in Israel” and, among other things, it included the recommendation to allocate a sum of 850 million shekels over a period of ten years to solve the main problems that were a part of the daily agenda of the Arab minority. The importance of the program was not only because of the budgetary recommendations made but also because of its explanatory remarks that included the recognition that the Arab population had not have an equal status with the other citizens of the country because of historical and political circumstances.¹²

During these years as well, because of the traditional concerns that were intensified by the intifada, the Israeli government still continued to deal harshly with security threats coming from the Arab population and, from time to time, force was used in this context by the government in order to maintain the balance of deterrence against factors that were considered to be threats to the security of the country. An example of this took place in November 1988 when parallel to Arafat’s announcement that he would declare the establishment of an independent Palestinian state during the conference of the Palestinian National Council in Algeria, the Higher Follow-Up Committee declared the holding of “Home Day.”¹³ As a response to this announcement the police met with the heads of the villages in Wadi A’ra and the Galilee, including the mayor of Nazareth, Tawfik Ziad, and made it clear that they expected the day to be peaceful.

In another case, which took place in August 1990, the government used its power when the Minister of the Interior signed an order prohibiting

Ahmad Tibi, who at that time was a prominent public figure and later became a member of the Knesset, from leaving the country. The security reason for the issuing of the order was to prevent Tibi's intention to meet with PLO factors.¹⁴ During the same month processes were begun to remove the immunity of Member of the Knesset Mohammad Mia'ri, who was suspected of having provided the PLO with assistance during 1988 when that organization wanted to send a "Boat of the Return" toward the coast of Israel as a symbolic gesture of solidarity with the Palestinian refugees. These processes were being used by the legal authorities to set down clear red lines for the Arab public personages and to make it clear that crossing them would lead to sanctions and punishment.

THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY AFTER 1992: BE NICE TO THE ARAB CITIZENS

After the elections to the Knesset in 1992 a change took place in the makeup of the Israeli government. The Labor Party, led by Yitzhak Rabin, formed a government made up of a coalition that was supported by five Arab members of the Knesset who stayed out of the government, but were promised that changes would be made in the policy toward the Arab minority. One of the outcomes of this political situation was a change in the policy to make a combined effort to advance the civil issues that were relevant to the Arab population.

A document was presented to the new government by the Bureau for Arab Affairs and from a historical point of view this was a document that would act as a touchstone for the policy that was to be navigated from the end of 1992 onward. The document included a series of operative policy recommendations for relations with the Arab minority and was divided into sections according to a key that referred to government ministries. The opening section of the document recommended that the prime minister should bring the following proposals, among others, to the cabinet for approval: the integration of the well-educated Arabs into the civil service; the appointment of a Muslim Arab to the position of advisor to the prime minister for Arab Affairs; the appointment of an interministerial committee to work out a solution for the problem of unrecognized population centers in the Arab sector; and the establishment of a fund to advance the Arab citizens of Israel.¹⁵

The following sections of the document included policy recommendations for the Ministries of the Interior and Religion whose main point was an increase in the regular budgets in order to achieve full equality among all the citizens of Israel linked to the decisions of the government, the allocation of the sum of half a billion shekels for the years from 1993 through 1997 (a five-year plan) for a development budget for the Arab sector, an examination

of the possibility to grant the status of cities to Rahat and Sakhnin (a step that was implemented in 1993–1994) and the provision of budgets to renovate and rehabilitate Muslim and Christian holy sites.

The document also proposed the planning of seven industrial zones throughout the country in which special encouragement would be provided to initiatives of the minorities, the allocation of a sum of seven million shekels to encourage initiatives in the Arab sector (under the aegis of the Ministry of Industry), the construction of a maternity hospital in Rahat and the examination of the possibility of building more postnatal care centers (under the aegis of the Ministry of Health), the allocation of a sum of a million shekels for the development of agriculture (the Ministry of Agriculture), the installation of street lighting in Arab villages (the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure), the allocation of 100 million shekels for the settlement of the issue of lands in the Negev (the Ministry of Building and Housing), the implementation of a five year plan for the Ministry of Education and Culture that would include the building of classrooms and new schools, and the integration of well-educated Arabs into the Ministry of Education. In regard to government ministries that had to deal with security matters the document recommended the increased mobilization of members of the minorities into the IDF and the frameworks of the police.

An analysis of program is important for the question of policy since it reflects its importance for the question of the establishment's policy. For the first time a wide-ranging program that included a wide variety of subjects that had always concerned the Arab minority was put forward. It was a multisystem program that reflected the government's interest in providing a response to the needs of the Arab population from the point of view of integrating it into Israeli society and the frameworks of the country as well as to reduce the gaps with the Jewish majority group. This was a really new approach for the heads of the Arab public and it was only natural that in a period in which the government wanted dialogue with the Arab minority that acts of violence were not being considered by it.

Government's decision number 31 of July 26, 1992, determined that a committee of directors-general would be appointed to ensure the implementation of the policy about the integration of Israeli Arab citizens into the different areas of activity in the country. This decision was quickly translated into deeds in the field and in November 1992 the Ministry of Transport announced that it would invest a sum of 15 million shekels in the rehabilitation of the transport infrastructures in fourteen Arab villages in the Galilee.¹⁶

In January 1993 the heads of the Arab public welcomed the government decision to classify most of the Arab villages as being areas of "national A priority" and "national B priority" since the significance of such a decision meant that there would be an increased flow of budgets into the industrial zones, benefits in education and tax relief.¹⁷ About a year afterward Shimon

Shitrit, the then economics minister who was responsible for minority affairs, announced that the government was allocating a sum of 300 million shekels for the development of the physical, economic and social infrastructures to enable initiatives to be made in the areas of industry, tourism and agriculture in the Arab sector. He added that the government had decided to assimilate one hundred academically qualified Arab people into the civil service.¹⁸ All in all, seventy academics were absorbed into the civil service during 1994. Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, the minister for building and housing, also allocated the sum of 105 million shekels to establish order in the Bedouin settlements in the Negev.¹⁹ That summer Haim Ramon, the health minister, authorized the construction of twenty new centers for family health in the Arab villages.²⁰ Nimer Hussein, said that “We feel that something is moving.” and Mutstefa Abu Raya, the head of the Sakhnin local council, admitted that “There is movement with the budgets.”²¹ It was clear that the presence of the prime minister at a ceremony in an Arab village was not only the payment of a debt to the Arab members of the Knesset, but was a sign of his personal commitment to his promise that the program that had been put together was actually taking shape and that the goal was to come toward the Arab public as a whole.

The gaps, for instance in the field of education, began to close relatively quickly and this was also remarked upon by factors that supported full equality in the granting of allocations to the sector such as cooperative Jewish–Arab associations. These budgets made it possible to allocate additional hours of learning support to strengthen the Arab students (11,000 hours in 1994), to increase their number in technological studies and teacher training and for psychological services for student.²²

In June 1995 the Equal Employment Opportunity Law was amended and prohibited discrimination on the basis of nationality or religion as well as prohibiting employers in the private sector from determining the criterion of army service as a condition for receiving employment unless the IDF service was essential for carrying out the particular work. This improvement continued until 2000, in which the number of members of the Arab sector working in government service was 2.5 times higher than it had been in 1992 and, in total, represented 5 percent of all those employed.²³ Altogether, during this time, two thousand Arab employees were added to the staffs of the government services.

The following table presents the ongoing growth that took place in the rate of Arabs employed in government service in percentages and numbers. In the four years that are relevant to this section the number of employees was doubled and this trend continued in the following years as well. From the point of view of the Arab minority this growth did not lead to a closing of the long-standing gaps, but the positive ongoing trend in this area reflected the policy of the new government toward the Arab citizens during these years.

Moreover the increasing integration of Arab citizens into the government ministries not only passed on the message of rapprochement by the government but also introduced the element of the loss of opportunity for employment in the case of someone turning to violent activity.

Table 7.1. Data on the Employment of Arabs in the Civil Service, 1992–1996

The number of Arabs employed in the civil service as a percentage of the total number of employees	Number of Arabs employed	Year
2.1	1,117	1992
2.5	1,369	1993
3	1,679	1994
3.5	1,997	1995
4	2,231	1996

The permanent budgetary deficits of the Arab local councils also received a special response during these years and, in 1995, their regular budgets were increased by a real rate of 13 percent when compared to the budget allocated in 1992. Parallel to this the development budgets of these councils grew by 160 percent during the same period. According to data that was collected and presented to the “Orr Committee” the grants provided to the Arab local councils during the 1990s grew by 5.5 percent compared to previous years.

The government also prepared a development program for the Arab villages for the cost of four billion shekels, half of which was aimed at investing in the national physical infrastructures of roads, electricity and water. A considerable amount of money was also allocated for the completion of the sewage systems in the local councils of the Arab sector. What was special about the program was the fact that it was presented to the heads of the Arab local councils for perusal in order to get their comments and ideas. In practice, despite the criticism that public bodies and other factors with political interests leveled at the program, there were also those among them who defined the program as “historic” and saw its implementation as having the potential to change the situation of the Arab minority in the country. This kind of comment was not the only one and attested to the change taking place in the government’s approach.²⁴

THE POLICY FROM 1996 TO 2000: ONGOING NARROWING OF THE GAP AND THE INTEGRATION OF THE ARAB POPULATION

During the period of the Rabin government the Bureau of the Advisor on Arab Affairs was closed and was replaced by the Head of Minority Affairs in the prime minister’s office. As far as could be ascertained, there were no

more comprehensive policy documents prepared regarding the Arab minority after August 1992. The basic guidelines of the government that was elected in May 1996 did not include the goal of achieving equality between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority.²⁵ Because of this efforts had to be made to clarify what the government's policy was from 1996 onward and this was done by analyzing the responses of the different ministers to questions raised by Arab Knesset members. In the different responses the awareness of the necessity to narrow the gaps between the different groups in the population, as they were recorded in the protocols of the Knesset discussions, show that the policy that they adopted was in the spirit of the above perceived necessity. In this respect their policies were a continuation of the line decided upon by the outgoing Rabin government four years previously. The continuation of the policy was apparently supposed to reduce the potential for violence by the Arab minority but within the ranks of this population during these years there was the beginning of a change in the politics and awareness that steered the way they were handling things into channels of violence.

About a month after the swearing-in of the Netanyahu government, July 2, 9, and 22, 1996, three discussions in the Knesset were devoted to the government's policy toward the Arab population. About a half a year later, on December 18, 1996, there was another discussion in the Knesset about issues that touched upon the minority population. Salah Salim, a member of the Knesset from the Balad-Hadash faction, demanded that there be full equality between Jews and Arabs so that Israel could become a "state of all its citizens." Minister Moshe Katsav rejected the demand and made it clear that Israel would preserve its Jewish character as was laid down in the Declaration of Independence.²⁶ This was a public expression of the change in the political consciousness that had taken place in the Arab sector and was beginning to express itself in more emboldened demands being made by their representatives in the legislature when compared with what had been raised in the past. A month after the discussion, Netanyahu met with the Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Councils and the Arab representative expressed satisfaction at what they had heard from him regarding to closing the gaps between the sectors.

On July 8, 1996, Minister of the Interior Eli Suissa, responded to a question after the demolition of a house belonging to an Arab family in Lod and made it clear that the house had been demolished because it had been built outside the demarcated lines of the master plan of the neighborhood and stressed that the ministry's policy was to remedy the discrimination that had existed in the past and to reduce the gaps as had begun by the outgoing government already in 1992. He even supported what he said with the following figures: a rise of 15 percent in development budgets for the Arab sector since 1993 as opposed to a drop of 2 percent during the same period

for the Jewish sector. He undertook to continue in this direction but, at the same time, made a demand of the heads of the Arab local councils to implement the collection of municipal and water rates.²⁷ Suissa presented figures showing a constant and continuous rise since 1991 in the sums granted by the Ministry of the Interior to the Arab sector. In 1996 the total amount was 516 million shekels in addition to which other government ministries had transferred a special one-time grant of seventy million shekels to the Arab local councils. He announced that the projected budget for 1997 would grow to 566 million shekels but Minister Suissa did not hold back the government's criticism of the way the heads of the Arab local councils were handling things and claimed that there had been a drop in the rate of collecting municipal rates, a phenomenon that he called "unworthy."²⁸

In another discussion, which took place in the Knesset during March 1997, Minister Katsav said that the government was not ignoring the fundamental problems of the Arab citizens and was interested in solving them. He promised that the government would "commit itself with all its power to solve the basic problems in all areas." Katsav surveyed a series of actions that had been taken to help the Arab minority during the recent years and noted that the present government was already implementing special development programs in a number of Arab villages such as Jisser el-Zarka and Bir el-Maksur. In Nazareth the government had invested 250 million shekels in the areas of development, had provided property tax benefits and had transferred 4,750 computers to schools in the Arab sector.²⁹ The deputy minister of education, Mosheh Peled, informed the Knesset that his office was working to close the gaps between Jews and Arabs and that, in concrete terms, had transferred an additional six hundred weekly hours for special education students in the Northern Region. In answer to a question asked by Member of the Knesset Azmi Bishara, Peled said that both Arab and Jewish teachers would have to declare loyalty to the state as a condition of employment.³⁰ Ali Asadi, the man in charge of Arab education in the ministry of education, confirmed the figures presented by Deputy Minister Peled and declared that Arab education had received the entire budget that had been allotted for 1996 while only 75 percent of the budget allotted for Jewish education had been transferred to the Jewish educational institutions.³¹

During the same month there was a comprehensive discussion in the Knesset about the situation of the Arab population in which Katsav announced that the government had decided to recognize seven Arab villages that up to that point had not been recognized.³² He presented the government's policy in the process of voting on a series of subjects which contained elements that would improve the situation of the Arab sector such as: the addition of six Bedouin villages to the classification of National Priority Area A, the building of 361 classrooms in Arab schools (seventy-five more than had been planned for in the budget), the addition of a sum of 160 million

shekels to the regular budget of the Arab local councils, and another 40 million shekels to development budgets—all despite a cutback of 7 billion shekels that had been made in budgets of the government ministries. Katsav went on to update the Knesset about the government's adoption of the previous government's policy about the increased employment of academically qualified people in government and its intention to both establish industrial zones in the Arab villages of Kabul, Sakhnin, and Tamra and to encourage the establishment of Jewish–Arab partnerships in industries in the triangle and Baka el-Gharabiya.³³

This trend of striving for a reduction in the gaps between the population groups and equality was also reflected in the policies of the housing ministry. Meir Porush, the deputy minister, informed the Knesset that during 1997 a continuing growth in the number of young couples had been identified in the Arab sector that were in need of mortgages and that he himself had instructed the staff in his ministry to alleviate the process of application by the Arab minority to receive assistance from the ministry.³⁴

Similar policies were presented by government ministers in 1999 as well and in March of that year the minister of the interior announced that budgets had been allocated to complete the master plans for seven Arab villages in the Galilee and, by doing this, in fact was confirming that the government had adopted the policy of the previous government since the decision to recognize these villages had been made in December 1995. Hussein Elhib, the head of the Tuba Zangariya local council, expressed satisfaction at the decision and noted that he felt that the prime minister had recognized the mistake he had made in his relations with the Bedouin villages in the north.³⁵

In July 1998 one of the main discussions on the situation of the Arab minority took place in the Knesset. Minister Katsav responded in the name of the government to questions and made it clear from the very beginning that the government's policy did not see the Arab citizens as a security risk or as an existential threat to the State of Israel and that: "The few that commit security offences they will be taken care of by the security factors."³⁶ He announced that the government's policy recognized the need for affirmative action for the Arab minority and informed the Knesset that the development budgets for the Arab villages would reach the sum of 570 million shekels in 1998, which was an increase of 8 percent compared to 1997. Regarding the employment of members of the minority in government ministries he said that, as of mid-1998, the numbers stood at 2,500 not counting the 15,000 teachers and, in regard to the area of education, he continued, the government intended to build 1,600 new classrooms.

At the end of 1998 and during the first half of 1999 the government continued with work for closing gaps between the different population groups together with the use of governmental power in the cases of security matters and the control of illegal practices. In November 1998, the govern-

ment decided to invest the sum of 614 million shekels into the Bedouin settlements in the north of the country over a period of five years. The program included the building of public institutions, the development of new neighborhoods for Bedouin soldiers who had been demobilized, the development of road infrastructures and the advancement of master plans. Among the villages that were included in the program were Tuba Zangariya, Búeine Nujidat, Zarzir and Bir el-Maksur.³⁷ As part of the program the Katz Report, which concentrated the recommendations made to improve the situation of education among the Bedouin in the Negev and to establish additional education centers, was presented to the government. The report recommended the building of 144 new classrooms in existing schools in the Bedouin settlements and the establishment of additional centers of education. Awad Abu Freikh, an educator and one of the senior members of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in the Negev, welcomed the government's decision to adopt the recommendations.³⁸

The ministry of housing also sought solutions for the housing shortage in the Arab sector and this was expressed by the deputy minister for housing, Meir Porush, when he informed the Knesset that the Israel Lands Authority was to make lands available for building in Umm el Fahem and other villages. He pointed out that the difficulty in the Arab sector arose from the lack of readiness of the people in the sector to live in mass housing projects and he recommended that this situation be changed through dialogue with the Arab leadership.³⁹

The policy of narrow the gaps between the sectors was also presented in material published by the public bodies and associations that were striving for equality between the sectors.⁴⁰ The picture that one gets from the activity of the government as it is presented above is shows that the closing of the gaps that had begun with the Rabin government had continued under the Netanyahu government, even if the pace of things was not to the satisfaction of the heads of the Arab sector.

In May 1999 the elections for the Fifteenth Knesset took place and a coalition led by the Labor Party formed the government. In a session of the Knesset on June 23, 1999, the outgoing minister of finance, Meir Shitrit, announced that his ministry had allocated the sum of 700 million shekels for development in the Arab sector during 1999, which was an increase of 18 percent compared to the development budget of 1998. He summed up the period in office of the outgoing government and stated that it could lay claim to a series of achievements in regard to the advancement of the Arab minority.⁴¹

In August 1999, three months after the elections, a ministerial committee under the leadership of Matan Vilnai, the minister for culture and sport, was established to deal with the needs of the minority population. In the prime minister's office, a comprehensive policy document was prepared for the

minority sector. The program was entitled “The Long Term Program for the Economic-Social Development of the Arab Villages” and professional factors from the Arab population, such as urban planners, businessmen, research bodies and associations that were dealing with the intersector creation of cooperative enterprises were involved with the writing of the program. The central line that directed its authors was “the obligation of the Israeli government to provide equal and fair opportunities to Israeli Arab citizens in social and economic areas.”⁴² The goal of the program was to find suitable solutions to problems in areas such as transport, infrastructures, building, housing, industry, commerce, education, employment, health and agriculture and the sum that was allocated for its implementation was 4 billion shekels over a period of four years. The disadvantage of the program was the long period of time that was taken for its approval since, from September 1999 onward, Minister Vilnai did not manage to get it approved until October 22, 2000, when it was finally brought up for approval three weeks after the outbreak of the violent events in the Arab sector.

Minister of Education Yossi Sarid responded to a question from a member of the Knesset, Ahmad Tibi, about positions for psychologists in Arab schools and pointed out that the transition to the five-year plan that had already been put into operation would provide a special budget for the financing of positions for psychologists.⁴³ At the beginning of 2000 Sarid announced that he had decided to establish an Arab college in Nazareth that, in the future, would act as a basis for the establishment of an Arab university in the city. He said that the college would begin to operate in 2003. He also informed the Knesset that it was his intention to introduce affirmative action to enable an increase in the number of Arabs who were being employed in senior positions in his ministry.⁴⁴ What Sarid said expressed a trend toward improvement in the field since, until 1999, there had been classrooms and teaching positions added in special education in greater numbers that reached 5,000 weekly hours per year, the science studies had been strengthened, thousands of computers had been introduced and upgraded and equipment for laboratories had been purchased in tens of schools in the Arab sector.⁴⁵ Sarid said that he wanted to continue to close the gaps not only in the field but also to give expression to this in his own bureau as the minister’s personal example.

The minister of finance, Avraham Shochat, told the Knesset that his ministry had adopted a policy of cancelling fines, linkage and the spreading of debt payments for the minorities. As far as the question of Arab academics was concerned the minister replied that, on January 31, 2000, a long term plan prepared by the Civil Service Commission for the integration of candidates from the non-Jewish minority into government service had been presented to the Ministerial Committee for Arab Minority Affairs. The ministerial committee made the point that the goal of the program was to achieve a

rate of 20 percent of non-Jewish members of the minorities in the total number of people employed in the civil service by the end of 2004. Shochat went on to say that this was a policy that was obligatory from both a public and ideological point of view and that the first program to absorb three hundred Arabs into the civil service of the country had already been completed for positions that had been defined as “middle level” and “high level.”⁴⁶

THE SECURITY POLICY FROM 1987–2000: SEVERE ENFORCEMENT TO NEUTRALIZE THREATS

During these years the government’s policy was to continue to carry out surveillance over the Arab population in everything regarding the area of security in order to uncover any threats and to prevent damage to the state’s security. From time to time, when an assessment of the situation suggested that there was a security risk or any sort of activity looming in the Arab sector a vigorous policy to frustrate these potential threats as put into practice. This is what happened, for example, when the general elections for the Eleventh Knesset were approaching in 1984 when the Central Elections Committee decided to prohibit the participation of the Progressive Peace List (Ramash) in the elections following the opinion provided by the legal advisor of the security services. The reasons for this were that this list had been expressing its belief in dangerous principles which were a threat to the safety and existence of the State of Israel and its unique preservation as a Jewish country.⁴⁷ Only the intervention of the Supreme Court, which cancelled the decision, made it possible for Ramash to take part in the elections. In another case that took place in 1985 the authorities limited the travelling overseas of Kamal Dahar and the priest Riakh Abu Asal, who were senior members of Ramash, because it was thought that the two of them wanted to meet with members of the PLO.

At the end of the 1990s a number of additional steps against Arab leadership factors were also taken when Member of the Knesset Taleb Al-Sana was summoned to a police investigation after he was suspected of incitement against the Israeli police. This took place after an event in which a young Bedouin was shot and killed by an inspector from the Nature Preservation Authority.⁴⁸ Member of the Knesset Abed Al-Wahab Darawsha was also investigated on suspicion of committing a similar offence following things he said during a visit to Jordan.⁴⁹ Sheikh Ra’ad Salah, the head of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement and Ibrahim Nimer Hussein, the chairman of the Higher Follow-Up Committee, were summoned for questioning by the police because of suspicion that they had trespassed during a clean-up campaign in the Muslim cemetery in the City of Neshet.

In the area of security policy there was one more affair that was prominent during the period being reviewed. In September 1999 two car bombs were exploded in Israel, one in Haifa and the other in Tiberias. The investigation revealed that it was activists, who had been recruited by Hamas, from the northern branch of the Islamic Movement from a number of villages in the Galilee who were responsible. Despite declarations made by Sheikh Salah that his movement only acted within the framework of the law, the government made a decision to increase the surveillance over the activities of the branch. The decision, which when compared to the call made during the discussion by members of the Knesset to outlaw the branch, was a moderate one, aroused criticism in the Arab sector and, especially, that of the heads of the northern branch.⁵⁰

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP DURING 1987 TO 2000: CONSTANT CHALLENGE AND PROTEST AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT

The violent protest events carried out by the Arab citizens of Israel following the massacre in Sabra and Shatilla were a concrete expression in the field of their ethnic and national identification with the Palestinians and the strengthening of the Palestinian component in their collective identity. This conclusion was also validated by findings from a survey that was carried out two years before the events in which 1,200 participants who were Arab Israeli citizens took part and 40 percent of them answered that they saw themselves as Palestinians.⁵¹

Palestinians political factors in the Arab sector took part in activities in two separate channels which, from time to time, met. One channel of activity was on the national level and emphasized the need for a solution to the Palestinian problem. This included different expressions of identification with the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip like mutual visits, participation in memorial ceremonies for Palestinian personages, the participation in shared activities for young people and work camps.

The second channel was the civil channel which focused on the attempt to improve the lives of the Arab citizens living under Israeli rule in different ways which ranged from dialogue with the government to taking steps to protest.

In the years before the outbreak of the First Intifada the process of the politicization of the Arab Israel citizens continued and was expressed by the establishment of a new political framework in the form of the Higher Follow-Up Committee. Following the "Land Day" events, which were commemorated on March 30, 1984, Ramash also joined the others as a political force. Its leader was Mohammad Mia'ari, one of the founders of Al-Ard in the 1960s. Its ideological platform based itself upon the foundations of Palestinian na-

tionalism and it turned to the Arab public with the call to demonstrate greater commitment to the Palestinian issue.

While Rakah and Ramash were leading the political activity in national aspects the Higher Follow-Up Committee was leading the activities involving civil issues and even so, despite the attempt to focus its activities on these issues, the committee found itself, more than once, being dragged into dealing with national issues. This directly came from the participation of political factors in its meetings including those who raised subjects of a clearly Palestinian nationalist nature to the agenda of the Arab sector.

Another example of this kind of activity took place in February 1984 when Nimer Hussein called a meeting of the heads of the local councils to discuss the topics on the agenda. The concluding summary of the meeting first focused upon national subjects and noted emphasized that the Arab public in Israel was an inseparable part of the Palestinian people and aspired to quickly achieve most of its legal national rights. Only later was there any mention of the civil aspects when the committee issued a statement demanding that the state improve the situation of the Arab minority. The announcement made it clear that the Committee of the Heads of the Local Councils, supported by the Higher Follow-Up Committee, would take action to cooperate with the Federation of Local Authorities, members of the Knesset and its various committees in order to achieve equality between the two populations of Jews and Arabs.⁵² In this announcement one can see the direction being taken by Nimer Hussein which was, in essence, ongoing dialogue with the authorities and not the turning to patterns of violence during events in the field.

An analysis of the way the Arab population and its leaders have handled things in national and civil matters, with special attention paid to Hussein, shows that in the years he headed the committee, he had an interest to enjoy the legitimacy bestowed by the establishment. He consistently avoided giving orders about patterns of protest that might descend into violence and, in this, the analysis also leads to the conclusion that, in the absence of a leadership factor who call for taking violent action, the chances of such action taking place are weak.

During the second annual commemoration of the massacre in Sabra and Shatilla in September 1984 there was only a small number of participants, most of whom were Rakah and Ramash activists, in the mostly symbolic mourning demonstrations and parades and there were no offences recorded involving public disturbances. The public did not show much interest in these events and the public mood was characterized by government factors as one of apathy.⁵³ A similar pattern of activity was recorded in September of 1985 and 1986, when Ramash organized quiet commemorations in Nazareth and Tira.⁵⁴

In February 1985 a delegation of the Higher Follow-Up Committee visited the Temple Mount following publicity which claimed that the Israeli government was planning to do damage to the mosques by granting permission to Jewish religious circles to ascend to the mount. Nimer Hussein announced that the Higher Follow-Up Committee had decided to join in the fight to defend the holy places, but he gave no details about the steps involved with providing this defense. His fellow delegates, Tawfik Ziad from Nazareth, Tarek Abed Al-Hay from Tira and Mohammad Mia'ari, the head of Ramash, warned that this was case of political and religious persecution but did not threaten to use violence, and it was anyway clear that the publicity had had no effect in the field.

In March 1985 the Arab citizens marked "Land Day." No strike was declared a year later in February 1986 after another wave of publicity about the subject and the Higher Follow-Up Committee held a special discussion about the issue of protecting the mosques. Nimer Hussein warned that any harm done to the Al-Aqsa Mosque would be a dangerous and hateful thing and so the Arab Muslims had to embark upon a long term campaign to prevent this happening. None of the participants in the meeting suggested using violence. Mia'ari, for instance, said that they had to relate to the problem in its religious context in order to provide it with a unique character. Kamal Rayan, a member of the Islamic Movement (the southern branch) recommended the establishment of an "Al-Aqsa Day" without giving any detail about what the significance of such a day would be and Nimer Murkus, the head of the Kfar Yassif Council, suggested recruiting Jewish factors into the campaign for the defense of the mosques. The summary of the meeting called for the defense of the mosques and did not include any call to act violently in order to achieve the goal. Hashem Mahamid, a member of Rakah who stood as a candidate for mayor of Umm el Fahem in 1986 sent a letter to the then prime minister, Shimon Peres, to the ministers of the interior and religion and to the chairman of the Knesset, in which he condemned the Israeli provocations. He satisfied himself with only expressing condemnation and a demand to prevent the provocations against mosques and did not make any threats about taking violent steps in order to stop what he and his friends in the Arab sector called attempts to do damage to the mosques on the Temple Mount.

Another event that took place during those years and that did have the potential for violence took place in October 1985, when Israeli Air Force planes bombed the PLO Command buildings in Tunis. The Committee of the Heads of Local councils expressed sorrow over the bloodshed and called for the establishment of a Palestinian state side by side with the State of Israel. The participants also decided to call a one-day strike to express solidarity. The call made to the public did not include a call to carry out violent actions, disturb the peace or to confront the security forces.⁵⁵ About a month later, in

November 1985, there was a lot of anger in the Arab sector following a limited appropriation of some land in the area of the villages of Majd Al-Krum, Sakhnin and Ailoot during which a number of villagers were arrested.⁵⁶ The National Committee for Protection of the Lands, which, in March 1976 had wanted to embark on a violent confrontation with the authorities, this time satisfied itself with a minor reaction in which it said that this appropriation was being carried out in a spirit of racism whose purpose was incitement against the Arabs.⁵⁷ Despite this threat, and in contrast to the violence that that was recorded after the massacre in Sabra and Shatilla, Ziad was, this time, the solitary voice that threatened to act violently. Nimer Hussein continued to adhere to dialogue with the authorities and sent a letter to the prime minister and Minister Ezer Weitzman, who was responsible for the minority populations, in which he demanded that they immediately settle the issue of the budgetary problems of the Arab local councils. In practice the line adopted by Hussein proved itself and negotiations began between the government's representatives and those of the Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Councils in which an agreement was reached to urgently transfer financial assistance (about six million dollars as opposed to the ten million demanded by the Arabs) to cover the deficits of the Arab villages.⁵⁸

At the end of 1986 the issue of demolishing illegally built houses became a central issue in the struggle of the political leadership of the Arab sector and, like other issues; this was also dealt with by them without the use of violence. Contact with the government was managed by the Committee of Arab Local Councils and its representatives exploited the Markowitz Committee's report⁵⁹ in order to exert pressure on the government to end the demolition policy. In February 1987 Abed Al-Hai from Tira and As'ad Azaiza from Daburiya met with Minister Arens, who was responsible for dealing with the minorities, and demanded the end of the demolishing of buildings in line with the recommendations made in the report. They also asked for a delay of two years for the implementation of the demolishing of those buildings which the report had permitted so that they could talk to the government about finding some solution.

Minister Arens agreed with the Arab representatives that it would be better to avoid taking any hasty steps involving this issue.⁶⁰ The opposition to the idea of introducing compulsory national service for Israeli Arab citizens or their mobilization into the army was also done without violence. In November 1985 the Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Councils published a statement in which they declared that it rejected the proposal to introduce compulsory national service for Arab citizens.⁶¹

A year later on December 6, 1986, Minister Arens announced that complete equality for members of the Arab minority was conditional upon their serving in the army. In response Nimer Hussein declared that "under the present political conditions the idea of mobilizing Arabs is unacceptable

because it is unthinkable for us to agree to fight against our brothers, the sons of our people.”⁶²

In all these events there were factors of the Arab leadership who were consulted and avoided calling for any violent action to be taken to achieve the goals they had set for themselves. They believed that dialogue with the government while displaying restraint and avoiding escalation would improve their situation as citizens. This restraint came from a combination of there being moderate leaders, a desire to work together with Jews and the internalization of the lessons learned from the results of the violent clashes with the government, as happened on “Land Day” and in the violent protest events that broke out following the massacre in Sabra and Shatilla in 1982. This behavior by the Arab leadership was the basis for taking decisions in preparation for “Peace Day” which came as a response to the outbreak of the Intifada.

THE PREPARATIONS FOR “LAND DAY” IN DECEMBER 1987

The outbreak of the Intifada surprised the Arabs. In the days before the beginning of the events the *Rakah* newspaper, the only Arab language daily, widely reported about the preparations for the summit meeting between the president of the United States, Ronald Reagan, and the leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev. On December 9, 1987, the newspaper reported on the car accident, which was considered to be the reason for the outbreak of riots, which had taken place the day before in which four people from the Gaza Strip were killed. The next day, on December 10, the newspaper continued to focus upon the American-Soviet summit and, on the front page, there was even an interpretive article written by Tawfik Ziad. In the December 11 edition of the *Ramash* gazette, which appeared as a weekly, they reported on “the fire that had taken hold in the territories.”⁶³

Beginning on December 12, *Al-Ittihad* began to publish a list of those who had been killed in the territories and, on this day, they reported on the protest events taking place in the Arab sector. The newspaper reported that *Rakah* organized a protest demonstration in Nazareth and Tel Aviv against what was defined as “the crimes of the conquest in the conquered Palestinian territories.”⁶⁴ Emil Jarjura, one of the leaders of the *Rakah*’s Nazareth branch, declared during a demonstration in his city that “From every home in Nazareth and from every respectable place in it to the Balata refugee camp and to the Jibaliya refugee camp we send our blessings to the Palestinian people, who are courageously standing up to the bullets of repression and destruction.”⁶⁵ On the same day, December 11, there were also demonstrations in Tura’an, Kafr Kana and Tamra where banners were waved with slogans written on them that read “The blood of the martyrs will not be for

nothing,” “Long live the courageous struggle of the Palestinian people,” “Yes to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state” and “Down with the iron hand of Rabin the conqueror.”⁶⁶

Two days later, on December 13, 1987, Rakah organized a demonstration opposite the offices of the prime minister in Jerusalem and opposite the bureau of the minister of defense in Tel Aviv. Jewish and Arab students from the University of Haifa also demonstrated against the worsening of the situation in the territories and published a statement that condemned the steps taken by Israel and a similar demonstration of the National Committee of Arab High School Students took place in Nazareth. On December 15, *Al-Ittihad* published an article that called upon Israel to stop the repressive measures and to choose a way that would lead to a just Israeli-Palestinian peace. The article encouraged public institutions in the Arab sector in Israel, including religious and educational frameworks, local authorities and professional associations, to make their voices heard in protest about what was taking place in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. There was nothing in the publication that called for the breaking the law or acting violently against the government. Following these publications and the protest activities the government reacted to prevent any escalation taking place in the Arab sector in Israel on the background of the Intifada, which was a term that had already been coined by the newspapers. The police arrested Rakah activists in Jerusalem and Nazareth and made it clear to the leaders of the party that it would intervene in any illegal demonstration that took place in the Arab villages.⁶⁷ In these reactions as well the combination of restrained leadership and the setting out of red lines by the government concerning the character of the reaction prevented the deterioration of the protest actions into violence.

The Arab leadership acted in nonviolent protest strikes, non-confidence motions in the Knesset and condemnations of Israel about their actions in the territories, appeals to world leaders to intervene to put a stop to what they called “the massacres in the territories” and the expressions of identification with the struggle in the territories. This kind of identification was expressed by Mohammad Mia’ari, a Rakah member of the Knesset, who declared: “Freedom for the Palestinian People and independence for the Palestinian state.”⁶⁸ Similar motifs appeared in January 1988 in “Al-Sirat” the publication of the Islamic Movement which was published monthly. The Islamic Movement chose to express a position that had been coordinated with other leadership factors. Articles in the publication, such as that written by Khaled Mahana, one of the movement’s leaders, reflected the dominant mood of the Arab street while emphasizing the ferment among the Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails because of what was happening in the territories.⁶⁹

The developments in the territories created an additional focal point of tension between the government and the Arab minority. During a discussion in the Knesset Roni Milo, deputy minister in the prime minister’s office,

called upon the Arab citizens of Israel "to not get involved with what has happening in the territories and to deal with their civil issues. He also demanded that they show responsibility and prevent damage to the state as part of their being citizens."⁷⁰ What he said, which reflected an authentic concern about deterioration in the security situation among the Israeli Arabs, aroused a storm of protest among the political power factors in the Arab minority who hastened to condemn his statement and expressed identification with the Palestinian struggle in the territories.

The Higher Follow-Up Committee carried on regular talks about the situation in the territories and decided to declare a general strike in the Arab sector in Israel on December 21, 1987. They decided that the strike would take place in the educational institutions, the local councils, the welfare services and the commercial bodies and that the mosques and churches would mark their identification with the struggle in the territories with calls to prayer, the ringing of bells and standing for one minute of silence in memory of the victims. The authors of the declaration called on Jews of conscience to join the strike, a clear expression of their search for dialogue with the majority group or, at least, with some of them.⁷¹ Nimer Hussein called for a solution to the problems through diplomacy and explained that "nobody can prevent the Arab citizens of Israel from expression identification with their brothers, the inhabitants of the territories."⁷² As in earlier instances also here it was the self-controlled character of the leadership that took the approach of adopting a restrained reaction that was not violent.

An analysis of the decisions and the accompanying declarations made by some of the participants, among whom were some who had in the past called for violent actions, is relevant to an explanation of why there was an absence of violence in the case of the outbreak of the Intifada. Rakah's Toufik Toubi suggested calling the strike "Peace Day." Mohammad Watad from Mapam explained that a general strike was the minimum the Arabs in Israel could do for the inhabitants of the territories. Darawsha explained that general strike was the best response there was to what he had said about the Arab population. The priest Shchadeh Shchadeh argued that there was no way that the members of the Arab minority would not react to what he called the crimes in the territories and Abed Anabtawi, the head of the National Arab Students Union, announced that any decision that was made by the Higher Follow-Up Committee would be incumbent upon the students. There was no factor in the Arab leadership that took part in the meeting who questioned the decisions that were made at the end of the meeting or who made a call for the adoption of violent patterns of action against the authorities on the background of the situation in the territories.

The "Peace Day" took place in the spirit of the decisions made by the Higher Follow-Up Committee and, in most of the Arab villages, the day was marked by no public disturbances or clashes between the Arab population

and the government forces. In a small number of villages there was some public disorder and local protest. The Wadi A'ra road was blocked for a short period of time with boulders and, in Jaffa, there were clashes between young Jews and young Arabs. Hashem Mahamid, the then mayor of Umm el Fahem, was seen running after fervent youths in attempt to stop them from blocking roads.

In Nazareth Rakah's Toufik Toubi hurried to calm down the tempers in localized confrontations between the demonstrators and the border police in an incident that was not in line with the guidelines about showing restraint, as was the case in most of the Arab centers of population.⁷³ According to a report made to the Knesset by Deputy Minister Roni Milo, the incident began with some young people throwing stones at the police station in Nazareth following instructions from Tawfik Ziad.⁷⁴ In the same discussion Milo made it clear that the government's policy was to encourage the moderate elements among the Arab Israeli citizens and to aspire to coexistence and cooperation. About a week later the minister of the police made a report about the "Peace Day" incident and noted that public disturbances were only reported in six Arab villages. The Arab press also reported there were only minor incidents in a small number of villages.

In the evening of the same day the Committee of the Heads of the Arab Local Councils condemned the expressions of violence and even nationalist politicians, such as those in the Sons of the Village, Rakah and Ramash came out against the throwing of stones and Molotov cocktails at vehicles.⁷⁵ In the days following "Peace Day" the Arab leadership in Israel was busy with learning the lessons of what had happened that day, expressed satisfaction about the public's readiness to strike without being disorderly, called for the release of the people arrested in the small number of incidents that had taken place and announced that they would continue to support the struggle of the Palestinian people. This public condemnation and the process of studying the lessons of the events fit the prevalent mood of the leadership frameworks in the Arab sector who wanted to avoid violence. This was in order to prevent escalation of the problems they were having in their sensitive relations with the government, to maintain the channels of communication and to prevent any harm being done to Arab citizens in a scenario which might involve a physical confrontation between Arab citizens and the security forces.

INTIFADA: THE GROWTH OF POLITICAL FRAMEWORKS AND THE ISLAMIC AWAKENING

A short time after the outbreak of the intifada in the territories, in January 1988, Member of the Knesset Abed Al-Wahab Darawsha, decided to leave the Zionist Labor Party, explaining that he could not be a member of a party

in which one of its members was the minister of defense, who had given instructions for a policy of “breaking the bones” of the Palestinians in the territories. Darawsha announced the establishment of a new political framework whose members would only be Arabs and its name was the Arab Democratic Party (ADP). He exploited the nationalist mood in the Arab street in order to recruit supporters in preparation for participation in the elections for the Twelfth Knesset. The political platform adopted was similar to those of Rakah and Ramash and combined nationalist and civil aspects such as the establishment of a Palestinian state as a solution to the national struggle and the implementation of full equality in rights for the Arab citizens of Israel. On the basis of this platform Darawsha managed to be elected to the Knesset as a faction of one after winning 27,000 votes.⁷⁶

These elections were the first to take place during the period of the intifada and the Palestinian issue became a central subject in the election campaign of the three Arab parties that were taking part: Rakah, Ramash and the ADP. All three parties based their message on the combination of equality for the Arab minority in Israel and peace between Israel and the Palestinians. This campaign turned out to be successful as the Arab parties received 58 percent of the Arab vote, which was a rise of 7 percent compared to the elections in 1984. From this point of view the Palestinian content in the election propaganda reflected the prevailing mood in the Arab street in Israel which was characterized by its support for the goals of the intifada. This trend also expressed itself in the results of a survey carried out about a year after the elections in August 1989, according to which 97 percent of the Arab citizens of Israel supported the establishment of a Palestinian state alongside the State of Israel.⁷⁷

The joining of the ADP into the Arab political arena took place parallel with the establishment of the Islamic Movement in the Arab street. The network of preaching (“Da’awa”) by the movement operated in many civilian areas, the most prominent being education, health and welfare, and its purpose was to recruit supporters and to return the Muslim public back to religion.⁷⁸ In February 1989 the Islamic Movement had its first political achievement when it won the municipal elections for the mayor of the city of Umm el Fahem with a stinging defeat to the communists. It also succeeded in getting forty of its people elected to the local councils of a number of villages. The success of the Islamic Movement was also impressive because it gained representation in every one of the villages in which they had put up candidates.⁷⁹ Sheikh Abdullah Nimer Darwish, the head of the Islamic Movement at that time, established his status as an important political factor in the Arab sector and, like other leadership factors, he coordinated his actions in national and civil issues with the Higher Follow-Up Committee. During this time of establishing its political and organizational power the Islamic Movement avoided all violent activity but its people joined in the

protest against the government that was organized by the Higher Follow-Up Committee and the movement's gazette expressed criticism of the government.

From the beginning of 1988, under the influence of the intifada in the territories, there was a sharp increase reported in the number of strikes and demonstrations by Israel Arab citizens in protest against national and civil issues and, in fact, since the establishment of the state, there had never been so much protest in the field.⁸⁰ In preparation for "Land Day" in March 1988, which was the first commemoration during the period of the intifada, the Higher Follow-Up Committee acted to make sure that the event would be marked by quiet memorial processions and the Arab public responded so that the Memorial Day passed without any extreme incidents taking place. Things were much the same on "Land Day" in March 1989. In preparation for the memorial day the Higher Follow-Up Committee declared a general strike and included a call for preserving the peace and avoiding confrontations with the security forces which was supported by Tawfik Ziad and Abdallah Nimer Darwish who said: "A strike yes, confrontations with the police, no."⁸¹ This, however was not the end of the calls for calm and a team was formed by the Higher Follow-Up Committee to authorize the slogans that would be written on the banners that would be waved in the procession of support for the intifada, side by side with support for peace as well as opposition to the demolition of buildings and the appropriation of lands.

Between March 1988 and March 1989 the Arab minority marked two occasions around which there could have developed some sharp protest that might have become violent. In November 1988 the Higher Follow-Up Committee decided to call a strike in the Arab villages in protest against the government's policy of demolishing illegally built buildings in them. The immediate reason for this was the anger at the demolition of a relatively large number of houses in Taibeh. The day of the strike came to be called "Home Day" and it appeared that the date chosen, November 15, 1988, had the potential for escalating into violence in the field because it corresponded with Arafat's announcement about the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. The leaders of Arab villages expressed concern about public disturbances because of the connection between the strike and the declaration and some of them even expressed regret over the decision to hold the strike. Ziad, who had in the past led the militant approach of violent protest, also joined up with those who were raising their eyebrows about the decision to strike and said that it would be better to mark the day of the declaration of Palestinian independence with happiness rather than with a strike.⁸² Nimer Hussein made it clear that, this time as well, he would continue to use the efforts at dialogue with the Ministry of the Interior in order to solve the problems surrounding building in the Arab sector.⁸³ In practice the day passed with no extraordinary things taking place that could have mobilized

the public to protest (also violently) and the heads of the Higher Follow-Up Committee adopted a similar position that supported identification with Arafat's diplomatic move without resorting to protest or violence. Other power factors that were at that time in the process of establishing themselves—such as Ramash, the ADP, and the Islamic Movement—had not yet accumulated enough of a presence in the Arab sector to make it possible for them to turn to violent activities and challenge the decisions of the Higher Follow-Up Committee, which enjoyed wide legitimacy.

The events that marked the first anniversary of the Palestinian intifada (December 1988) also took place without any signs of violence by the Arab population in line with the guidelines of the Higher Follow-Up Committee. The anniversary was marked by quiet assemblies in Tel Aviv (an event in which Jews participated), Shfaram, Nazareth, Umm el Fahem and Acre, during which the participants read poems and stood at attention in memory of those killed. The second anniversary of the outbreak of the intifada also passed without any unusual incidents. There were demonstrations of identification with the struggle of the Palestinians that took place in some of the Arab villages while the attempts made by young people to strike the studies in schools in several villages failed.

In October 1989, a year before the terrible events that took place on the Temple Mount, there was an angry mood in the Arab public caused by news they had received about the intention to lay the cornerstone for the building of the third temple in the compound of the Temple Mount which was a step that was viewed by the leaders of the Islamic Movement as a threat to their mosques. The Arab leaders decided to appeal to the prime minister, to the ministers of police and religion, and to the ambassadors of Egypt and Turkey in Israel to ask for their intervention in order to prevent the implementation of the cornerstone laying ceremony. Sheikh Salah turned to Nimer Hussein for help and they agreed that the Higher Follow-Up Committee should visit the Temple Mount in order to learn, firsthand, the situation. The decisions made by the Islamic Movement, together with Hussein, did not include the use of violence to protect the mosque.

THE TEMPLE MOUNT EVENTS: RESTRAINED PROTEST OF THE ARAB LEADERSHIP

The seriously violent events that took place on the Temple Mount in October 1990, during which twenty-one people who had come to pray were killed, surprised the leading bodies of the Arab minority in Israel. When he heard what the dimensions of the event were Nimer Hussein convened an emergency meeting of Higher Follow-Up Committee in order to work out what steps to take. During the meeting he declared that these were not just people who

were killed but martyrs who had sacrificed themselves for the Muslims' holiest place after they had been attacked by Jewish extremists. Member of the Knesset Darawsha placed the responsibility for the event onto the Israeli government and described the event as a crime that been committed under the protection of the government's decisions. Sheikh Salah declared that the Jews had no right to the Temple Mount since the whole compound is Islamic holy place. He accused the Israeli government of being responsible for the deaths of the Muslims on the Temple Mount and suggested some protest steps to take which included the declaration of a general strike, the devotion of a week to studies in schools about the importance of the Al-Aqsa mosque, the erection of a monument in memory of those killed, the flying of mourning flags and the sending of delegations to console the martyrs' families.

The Higher Follow-Up Committee adopted a series of decisions that included the declaration of a general strike in the Arab sector which would be declared days of mourning and placed the full responsibility for the events and their results on Israel. In the long term it was decided that the day of the massacre, as it was referred to in the announcement, would from then on be called "Jerusalem Day" and would include visits to be made by delegations of Israeli Arab citizens to the families of those killed. The Arab minority was called upon to mobilize itself for a campaign to donate blood for those injured in the incident and made a demand of the Israeli government to release all those arrested during the event. The religious aspects were not absent from the announcement which warned Israel not to harm the holy places of Islam and Christianity in Jerusalem.⁸⁴ An analysis of the decisions made shows that senior factors in the Arab minority did not call for any violent action as a reaction to the terrible events. The actions were aimed at expressing identification with the families of those killed and were a protest against the brutal way the government had handled things.

As a result of the decisions made by the Higher Follow-Up Committee, quiet mourning processions took place in a large number of villages in the Arab sector in Israel. Demonstrations that took place in Nazareth and Taibeh developed into localized confrontations between masked youth, border policemen, and the police.⁸⁵ The organizers of the demonstration in Nazareth called upon the police not to enter the city and promised to calm people down, which was a clear expression of their desire to prevent violent clashes. In Rahat, hundreds of women demonstrated in protest against the events and the Islamic Movement in the village distributed a flyer that instructed the people to listen to the guidelines of the Higher Follow-Up Committee. In other Bedouin villages, such as Hura and Lakiya, youths threw stones at passing cars and were stopped by the police.

There was also a very large demonstration that took place in Umm el Fahem where the demonstrators carried placards that praised the martyrs of the intifada and promised to complete the struggle. The northern branch of

the Islamic Movement, which was in charge of the city at this time, played a special role in the demonstration. Mayor Sheikh Salah, in the speech he delivered, included a blessing for each martyr “who washed the courtyard of the Temple Mount and the Al-Aqsa mosque with his blood.”⁸⁶ Along with the demonstration youths who lived in Umm el Fahem blocked the entrances to the city and burned tires. Member of the Knesset Hashem Mahamid, the outgoing mayor, hurried toward them to send them away and return order.

Another motif which appeared in the gazette of the Islamic Movement, was the words of praise devoted to those killed for sacrificing themselves in the battle for the protection of the mosques. One of the villagers from Tamra had been killed in the riots on the Temple Mount and the city was called upon to decorate the town in preparation for a grand reception for the fallen son. About a month after the events about 15,000 people took part in a memorial ceremony for the dead person. Sheikh Salah spoke at the ceremony and stressed “the deeds of slaughter carried out by Israel from Kafr Kassem in 1956 up till the Temple Mount.”⁸⁷ In all of these expressions there was no specific call to act violently but the tone of what was said and the content about the responsibility of the establishment for the deaths of the Palestinians on the Temple Mount was, at that time, an escalation in the boldness of the leadership factors of the Arab sector to challenge the Israeli government. From a historical point of view one can see these expressions as verbal violence which, like the declarations that preceded the events of “Land Day” in 1976, contributed to the public climate that encouraged the readiness to protest and act violently against issues that were considered to be important to the Arab minority, such as the example of the mosques on the Temple Mount or the deaths of Israeli Arabs. These were also the harbingers of religious (Islamic) violence that was being led by the Islamic Movement, even if not alone, during the events of October 2000.

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP FOLLOWING THE GULF WAR: QUIET AND RESTRAINED PROTEST

With the publication of the news about Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, the events taking place in the gulf became the talk of the day in the Arab minority and the interest in what was happening was great. Saddam Hussein was seen by the wider public as an Arab national hero because of the courage he had shown against the United States. Among the Arab leadership the gulf crisis aroused significant differences of opinion between the different power factions. Ramash supported the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and called upon the Arab world to support Saddam Hussein.⁸⁸ The Sons of the Village also supported the Iraqi president and, in a public statement, called upon him not to withdraw from Kuwait and not to surrender to the American dictate. The

Arab nations were called upon to act against the pro-American regimes in their countries and similar appeals to rise up against the Arab rulers also appeared in other posters and articles in the publications of Ramash and the Sons of the Village (*Alwatan* and *Almidan*) and were, in fact, the only expression of any call to act in violent ways following the gulf crisis.

In the field, the two movements expressed their support for Iraq by staging a number of demonstrations with little attendance which, in Nazareth, was marked by the burning of the American flag which resulted in two of the demonstrators being arrested by the police who made it clear that they would not allow this to happen again.⁸⁹ In another incident (August 30) the police prevented Ramash activists from demonstrating and warned them that if the demonstration did take place they would all be arrested.

In contrast Rakah condemned the Iraqi army's invasion of Kuwait and saw it as a catastrophe for both nations. They warned that Israel and the United States would probably exploit the tension in the gulf to inflame the whole region and said that the way to solve crises was through diplomatic negotiations.⁹⁰ The Islamic Movement also came out against Iraq on the basis that violence between Arab and Muslim nations only serves the enemies of Islam. Khaled Mahana wrote that the admiration for Saddam Hussein in the Arab street in Israel was not appropriate⁹¹ and the leader of the movement, Sheikh Nimer Darwish, called upon the Muslims to unite because of the crisis. The two movements also staged limited demonstrations in the field. On August 24, Rakah organized a demonstration in Wadi Nisnas in Haifa in which they expressed identification with the Iraqi people and on the twenty-seventh of the same month opposite the ministry of defense in Tel Aviv as well, where placards against the United States were displayed. In addition the Islamic Movement held a demonstration in Rahat on August 16, in which they expressed identification with the suffering of the people in Iraq.

Despite the opposing positions taken by the political power factors in the Arab sector several common denominators stood out. Firstly, most of the activity involved writing articles with each political body doing this in its own publications. Secondly, the accusing finger was first pointed at the United States and only later at Israel. Thirdly, all of the factors expressed disapproval of the positions taken by the Arab rulers, who chose to stand by the United States. Fourthly, all of the factors were worried that Israel might exploit the situation in the gulf to advance its goals by doing damage to the Palestinians. In this situation of disagreement between the power factors over the Gulf War, together with the concern over the Israeli reaction to action in the field, the chances of there being any protest activity lessened, especially the use of violence. In practice all the Arab public leaders chose to avoid using patterns of violence which was a decision, like those analyzed earlier, that strengthens the argument that without any legitimate leading body that

could mobilize the public for political violence, such violence would not take place.

The handling of the situation by the Arab leadership factors changed a little halfway through January 1991, after rockets began to be fired at Israel from Iraq. Nimer Hussein claimed that the falling rockets on Israeli soil showed that there were no safe borders and that all the sides involved in the dispute should resolve it peacefully. He also welcomed the readiness of families from the Arab minority in Israel to host Jewish families from the center of the country who were seeking shelter in their homes and sent a message of identification to the mayors of Tel Aviv and Haifa.⁹² In this way Nimer Hussein once again made it clear that he opposed threatening action and preferred to act toward bringing the different population groups in Israel closer together through dialogue. The Committee of the Heads of Arab Councils also adopted his position and expressed sorrow about the destruction caused and the victims of the rocket attacks on the Israeli citizens among whom were also Arabs.

A new component in the activities of the political power factors in the Arab sector during this period was their effort to help the Palestinians in the territories who were struggling with the curfew that had been imposed on them by Israel because of the war. Assistance campaigns were undertaken that included the transfer of food and medicines to the population in the territories and the Committee of the Heads of the Arab Local Councils demanded that Israel cancel the curfew which they claimed was a humanitarian crisis. At a meeting that they convened, at which the advisor to the prime minister on Arab affairs was present—which, in itself was evidence of their desire for dialogue with the establishment—the committee condemned the missile attack on Israel, demanded the cancellation of the curfew in the territories, and demanded a solution to the distress of the Arab councils.

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP FROM 1991 TO 1996: POLITICAL ACTIVISM AND INCREASING DEMANDS MADE ON THE STATE

In the years 1991 to 1996 the political power factors in the Arab sector continued working for improvement in the situation of the Arab population in a series of civil issues while, in parallel, they were expressing identification with the Palestinian national struggle and the intifada. During this period the Higher Follow-Up Committee continued to be the roof body of all the political power factors and to lead the fight in a variety of issues. Despite its being the political body with the most power at this time there were two other political phenomena—the stabilization of the Islamic Movement as a leading force in the Arab sector that was constantly striving to influence the public agenda of the whole Arab minority and the establishment of Balad in 1995.

The entry of the two movements into the political arena exerted a real influence upon choosing the pattern of violent action in the events that will presently be analyzed.

The rise of the Islamic Movement and Balad was the outcome of two external processes that were taking place throughout the world that had a real influence upon the political map of the Arab minority. The first process came out of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 which led to a wave of Islamic awakening in different countries in the Middle East, such as Sudan and Algeria, and to the development of new religious movements that were politically oriented, such as Hizballah, Hamas and the Islamic Movement in Israel. The second process was the awakening of nationalism in Eastern Europe as a result of the breaking up of the USSR and Yugoslavia which was followed by the establishment of more than twenty states for national groups who were fulfilling their aspirations for self-determination. The growing preoccupation with this subject in the international arena also trickled down into the consciousness of the Arab citizens of Israel, especially to the level of the highly educated people with political awareness. Public figures who belonged to the leadership of the Arab minority began to meet with other minorities, took part in international forums and some even participated in the formulation of charters that dealt with the rights of national minorities.

During the 1990s the Higher Follow-Up Committee dealt with a series of issues that included the budgetary deficits of the Arab local councils, the continuation of the demolition of illegal buildings, the fixing of the status of nonrecognized settlements in the Arab sector, the intention to forcibly move Bedouin in the Negev from their encampments to permanent living areas, and the concern that the government would introduce national service or mobilization into the army for the minority populations. Added to this was the constant surveillance over the situation in the territories. The Islamic Movement, which had already established roots in the Arab street during these years, continued to blame the government for attempting to do harm to the Al-Aqsa mosque.

The Higher Follow-Up Committee continued to search dialogue with the governmental authorities. In March 1991 the inspectors from the Ministry of the Interior demolished eight buildings built illegally by the Bedouin in the Negev. Political factors in the Arab sector protested about the discrimination shown against the Arab minority.⁹³ During the same month the heads of the Arab local councils warned that the continual budgetary deficits of the councils had to be solved quickly.⁹⁴ In the framework of the preparations being made to mark “Land Day” at the end of that month Rakah suggested that the battle over the government’s intention to appropriate about 7,000 dunams (2.7 square miles) of land and to attach it to the master plan for Nazareth Elite needed to be intensified.⁹⁵ The suggestion was rejected by the Higher Follow-Up Committee and, instead, Tarek Abed Al-Hai suggested turning

“Land Day” into “The Day of Peace and Brotherhood.” Nimer Hussein said that this was a positive idea and added that they should include Jewish elements in the protest against the land appropriation.⁹⁶

Ultimately, following the decisions made Committee, “Land Day” of March 1991 passed quietly. From a historical point of view, the differences of opinion about the character of the day and the attempts of different political power factors to influence the characteristics were signs that attested to the weakening of Higher Follow-Up Committee during the coming years. The more the strength of the new power factors, such as the Islamic Movement and Balad, grew the more they wanted to dictate patterns of action for the Arab minority some of which had the potential for the use of violence. These patterns were not seen as being appropriate for the traditional line of dialogue of Nimer Hussein but he did not do anything to prevent the rise in importance of the new forces who were highly motivated to adopt oppositional patterns of activity against the establishment.

In May 1991 the inner secretariat of the Higher Follow-Up Committee discussed the budgetary crisis of the Arab local councils and Nimer Hussein suggested giving the government an extension of a month to come up with a solution via dialogue. The suggestion was agreed to and during that month the Arab leadership factors met with the minister of finance and the minister of the interior with whom they made an agreement about the solution for the crisis and the transfer of immediate assistance to the councils in trouble.⁹⁷ About a month later, in June 1991, the program for the encouragement of Christians to go into the army was completed in the office of the Advisor on Arab Affairs but the Higher Follow-Up Committee rejected the proposal claiming that all members of the non-Jewish minorities in Israel belonged to the Arab nation and that they should not be separated.⁹⁸ The ongoing dialogue, as in the past, reduced the possibility of a slide into violent ways.

Together with the struggle over civil issues the political connections of the Arab leadership factors with the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip became a regular thing. In July 1992, a month after the change in government in Israel, the Arab members of the Knesset warned Yitzhak Rabin, then prime minister, that escalation in the field following a raid carried out by the IDF to arrest wanted people who were hiding in the Al-Najah University in Nablus would lead to a general strike in the Arab sector of Israel. They demanded that Rabin cancel the curfew placed upon the university and involved the American secretary of state, James Baker, into the picture. This was an expression of the fact that they preferred international involvement over the use of violence in the field in order to change the Israel policy about the Palestinian issue.⁹⁹

In November 1992 Nimer Hussein and Ahmad Tibi, who at the time, was the chairman of the Academics Committee of Taibeh, travelled to Tunis to meet PLO chairman, Yasser Arafat, in order to convince him to accelerate

the diplomatic process so they could achieve a solution to the conflict in the region. About a month later the Arab minority held a strike for one day in protest of the government's decision to deport more than four hundred activists from Hamas and the Islamic Jihad from the territories to Lebanon in response to the murder of a border policeman. Nimer Hussein explained that the aim of the strike was to demonstrate the great concern of the Arab leadership about additional deportation procedures which might include Arab citizens of Israel. During that month, a delegation of 150 Israeli Arabs, including political people, went to the Gaza Strip to meet Palestinian public personages. During the visit Member of the Knesset Hashem Mahamid called on the Palestinians to fight against the conquest in all ways until the homeland was liberated, and, later, explained that he did not mean an armed fight against Israel.¹⁰⁰

The Islamic Movement exploited the rise in its status to advance the subjects it was interested in. It led the struggle for the preservation of the Islamic holy places throughout the country as a whole and in Jerusalem in particular and expressed identification with the Palestinian struggle in the territories by sending assistance to the needy. The movement made sure that many events of a religious nature took place in order to keep the issue of the holy sites and mosques on the Temple Mount on the public agenda in the Arab sector because these helped it accumulate political power. In its activities during these years, until 1996, the Islamic Movement avoided calling for violent action to advance its political goals.

In October 1991 the movement held a commemoration of the deaths of the twenty-one Muslims on the Temple Mount which included a day devoted to studying in memory of the Arab Israeli citizen who had been killed, visits to the families of those who died, the raising of black flags and a campaign for collecting food and basic products for the needy in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.¹⁰¹ In January 1993 the Islamic Movement took part in an assembly in Jerusalem to protest the deportation of activists from Hamas and the Islamic Jihad to Lebanon. Sheikh Salah declared that "The deportees are our flesh and blood. The deportations are aimed at emptying our Palestinian cities and villages and our mosques especially the Al-Aqsa mosque."¹⁰²

At the beginning of 1996, following significant differences of opinion between Sheikh Nimer Darwish and Sheikh Salah over the participation of the movement in the Fourteenth Knesset elections, the two disengaged from each other. This was followed by a split of the Islamic Movement into two branches: the Abdallah branch, named after its leader, and the Ra'ad branch. At the beginning of September 1996, when the Western Wall tunnel was opened, Sheikh Salah turned to international elements and asked for their help in the struggle to protect the Islamic holy places in Jerusalem.¹⁰³

During these years, articles and reports that were antagonistic to the State of Israel and the Jewish religion began to appear in the gazette of the north-

ern branch of the Islamic Movement as well as expression of support for violent actions. These motifs regularly appeared throughout the 1990s and examples of this were: “The Muslims are the victims of the Zionist cancer”¹⁰⁴ and “The State of Israel is like a locust hurrying to destroy everything good.”¹⁰⁵ In other bulletins they wrote: “The intifada strikes blows with stones on the heads of the drunks and gluttons and smashes the noses of those who surrender”¹⁰⁶ and “The hands of Prime Minister Rabin are drenched in the blood of the residents of Hebron and do not allow the arrest of settlers when they are slaughtering.”¹⁰⁷ Salah himself hinted at using violent forms of activity in the future and declared that “If Israel doesn’t want to take the path of peace we are ready for this.”¹⁰⁸

Balad also became a rising power during these years alongside the Islamic Movement. The main agenda of movement, which became a political party, was the demand to change the character of the state and declare that Israel was the state of all its citizens. Its leader, Azmi Bishara, already in October 1993 clarified that he could not accept Israel as his country while it was defined as a Jewish country and not as a country of all its citizens. At the same time he expressed opposition to the idea of mobilization of the Arab citizens of Israel into army service because it was the IDF that defeated his people in wars from 1948 to 1967. A year later, in November 1994, during a conference at the University of Tel Aviv, he argued that even if full equality was achieved between the Arab minority and the Jewish majority the Arab citizens would not be able to accept the Zionist character of the state or the right of every Jew to come to live in Israel.¹⁰⁹

In April 1996, a short time before the general elections for the Fourteenth Knesset, Balad signed an agreement with Hadash (the Communists) to run in the elections on one list. Bishara explained that this step was taken to create a political axis that would fight the “Israelization” and “Zionization” of the country.¹¹⁰ After he was elected to the Knesset Bishara increased his activity (and boldness) against the state institutions and the leaders of the country. In September 1996 he called for the prevention of Netanyahu, then prime minister, from participating in the economic conference taking place in Cairo and for not allowing Israel to market goods to Arab countries. A couple of days later he wrote in the Balad gazette that the Arab countries should impose a political boycott on Israel.¹¹¹

THE OPENING OF THE WESTERN WALL TUNNEL: HARSH CRITICISM AND THE AVOIDANCE OF VIOLENCE

The first headline printed by the *Al-Ittihad* on the day after the opening of the Western Wall tunnel dealt with the Palestinian reaction to the Israeli step and declared that the government of the Palestinian Authority was calling for a

general strike and demonstrations.¹¹² The editorial of the same issue dealt with Israel's policy of provocation toward the Palestinians; moreover there were no comments made or steps taken by the Arab sector and its leadership in reaction to the step of opening the tunnel mentioned in the issue. In the following edition the Communist Party published an announcement in which it accused Prime Minister Netanyahu of declaring war on the Palestinians and also called upon its supporters to protest following the escalation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip because of what it called "the murder of the Jerusalem Arabs and of the peace process."¹¹³

Only on September 26, two days after the opening of the tunnel, did the Higher Follow-Up Committee convene a meeting to discuss the ways the Arab public could react to the Israeli step and to the confrontations in the territories between the Palestinian security forces and the IDF soldiers. Nimer Hussein condemned the Israeli action and saw it as an attack upon the Al-Aqsa mosque. Hashem Mahamid warned that Israel wanted to Judaize Jerusalem and believed that the Al-Aqsa mosque was in real danger. He suggested that people donate blood, send delegations to pray in the Al-Aqsa mosque and in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and to organize demonstrations in the Arab villages and opposite the prime minister's office in Jerusalem. He did not suggest doing anything violent in order to cancel the government's decision. Abed Almalak Dahamsha, a member of the southern branch of the Islamic Movement, asked the Arab members of the Knesset to ask for a special session of the Knesset because of the events. Sheikh Salah warned that under the Temple Mount there were many additional tunnels that had not yet been exposed, and that the mosque might collapse. Ramez Jiraisi, the mayor of Nazareth, called upon the Jews and Arabs to unite their forces to bring down the Netanyahu government. Bishara believed that the Arab public was at a crossroads because the Israeli government was interested in burying the peace process. He suggested creating an Arab educational program about the city of Jerusalem and to teach this in all schools instead of "the Zionist curricula" that ignore the rights of the Palestinians in Jerusalem.¹¹⁴ Amongst all this not one of the participants called for violence as a reaction to the opening of the tunnel.

The committee decided to hold a general strike on September 27, 1996, and to establish this day as "Jerusalem Day." On this day the Arab public was called upon to participate in protest processions and wave placards with slogans as well as organizing groups to make visits of identification with the holy places in Jerusalem. They were also called upon to donate blood for those Palestinians injured in the territories. The committee issued a call to the forces of peace in the Jewish public to join the protests and to oppose the policies of the Israeli government which they saw, together with the Jerusalem Municipality, as being responsible for the deterioration of the situation the government was called upon to halt the excavations being carried out

under the foundations of the Al-Aqsa mosque.¹¹⁵ No call was made to the Arab minority to take violent action in response to the recent developments in Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and, as in the past, the committee adhered to the line that supported expressing protest in legally acceptable ways.

The strike was held in the Arab sector and the demonstrations took place without anything extreme happening. Demonstrations took place in Kfar Manda, Tamra, Kabul, Sha'ab, Iblin, Taibeh, Shfaram, Umm el Fahem, Acre, Nazareth, Jaffa, and Haifa and in a long list of other villages. Slogans against what was called "the Israeli massacre" were waved about in all the demonstrations and at the demonstration in Nazareth Member of the Knesset Bishara said that what is happening in the territories is what happened in South Africa and we are dealing with something that was preplanned. The government of Israel thinks that it can survive for four years without any diplomatic progress being made and we are standing here today united against this government. A small number of disorderly incidents took place in the demonstration that took place in Nazareth when some of the demonstrators blocked the main road, burned tires and smashed shop windows. The security forces dispersed the rioters and arrested twenty-one people.

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP FROM 1996 TO 1998: GROWING BOLDNESS AND THE UTILIZATION OF VERBAL AND PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

During the two years that began with the opening of the Western Wall tunnel and ended with the Alroha Lands affair two important political developments were identified which had the potential to affect the discourse in the Arab sector as well as the patterns of its activities during protest events. The first development was the sharpening of the tone of the declarations and methods of the Islamic Movement, especially those of the northern branch. The different spokesmen of the branch began to use a "nationalistic" approach toward the state and came out against it in a series of subjects which included the use of expressions some of which encouraged the use of violence. The second political development was the entrenchment of Balad as an influential political factor which was made possible not only because its members had been elected to the Knesset but also because the slogan it had adopted—a state of all its citizens—had been well-received in the Arab street. A public opinion survey that was carried out in the middle of 1997, which questioned one thousand people in the Arab sector, showed that 66 percent of them supported a change in the Jewish character of the state to becoming "a state of all its citizens" as was written in the platform of the party.¹¹⁶

The influence of Balad on the sector's political discourse, both on the leadership and the public's levels, arose out of the fact that the demand it was making of the government for full equality also included a demand to recognize the Arabs as a national minority. During these years these motifs regularly appeared both in the discourse of the leadership of Balad and beyond it. The journalist, Salman Natour, for example, complained about the way the existing leadership frameworks were handling things in the Arab sector. He argued, with a broad hint at the national component, that the Higher Follow-Up Committee and the Committee of the Heads of Local Councils were working in out-of-date ways and were unable to achieve either the things they were demanding or the aspirations of the Israeli Arab public.¹¹⁷

The main subjects that occupied the Arab leadership during this period were the regular civil issues such as the concern about land appropriation, the financial state of the local councils, education, the absence of Arabs in state institutions, the protection of Islamic and Christian holy sites, and the demolition of illegal built buildings in Arab villages—accompanied by the national Palestinian struggle in the territories. Regarding all these the Higher Follow-Up Committee continued to examine the legally acceptable ways to protest these things in a democratic country and to avoid the call for violent action.

The Arab members of the Knesset presented many questions in the Knesset about civil issues with the aim of improving the situation of the Arab minority and their activities in the framework of the Knesset included proposals of nonconfidence in the government, mostly on the background of the political steps taken against the Palestinian Authority and sometimes in protest at the harsh economic situation of the Arab population.¹¹⁸ Rafik Haj Yihyeh, a Labor Party member of the Knesset, when he asked a question, made sure to emphasize that the Arab minority preferred dialogue with the government in order to improve its situation. In July 1998 he posed a question about the difficult situation of the Arab local councils and expressed hope that the strikers' protest tent set up by some of the heads of councils would be paid attention to by the Knesset in order to deal with the distress. He brought the Knesset assembly up to date on the fact that the heads of councils had asked to discuss things with the relevant ministers, including the prime minister but, according to him, their effort to gain access to the country's leaders had not borne any fruit. Despite this Haj Yihyeh agreed that there had been an improvement in the situation of the Arab minority since the beginning of the 1990s.¹¹⁹

The Higher Follow-Up Committee also worked for the achievement of equality between the different population groups and agreed to be patron of the initiative to hold a conference about equality which took place in December 1996. At the preparatory meeting that took place in Shfaram a number of studies done on civil matters were discussed and complaints were made

about the policy of discrimination against the Arab minority. These included the issues of land appropriation in the Arab sector, the preparation and authorization of master plans for the development of Arab centers of population, the recognition of as yet unrecognized Arab villages and the improvement of the education, welfare and health systems in the sector.¹²⁰ The Equality Conference took place on the background of the changes that were taking place in the international sphere vis-a-vis the situation of national minorities. After the conference Bishara said that this was the first time that the Arab minority had made an attempt to define its relationship with the state and that full equality would only be achieved when the state became a state of all its citizens so that it would no longer be a Jewish state and the Arabs would be recognized as a national minority. From a practical point of view Bishara suggested that the Arabs should begin to build national institutions.¹²¹ At this particular point in time he did not express support for any protest or violent action but, in contrast to other Arab public figures, such as Member of the Knesset Haj Yihyeh, he did not believe in dialogue with the government and tended toward a more separatist view.

At the beginning of January 1997, the National Parents Committee of the Arab minority decided to strike the education system in the sector and, in this way, joined the struggle of the Arab local councils in their demand for equality in the field of education. The heads of the local councils decided to send a delegation to the Arab League and the UN in order to present them with a report on the situation of the Arab minority in Israel and to boycott the visits of ministers and government clerks to Arab villages. At a demonstration that took place in Jerusalem Ahmed Sa'ad, a member of the Knesset from the Balad-Hadash faction, said the Arab minority would turn every city and village upside down until they achieved their just rights. Alongside the protest activity, that included the striking of the municipal and educational systems, Arab legal experts presented appeals to the High Court of Justice, sometimes together with Jews, in which they asked that the government be obligated to carry out a policy of affirmative action and equality toward the Arab minority.¹²² Two months later the Higher Follow-Up Committee ordered a full strike to be carried out on "Land Day" in protest of the continuation of discrimination against the Arab minority and as a sign of identification with the Palestinian struggle in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The strike was almost totally complied with.

In August 1997 the Higher Follow-Up Committee gave instructions to strike the opening of the school year in protest of what it called a continuous worsening of the state of Arab education and the disregard by the government of the needs of the Arab minority in this area. Other forms of protest that were also suggested at this meeting were the holding of a press conference in which they would reveal an up-to-date picture of the state of education in the Arab sector, the possibility of extending the strike to a month and

the holding of an ongoing demonstration opposite the prime minister's office in Jerusalem. The committee also decided upon a series of sit-in strikes in protest of the continuing budgetary deficit of the local councils and the absence of any solution to this problem from the government. In this case as well the committee adhered to the traditional approach that supported protest within legal limitations. Last minute attempts by several heads of local councils and government representatives to prevent the strike were not successful because the minister of the interior, who consulted with the leaders of the Arab minority on August 26, made it clear to them that a comprehensive recovery plan was a condition for any arrangement made. The minister was expressing the policy of the government which, during these years, supported an increase in budgets for the Arab villages but also made the demand that the heads of local councils in the sector gird their loins and start collecting municipal taxes as they were legally required to do.

On December 31, 1997, the heads of the Arab local councils decided to appeal to the High Court of Justice in order to oblige the government to carry out the agreements it had made with them. On these very same days Hadash and Balad were carrying on a common struggle, which included protests in the field, against the intention of the authorities to appropriate land from a Muslim cemetery in Nesher to pave a new road.¹²³

“Land Day” in March 1998 passed without any extreme events taking place while the day itself was centered upon making people more aware of the need to protect the lands from appropriation in the future. A few days later, at the beginning of April, inspectors from the ministry of the interior demolished three buildings in Umm Sakhali, an unrecognized Bedouin settlement near Shfaram. In response, the Higher Follow-Up Committee decided to declare a campaign to raise money in order to rebuild the demolished buildings. The police hurried to the settlement to prevent the construction work and ran into a protest demonstration organized by the inhabitants. In the same context a decision was also made to maintain an ongoing Arab presence in Umm Sakhali and to escalate the protest against the government's policy in this area without giving details about what steps were to be taken.¹²⁴

The demolition of the buildings in Umm Sakhali increased the sensitivity of the Arab sector at that time about the issue of protecting the lands. In July 1998 the Higher Follow-Up Committee decided to establish a national body for the planning of building that would prepare a plan to oppose the appropriation of lands and develop a master plan for the Arab villages instead of the government's planning committee. As a first step the committee decided to initiate popular protests, including a countrywide demonstration, against the army order for the appropriation of the Alroha land. Bishara, who was one of the initiators of the step, said that the Arab public had no interest in discussing this matter with the government but would fight it and declare a country-

wide confrontation. He also thought that "Land Day" to be marked in March 1999 should be turned into a day of popular uprising (intifada).¹²⁵

The Islamic Movement also continued operating in the political arena together with the Higher Follow-Up Committee and the leaders of the movement, especially those from the northern branch, adopted a more bellicose and antagonistic tone toward the government, which even involved verbal violence, and was fed by the ideological platform of the movement that obliged them to protect the Al-Aqsa mosque and the Islamic holy places. The more provocative tone expressed itself in speeches and in the content of the branch's gazette. An analysis of this phenomenon shows a gradual escalation with the first stage involving the spokesmen of the movement raising general complaints about the government in discussions that were held in the Higher Follow-Up Committee. The next stage expressed itself in the move toward expressions and declarations that were more aggressive against the government and the third stage was characterized by the call to take violent action in order to protect the interests of the Islamic Movement and the Arab minority.

During these years the northern branch of the Islamic Movement carried on an ongoing and determined battle against the Israeli authorities. This battle, which was of a religious nature and based itself upon the beliefs of the Muslim Brotherhood, took place in three cycles. The first dimension focused upon the disagreements that arose between the Muslims and the authorities and which had been exacerbated over the years. The more the self-awareness of the Muslim community grew, the more organized its activities were. The movement took the leadership for the battle over the return of the Islamic holy places upon itself and this included the abandoned cemeteries, mosques and ruins. This activity also took place in mixed cities and even in cities and towns that had a clearly Jewish character such as Tiberias, Beth She'an and Moshav Habonim, near Haifa. The Islamic activists of the Ra'ad branch mapped sites throughout the country and, through utilizing the laws, tried to stop the building of public enterprises using the argument that the sites belonged to the Islamic Wakf.

The second cycle of activity involved the issue of the Temple Mount and the approach taken by the northern branch of the Islamic Movement was assertive and constantly accused the Israeli establishment of attempting to destroy the mosques on the Temple Mount. The third cycle was the attempt to establish an ideological and political link between the Arab minority in Israel and the Islamic environs of the Middle East.

The expressions used by the leaders of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement always included a list of new characteristics among which were a call to protect the mosques using different means such as the presence of armed Muslims, the denunciation and the ridiculing of the state's leaders, the denigration of Judaism as a religion, identification with the actions of Hamas in the territories, the provision of a forum for Hamas activists in the move-

ment's gazette and support for the struggle to release the security prisoners who were Arab citizens of Israel.

In January 1997 Kamal Khatib, Sheikh Salah's deputy, wrote that the Islamic Movement was demanding that there be an armed Palestinian presence on the Temple Mount and that, if this was impossible, then an Islamic or Arab force should be placed there in order to safeguard the mosques.¹²⁶ At the beginning of February 1997 a delegation from the branch, accompanied by other political factors from the Arab sector and senior members of the Palestinian Authority, visited the area of the Temple Mount. The visit took place following the complaint that the government had made it possible for the Antiquities Authority to carry out a dig under the mosque and the heads of the Islamic Movement warned that Israel would have to bear the responsibility for any damage that might be caused to Al-Aqsa. In June 1997 Sheikh Salah published an article in which he declared that the Palestinian masses in the Galilee, the triangle and the Negev had to be awakened so that they could act as an effective means of pressure to convince Israel to release the Israeli Arab citizens who were prisoners of freedom.¹²⁷ He did not determine what patterns of action the Arab public should use to help in this struggle.

A month later, in the middle of July 1997, thousands of the residents of Umm el Fahem blocked the main entrances to the city in protest at the water supply being cut off because of a debt owed by the city to the water company. Sheikh Salah explained that he had made the decision to call the demonstration after he had used up all the possibilities that were available to renew the supply of water.¹²⁸ It was the first time the sheikh chose a violent form of activity in the form of blocking a road and thus disturbing the public order in order to achieve a political goal.

That same week the Sheikh published another article in which he declared that "the Jewish religion is used to spreading lies and every believer has to stand up with determination against these Jewish terrorists."¹²⁹ Hamad Aghbariya, a prominent branch activist, referred to Judaism as a religion that usually lies and declared that "the Chief Rabbi of Israel, Bakshi Doron, was lying when he declared that Judaism does not allow damage to be done to other religions."¹³⁰ In August 1997, at a gathering in the village of Ara'ra, Sheikh Khatib preached a sermon in which he said, among other things, that "All the monsters and monkeys need to know that we will only follow in the footsteps of the prophet Mohammad and insulting the prophet, as the offspring of pigs and monkeys did in Hebron, was not reported enough by the media."¹³¹

The second assembly that the northern branch organized in September 1997 under the banner of "Al-Aqsa is in danger" opened with the song called "We will die and will not leave" the words of which included, amongst other things, that "We will stand up against the soldiers and will not break facing those who call themselves the leaders of the temple . . . oh Jerusalem, wait

for those marching at the head of the throng.”¹³² A month later Khatib wrote that,

On the background of the published material about the intention to build the false third temple, the golden calf of the present era will be sent up in flames and will cast all the Children of Israel and the whole region into a sea of violence and destruction. If there are those who are thinking about sacrificing a calf to the temple, meaning to build the third temple at any cost, they need to know that we will sacrifice our lives on the threshold of Al-Aqsa.”¹³³

About a month after the gathering a delegation from the Islamic Movement visited Gaza and blessed Ahmad Yassin, the spiritual leader of Hamas, on his release from the Israel jail, Sheikh Salah expressed his joy at their being able to come from the Galilee, the triangle and the Negev to take part in the festivities over the release of Yassin. During the same month Sheikh Hashem Abed el Rahman, the spokesman of the northern branch, claimed that the Israeli government wanted to slaughter Muslims, spill their blood and destroy the Al-Aqsa mosque. He warned that the Muslims would not sit on their hands while there was an attempt being made to harm the mosque and that they were ready to give up their lives and their blood to defend the mosque.¹³⁴

As a mayor of Umm el Fahem and, in July 1997, Salah led the struggle against the government in protest against the fact that the government had not transferred the budget for the development of the city. He threatened the Israeli government with “an unprecedented response” if it refused to make the establishment of a technological school in the city possible, didn’t fix up the approach roads to the entrance to the city and held up the process of establishing an industrial area.

These motifs regularly appeared in the gazette of the branch in 1998 as well and, in January 1998, an article was written in the paper in which the Muslims were called upon to prepare forces to oppose the enemy and save the Al-Aqsa mosque.¹³⁵ In February Sami Abu Frikh, a senior activist, accused the government of “stealing the lands of the Arabs and murdering their people.”¹³⁶ During the same month another article compared the Jews to “rats gnawing away at the ashes of the mosque.”¹³⁷ In March the literary editor of the branch wrote an article in praise of the terrorists and expressed sorrow over the fact that the prisoners, whom he called “the most important group,” have to remain in jail.¹³⁸

Along with the Higher Follow-Up Committee and the activities of the Islamic Movement, Balad also intensified the demands it was making from the government at this time and also supported the carrying out of the reform of the Arab leadership institutions in order to develop institutions that would ensure their development as a national minority. It suggested the establishment of a new political framework that would be called the Higher Follow-

Up Committee for the problems facing Arab minority in Israel and, through establishing a political organization, thus make their being a national minority a concrete fact. At the same time the party expressed criticism about the weakness of the Committee by claiming that, in its situation, it was not capable of dealing with the challenges facing it and the Arab public. Personal criticism was leveled at Nimer Hussein, the veteran chairman of the committee, who was even accused by Balad of being a member of a Zionist framework. The party supported the development of a national plan that would define the independent national positions for the Arab minority while developing as wide an agreement as possible about national and civil issues.¹³⁹ In the eyes of its members the program was aimed at providing answers for problems involving industry, education, culture, agriculture, building and infrastructure.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE “ALROHA” LANDS EVENTS

At the beginning of January 1997 a group of residents from Umm el Fahem and the villages of Muawiyya and Musmus decided to establish an ad hoc committee to thwart the intention of the authorities to turn the “Alroha” lands into a training area for the IDF (Area 107). The members of the committee decided to prepare the land for planting and to make a demand of the government to attach the land to the jurisdiction of city of Umm el Fahem.¹⁴⁰

A year and a half later, at the end of May 1998, after more than a year in which nothing was done, the struggle over the issue began anew. Sheikh Salah called upon the residents of his city to oppose the plan for appropriating the land. In June the committee renewed its activities after the ministry of defense informed them of its intention to declare the area a closed military zone. One of the immediate significances of this intention was the demand made by the government of the Arabs to equip themselves with entry permits in order to go into the closed military zone where the owners of the land were growing different crops. The members of the committee decided to establish a fund to collect money to allow them to continue their struggle and also asked the Higher Follow-Up Committee to convene an emergency meeting to discuss the issue. They also decided to utilize the channels of communication with the government and asked for meetings with the prime minister, the president and the Minister of Defense.

Two months later, in August, the committee, with the encouragement of the City of Umm el Fahem, changed its name to the Committee for the Protection of the Alroha Lands, which was similar to the Committee for the Protection of Lands from the 1970s. At a meeting which took place on August 26, they decide to call upon the owners of the land to ignore the Army’s order prohibiting them from entering the area, to set up a protest tent

there, to hold a protest demonstration at the entrance to Umm el Fahem every Friday, and to devote the sermons in the mosques to the issue.¹⁴¹

On September 4, about three weeks before the time when the army order was to go into effect, a Friday prayer was devoted to the Alroha lands in which three thousand people took part. Sheikh Salah preached the main sermon and called upon the public to hold on to their land “whatever the sacrifice.”¹⁴² He also called upon the strikers to not be afraid of the threats being made to them by the different governmental bodies. The sheikh himself and Member of the Knesset Abed el Malek Dahamsha, sat in the protest tent which was a concrete expression of their call to hold on to their lands. Three days later the Higher Follow-Up Committee convened a meeting in the protest tent that was devoted to the issue and decided to pave an access road that would make it easier for demonstrators to get to the disputed area. Suleiman Aghbaria, one of the leaders of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement, said at the meeting that if the government demolished the protest tent it had to be rebuilt and, if necessary, rebuilt again and again. He implored those present to not hesitate about moving the protest tent to the Wadi A’ra highway and blocking it.¹⁴³ This was the first specific call made by a public personage to choose a violent pattern of action in order to prevent the appropriation of land. It was also the first time that Nimer Hussein, did not apply the weight of his prestige to prevent the call to act violently. Instead, he complained that the government was limiting the steps taken by the Arab minority and limiting the area of jurisdiction of the Arab local councils. He announced that he would demand that the government attach the lands to the area of jurisdiction of Umm el Fahem. The government, on its part, was not passive about the these steps being taken and the police strengthened its forces in the area and threatened to arrest those present in the protest tent because it was taking place in a closed military zone.

On the day that the closure was to be implemented (September 27, 1998) serious clashes between the Arab demonstrators and the security forces broke out in the disputed area and continued for four days during which Sheikh Salah was seen supporting acts of public disorder by “spurring on those disturbing the peace with inflammatory exclamations.”¹⁴⁴ The police arrested eighteen demonstrators on suspicion of lighting forest fires and throwing Molotov cocktails at the police and seven of them were charged a short time later.¹⁴⁵ Even after the cessation of the events Sheikh Salah continued to justify the rioting and in a newspaper interview emphasized that “the events were a first time fortifying experience for the participants that only added determination and strength to continue to demand our just rights.”¹⁴⁶

In the months that followed the violent events the contacts between the government ministries and the relevant factors in the Arab sector continued to try and overcome the disputes over the lands. These contacts were unsuccessful because all the compromises suggested by the government ministries

were rejected by the Arab party, including the possibility of receiving alternative land in exchange for those that had been marked for appropriation. Parallel to the discussions on the issue factors in the Arab leadership were examining additional retaliatory steps to take among which were making appeals to international legal bodies and the mobilization of popular support for the struggle. The Ra'ad branch continued to adhere to the provocative line expressed by Sheikh Hashem Abed el Rahman, the branch's spokesman, who warned that regarding the Alroha lands "the feeling among the Arabs is that this is a volcano that has no other alternative than to explode."¹⁴⁷

These events were the first in sixteen years in which violent group political events in the Arab minority were recorded. The heads of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement felt that they had accumulated enough power to oppose the government using violent means to mobilize the public. The fact that the disputes revolved around lands close to Umm el Fahem, the stronghold of Ra'ad branch, also contributed to the decision to act violently. These events proved, as in what happened in Nazareth in 1958 and on "Land Day" in 1976, that when the framework of leadership chose to act with violence and there was no other leadership factor to restrain it, then group political violence would break out against the government functionaries.

At the end of the negotiations that took a number of years a document was prepared entitled the "Alroha Understandings" in which it was decided that the IDF would continue to hold training exercises in the disputed area and the residents would continue to work their land. The government agreed to advance a variety of development plans as compensation for the residents for the discomfort they were experiencing because of the training grounds near the Arab villages. The solution to the crisis was thus finally achieved through dialogue between the parties after a long and continuous period of protest and violent confrontation. From a historical point of view this was the third time, after the events in Nazareth in 1958 and "Land Day" in 1976, that the network of relations between the government and the Arab minority in regard to different disputes over events or issues involved the use of violence, protest and dialogue.

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP FROM 1998 TO 2000

The Higher Follow-Up Committee, the Islamic Movement (especially the northern branch) and Balad continued to set the tone in the Arab sector but there was one significant political change that took place during these years when Ibrahim Nimer Hussein retired from political life in February 1999. Up until then he had been considered to be the only political factor who had had the ability to unite all the political power factors and clear proof of this was seen at the end of 1998 when Sheikh Salah, Mohammad Baraka, of the

Communist party, Ramez Jiraisi, the mayor of Nazareth, and Arab members of the Knesset approached him in November and asked him not to retire.¹⁴⁸ At the beginning of March 1999 elections were held to choose the new head Committee which resulted in Mohammad Zidan, the head of the Kfar Manda local council, and Shuki Khatib, the head of the Yafiya council, receiving the same number of votes. They agreed to serve in rotation and Zidan took on the position first.

All the political factors in the Arab sector dealt with the traditional issues that were on the civil and national agenda of the minority during these years and a charged atmosphere and the use of a pugnacious tone became an inseparable part of the dialogue during these years in such a way that it also affected what was being said by political public personages who belonged to currents that recognized the Jewish state, such as the Communist Party. The direct and indirect dialogue with the establishment became more acrimonious, even when compared with the period between 1996 and 1998. The challenges laid down by the Arab minority to the government included not only protests in the field but also independent efforts to advance the situation of the Arab population. Study days were held in which the challenges facing the Arab minority and the ways to achieve full equality were discussed. An effort was made to establish a national authority for strategic planning and building to answer the needs of the Arab population and an Arab planning team was set up to present alternatives to the national master plan to fulfill the needs of the Arab minority.¹⁴⁹

On the background of the charged atmosphere during these years and despite the efforts made by the government to navigate and actualize a policy whose purpose was to reduce the gaps, there were a series of issues on the agenda of the Arab minority that, at least according to its leadership, needed to be dealt with: the financial distress of the local councils, the cessation of the demolition of buildings in the Arab sector and the setting up of a master plan, the concern over the appropriation of land, the demand to release Israeli Arab citizens who were security prisoners, the concern over damage being done to the Islamic holy sites, the demand for suitable representation for the Arab minority in the state frameworks, opposition to military or national service for young Arabs and the support for the national struggle of the Palestinians in the territories.

Under Zidan, the Higher Follow-Up Committee at the beginning of February 1999 increased the demands it was making from the government in the civil sphere and added the demand to recognize the Arab minority as a national minority. This demand was based upon the prevalent public mood in the Arab sector at this time as was, for example, expressed in a survey that was published in May 1999 in which 18.4 percent of 910 people questioned negated the existence of the state which was three times the rate when compared with the findings of a similar survey carried out in November 1995.

Another finding of the survey was that close to 70 percent of the Arabs defined their identities as Palestinian.¹⁵⁰

Zidan, the new chairman of the committee, supported the dialogue with the government, but chose to carry on a more blunt and confrontational dialogue than his predecessors in the role. As a result he led the follow-up committee into adopting a more aggressive policy in its relations with the authorities and was usually present in every village and site in which there was a confrontation between the government and the Arab citizens.

One of the main areas that bothered the Arab leadership during the period being surveyed was the growing concern over the appropriation of land. From 1998 onward an increased concern with this subject could be discerned and from this year until 2000 there were demonstrations to protest the intention of the government to appropriate land for public purposes. In Kfar Nahaf in the Lower Galilee the residents demonstrated on the background of publicity about the appropriation of lands and their attachment to the area of jurisdiction of the nearby city, Karmiel. The demonstrators decided to send a letter to the minister of the interior and to examine the possibility of turning to the courts. A similar pattern of protest was adopted by the residents of the village of Ein Mahel who wanted to prevent the appropriation of land for the extension of the area of jurisdiction of Nazareth elite. They were helped by the Arab members of the Knesset who presented motions to the agenda to bring about the cancellation of the appropriations.¹⁵¹

Another prominent important protest during those years involved the appropriation of land for the paving of the cross Israel highway (Highway Six). Residents of the villages near to the planned route of the highway in the villages of Tira, Taibeh, Kalansawa, Kfar Kassem, and Jat established the Committee for the Victims of the Cross Israel highway and received the support of Higher Follow-Up Committee for their activities and took a series of actions to prevent the appropriations. Mohammad Abu Ful, the mayor of Jat, said that the residents of his village would not agree to the paving of the highway even if it meant the spilling of blood and the sacrificing of people.¹⁵² In January 2000 the Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Councils announced that they would fight the decision to demolish about twelve thousand buildings and houses that were on the route to be taken by the proposed highway. Three months later the Higher Follow-Up Committee was again mobilized to help in the battle and it convened a meeting in the protest tent that was set up in Kfar Bara and announced that it intended to open new negotiations with the government to solve the problem.

Another issue that bothered the Arab minority was the growing implementation of the orders to demolish illegally built buildings about which protest events took place from time to time. In most cases local complaints about the disturbance of the peace were recorded even when public representatives, such as Balad members of the Knesset were present in the field. The

expressions of protest also took on a different character because of the active mobilization of the Higher Follow-Up Committee in protest against the demolitions. In one example of this, in May 1999, the committee demanded that the ministry of the interior cancel the demolition order of twelve buildings in Shfaram and informed it that it was fully ready for any emergency situation. The city itself appointed a local committee of its own whose task was to work out ways of preventing the planned demolitions.¹⁵³

The budgetary deficits of the Arab local councils were also a subject of ongoing protest during the period being surveyed. On November 21, 1999, the Committee of the Heads of the Arab Local Councils declared a general strike and the holding of a demonstration opposite the prime minister's office in Jerusalem in protest at the lack of equality in the budgets provided to the different sectors. The decision about these steps was taken after a meeting of the representatives of the committee with the then prime minister, Ehud Barak, from which they came out disappointed because he did not offer any concrete solutions to the problems raised. Among the problems that they wanted to fix, in addition to that of the state of the councils, was the cancellation of the land appropriation planned for the paving of the Cross Israel Highway, the recognition of the illegal Bedouin settlements and the improvement of the level of education in the Arab sector.¹⁵⁴

Three days later the protest became more concrete with a demonstration that took place in Jerusalem that turned into a series of harsh confrontations between the demonstrators and the police where Zidan and Member of the Knesset Ahmad Tibi were injured and taken to hospital. Following the event the Arab municipal network went on strike on December 1, 1999, and its leaders demanded that the government appoint a committee of inquiry to examine what happened during the events. The crisis about the budgetary deficits was solved on December 27, 1999, in an agreement that was reached between the councils and the government in which the amount of assistance for the development budget of the Arab centers of population was raised to 100 million shekels for the 2000 budgetary year. Zidan described the agreement as serious and as a first step on the way to equality between the sectors.¹⁵⁵

Another protest led by the Higher Follow-Up Committee was recorded on the background of damage done to Islamic holy sites. In January 2000, anonymous people desecrated the Muslim cemetery in Neshet where they spray-painted inflammatory slogans. The committee called upon the government to locate those responsible for the deed and to put them on trial. The Communist stream organized a protest demonstration on the campus of the Haifa University and the northern branch of the Islamic Movement filed a complaint with the police.¹⁵⁶ About a month later Zidan convened a meeting of the Higher Follow-Up Committee in order to discuss the ways to protect the Islamic holy sites where it was decided to establish a committee of represen-

tatives from the government and the Arab sector to deal with the matter. It is possible that, because of the lack of confidence in the seriousness of the government's intentions, the Higher Follow-Up Committee decided to establish a subcommittee to follow up on the issue. The public explanation was the rise in the number of cases of damage being done to holy sites during this time, such as what had happened at the Neshar cemetery, Hawareth mosque in Hadera, and the Alsook mosque in Tiberias. The committee organized prayers in the Albahar mosque in Tiberias after it was desecrated by unknown people and all the leadership factors. The committee also decided to clean up the place and turned to the Tiberias municipality to place permanent guards at the site in order to prevent further similar incidents.¹⁵⁷ Despite the charged atmosphere that existed between the Arab minority and the government the Higher Follow-Up Committee did not call for the use of violent means to achieve its political goals.

On the background of all these issues the Higher Follow-Up Committee decided to combine the "Land Day" of 2000 with the issue of the lands and made the point that the events would be about the intention of returning the lands that had been appropriated and not only about protecting those that remained.¹⁵⁸ It coordinated the events in Sakhnin, in Alroha lands and in the unrecognized Bedouin settlements in the Negev. The events in Sakhnin developed into a stormy confrontation because of a procession by the demonstrators to a nearby military camp. In the process of dispersing the demonstrators a seventy-two-year-old woman was killed when she breathed in tear gas fired by the police. The Higher Follow-Up Committee placed the responsibility for the death of the woman demonstrator on the government and decided to finance the lawyer's fees for dealing with the charges that had been made against the dozens of demonstrators that had been arrested during the event.

The issues of land appropriation and the demolition of buildings also continued to be a political and public focal point during the summer months of 2000 and the Higher Follow-Up Committee was insistent on demonstrating its presence in the field whenever the government was planning to appropriate land or demolish buildings. The forceful implementation by the government together with the growing boldness of the Arab public personages raised the level of tension in the Arab sector during this time and Member of the Knesset Dahamsha warned that "We are on the edge of a swelling popular uprising (intifada) by the Arab public. We will break the hands and strongly beat every policeman who tries to destroy an Arab house. We will defend ourselves and attack anybody that tries to uproot us."¹⁵⁹ The series of protest events and Dahamsha's declarations, which were a form of verbal violence, reflected the tense mood in the Arab sector during the two months preceding the events of October 2000.

In September 2000, just before the annual assembly of the Islamic Movement, the Higher Follow-Up Committee gave support to the movement and condemned the calls to make the northern branch of the Islamic Movement illegal because of the revelations of an affair that had taken place a year earlier in which movement activists had been involved in the explosion of car bombs in Tiberias and Haifa. The committee called upon the Arab public to come in their masses to the planned assembly in Umm el Fahem. At the same time the committee also condemned the announcement made by Police Superintendent Alick Ron, the northern region police commander, about the intention of putting Member of the Knesset, Mohammad Baraka, on trial on suspicion of incitement. It published an announcement in which it made clear that if Baraka was held for questioning the whole Arab public would accompany him to the police station.

Balad, encouraged by its having established itself firmly on the political map and by its growing strength in the Arab street, continued with its activities to reach its goals using the slogan "a state of all its citizens." Its various spokesmen called upon the Arab public to take more vigorous steps of protest to improve its situation. The party did not hesitate about expressing support and identification with terrorists and initiated a long series of protest measures in the field involving civil issues mainly against the demolition of buildings and the appropriation of land. In this area the heads of the party made sure to be present in the places where there was friction with the government in order to stand with the population.

Balad frequently involved itself in activities whose purpose was to bring an end to the Jewish character of the State of Israel. Abed Alfatah, the secretary-general of the party, explained that the efforts to change the character of the country was aimed at bringing about the establishment of a binational Arab-Jewish state in the whole area of historical Palestine. In a brochure that was published by the party in November 1999 it was written that "All the time that Israel continues to be the state of the Jews and the Arab national minority living in it does not get its rights, as individuals and as a group, then the Israelization will be nothing more than a fictive option."¹⁶⁰ In a motion presented by the Balad faction to the Knesset in October 1999, it made a demand to cancel all the privileges and easements given to Zionist institutions such as the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Fund. The positions adopted by Balad, which at the time, were considered to be far-reaching became a widespread conviction in the Arab minority after a few years and represented a challenge to the character of the state which, after a short period of time, was expressed in serious violence in the field.

At a meeting of the Higher Follow-Up Committee which was attended by Bishara a discussion was held on the subject of the appropriation of the Alroha lands. Bishara, according to reports, made the comment that "We do not want business with the government ministries but fights and declarations

of confrontation on a countrywide scope, the opening of the old files and preparations for Land Day in March 1999 that will become a popular uprising (intifada).”¹⁶¹ After the events surrounding the Alroha lands Bishara published an article in which he wrote that the events in Um Sakhali and in Alroha were “a classic spontaneous *intifada* and an expression of the energy and national raw material that is suppressed in the souls of the young people and which indicate their desire to challenge and oppose. Accordingly a popular protest should be initiated in the triangle, the Galilee and the Negev.”¹⁶² This was a direct expression of the party’s readiness to act with force as well in order to advance political goals that arose out of its ideology, including the use of violence.

Balad also initiated its own events in the field along with its being part of the national leadership bodies. In February 2000 the party organized a protest demonstration of its own against the government’s intention to appropriate land for the paving of the Cross Israel Highway. Demonstrations took place in Tamra, Kfar Yassif, Sakhnin, Shfaram, Kfar Kassem and Baka al-Gharbiya in which there were calls made to the Arab public to turn the coming “Land Day” into a day devoted to the struggle to preserve the lands. Just before “Land Day” Balad published a call to escalate the protest activity and to paralyze the country.¹⁶³

At the beginning of 2000 Bishara both led the campaign against the authorities and expressed public support for terrorist factors, as was the case in the middle of that same year when Israel left Lebanon. Following the decision made by the government at the end of 1999 to tighten the surveillance over the Islamic Movement, Bishara said that the Arab public would not agree to being related to through the means of intelligence gathering. He called for an escalation of the struggle in issues such as land appropriation, the provision of land for building and the allocation of budgets to the Arab minority. In January 2000 he explained that “Umm Sakhali campaign should be a lesson to the government about its relations with the Arab citizens of Israel.”¹⁶⁴ A month later, in February, he attacked the decision made by the Department for Investigating Police to close the file on the investigation of policemen who had been involved in the event in which an illegal building had been demolished in the city of Lod in June 1999. The incident developed into a localized confrontation in which Bishara, who was present during the protest event as was his practice during those years, was also injured.

The IDF’s exit from Lebanon in May 2000 provided Bishara and Balad with the opportunity to express their support for terror. The party organized an assembly in Umm el Fahem under the banner of “The Hizballah Victory Festival” during which Bishara said “It is Hizballah’s right to humiliate Israel and to be proud of its achievements. Israel suffered a defeat in Lebanon. This is a legitimate protest movement.”¹⁶⁵ Following this declaration the attorney general decided to file charges against Bishara on suspicion of

identifying with a terror organization but even this step taken by the government did not change Bishara's mind and he did not retract his statements. At this stage, about three months before the October events, verbal violence became a routine way for the leaders of Balad and the Islamic Movement to express themselves. The various spokesmen exploited their freedom of expression (and Bishara his parliamentary immunity) to constantly provoke the government and threaten the use of violent protest.

The leaders of the Islamic Movement continued their aggressive approach in religious, civil and national matters while also goading the government and its institutions. Some of the expressions used by the heads of the northern branch included the readiness to carry on the fight in all ways, including using violence, in order to protect its interests and those of the Arab minority as a whole. Among the subjects that they were trying to advance were the release of security prisoners who were Arab Israeli citizens, calling for support for the struggle to prevent the appropriation of land and the demolition of buildings while being prepared to initiate confrontations and the expression of bitter protest at the government's intention to do harm to the Islamic holy sites.

Sheikh Salah himself called upon the Arabs to sacrifice their lives to save the Al-Aqsa mosque from harm or destruction explaining that "the protection of the mosques also includes opposition to the conquests by foreigners when the danger arises from the very presence of a police station on the compound of the mount."¹⁶⁶ In December 1998 Sheikh Salah called upon the then president of the country, Ezer Weizman, to release the Arab Israeli citizens who were security prisoners. He pleaded with the president to join in the fight for equality between the different sectors in areas such as education, health, welfare and employment. The appeal to the president of the country was made as part of a wider framework that was dealing with this subject and included the writing of articles that supported the release of prisoners, the organization of a campaign to assist the prisoners and their families and visits to the jails to see prisoners from the northern branch of the Islamic Movement and public figures from other political bodies.

In March 1999 Salah called upon the Arabs in Israel to begin changing their patterns of reaction to patterns of initiative and confrontation with the authorities in order to achieve their rights. He pressed the Umm el Fahem residents to physically obstruct the establishment of an army camp on the Alroha land as part of the continuation of the struggle over the lands. A year later, in a gathering that took place in Baka al-Gharbiya to mark "Land Day" he explained that the Arab public was not violent but that "if violence is imposed upon us, we will be more violent."¹⁶⁷

Following the government's decision to tighten up the surveillance over the activities of the northern branch Salah accused the government of carrying on a campaign of persecution and incitement against his movement

claiming that “it was open season on the Arabs” and that the government, by its use of the security services, was showing residual resentment toward him because of the events of the Alroha lands.¹⁶⁸ In March 2000 he tried to use a separatist line in the discussions of the Higher Follow-Up Committee when he suggested they boycott the government and resign from the Union of Local Authorities. The sheikh believed that they should boycott every meeting with government representatives and argued that “these meetings create a positive image for the government in its relations with the Arab minority.”¹⁶⁹ The Higher Follow-Up Committee accepted some of what the sheikh had said and, in March 2000, boycotted a meeting with the then Prime Minister, Barak, who had wanted to extend his greetings to the Muslims on the occasion of Eid el-Adha (the Sacrifice Feast).

At the beginning of April 2000 the Islamic Movement held a demonstration in Acre to mark the birthday of the Prophet Mohammad where Sheikh Salah announced that the Muslims would not sit on their hands while the Islamic holy sites were being damaged. His deputy, Kamal Khatib, added that “This generation will not be like the generation of 1948 but will strive to live with honor on its land or die on it.”¹⁷⁰ During the same month the Public Relations Department of branch published an article in which they wrote that “the attack by the government on the Arab public is heating up and we relate to it as a continuation of the period of the hated military government. We demand that the Israeli government take its hands off our lands and houses and stops the persecution campaign against the people of the Arab minority.”¹⁷¹ In June 2000 the heads of the northern branch expressed their support for calling upon the other political bodies in the Arab sector to demand full equality between all the sectors. Mohammad Ariar wrote an article in which he argued that “our concerns are not only about sewage and building houses. There is a need to give expression to identity, nationality and faith and to be able to provide a decent education for our children. The Israeli approach is humiliating. We are not robots being controlled from the offices of Minister of Police Ben-Ami, the academic, who wears the uniform of the Special Forces when he approaches the Arab sector.”¹⁷² In this way Ariar was expressing two basic ideas, the first being the prevalent idea in the Arab minority about the need for full equality and the recognition of it as a national minority and the other being the outspoken attitude of the branch toward the government and its elected representatives. This was another expression of the growing oppositionist line that was preparing the atmosphere, at least for the readers of the branch’s newspaper, for the adoption of patterns of action of protest and violence against the establishment.

About two weeks before the outbreak of the events in October 2000 Sheikh Khatib published an article in which he argued that Prime Minister Barak was intending to demolish the Al-Aqsa mosque and threatened that the Muslims would not shed a tear but would make sure that “. . . there will be

rivers of blood around the mosque. Barak needs to know that there are those who will defend the mosque to the death. He will find martyrs' blood on the walls of Al-Aqsa and its gates."¹⁷³ At the "Al-Aqsa is in Danger" gathering halfway through September 2000 Sheikh Salah said that every position that claimed that the Jews had any rights to the Temple Mount was a declaration of religious war on Muslims wherever they are and he included the Western Wall as part of the mosque and said that surrendering it was, in his eyes, treason.¹⁷⁴

OCTOBER 2000 EVENTS

As analyzed above the atmosphere in the Arab sector from 1996 was experiencing a trend toward escalation that was being regularly nurtured by new players in the political arena that had acquired influence and status and the friction with the government revolved around civil, national and religious issues. In the last third of September 2000, a member of the Knesset, Ariel Sharon, announced that he intended to go up to the Temple Mount compound in order to examine the renovation work being carried out there and the inspector general of the police declared that he could not prevent the visit. When Sharon went up onto the Temple Mount fights broke out in the courtyard of the mount between Muslims worshippers and the police and other security forces during which tens of people were injured on both sides. The next day, on September 29, the confrontations spilled over into other places in East Jerusalem resulting in seven Palestinians being killed and more than a hundred injured. Because of the escalation in East Jerusalem the Higher Follow-Up Committee declared a general strike in the Arab sector and the holding of protest marches in the Arab villages and there was a widespread response by the Arab public. In some of the places violent clashes took place encouraged and guided by political factors such as Balad and the Islamic Movement and the Higher Follow-Up Committee published a proclamation praising the rioters and condemning the government. It supported the use of violence and saw it as the pattern of action that needed to be adopted and, this being so, it did not issue a call to the rioters to restrain themselves. Several of its members, when giving testimony to the Orr Committee, confirmed that there was a real potential for public disorder as a result of the situation that developed.¹⁷⁵ This pattern of action was something new from the point of view of the Committee since, up till February 1999 except for its non-involvement in the Alroha lands event, under the leadership of Nimer Hussein the committee had always made sure to avoid the use of violence. Whenever violent incidents did break out, it quickly called upon the public to restore public order. This time, however, the committee, now led by Zidan,

chose to adopt a line of action that, according to the testimony of its members, steered the public in the direction of violence.

Balad, on its part, distributed a proclamation on September 30 in which they claimed that the events in Jerusalem in which Arabs were killed were “a planned massacre” by the authorities. Bishara, who was summoned to give evidence about the proclamation and its content before the Orr Committee, disassociated himself from the subject at the beginning and claimed that the proclamation had been distributed by Balad people in Umm el Fahem. The protocol of the meeting of the Higher Follow-Up Committee of the day on which the proclamation was published provided proof that Bishara had said at that meeting that “the massacre and incidents had been preplanned, which was the formulation that appeared in the proclamation distributed by his party.”¹⁷⁶

On October 1, Balad published an announcement in which they wrote that on September 30, its people had already initiated tens of protest demonstrations in the main streets in the Galilee and the triangle to protest against the events at the Al-Aqsa mosque. In Kfar Kana, Balad supporters threw rocks at vehicles and clashed with security forces. Bishara himself attested to the fact that he and the members of the political bureau of his party were present everywhere that clashes were taking place with the police and specifically mentioned Umm el Fahem and Tamra. When it became clear that the events were becoming more violent, the leaders of Balad also did not take any action to calm things down.¹⁷⁷ At the height of the October events in 2000 Bishara stated that “Our file will not be closed as long as the murdering criminals remain in government. Our fallen victims did not die for budgets. This time they came out to declare their political position and this is our right.”¹⁷⁸

On October 2, Balad published another proclamation calling for the Arab public to continue to take part in the events and which included expressions that glorified the serious clashes that had taken place on October 1. The proclamation called the events that had taken place an “intifada,” an expression in Arabic for a violent widespread rebellion that challenges the government. This was a kind of experiment made by Balad to advance its political goals by using violent patterns of activity. Bishara was not prepared to disassociate himself from the violent line he had adopted and during the meetings held by the Orr Committee he explained that he does not usually try to mediate between the police and the public and justified this by arguing that,

We know that our legal actions in parliament, in the Knesset committees, in elections, in authorized mass gatherings and in demonstrations opposite the office of the Prime Minister all end up in a dead end with no chance of exerting influence over the process of decision making. In this way a dynamic

is created between the population and the leadership that leads to a more radical form of protest.

He agreed that making calls of the kind he was making encouraged the development of violent events against the government.¹⁷⁹

Balad did not change the violent line it had adopted even after the events had ended. Declarations that it publicized about two weeks after the end of the riots expressed enthusiastic admiration and praise for the October events for which came to be called “exalted exemplary bravery” and a “just uprising.” In January 2001, Bishara himself said that “In the matter of taking part in the intifada there are those who think that participation is donating rice, sugar and humus. That’s great and good but taking part in the struggle is the basis . . . I think that raising the level of the struggle of the ‘inside’ Arabs (a nickname for Arab citizens of Israel) is not only the donation of food products but also the struggle in other ways which are basic.” The secretary-general of Balad, Awad Abed el-Fatah, explained to the Orr committee that he saw it as his duty to call upon the Arab public to join the struggle.¹⁸⁰

The leaders of the Islamic Movement, in contrast to the leaders of Balad, did not admit during their testimony before the Orr Committee that they had played an active role in the serious events. In practice, a day after the beginning of the events the northern branch of the Islamic Movement published a declaration that praised the sacrificing of blood for Al-Aqsa and Sheikh Salah confirmed in his testimony before the committee that he had formulated the declaration. In another declaration the branch declared, as Balad had done, that the events on the Temple Mount had been “a planned massacre” and Salah placed the blame for the outbreak of the events upon the government and claimed that this was a conspiracy of the security services. The first edition of *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah* after Member of the Knesset Sharon had gone up to the Temple Mount opened with the headline “Sharon Invades Al-Aqsa.”¹⁸¹

When the events were taking place the City of Umm el Fahem, whose mayor at that time was Sheikh Salah, published an announcement in which it thanked “all our people in the cities and villages spread throughout the homeland who gave proof of their unity and togetherness regarding the mosque.” There were words of praise and glorification for the violence used by the rioters toward the security forces placed in the text of the announcement. Salah himself published a statement on October 6, 2000 in which he defined the events as the “Al-Aqsa intifada.” The Orr Committee interpreted this as meaning, according to the words he used and this definition, that the sheikh held the opinion that these were events that had the character of being an uprising and not purely a demonstration. Another declaration posted by the northern branch linked the “Land Day” events in 1976, which took place to

defend lands, with the October 2000 events that took place to defend the mosque.

As in the case of Balad, an analysis of the way the Sheikh and his colleagues in the northern branch handled things does not identify any attempt to calm things down in the field or to call upon the public to stop the acts of violence. From the moment the first signs of violence were recorded until it ended two weeks later the Islamic Movement displayed a single and continuous line that justified the violent deeds and encouraged people to carry them out in order to protect the religious and political interests of the Arab minority. Sheikh Kamal Khatib accused Prime Minister Barak of being responsible for the deaths of Muslim worshippers and published an article in which he wrote: “Barak, wait for retribution on what you have done with your own hands. Barak can expect this to be a black year.” Salah explained that there was a need to document the divine revelations that encompassed the events and that he intended to devote his coming articles to describing what had happened.¹⁸²

SUMMARY

This chapter, which describes and analyzes a period of thirteen years, deals with six events that had the potential for violence being used by the Israel Arabs as a group. From the point of view of the results there were two cases, the Alroha lands affair in 1998 and the October 2000 events, in which this potential was actually realized.

An analysis of the government’s policy during this period leads to the following findings: From the security point of view there was clearly tighter implementation in the years following the outbreak of the intifada in the territories and, in the effort to bring home the message to the Arab public that the establishment “expects” them to manage things differently from the Palestinians in the territories. There was a coordination of expectations made with the leaders of the Arab sector. Discussions were carried out preceding some of the events in order to make sure that they would take place only within the framework of the law, as befitted a democratic regime. When a potential threat from one or another public factor was detected, measures were taken (preventative, thwarting and deterrent) to reduce the potential damage expected from carrying out such a step. In other words the security policy fitted the motto “Dialogue and the drawing of red lines.”

When the memorial and protest events began on the Temple Mount the authorities placed its enforcement forces in the areas of potential friction and used its power in order to restore order while carrying on a dialogue with the local leadership but also arresting those who were being disorderly. In regard to the policy toward the arrangements made for praying on the Temple

Mount and the Western Wall plaza, as they were in the case of the October 1990 incidents in which twenty one worshippers were killed on the courtyard of the mount, the policy was aimed at allowing freedom of worship to both religions. When it became clear that the Jews worship was being made impossible because of the throwing of rocks from the mount courtyard, a determined and strong force was employed to allow the implementation of the policy. The outcome in this case was the outbreak of clashes between the Muslim worshippers and the representatives of the authorities which ended up with the loss of many lives and damage to property.

As for terror deeds, the involvement of Arab citizens of Israel in these activities were handled with relentless determination. There were two prominent cases that took place from 1987 to 2000. In February 1992, three soldiers had been murdered in a tent next to the settlement of Galed near Wadi A'ra. All those arrested in the affair, including Arab Israelis, were put on trial and found guilty. The second prominent case took place in September 1999 when two car bombs exploded in Haifa and Tiberias. The investigation led to the involvement of Islamic Movement activists who were put on trial and found guilty. This led to the tightening of the intelligence surveillance of the Islamic Movement and the attempt to identify its activists that were involved in hostile activities.

When it comes to civil affairs the government's policy can be divided into two subperiods: from 1987 to 1992 and from 1992 to 2000. During the first period there were minor changes taking place in the way the government was relating to Arab citizens, even if this had not been officially declared. The central motif, which appeared in the documents of the various advisors, was the principle of the civil integration of the Arab minority into the country's frameworks; but this principle, which guided the establishment when Minister Weizman took over the role of being minister in charge of Arab affairs in 1984, was never implemented mainly because of the foot dragging of the political level over the treatment of the minority populations. The resignation of Minister Arens (1987) hurt the chances of the Arabs being integrated into government service since Arens, who had supported such a move, lost his political power and was no longer able to work toward this. The reaction of the Arab citizens of Israel to the intifada, while it was minimal even though it was widely covered by the media, made the chances of integration even smaller because it aroused doubts in the minds of Jewish society. Despite this, at the end of the 1980s, a few attempts were made to improve the situation of the Arab minority in a number of areas such as housing and education and a regular mechanism was set up for dialogue between the governmental system (the ministries, the Knesset) and the Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Councils.

During these years no Arab lands were appropriated and it seemed as if the cessation of the appropriation of land had been one of the lessons learned

by the establishment following the events of “Land Day.” In addition, no extreme security measures were taken against political bodies such as the actions that had been taken against the Al-Ard movement in the 1960s. The minor expressions of protest and violence on “Peace Day” in 1987 were reacted to strongly by the government and included the rapid neutralization of rioters and the passing on of a clear message that threatened that all contacts the heads of the local councils had with the government would be ended.

In the second subperiod, which began in the middle of 1992 and continued until 2000, it was clear that a real change had taken place in the government’s policy. The line adopted by the Rabin government had made a distinction between civil and national issues and in the area of nationality the establishment had been trying, during those years, to separate the Palestinian identity from the identity of the Israeli Arabs. It had constantly put aside the Arab minority’s demands that were connected to the diplomatic processes taking place with the Palestinians or the security operations being carried out by Israel in the territories, and worked at reducing the meetings being held between Arab Israelis and factors from the PLO. The establishment had also refused to recognize the Higher Follow-Up Committee as a representative body of the Arab minority.

On the other hand, on the civil level, a policy whose main purpose was the reduction of the gaps between the majority group and the minority groups was put into practice. The government ministries worked toward strengthening the channels of communication with the Arab leadership and the influence of the new policy could soon be seen in the local councils, the education and health networks, in the steps being taken to recognize the unrecognized settlements and in the growing integration of academically qualified Arabs in state frameworks. These things are reflected both in the analysis of the answers given by the different ministers to questions asked by Arab members of the Knesset and the responses of public figures and the leadership of the Arab sector itself. The practical expression of the change in policy could be seen in different civil areas such as what happened in 1999 when the number of mother care clinics in the Arab villages numbered 175 out of the 520 that existed throughout the country (33 percent). The five-year education plan budgeted 37 percent of its total budget for precompulsory education in the Arab sector and 29.5 percent for the building of new classrooms in Arab schools as will be seen in the next chapter.¹⁸³ Improvements were made in other areas such as housing, welfare, agriculture and the environment.

The government’s policy in these areas was consistent and continued uninterrupted until 2000 without any deviation even in times of crisis over the struggle for the Alroha lands or during the October 2000 events and after them. The three governments that were in office during these years (Rabin, Netanyahu, Barak) adopted a policy of reducing the gaps and increasing the

integration of Arabs into the public and civil life of Israeli society. As will be shown in the following chapter this trend continued after the October 2000 events as well and from 2001 to 2005 the political level discussed different plans aimed at advancing the Arab minority at least sixteen times in various forums.¹⁸⁴

Despite the improvement which was clearly seen within the Arab sector, the Arab leadership factors continued to complain about discrimination in at least two aspects: one, their situation in comparison with the Jewish majority, which had also continued to prosper during these years and two, in comparison with the situation and status the leadership wanted for the Arab minority. The government's policy, even though it was positively inclined toward the minority sector, suffered from a number of problems and the implementation was slow, when compared with what the Arab minority wanted. This tardiness also arose out of complex bureaucratic processes but it was clear that a period of a few years would not be enough to close the gaps that had opened up over a period of more than four decades.

During this period, along with the steps taken to improve the conditions of the Arab minority, the government continued to implement the policy of demolishing illegal buildings. Despite the constant and slow improvement in other areas these demolitions were a constant source of protest and were used by the Arab leadership when it attacked the government. In most cases the protest took place within legitimate frameworks but in isolated, localized cases violence did take place following the demolition of buildings as a result of protests made by the owners as was the case, for example, in Umm Sakhli in April 1998. The conclusion is that the policy of the Israeli establishment toward the Arab minority during these years was not a core cause of tension that created a violent protest reaction by this population. If this were not the case then violent protests would have most likely have taken place in all the events or, at least, in most of the events involving the demolition of buildings—and this was not the case.

The Temple Mount events and those of the Gulf War are events that are external from the point of view of having taken place outside the public geographical space of the Arab minority in Israel. Even if this is the case, because of the religious sensitivity and the ethnic and national links, they did act as a basis for violent reaction by the Arab population in Israel. In the final analysis the reaction of the Arab minority was not violent because of the restrained and restraining approach adopted by the Higher Follow-Up Committee and the readiness of the other political power factors in the sector to accept its bidding. This strengthens the argument that claims that, if there is no leadership body that chooses to act violently and encourages the public to do so, then this kind of violence will not take place in the political context. The importance and centrality of the Higher Follow-Up Committee proved itself to be crucial time after time and, every time they came to a crossroads

where they had to make a decision about how to react, they convened the committee to work out the nature of the reaction within the framework of a policy that aimed at maintaining a dialogue with the government or, at least, at protesting within the limits of the law.

A number of factors led to the decision of the Arab leadership to react in nonviolent ways to the war in the Persian Gulf. The dissension and differences of opinion between the political power factors in the Arab sector reduced the chances of organizing a widespread protest. Ramash and the Sons of the Village consistently supported Iraq while, in contrast, Rakah and the Islamic Movement, condemned the invasion of Kuwait and, each in its own way, warned against damage being done to Arab and Islamic unity. The Communist stream opposed the Iraqi move and thus pulled the rug out from under the feet of the factors that wanted to start a protest that would lead to violence against the State of Israel. The forces that supported Iraq enjoyed little public support and suffered from a weak organizational network that made it difficult for them to mobilize widespread support for protest in the field. Moreover Israel was perceived in the Arab sector as being a party that was only indirectly involved in the war and, in addition to the above, the leadership of the Arab minority had very important issues on its agenda that were affecting its daily life and were viewed as being more important. Ultimately, as we can see from the existing sources, there was no violent reaction by the Arab minority in their basket of their reactions to the Gulf War.

The expressions of protest in the “Peace Day” events in December 1987, in the grave events involving the deaths of worshippers on the Temple Mount in October 1990, during the days of the Gulf War and in the response to the opening of the Western Wall tunnel in September 1996 were all the same. They included protest marches, pilgrimages to the graves of those who died, strikes, days of mourning and calls to the Israeli establishment to recognize the Arab minority. In some of the cases an early agreement was reached with the representatives of the establishment about the nature of the protest as a reaction to these events in order to prevent any decline into dangerous and endangering violence. In all of these events there were no cases of objection to the leadership of the Higher Follow-Up Committee by either recognized political bodies or other public factors. In all the cases that were analyzed the ideological support for the Palestinian struggle in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip stood out even when the struggle was characterized by violence and the turning to the use of force became routine.¹⁸⁵

The decision to act without violence also suited the prevalent mood of the Arab public in Israel and a survey carried out in the first half of 1988 among 1,200 people, which was a representative sample, a few months after the outbreak of the intifada, found that close to 74 percent of the interviewees supported the general strike as a means of advancing the goals of the minority population. In contrast to this in answer to the question of whether they

supported the holding of illegal demonstrations and the use of force against the government in order to advance political goals, 77 percent of those questioned answered in the negative, and only 8 percent of the responses supported such a move, most of whom were supporters of the Sons of the Village, who traditionally expressed radical positions in relation to the State of Israel and its institutions.¹⁸⁶

In the framework of the events of "Peace Day," the riots on the Temple Mount, the Gulf War and the opening of the Western Wall tunnel it became clear that if a restraining leadership had existed at the point in time in which a pattern of activity was decided upon then the existence of such a leadership would have prevented the decision to use violence. In all the above events the strengthening political power factors such as Balad and the Islamic Movement chose to act in the spirit of the decisions made by the Higher Follow-Up Committee and both movements did not take steps to act in violent protest in order to advance their political goals.

Even if this were the case, one could identify new characteristics in the expressions used by spokesmen of Balad (such as Bishara) and the northern branch of the Islamic Movement (Sheikh Salah) which were different from those laid down by the Higher Follow-Up Committee and which attested to the readiness to challenge the government by using violent patterns of action. Bishara suggested civil rebellion as a response to the government not solving the problems of the unrecognized Arab settlements while Salah said that the Arab side was ready to deal with Israel in ways other than peaceful ways. Neither of these statements was translated into stirring up the Arab public to act in violent ways since they were young, emerging political movements that had not yet accumulated sufficient resources to mobilize wide public support for acts of violent protest. This was despite the Palestinian national identification that had already struck roots in the consciousness of the minority during these years and also despite the discrimination in the relative conditions of the Arab population when compared to the majority.

From the point of view of historical analysis one can say that the patterns of response of the Islamic Movement in the affair involving the deaths of worshippers on the Temple Mount and in the events surrounding the opening of the Western Wall tunnel were a kind of test balloon. At this stage the movement was building its political and public power and preferred to wait for the convenient and better based right time to maximize its interests in the public political space. This was also the case with Balad in the case of the opening of the Western Wall tunnel in September 1996. The young movement, which had only just become a political party, decided to adhere to the decisions made by the Higher Follow-Up Committee and, at the same time, was using its organizational resources to establish itself politically in the sector. Even so, the acrimonious expressions used by the leaders of the Islamic Movement and Balad, which became more extreme as the years went

by, created a public climate that was more charged and which served the violent approach chosen by the Islamic Movement in the Alroha lands affair and by both movements in the October 2000 events.

The last two cases in the chronological and historical continuum express a change in the balance of political power in the Arab sector. The Islamic Movement led the approach of violent protest which ultimately led to harm being done to people and property as well as a significant disturbance to the daily routine along the Wadi A'ra axis and the events spilled over to a small number of other Arab villages throughout the country. A change in government policy could also be identified in this affair when, after many years of not implementing land appropriation, a decision was made to appropriate land in the field accompanied by the use of force. This change was not acceptable to some of the national leadership bodies in the Arab sector especially those which had an interest procuring these lands for themselves.

The violent events of the Alroha lands came about as a result of a measured and rational decision made by the leadership of the Islamic Movement as expressed by the leaders of the northern branch and the decision to act violently against the government was based upon two points of view. One was the religious ideology of the branch which was characterized by constant antagonism toward the government, Judaism and Zionism, and the other was civil-municipal based. At this time Sheikh Salah was the mayor of the city of Umm el Fahem and had a political interest in advancing his status and that of his movement by accumulating achievements. In October 1998 the events did not succeed in sweeping the whole Arab minority along toward holding protests and ultimately they were localized and took place in the Wadi A'ra area.

From the point of view of the northern branch of the Islamic Movement, as a powerful body in the Arab sector, this was the first attempt it had made at assessing its ability to mobilize the public toward holding violent demonstrations against the government, and this was attested to by Sheikh Salah himself. At this stage in the second half of 1998, the branch did not as yet have the strong political status that would allow it mobilize the resources necessary for holding a widespread protest. This affair is a concrete proof of the argument that says that when a leadership exists that chooses to act violently in order to advance its political goals, in this case gaining control of the lands, and there is no leadership factor to prevent it, then political violence will break out. In the event under discussion the Higher Follow-Up Committee, the central leadership body of the Arab citizens of Israel, did not act to prevent violence and did not suggest any legitimate form of protest within the law, thus, in fact, it did not offer any alternative to the violent approach led by the Islamic Movement.

A similar analysis can be made regarding the behavior displayed by the Islamic Movement and Balad during the October 2000 clashes. In this case as

well, when the leadership bodies chose to act with violence to advance political goals and there was no leadership body ready to prevent this happening, then widespread group violence broke out which led to a high price being paid in people's lives and property. The Higher Follow-Up Committee, which could have prevented this, did not do so, but quite the opposite. In some of the cases the committee actually supported the approach chosen by the Islamic Movement and Balad and, for two main reasons. The first was that the changes that had taken place in the leadership of the committee had led to a change in views and Mohammad Zidan, the new chairman of the committee, did not oppose the aggressive and violent approach of the two movements. The other reason was the public mood that prevailed as a result of the fact that, at that time, the friction between the Arab minority and the establishment had reached its peak because of the ferment that had developed because of the Jewish activity on the Temple Mount, the fears (even if they were unjustified) that the discrimination between the Arab minority and the Jewish majority would continue and the accusations about the government not fulfilling the promises it had made.

NOTES

1. The meaning here is the number of victims in the framework of a violent clash between the Arab minority and the government. In this aspect the Kfar Kassem massacre, which was analyzed in earlier chapters, is not included in the framework of the discussion.

2. Prime Minister's Office, *Policy toward Arab Citizen of Israel, 1985*, pp. 2–5 [Hebrew].

3. Benziman and Mansour, p. 86.

4. Arnon Sofer. *Proposal for a Policy toward the Arab Sector in Israel—1987*, p. 48.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

6. Prime Minister's Office, *An Offer for Government's Policy toward the Minorities (1987)*, p. 14 [Hebrew].

7. Minister Arens resigned from the government in 1987 following a decision that he objected to cancel the Lavie airplane project.

8. The Prime Minister's Office, The Bureau of the Advisor on Arab Affairs, *A Selection of Events*, 22, November 1982, p. 1.

9. Shetandhal, p. 313–314, Rekehss, "The Arabs in Israel and the Arabs in the Territories," p. 167–169.

10. An interview with Olmert by Mansour and Benzimanon January 12, 1990. Cited from their book, p. 95.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 95–96.

12. Prime Minister's Office, Minister of Minority Affairs, *A Multi-Year Plan for Developing the Arab Sector*, June 1990 [Hebrew].

13. *Al-Ittihad*, November 11, 1988.

14. *Al-Ittihad*, August 29, 1990.

15. Prime Minister's Office, the Bureau of the Advisor on Arab Affairs, *The Arabs of Israel, the Effort for Equality, Possible Operative Steps*, (August 1992), p. 2. This document was later formulated into a program that was presented by Minister Olmert with adjustments and updates made to the time of presentation to the government.

16. *Al-Hamishmar*, November 20, 1992.

17. *Davar*, January 26, 1993.

18. *Yediot Ha-Gallile* newspaper, July 2, 1993.

19. *Davar*, July 14, 1993.

20. *Kool al-Arab*, August 26, 1993.
21. Sikkuy Association Annual Report 1993, p. 1.
22. Civil Right Association Report 1996, pp. 8–9.
23. Orr Committee, p. 50.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
25. Prime Minister's Office, *The Guidelines of Government* 1996.
26. Knesset minutes, December 18, 1996.
27. Knesset minutes, July 8, 1996.
28. Knesset minutes, January 13, 1997.
29. Knesset minutes, March 26, 1997.
30. Knesset minutes, May 28, 1997.
31. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, November 29, 1996.
32. The seven villages were: Kamaneh, Dmeideh, Ras el-Ein, Husniya, Khomeira, Alarian, and Ein Hood.
33. Knesset minutes, July 15, 1997.
34. Knesset minutes, December 1, 1997.
35. *Al-Ittihad*, January 8, 1998.
36. *Ibid.*, July 21, 1998.
37. Knesset minutes, December 16, 1998.
38. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, January 8, 1999, p. 5.
39. Knesset minutes, November 25, 1998.
40. Sikkuy Association Annual Report 1998, pp. 16–19.
41. Knesset minutes, June 23, 1999.
42. Prime Minister's Office, *A Multi-Year Plan for Developing Arab Sector*, 2000, p. 13.
43. Knesset minutes, October 18, 1999.
44. Knesset minutes, January 26, 2000.
45. Ministry of Education, *Annual Report 1999–2000*.
46. Knesset minutes, March 28, 2000.
47. The procedure against the prime minister was carried out in parallel to a similar procedure in which Meir Kahana's party "Kach" was prohibited from taking part in the elections.
48. *Kool Al-Arab* newspaper, February, 26, 1999.
49. *Ha'aretz* newspaper, January 4, 1999.
50. Knesset minutes, September 14, 1999.
51. Sami Smooha, *Arabs and Jews in Israel*, p. 87.
52. *Selection of Events in the Sector*, 37/38, March–April 1984, p. 11–14.
53. *Selection of Events in the Sector*, 41/42, August–September 1984, p. 21.
54. *Al-Ittihad*, October 1, 1985; *Alwatan*, September 26, 1985.
55. *Alfajr*, October 8, 1985, p. 1.
56. *Al-Ittihad*, November 22, 1985, p. 1.
57. *Ibid.*, December 17, 1985, p. 2.
58. *Ibid.*, December 30, 1985, p. 1.
59. The Markowitz Committee examined the issue of illegal building in the Arab sector and, in August 1986, presented its findings to the Minister of the Interior. Its members made the following recommendations: to grant building permits retroactively to illegally built buildings that had been built in areas that were included in the master plan for the Arab villages; to impose limitations upon other buildings; to be satisfied with a limited amount of the demolition of offending buildings. For more see the Inter-Ministerial Committee for illegal construction within the Arab sector, August 1986.
60. *Al-Ittihad*, February 25, 1987, p. 1.
61. *Ibid.*, November 6, 1985, p. 2.
62. *Ibid.*, December 4, 1986, p. 4.
63. *Alwatan*, December 11, 1987, p. 1.
64. *Al-Ittihad*, December 12, pp. 1, 8.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
66. *Ibid.*
67. *Ibid.*, December 17, 1987, p. 2.

68. *Alwatan*, December 18, 1987, p. 1.
69. *Al-Sirat*, March 1988, pp. 9–10.
70. *Al-Ittihad*, December 18, 1987, p. 7.
71. *Ibid.*, December 20, 1987, p. 7.
72. *Zo Haderekh*, December 23, 1987, p. 1.
73. *Al-Ittihad*, December 22, 1987, p. 4.
74. The incident was reported on in the *Al-Ittihad* newspaper on December 29, 1987, and Deputy Minister Milo's response was printed in the paper two days later on the first page. In his speech to the Knesset Milo did not reveal the information according to which Ziad had given instructions to throw stones.
75. *Koteret Rashit* newspaper, December 30, 1987 [Hebrew]; *Alwatan* newspaper, February 12, 1988 [Arabic].
76. Central Bureau of Statistics, Elections Results for 12th Knesset, 1989.
77. *Yediot Aharonot* newspaper, August 25, 1988 [Hebrew].
78. Mayer, *Awakening of the Muslims in Israel*, pp. 81–90.
79. Paz, *The Islamic Movement in Israel*, pp. 65–70.
80. Asa'd Ghanem and Sara Osatzcky-Lazar, *Green Line, Red Lines* (Givat Haviva, 1990) pp. 28–30 [Hebrew].
81. *Ma'ariv* newspaper, March 30, 1989, p. 7.
82. *Al-Ittihad*, November 13, 1988, p. 1.
83. *Ibid.*, November 11, 1988, pp. 1, 8.
84. *Al-Ittihad*, October 9, 1990, p. 1.
85. *Al-Sirat* newspaper, October 12, 1990, pp. 1–3.
86. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
87. *Ibid.*, November 2, 1990, p. 8.
88. *Alwatan*, August 3, 1990.
89. *Al-Ittihad*, August 22, 1990.
90. *Ibid.*, August 10, 1990, p. 1.
91. *Al-Sirat*, August 3, 1990.
92. *Kool Al-Arab* newspaper, January 25, 1991.
93. *Al-Hmishmar* newspaper, March 5, 1991.
94. *Al-Ittihad*, March 12, 1991.
95. *Ibid.*, March 18, 1991.
96. *Al-Sinara* newspaper, March 8, 1991.
97. *Al-Ittihad*, May 23, 1991.
98. *Ma'ariv* newspaper, June 30, 1991.
99. *Ibid.*, July 17, 1992.
100. *Hadashot* newspaper, December 25, 1992.
101. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah* newspaper, October 4, 1991.
102. *Ibid.*, January 8, 1993, p. 4.
103. *Ibid.*, September 13, 1996, p. 3.
104. *Ibid.*, February 7, 1992, p. 4.
105. *Ibid.*, October 2, 1992, p. 20.
106. *Ibid.*, October 23, 1992, p. 2.
107. *Ibid.*, March 13, 1994, p. 9.
108. *Ibid.*, January 8, 1993, p. 4.
109. *Ha'aretz*, November 13, 1994.
110. *Al-Ittihad*, April 11, 1996, p. 1.
111. *Fasl Al-Makal*, September 20, 1996.
112. *Al-Ittihad*, September 25, 1996, p. 1.
113. *Al-Ittihad*, September 25, 1996, p. 1.
114. *Al-Ittihad*, September 27, 1996, p. 8.
115. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
116. "Political Positions of Arab and Druze in Israel: A Survey," in Elie Rekhess (ed.), (Tel Aviv University, Dayan Center, 1997).
117. *Al-Ittihad*, November 22, 1996, p. 1.

118. Between the months of March 1997 and July 1998, two months before the explosion of the Alroha lands affair, the Arab factions presented five motions of nonconfidence and all the motions were discussed in the full assembly of the Knesset on the following dates: March 31, 1997, June 24, 1997, November 3, 1997, December 15, 1997, and July 27, 1997 and were rejected.

119. Knesset minutes, July 29, 1998.

120. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, November 22, 1996.

121. *Al-Nahar* newspaper December 17, 1996.

122. A petition of this kind was presented by the League of Human Rights. See The High Court of Justice, 6924/98 The League of Human Rights in Israel versus the Government of Israel. During the discussion Justice Yitzhak Zamir said that, on the practical level in the State of Israel, special significance is given to the question of equality for the Arabs. This question is part and parcel of the complex relations that have developed between the Jews and the Arabs in Israel over a long period of time. Despite this, and perhaps because of it, there is a need for equality.

123. *Al-Ittihad*, January 2, 1998, p. 1.

124. *Al-Sinara*, April 3, 1998.

125. *Fasl Al-Makal*, July 15, 1998.

126. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, January 17, 1997, p. 2.

127. *Ibid.*, June 27, 1997, p. 5.

128. *Ibid.*, July 11, 1997, p. 15.

129. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

130. *Ibid.*, July 25, 1997, p. 4.

131. Kahtib was referring to the incident in Hebron in which a pig was drawn on a mosque in Hebron next to which they wrote the Muhammad. *Ibid.*, July 11, 1997, pp. 2–4.

132. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, September 26, 1997, p. 10.

133. *Ibid.*, October 31, 1997, p. 4.

134. *Ibid.*, October 24, 1997, p. 2.

135. *Ibid.*, January 9, 1998, p. 6.

136. *Ibid.*, February 6, 1998, p. 4.

137. *Ibid.*, February 20, 1998, p. 10.

138. *Ibid.*, March 13, 1998, p. 11.

139. *Fasl al-Makal*, November 27, 1997, p. 1.

140. *Kool al-Arab*, January 10, 1997.

141. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, August 28, 1998, p. 15.

142. *Al-Ayam* newspaper September 7, 1998 p. 18 [Arabic].

143. *Ibid.*

144. Orr Committee, p. 542.

145. Knesset minutes, December 1, 1998.

146. *Kool al-Arab*, October 9, 1998, p. 7.

147. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, December 25, 1998, p. 3.

148. *Ibid.*, November 20, 1998, p. 5.

149. *Ibid.*, July 2, 1999, p. 5.

150. *Ma'ariv*, May 4, 1999.

151. Knesset minutes, July 12, 2000.

152. *Al-Ittihad*, *Fasl al-Makal*, June 4, 1999.

153. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, July 2, 1999, p. 10.

154. *Al-Ayam*, November 17, 1999, p. 9.

155. *Al-Ittihad*, December 27, 1999, p. 24.

156. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, January 6, 2000, p. 3.

157. *Ibid.*, February 11, 2000, p. 24.

158. Orr Committee, p. 86.

159. *Al-Sinara*, September 26, 2000, p. 3.

160. Balad political platform, November 1999, p. 3. These things also appeared in booklet containing the platform of Balad for the Knesset elections in 2006.

161. *Fasl al-Makal*, July 10, 1998, p. 16.

162. *Ibid.*, October 13, 1998, p. 7.
163. *Ibid.*, March 15, 2000, p. 2.
164. *Al-Ittihad*, January 14, 2000, p. 15.
165. *Fasl al-Makal*, June 23, 2000, p. 1
166. Orr Committee, p. 543.
167. Orr Committee, p. 542–3.
168. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, September 24, 1999, p. 5.
169. *Al-Sinara*, March 7, 2000, p. 5.
170. *Ayam al-Arab* newspaper, April 2, 2000, p. 2 [Arabic].
171. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, April 14, 2000, p. 2.
172. *Ibid.*, June 2, 2000, p. 2.
173. *Ibid.*, September 15, 2000, p. 4.
174. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, September 8, 2000, p. 5.
175. Orr Committee, pp. 515, 517.
176. *Ibid.*, pp. 527–8.
177. *Ibid.*, p. 529.
178. Use was made here of the term *Shuhada*, which means a holy martyr who has died for an exalted goal. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, October 6, 2000, p. 6.
179. Orr Committee, pp. 524–5.
180. *Ibid.*, p. 424; 529–530.
181. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, September 29, 2000, p. 1.
182. *Ibid.*, October 6, 2000, p. 7.
183. Sikkuy Association Annual Report 1999–2000, p. 11, 15, 20 [Hebrew].
184. Elie Rekhess, Government's Decision for Arabs in Israel, 2005, in www.abrahamfund.org [Hebrew].
185. The meaning of the term *routine* here is the conversion of the Palestinian struggle to one of routine violence from the beginning of the intifada. Previous to this, from the end of the 1960s until December 1987 there were expressions of violence against Israeli targets in the territories and inside the State of Israel but these were not referred to by the name of intifada (repudiation in Arabic) in the sense of being a popular uprising to achieve political goals.
186. Sammy Smooha, *Arabs and Jews in Israel*, vol. 2 (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989), pp. 132–133.

Chapter Eight

The “Defensive Shield” Campaign (2002) and the “Cast Lead” Operation (2008)

BACKGROUND

This chapter deals with two campaigns by the IDF in the territories. The first was the “Defensive Shield” campaign that took place in Judea and Samaria in March–April 2002 and the second was the “Cast Lead” operation that took place in the Gaza Strip in December 2008. Both of these campaigns are relevant for the Arabs in Israel because the campaigns were carried out against Palestinian terrorist organizations whose ethnic, religious and national identity is the same as those of the Arab minority in Israel. Both of the campaigns took place in the decade after the October 2000 events, both continued for a long time (between two and three weeks), and, in both, there were a large number of victims in the Palestinian population. Both of these had the potential to be the catalyst for a violent reaction from the Arab minority in Israel. Both of the campaigns are also included in the sixth period that determined the character of the Arab minority in Israel that began after the October 2000 events and, in fact, continues today. It is characterized by the learning of the lessons of the acrimonious events of October 2000, the increasing attempts to carry on a dialogue with the government, and the vocal demands made by the Arab minority to receive recognition as a national minority and to be a full partner in the determination of the country’s agenda as was written in the documents that described this vision during this decade.

The “Defensive Shield” campaign which began on March 29, 2002, and finished after three weeks on April 21 was a reaction to an attack that was carried out by Hamas on the Park Hotel in the city of Netanya on March 27,

2002, in which thirty Israelis were killed and about 150 were wounded. The government instructed the army to go into the villages and cities that had become places of shelter for the terrorists. The goals of the campaign were to trap and arrest terrorists and mainly those that had sent them, financed them and given them shelter, to capture and confiscate weapons and military equipment that were being used to harm Israel, to expose and destroy terrorist installations, laboratories for building bombs, and weapons factories and caches. The instructions given were to shoot anyone who was using a weapon and to immobilize anyone who was resisting and endangering the forces and all this was to be done without endangering the civilian population.¹

The campaign concentrated on the large cities in Judea and Samaria and included Nablus, Jenin, Ramallah, Kalkiliya, Tul-Karem and Bethlehem. During the fighting, twenty-nine IDF soldiers and 250 Palestinians were killed and five thousand people from the territories were arrested. One of the things that stood out because of its seriousness was the conquest of the Jenin refugee camp which had provided shelter for many terrorists. The operation included the use of heavy armored equipment which resulted in the destruction of many houses in order to make it easier for the forces to move around inside the camp and to fight the terrorists.

The goal of the “Cast Lead” campaign, (December 27, 2008 to January 18, 2009), was, according to the definition of the Israeli government, the improvement of the security reality of the inhabitants of the south of the country who had been suffering for more than seven years from missile attacks.² The campaign was given three missions to carry out: the escalation of a long-term quiet, the prevention of the military buildup of Hamas and the return of the kidnapped soldier Gilad Shalit.³

The first stage of the fighting involved air attacks which caused the deaths of dozens of Hamas activists and, from the second week on of the campaign IDF land forces were added. The war, which took the lives of ten IDF soldiers and a thousand Palestinians,⁴ ended on January 18, after the Israeli government declared a unilateral ceasefire.

GOVERNMENT’S POLICY AFTER OCTOBER 2000: INCREASED DIALOGUE WITH THE ARAB MINORITY

The Israeli government’s policy in the two cases needs to be examined from two aspects. The first is the policy that was adopted toward the Intifada which began in October 2000 with an emphasis on the implementation of the policy during the two military campaigns. The other aspect is the analysis of the government’s policy toward the Arab citizens of Israel during the period being studied.

In the period of time between the outbreak of the Second Intifada in October 2000 and the beginning of the “Defensive Shield” campaign the Israeli government’s policy was characterized by an ongoing effort to halt the Palestinian terrorist activities that were being carried out both in the territories and in Israel itself while trying to make a routine life possible for the Palestinian population.

The decision to embark on the “Defensive Shield” campaign was made following an extreme attack that Palestinian terrorist organizations had carried out. The then prime minister, Ariel Sharon, and the minister of defense, Binyamin ben Eliezer, explained that Israel’s security measures would be broadened in order to achieve the goal of ending the killing of Israel citizens.⁵ During the fighting different government spokespeople emphasized the policy which differentiated between the need to do damage to the terrorists and those who were helping them and the need to make it as possible as they could for the Palestinian population to continue with their daily lives. One of the practical aspects of this was the permission given by Israel to provide humanitarian assistance for the needy in Palestinian cities and villages.

The policy adopted toward the Arab citizens of Israel during these years was, in practice, a continuation of the same policy of the 1990s. Frisch argues that the Israeli policy toward the Arab minority was directly influenced by the external developments taking place in the Middle East region. According to him, during times of escalation the policy was harsh and during calmer periods it tended to be more amenable to the demands of the Arab minority.⁶ In fact, the reality during the first decade of millennium, which was characterized by violent clashes with the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria and the Gaza Strip, did not lead to any change in the policy of the Israeli government. It did, however, recognize that there were gaps between the majority group and the minority group and that there was a need to close them and the October 2000 events, which deepened the rift between the government and the Arab minority, made the perception that there was a need to continue the policy of narrowing the gaps more acute. In practical terms it was clear that the government was seeking channels of dialogue with the leaders of the Arab sector in order to mollify the tense atmosphere that clouded the relations between the parties after the violent events. In this sense the government’s initiative to enter a dialogue with the Arab minority, which began in the 1990s, was a turning point in its policy since, up till then, the party that had been making the initiatives for dialogue had almost always been the Arab minority that was trying to improve its situation while the government was usually passive, especially during the first few decades after the establishment of the state.

Already in 1999 the Barak government had established two ministerial committees to deal with the relevant issues involving the Arab population.

The first committee was headed by Minister Matan Vilnai and its task was to find solutions to the problems of unemployment, poverty, and the lack of housing and the appropriation of lands. The second committee was headed by Minister Haim Oron and coordinated the treatment of the Bedouin population in the Negev. This committee decided to allocate the sum of 1.2 billion shekels over a period of four years to create physical, social and economic infrastructures in the recognized Bedouin settlements in the south.⁷

In the second period from October 2000 to March 2002, when the “Defensive Shield” campaign began, three governmental programs stood out that had been prepared for the Arab minority and were aimed at advancing it and these were the development of the Arab villages, the integration of Arab citizens into government services and the advancement of education in the Arab sector.⁸

The program to develop the Arab centers of population was put together during 2000 by the coordination and control unit of the prime minister’s office and was aimed at all the Arab villages and cities in Israel except for mixed cities. All the relevant government ministries were involved in the plans for the Arab minority as were the heads of the local councils, businessmen and planning professionals from the Arab sector who contributed their experience to the work of mapping out the needs of the minority. The people in the prime minister’s office and Minister Vilnai personally visited the Arab centers in order to learn, firsthand, what the problems that need to be quickly solved were. These actions show how important the then prime minister, Barak, thought this was as did the fact that he had placed the care for this subject into the hands of the people in his office who would be the coordinators of the activities of the government ministries. The inclusion of people from the Arab minority in the preparation of the program was also a clear expression of the implementation of a policy that encouraged dialogue in civil matters.

The goals of the program were to close the gaps between the Arab and Jewish sectors; to find suitable solutions for the essential needs of the Arab population centers in areas such as transport, infrastructures, housing and construction, industry and commerce, education, employment, health, religion; and to establish the foundations for the attraction of additional financial investments. The government allocated a sum of four billion shekels for the program, half of which was to be spent on the deteriorating infrastructures in the Arab cities and villages including the paving of roads, laying down sewerage systems, street lighting, connection to the national water system, the completion of the master plans for the Arab centers of population, the establishment of new high density building neighborhoods, the acceleration of the building of public institutions and the development of internal infrastructures in the centers. The program was an operational program for all the

government ministries with exact allocations of sums made for each enterprise.

Another central area that the multiyear program was aimed at developing the economy and the planners characterized the Arab sector as a section of the market in which the percentage of unemployment was high, the rate of participation of women in the work market was low and where there was a lack of organized industrial areas. The goals that were set were the development of industrial areas that would be shared by settlement blocs (including industrial areas for both Jews and Arabs), the steering of Arab employment toward the areas of technological research and development and the development of human resources through investment in education. To achieve this, the sum of 700 million shekels was allocated for the building of classrooms and another 280 million for pedagogical programs for gifted children, special education, and science and technology education.⁹

The change in government after the 2001 elections did not bring about a change in policy and in the basic principles of the new government, headed by Ariel Sharon, they wrote that “The government will ensure full equality for all the Arab citizens of Israel . . . in education, employment, housing and infrastructures as well as the correction of distortions that existed in the allocation of resources and the provision of public services.” The government also promised to create places of work for the Arab minority.¹⁰

Another important program that the government prepared after 2000 was an increase in the integration of Arab citizens into government service. The background to this was the amendment of section 11 of the State Service Law that the Knesset passed in which it was determined that suitable expression would be given to the representation of members of the Arab minority in all ranks and professions working in the civil service.¹¹ The amendment was the legislative expression of a reality that had already begun in the 1990s when members of the Arab minority began to be integrated into the various government ministries to a greater degree. The following table presents the constant growth in the number of Arabs employed in the civil service during the decade between the first Rabin government and the time of the “Defensive Shield” campaign.”¹²

Table 8.1. Arabs employed in government service 1992–2001

Year	Total number of government workers	Total number of Arab workers	Percentage of number of Arab workers
1992	53,549	1,117	2.1%
1993	53,914	1,369	2.5%
1994	55,278	1,679	3%
1995	56,183	1,997	3.5%

1996	56,809	2,231	4%
1997	57,286	2,340	4.1%
1998	57,580	2,537	4.4%
10/1999	58,115	2,818	4.8%
4/2001	54,337	3,128	5.7%

An analysis of the figures leads to several conclusions. Firstly, from 1992 onward there was a continuous growth in the absolute number of Arabs working in government service and in 2001 the most significant growth was recorded (almost 1 percent) in the year when the overall number of employed was actually reduced by about four thousand. While the higher figures are still not representative of the number of Arabs in the total population the very fact of the continuous rise in the figures, at least partially, expresses, the implementation of the policy of integration that the government had adopted.

Another prominent program during these years was the five-year plan to advance education in the Arab sector which was prepared by a steering committee that was made up of nine members including three members of the minorities. The program was put into practice during the 2001 school year and a sum of 250 million shekels was allocated for this. The goal was to raise the learning achievements of the Arab students while placing the emphasis on mathematics and languages.¹³ The program was put into operation in 240 out of 570 schools in the Arab sector in the first year which was about 40 percent of the schools.

In regard to municipal affairs between 2000 and 2002 the Ministry of the Interior authorized a master plan for the Arab centers of population and there was real progress made in this area.¹⁴ In 2000 the master plan was authorized for 47 Arab villages and in 21 of them the programs had already become operational in 2002.¹⁵ In the few villages that had remained without a master plan, such as was the case in the village of Salama, the ministry of housing and construction acted to advance the detailed development plans in a series of areas such as land for housing, agriculture, and industry for the needs of the public. In the area of agriculture, which was considered to be traditional, central, and important for the Arab minority, the development budget grew four times bigger during 1999–2002.

The application of the policy ran into difficulties more than once and in some of the cases there were slowdowns in the speed of implementation because of bureaucratic barriers and, in other cases, problems also arose as a result of internal issues such as the lack of readiness of the sector to agree to modern development, power struggles between clans, a lack of belief in the purity of the government's intentions, the rapid changes that took place in the leadership of the local councils and the continuation of the phenomenon of illegal building.¹⁶

This policy was also applied after “Defensive Shield” operation. From 2002 to 2008 the Israeli government made a series of decisions whose implementation would reduce the gaps that had begun to close during the previous decade even more in the future. In August 2003 the ministerial committee for the affairs of the non-Jewish sector instructed the government ministries to give priority to members of the Arab minority in receiving employment and advancement at work for a period of two years.¹⁷ In January 2004 the government decided to advance equality and the integration of Arab citizens of Israel into government service as part of the continuation of steps that had been taken by the previous governments in the 1990s.¹⁸ In March 2006 the government adopted the recommendations made by an interministerial team that included representatives from the ministries of justice, finance and the civil service commission about additional ways to advance the suitable representation of members of the Arab minority in the civil service. The goal the government set itself was to get to a situation in which 8 percent of all those employed would be members of the Arab minority.¹⁹

In the area of housing the government decided to subsidize the costs of developing the infrastructure for new buildings for demobilized soldiers in minority villages in the north, including Bedouin villages. The declared goal was the marketing of 600 housing units per year for demobilized soldiers (both Druze and Circassian) and the annual sum allocated for this was ten million shekels.²⁰

The prime minister at the time, Ehud Olmert, was not satisfied with only implementing a policy of closing the gaps but encouraged direct dialogue with the leadership of the Arab minority and their direct participation in the decision making about matters concerning the quality of life in the country. As a direct result of this policy Olmert initiated the Prime Minister’s Conference for the Arab Sector which took place in July 2008 and, in his speech before the participants, he chose to emphasize that the Israeli Arab citizens did not constitute a strategic threat but were equal citizens with equal rights in the State of Israel. The conference was the zenith of the direct process of ongoing dialogue that had begun in 2007 when the prime minister had given instructions to prepare broad programs for the Arab population in the areas of education, economy, and municipal matters. Three programs in which members of the Arab minority had taken part in preparing were presented at the prime minister’s conference.²¹

The government made a series of additional decisions which were aimed at advancing the minority populations. One of the important ones was the establishment in February 2007 of the Authority for the Economic Development of the Arab Sector. This new authority prepared an economic program for the Arab minority and presented a vision in which this sector of the population would become advanced from the economic and social points of view through the positive exploitation of the economic potential it possessed

and its integration into the national economy. Among the goals of the program were: the raising of the standard of living of the Israeli Arab citizens, the encouragement of productive economic activity and the raising of the per capita income in the Arab population.²² Aiman Saif, a member of the Arab minority, was made head of the authority as a concrete expression of the intention to carry out the policy of integrating the sector into the institutions of the state.

The way the authority was established attested to another step up in the policy the government had introduced for the integration of the Arab minority. From being a policy of passive and localized dialogue during the 1950s up to the recognition of the existence of gaps which was damaging to the Arab minority in the 1990s, including the initiation of dialogue, a constant striving to narrow the gaps and the intensification of the integration until it was seen as part of the economy at the beginning of the twenty-first century and, on the background of the bitter memories of October 2000, the chances of there being violent acts carried out by the Arab minority was significantly reduced.

Parallel to the work of the new authority during these years the ministry of the interior began to authorize the master plans for the Arab centers of population and plans were authorized for thirty-six centers while an additional twenty-two had plans deposited for consideration in the process of authorization which in total included eighty-two centers of population. The results of this policy could be seen in the field and Arab researchers noted this in their analyses of the developmental trends in the sector.²³ By the beginning of 2010, 125 (out of 128) Arab towns had received authorization for master plans²⁴ and, as a result of the policy, the percentage of lands allocated by the Lands Authority for housing needs of the Arab population also grew from 5 percent to 13 percent.

The growth trend of the entry of members of the minorities into employment in government service continued and the percentage of Arab workers that had gained employment in government service rose from 5.7 percent in 2002 to about 12 percent in 2008. The following table presents the rise in the Arabs employed in government service in both absolute numbers and percentages.²⁵

Table 8.2. Arab workers who entered the civil service from 2002–2008

Year	Total number of workers hired	Arabs hired	Percentage of Arabs of total hired
2002	4440	251	5.7%
2003	4531	931	4.26%
2004	4668	492	5.33%
2005	4537	275	6.9%

2006	3161	180	6.6%
2007	4514	339	8.7%
2008	4955	517	11.66%

From a practical point of view the absorption of members of the minorities into the civil service came up against different kinds of barriers and the government, which was aware of this, appointed an interministerial team headed by the director-general of the ministry of justice whose task was to accompany the work of the government ministries in order to get rid of bureaucratic barriers. One of the recommendations made by the team became a government decision (Decision 4436) and determined that new workers from the minority communities who were being integrated into the civil service would be eligible for benefits such as housing assistance of 2,000 shekels a month (500 hundred dollars) for any worker who had to change his place of residence.²⁶ Other bureaucratic barriers that were located were the tardiness in issuing the authorization of master plans, poor economic infrastructures, inefficiency in municipal management and a lack of strategic planning. Apart from this there were also cultural barriers such as the attempt to make a breakthrough and introduce changes into a society that was essentially traditional, had little employment experience, lacked social networks and had a low level of education in the potential workforce. The multiplicity of programs and their implementation in practice, at least for some of them, indicates a constant and continuous occupation by the government with the issues of the Arab minority and the efforts being made to solve the problems.

The general picture, therefore, was one of the presentations of a policy essentially aimed at narrowing the gaps between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority and integrating the Arab citizens of Israel into the public and civil space of the country. Despite the various difficulties in implementing it, the policy was put into practice in a period when Israel was dealing with the intifada in the territories and the thwarting of terror that was being carried out by a small number of Arab Israeli citizens. In September 2001 a suicide attack carried out by an Israeli Arab in the Nahariya railway station in which three Israelis were killed. During these years dozens more Arab Israeli citizens assisted in terrorist attacks as drivers, providers of places to sleep, and employers of inhabitants of the territories and some of them were arrested by the Israeli security services.

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP: RESTRAINED REACTIONS TO IDF OPERATIONS IN THE TERRITORIES AND ONGOING DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT

On the background of the ongoing Intifada in the territories the occupation with political power factors in the Arab sector regarding the issue of the national struggle against Israel grew. Several of the central motifs in this framework that stood out were the condemnation and protest against the Israeli security steps being taken in the territories, meetings with the Palestinian leadership to express identification and the expression of support for the Intifada. The pattern of activity chosen was the holding of protest demonstrations, the appeal for legal assistance, the attempts made to get support from the Arab world and the international arena for the Palestinian issue, the motions for votes of nonconfidence in the government and the provision of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinians. The range of activities did not include violence and the protest recorded in the field was minimal and moderate which, among other things, was a result of the memories of the violent events of 2000 together with the harsh security measures applied by the government against the senior leaders of the sector such as Sheikh Salah who was found guilty of being in contact with a foreign agent in the middle of 2003. In doing this the arm of the law established a clear red line between legitimate protest and prohibited violent activity.

In the Palestinian arena, a delegation from Balad met with the heads of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in 2001 and discussed ways of struggle to be used in the Intifada and ways to solve the Palestinian issue. In the same year representatives of the Communist stream met Na'af Khawatma, the secretary-general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine in Amman. A year later Khawatma had a similar meeting with Member of the Knesset Ahmad Tibi. These meetings usually occupied themselves with the situation of the Islamic holy property, the expressions of support for their struggle, with support for terrorist factors and the examination of the possibility for students from the Arab sector coming to study in Arab countries. In March 2002, Member of the Knesset Mahmud Kana'aneh, a member of the National Arab party which was a member of the Raam-Taal parties, met with Walid Jumblatt, the leader of the Druze in Lebanon, and examined together with him ways to help in the territories. Azmi Bishara visited Syria and Lebanon several times during that period and maintained diplomatic contacts with the heads of both states.

The protest in the Arab sector against Israel's actions in the territories was often heard after days of fighting in which there was a high number of Palestinian casualties recorded or in cases where some senior leader or public figure in the Palestinian arena was killed. Following the killing of Abu Ali Mustafa (August 2001), one of the senior leaders of the Popular Front and

three Arab members of the Knesset took part in his funeral, including Mohammad Baraka and Ahmad Tibi, and Balad and Hadash held memorial gatherings in a number of Arab villages in Israel. Following the incident Baraka, a member of Hadash, appealed to the High Court of Justice with the request to instruct the government to stop what he called Israel’s “policy of liquidation.”²⁷ Members of the Knesset from different parties moved for motions of non-confidence in the government on the basis of the actions being taken in the territories in an effort to subdue the Palestinian terrorist activity. This was the case, for example, in March 2001 when the Hadash party moved a motion of nonconfidence in the government because of the situation in the territories and the encircling of the city of Ramallah.²⁸ Along with the expressions of identification with the Palestinian struggle the Arab members of the Knesset expressed support for the continuation of the intifada. Member of the Knesset Baraka believed that this was the most effective instrument to bring down the Israeli government²⁹ and Member of the Knesset Taleb Al-Sana justified the intifada and claimed that it was not terror but legitimate opposition.³⁰

From the point of view of the Arab public the “Defensive Shield” campaign was a surprise even though friction and confrontations had been regularly, and frequently, taking place in the territories since the end of 2000. A military campaign of such proportions as the “Defensive Shield” was unusually large and represented a change in the reality that had been established in the territories and which had come to be called the “Second Intifada.” Following the publication of the news about the beginning of the campaign, which was close to the time of “Land Day” on March 30, the Higher Follow-Up Committee decided to convert the central memorial gathering that was planned to take place in the Negev into a protest demonstration against the campaign and an expression of support for the Palestinian people. About five thousand people took part in the gathering which took place on the lands of the A-Touri Bedouin tribe north of Beer Sheva. The participants condemned the encircling of Ramallah and declared that they would not sit on their hands if Israel hurt the Palestinians or Arabs.³¹ They flew PLO and Hizballah flags but things remained orderly and nothing unusual was reported. The police took up positions outside the Arab villages and permitted the protest to take place. There were also other demonstrations to mark “Land Day” in Arabeh and Sakhnin that included characteristics that memorialized the events of 1976, support for the Palestinian people and criticism of the rulers of the Arab countries who were not doing enough for the Palestinians.

Shawki Khatib, the chairman of the Higher Follow-Up Committee, placed the responsibility for the shedding of blood of both Jews and Arabs on Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. He convened another meeting of the committee on April 2 in which they decided to intensify the protest actions to include the sending of letters to international bodies demanding the cessation of the

campaign and asking for the organization of humanitarian assistance to the residents of the territories. Following these decisions a delegation of the Higher Follow-Up Committee met with Jordanian and Egyptian diplomats who were representing their countries in Israel and asked them not only to condemn Israel, but to also consider returning their ambassadors to Amman and Cairo.³² Other demands were made by the Arab leadership to the secretary-general of the UN, Kofi Anan, and to other world leaders. All in all, these steps were in the frame of the law and reflect Arab protest against the military operation.

The position taken by Balad to the campaign was complex. Its leader, Bishara, was questioned during this time by the police about his trips to Lebanon and his meetings there with the heads of Hizballah. The Knesset held several discussions about this matter and in September 2001 the legal advisor to the government asked the speaker of the Knesset to remove the parliamentary immunity of Bishara to allow him to stand trial for his support of violent activities, acts of terrorism and identification with terrorist organizations.³³ Bishara's patterns of activity attest to the fact that, in contrast with other leadership factors, he had not learned the lessons of the October events and had not moderated the way he was acting. It is possible that the reason for this was the government's focus during this period upon the thwarting of threats made by the Islamic Movement which made it possible for Bishara to not be exposed to the government's display of its power. Be that as it may, he continued to adhere to the line of activism that denied the right of the state to exist and made no hesitation about supporting violent actions carried out by Palestinian and other organizations. Even so, in the period after the October 2000 events, he remained the lone voice of violence and found it difficult to mobilize much support for protest activities in face of the restrained responses of the other leadership factors that preferred to express their protest in ways that the law allowed.

The investigation carried out on Bishara following the statements he had made did, however, slightly moderate his public statements. He argued that the Palestinian people were at a crucial stage in their struggle and could not halt the Intifada and also declared that the opposition was, in fact, an act of national liberation and that, since the Israeli conquest was an act of terrorism, then the opposition was legitimate. Bishara also attacked Israel's policies in the territories, expressed confidence about the continuation of the Palestinian struggle and demanded that the Israeli government release those Palestinians that had been arrested.³⁴

The secretary-general of Balad, Awad Abed el-Fatah, who identified the restraint in the patterns of protest of the leadership factors in the Arab sector as a lesson learned from the October 2000 events, called for a transition to be made from a conscientious reaction based on identification to a new stage in

which the Arab public would apply pressure to halt the military activities of Israel in the territories.³⁵

The northern branch of the Islamic Movement adopted the style of sharp reaction in order to describe the military actions taken by Israel in the territories and terms such as "barbaric acts of slaughter" and "terroristic conquest" was just a selection of the expressions that appeared in *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah*, the gazette of the branch.³⁶ Sheikh Salah exploited his permanent forum in the pages of the paper to level criticism at the shameful policies of the Arab rulers who, according to him "were making deals with blood of the Palestinians." In a pair of poems that he wrote he compared the then prime minister, Ariel Sharon, to bloodthirsty Mongolian warlords from the Middle Ages.³⁷ Salah and his deputy Khatib, who also wrote an article with similar motifs, chose not to call on the Arab street to come out and confront the Israeli security forces as they had done in the past.

On the ground, demonstrations of identification with the Palestinians took place because of the campaign and the price that the inhabitants of the territories had to pay. At the end of the first week of the campaign there were dozens of demonstrations of support and all of them took place without anything untoward happening except for localized incidents of stone throwing in Wadi A'ra and the Negev, in which thirteen people were arrested for disorderly behavior. In Shfaram seven demonstrators who burned the Israel flag were arrested. The message that the government wanted to make by these arrests was clear: protests were a legitimate thing, but violence and disturbing the public peace were prohibited.³⁸ In comparison with the October 2000 events the reaction was restrained this time and, although it included strong protest it did not develop into widespread violence. A few cases of disorderliness were reported in the field but they quickly ended.

The leaders of Hadash called upon the International community to place the prime minister on trial after reports were made about dozens of killed Palestinians in the Jenin refugee camp and compared the resistance of its inhabitants with that of the inhabitants of Stalingrad during World War II.³⁹ When the dimensions of the damage done became clear, they urged Shawki Khatib to convene the Higher Follow-Up Committee in order to consider what additional steps could be taken in reaction arguing that they could not wait for international intervention. Their appeal to the committee shows that they recognized it as the leading body of the Arab minority which had the authority to make decisions for all the political power factors.

In parallel with the protest most of the political power factors organized humanitarian assistance for the inhabitants of the refugee camp that had turned into a symbol of the struggle and resistance to Israel. During the campaign donations of food and millions of dollars' worth of blankets, medicines and equipment were collected and sent to the residents of the territories.⁴⁰ This activity of the national political frameworks was a model to be

imitated by the other factors in the Arab sector and the Arab residents of Haifa founded a popular committee to give assistance to the Palestinians while a similar committee was established by Arab students at the Haifa University and in the city of Nazareth. The Israeli policy in this context was characterized by fighting against the nests of terror while authorizing the transfer of goods to the Palestinian population.

THE ARAB LEADERSHIP BETWEEN “DEFENSIVE SHIELD” AND “CAST LEAD”: DIALOGUE ALONGSIDE THE CONSTANT CHALLENGING OF THE GOVERNMENT

Between the “Defensive Shield” campaign and the “Cast Lead” campaign the patterns of activity of the political power factors in the Arab sector took on a nationalistic hue which was characterized by the following: meetings with senior Palestinian leaders in the territory of the Palestinian Authority and overseas, meetings with leaders of the Arab world, support for the Palestinian struggle and the implementation of their demands, especially the right of return, the justification of the Intifada in the territories, the provision of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian residents of Judea and Samaria, the condemnation of Israeli military actions and opposition to the integration of the Arab minority in Israel in enterprises that had a national character.

In September 2002 a delegation from Hadash visited the chairman of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat, in his office in Ramallah and Abu Mazen received a similar delegation after he was elected head of the Palestinian Authority in January 2005. After the parliamentary elections in the Authority in January 2006 some of the power factors in the Arab sector also held meetings with Hamas.⁴¹ Another pattern of activity was the holding of meetings with political factors in the Arab world in an attempt to persuade them not only to act for the benefit of the Palestinian issue but also to bring them up to date with the situation of the Arab minority in Israel. These meetings mostly dealt with what was happening with the Islamic holy sites, as had been the case with the representatives of both branches of the Islamic Movement, as well as the expression of support for their struggle and the terrorist factors, just as the Balad members had done, and the possibility of students from the Arab sector going to Arab countries to study.

Bishara, for instance, visited Syria and Lebanon a number of times during the first decade of the twenty-first century and established contacts with the heads of both countries.⁴² Member of the Knesset Abed Almalek Dahansha, which represented the southern branch of the Islamic Movement, met the Jordanian ambassador in Tel Aviv while the mayor of Nazareth, Ramez Jiraisi, met the Jordanian ambassador to discuss the quota of students from the Arab minority who could study in Jordan. A delegation from the northern

branch of the Islamic Movement held a meeting with the Egyptian ambassador and expressed its concern that Israel might harm Islamic holy sites.⁴³

A similar course of action involving subjects of a national nature was also taken many times through connecting the nationalist component with religious motifs. This stood out with the representatives of the two branches of the Islamic Movement but was not absent in other power factors in the political arena. Dahamsheh, Sheikh Salah and the Balad member of the Knesset, Jamal Zakhalka, for example, called upon the ambassadors to Israel to act to stop the works being carried out on the Temple Mount because of the fear that they would damage the Al-Aqsa mosque and demanded international protection for the mosques.⁴⁴ Sheikh Salah accused the Israeli establishment of discrimination against the Arab minority on the background of national and religious interests and the intention to demolish the mosques on the Temple Mount. The tone used by the Sheikh was softer during those years compared to the tone he used in the 1990s because, among other things, in January 2005 the Israeli establishment found him guilty of transgressions and, in a plea bargain, he admitted to having had links to a foreign agent. Although this preventative step taken by the government against him and against other senior figures in the movement did not cause the sheikh to change the ideological positions he held, it did cause him to avoid using extreme expressions as he had done during the years preceding the October 2000 events.

All political power factors expressed protest against Israel's actions in the territories. The characteristics of the actions were, in the main, found to be identical with the reaction that was being interpreted as atypical. This, for example, was the case with the extensive damage done to human life, wide-ranging military campaigns, punishing steps taken that were interpreted as being serious and the attacks on senior Palestinian leaders. This was the case, for example in 2004 after the death of Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, the spiritual leader of Hamas. Hadash defined his killing as a dangerous escalation that would prevent any way of achieving a political solution and the Ra'am-Ta'al factions in the Knesset warned that Israel's policies were leading to a blood-bath. All the power factors not only protested against the Israeli actions but also expressed support for the intifada. When the minister of the interior decided to cancel the citizenship of two Israeli Arabs who were found to be involved in terrorist activities, all the political power factors came out against the decision and complained that this was a case of persecution of a minority group by the government and not one of them condemned the terrorist action the two were involved in.

Another subject that stood out during these years that occupied the leadership factors of the Arab minority was the Second Lebanese War which took place in 2006. As in previous wars the internal distress of the Arab public and its leadership was obvious since, on the one hand, the war led to the loss of

human lives and property in the Arab public as well with eighteen Israeli Arabs being killed by rockets fired by Hizballah out of a total of thirty-nine citizens who had been killed. On the other hand, the Arab citizens of Israel expressed identification with the Lebanese citizens who were suffering losses as a result of the IDF's military actions. Member of the Knesset Ahmad Tibi, for example, gave expression to this when he wrote that he was proud of his opposition to the war but, at the same time, would continue to aspire toward complete and real civil cooperation.⁴⁵ An opinion poll taken in 2006 found that 50 percent of Israeli Arabs justified the launching of missiles by Hizballah at Israel.⁴⁶

At the height of the war on July 30, 2006, an incident took place in which there was fire directed at Kfar Kana village in Lebanon, in which dozens of the villagers were killed. The incident led to strong reactions by the Arab leadership which leveled intense criticism at Israel's military policies. Member of the Knesset Al-Sana complained that Israel was becoming a racist state that was inciting people against the Arabs and his Knesset colleague Bishara declared that Israel was carrying out acts of genocide against the Shiite population in Kfar Kana and that this was a step that could legitimately be protested. He also rejected the argument that was being leveled against him by Israeli factors that he was a member of a fifth column.⁴⁷ In the field there were few expressions of protest about the steps being taken by Israel in the war, but there were events organized by the northern branch of the Islamic Movement in Jerusalem and Taibeh.

The Arab leadership factors were also occupied with civil issues and one of the goals they set for themselves was the narrowing of the gap with the Jewish majority group through carrying on a dialogue with the government as was being navigated during these years by Shawki Khatib, the head of Higher Follow-Up Committee. More than once, Khatib asked for meetings with the prime minister, other ministers and the legal advisor to the government to discuss the advancement of the Arab sector and a number of times complained that they had refused to meet with him. Because of his interest in maintaining a dialogue with the government, Khatib, and the heads of Hadas like him, made sure that he participated in the state memorial ceremonies to mark the death of late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Member of the Knesset Baraka explained that this kind of participation did damage to the government's attempt to isolate the Arab sector.

The heads of Arab local councils hosted government factors in their villages, including the then president of the state Moshe Katzav who visited Tira and Kfar Kassem in 2001 and Prime Minister Sharon who came to Umm el Fahem in 2004. Additional meetings with government factors took place in the Arab sector with national government institutions, such as meetings with IDF representatives (the Homeland Command), which regularly took place during the decade in which municipal and civil issues were discussed with

the intention of assisting the Arab minority.⁴⁸ In an attempt to improve the situation in the population, the city of Nazareth turned to the government ministries and asked them to return all the branches of the public institutions that had been removed from them in order to allow the services for the citizens to be readily available.

Another area in which the political power factors tried to act was in their opposition to the appropriation of lands and the demolition of illegal building. The Arab factions in the Knesset—except for Balad—and the national leadership bodies time and time again appealed to the prime minister in attempts to cancel the appropriation and demolition orders. Kamal Riyan, a member of the southern branch of the Islamic Movement and deputy general manager of the Center for Local Government, met with the minister of housing in an attempt to increase the allocation of lands for building for young couples from the Arab sector, for the development of infrastructure in settlements that had not yet been recognized by the authorities and for the absorption of academics from the Arab minority for employment in the ministry.⁴⁹ Similar meetings were held with the Tamra local council which received 2 million shekels in assistance for projects involving infrastructure development.⁵⁰ Meetings with representatives of the authorities also took place in the Negev where the head of the council of Hura, a Bedouin settlement, asked for assistance from the ministry of agriculture.

During these years the Committee of the Heads of Arab Local Councils maintained regular contact with the government ministries in order to make sure that subjects that were relevant to the Arab minority were being taken care of. When the signs of crisis began to appear, mainly in regard to the deficits in the local councils or when there were cases in which there was readiness by the authorities to offer assistance to the Arab minority, the heads of the committee initiated meetings with the director general of the ministry of the interior, the minister of housing, or the director general of the ministry of education to discuss the common issues such as rehabilitation grants, the closing of deficits, the transference of development budgets and the building of classrooms in the Arab sector.

THE PATTERNS OF ACTIVITY OF THE ARAB MINORITY DURING THE “CAST LEAD” CAMPAIGN: PROTEST WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE LAW

In contrast with the “Defensive Shield” campaign the “Cast Lead” campaign did not come as a surprise to the Arab citizens of Israel. The continuous escalation along the southern border of Israel, which included the unceasing firing of rockets at Israeli centers of population and the military reactions of Israel, inevitably led to the wide-ranging campaign. The Arab media regular-

ly reported about what was happening in the Gaza Strip and in the weeks preceding the campaign, growing interest in the Arab street because of the escalation in the Gaza Strip was obvious also because of the activity of the social and citizens organizations. During December 2008, Hadash organized a protest demonstration against the IDF's actions in the Gaza Strip and, in a public statement that was distributed, declared that it was impossible to be silent about the daily attacks carried out by Israel on the Palestinians in the Strip. On December 6, Balad also organized a demonstration of solidarity in Taibeh and in all these events the heads of the parties did not issue any calls for the public to act violently in order to bring about a change in Israel's policies in the Gaza Strip. Subsequently some of the political frameworks chose to focus their activities upon humanitarian matters and campaigns to donate food, money and medicines for the people of the Gaza Strip began to operate.

On December 28, when the events began, about a hundred Arab Israelis demonstrated outside the villages of Be'ne and Dir el-Assad in the Galilee and called upon the government to stop the campaign. Some of the demonstrators were arrested by the police on suspicion of rowdy and disorderly behavior.⁵¹ In Kfar Kana, near Nazareth, a thousand people held a quiet procession in which some of the participants tried to block the junction at the entrance to the village but the police prevented them. Demonstrations with few participants also took place in Umm el Fahem and Dabouriya in the Lower Galilee.

On the political level the Higher Follow-Up Committee decided to strike the Arab sector for one day and organize demonstrations in the Arab population centers throughout the country. The committee made it clear in the announcement that summed up the meeting that it had a duty to fight against the siege that had been imposed upon the Palestinian people and bring about the opening of the transit stations between Israel and the Gaza Strip. The committee also called upon the international community to immediately intervene to stop the military steps taken by Israel. Sheikh Salah criticized the Arab countries for their silence over what was taking place in the Gaza Strip and declared that the Israeli Arab public could demonstrate and assist those who had been injured.

The largest demonstration that took place during the time of the campaign was in the city of Sakhnin on January 3, 2009, and this was also initiated by the Higher Follow-Up Committee. While this was taking place Member of the Knesset Zakhalka declared that the Arab public was united in its call to stop the war and put the Prime Minister and the minister of defense on trial. Member of the Knesset Baraka explained that the Arab minority would continue to express its ideas about the conquest and the racism of Israel. The mayor of Sakhnin recited a blessing for the victims in the Gaza Strip and called them "shahidim" (martyrs). The police were given instructions to al-

low the protest to take place and avoid taking actions that might lead to escalation.⁵² The establishment wanted to pass on the message that they were permitting legitimate protest within the framework of the law but would prohibit violent activities that were an offense against the law. Another demonstration initiated by the Higher Follow-Up Committee took place opposite the office of the prime minister in Jerusalem on January 11, 2009, in which the demonstrators held up signs that accused the prime minister, the minister of defense and the foreign minister of murdering children side by side with the usual motifs used to condemn Israel and others supporting the struggle and calling for a firm stand against aggression.

SUMMARY

The IDF’s “Defensive Shield” campaign in Judea and Samaria was an external event that created the potential for an outbreak of group violence by the Arab Israeli citizens because of their common national and ethnic identity with the Palestinian inhabitants of the territories. An analysis of the event shows that the Israeli policy in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip was forceful and determined to damage the terrorist infrastructures. In contrast to this, in everything connected with the policies enacted toward the Arab minority the Israeli government strove to narrow the gap between the Arab minority and the Jewish majority, to carry on a dialogue and include representatives of the Arab sector in the preparation of different programs aimed at achieving this goal. The very fact of navigating this path brought about an improvement in the situation of the minority in different areas and, for instance, community police stations were established in Arab settlements and there was a notable improvement in the education system. This improvement created the understanding among some of the minority’s political power factors in that the government was, in fact, coming toward them and that a change in perception had begun to take place among decision makers toward the Arab population. Some of them also recognized that the implementation of the programs had come up against difficulties which were not only the result of bureaucratic barriers but also because of cultural and social barriers that characterized the culture of the Arab minority and were making it difficult to accept the changes involved in modernization.⁵³

The leadership factors in the Arab minority did not call upon the public to react violently to the “Defensive Shield” campaign, but chose channels of diplomatic, humanitarian, legal and political action in an attempt to stop the campaign and the damage being done at the time to the Palestinians in Judea and Samaria. During these years the Higher Follow-Up Committee promoted a policy that strove to maintain a dialogue with the government and avoided making inflammatory statements. Member of the Knesset Bishara, who at the

time was under threat of having his parliamentary immunity removed in the Knesset and being put on trial for the praise he had expressed for Hizballah, preferred not to complicate his legal position any further. Although the leaders of the Islamic Movement expressed strong criticism of the prime minister and some of the other ministers they also avoided escalating things in the field, carefully weighed their steps and chose not to adopt any patterns of violent activity as they had adopted during the events of October 2000.

The “Cast Lead” campaign was also an external event that had the potential to lead to violence in the Arab sector in Israel but no such violence was recorded for several reasons. The government’s policy toward the Arab minority in the years preceding the campaign had encouraged dialogue with the sector and integration of its people into the civil service. The continuous increase in the number of Arabs employed in government ministries, a series of government decisions aimed at improving the situation of the Arab citizens, the establishment of an authority for economic development in the prime minister’s office (with a member of the minorities heading it) were only part of the practical expressions of this policy. The approach of the establishment did not go unrecognized by the leaders of the Arab sector even though, from a practical point of view, there were gaps between the making of the various decisions and the extent of their implementation in the field. This was, however, because of different barriers that made it difficult to rapidly put the programs that had been prepared for the Arab minority into practice. Among those barriers were a complicated bureaucracy, the refusal to construct mass building projects, the low level of municipal rates collection, the difficulty of integrating women into the work force and the difficulty the local leadership had in implementing the processes of change.

During the time of the campaign in the Gaza Strip the police allowed the Arab minority to express its protest through holding legal demonstrations, but whenever there was disorderly behavior, the arm of the law quickly came into action to vigorously and determinedly restore order and arrest the rioters. During the time of the campaign more than seven hundred Israeli Arabs were arrested on suspicion of behaving in a disorderly fashion but most of them were released almost immediately while some of them were put on trial after evidence was found to show that they had actually acted violently and broken the law.⁵⁴

Although the leadership factors in the Arab sector strongly criticized the campaign all of them steered the protest into legitimate channels as they had done six years before during the “Defensive Shield” campaign. Awad Abed el-Fatah admitted that the reaction of the Arab citizens toward the campaign was less strident and less violent than it had been during the October 2000 events.⁵⁵ Balad, the Islamic Movement, and other leadership factors, allowed the Higher Follow-Up Committee to lead the protest and its chairman steered the protest into legitimate and legal directions. Both of the military cam-

paigns, like the other test cases that were analyzed in this work, show that external events are not sufficient condition for collective violence. It also proves that if there is no leadership factor that chooses violent forms of protest to advance political goals then group violence will not take place.

NOTES

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29. *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida* newspaper, February 4, 2001.
30. *Ibid.*, June 9, 2001.
31. *Ha'aretz* newspaper, March 31, 2002.
32. *Kool al-Arab* newspaper, April 5, 2002.
33. Knesset minutes, November 6, 2001.
34. *Fasl al-Makal* newspaper, April 5, 19, 2002.
35. *Ibid.*, April 5, 2002.
36. *Sawt al-Haqq wal-Hurriah* newspaper, April 5, 2002, p. 3.
37. *Ibid.*, April 19, 2002, p. 23.
38. *Al-Ittihad* newspaper, April 21, 2002.
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40. *Ha'aretz* newspaper, April 25, 2002.
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Conclusion

This study has chosen to take a historical view of the network of relations between the Israeli government and the Arab minority during the sixty-year period from 1948, the establishment of the state, until 2008. These relations moved along a continuum that included dialogue, protest and violence and were analyzed through seventeen case studies. The following are the conclusions.

DIALOGUE

The first conclusion of the research is that both direct and indirect dialogue has taken place between the Israeli government and the Arab minority throughout the years. During the early years the government initiated the discussions only around the subjects that were a challenge or a threat to it, and these only dealt with security issues. Whenever a security threat was identified as coming from the Arab population the legal and enforcement authorities (the military government, the police and the secret service) made sure to summon the leaders of the Arab sector in order to issue messages of deterrence that made it clear that the state would not tolerate such threats and would act to frustrate them. No initiatives for dialogue by the government have been found concerning civil matters that touched upon the daily lives of the Arab citizens. The state satisfied itself with granting basic civil rights to the Arab minority and did not pay much governmental attention to the needs of this segment of the population. The main reasons for this were: the policy that focused upon the effort to endow the new state with a Jewish character and preserve it, the preservation of a democratic identity for the country through the granting of minimal rights to the non-Jewish minority and the

creation of deterrence to the Arab population in order to dissuade it from carrying out actions against the state.

Conversely, from the establishment of the state until the 1980s, one can identify a constant initiative by the representatives of the Arab sector to carry on a dialogue with the government. At the beginning the leaders of the sector asked to prevent any harm being done to the minority population, especially during the time the military government existed. In later years the Arab public figures made requests to carry on similar discussions about the continued improvement of the status of the minority. These efforts included appeals to the government from the podium of the Israeli Parliament (the Knesset) and through the media, the application of pressure from Arab members of the Knesset who were part of Zionist parties and constant attempts by the heads of local Arab councils to find an attentive ear in the various government ministries.

The second conclusion about the dialogue is that, from the 1990s onward, a change took place in the attitude of the government toward the minority group. As the result of a growing realization—mainly among the ministers and advisors on Arab matters to the prime minister—for the need to reduce the gaps between this minority and the majority group a policy that recommended the broadening of the dialogue with representatives of the minority was instituted. This dialogue was accompanied by an initiative by government ministries to carry out discussions with representatives of the Arab minority and to increasingly integrate them into the process of creating programs that were aimed at improving their status as citizens. This initiative was responded to well mainly by the heads of local councils and direct channels of communication were established. Even so, all the governments of Israel refused to recognize the Arab population as a national minority and, as an outcome of this policy they did not officially recognize the Higher Follow-Up Committee as an institution that represented this sector. During these years indirect discussions were carried out in parallel between the government and political power groups that did not recognize the State of Israel. This mainly refers to The Islamic Movement and Balad who exploited public forums to make far-reaching demands from the government, going as far as to demand a change in the character of Israel from being a “Jewish and democratic” state to being “a state of all its citizens.” More than once these demands were also accompanied by clear threats to use violent means against the government.

The third conclusion is that from 2000 onward, in the framework of learning the lessons of the seriously violent events of October 2000, the dialogue taking place between the government and the Arab minority intensified. Alongside steps being taken against threats, including the arrest of leading public figures, the desire of the central government to come toward the Arab minority and heal the deep rift that was caused after the difficult

events was apparent. During these years ongoing discussions were held about many civil issues such as health, education, welfare, housing and municipal matters. Under the leadership of the prime minister's office comprehensive programs involving all areas of life were developed the goals of which were to rapidly close the gaps. A special authority for dealing with the minority population, headed by an Israeli Arab, was established in the prime minister's office. The ministry of the interior completed a master plan for the Arab villages and ongoing discussions between the different ministries and the heads of the local councils are being held about a long list of civil matters.

PROTEST

Protest in the field became a permanent pattern of activity for the Arab minority only in the second half of the 1970s. Until then the pattern had been characterized by public verbal criticism in Arabic and Hebrew, mainly by the Communist Party in the parliamentary arena and in the newspapers, of steps taken by the government. The change that took place in the character of the Arab leadership led directly to a change in the characteristics of the protest. Until the events of "Land Day" in March 1976, the leadership had consisted of traditional men such as the heads of villages and local personages (*mukhtarim*) and a legal-formal leadership in the form of the heads of the Communist stream. During the same period it had been occupied with efforts to prevent any potential or real harm done by the government which was exercising a strict security policy against the Arab minority. It was a mediating leadership or a "harm-reducing" leadership and, as such, it did little to organize protests that might have gotten out of control and deteriorated into violent confrontations between the Arab demonstrators and the security forces. Their concern about such a scenario was because of the possibility of punitive measures being carried out against the Arab public, such as took place after the violent events in Nazareth in 1958.

The appearance of new political frameworks in addition to Rakah (the Communist Party) during the 1970s and the events of "Land Day" turned the instruments of protests into a permanent pattern for managing the Arab minority vis-à-vis the government. During these years new charismatic figures such as Tawfik Ziad (Rakah), Mohammad Mia'ri (Ramash) and Abed Al-Wahab Darawsha (Mada) appeared and developed. These people and others actualized their abilities and also became legal leaders after they were elected to office in the national and municipal elections. Their appearance and the establishment of the Islamic Movement influenced the nature of the Arab protest. From the 1980s onward there was a real growth in the number of protest events in the field about issues that had a national and civil character. These included demonstrations, assemblies, confrontations with the security

forces and strikes by the Arab sector accompanied by publicistic protests that, during the 1990s would have been characterized by incitement and verbal violence of a nationalistic and Islamic nature. These protest were always organized by political factors such as the Higher Follow-Up Committee, the Committee of the Heads of Local Arab Councils, Arab political parties, and separatist movements such as the Islamic Movement and the Sons of the Village and Balad.

The second conclusion about the issue of protest deals with the change that took place in the policy of the Israeli government toward this. Until the 1970s the government made efforts to reduce the expressions of protest in the field and to do this it exploited the severe regulations of the military government. This, for example, is what was done when the protest in Nazareth in May 1958 was forbidden and, when it did take place, the transition to violence was rapid. After the damaging events of "Land Day" the Israeli establishment allowed the Arab public to protest, which was based upon the understanding that the inferior status of the Arabs was fomenting unrest and that it was preferable to channel this into legitimate protest rather than violence. When violence did break out the government used its forces to restore public order in order to create a clear line of separation between legitimate protest and prohibited violence.

VIOLENCE

An analysis of the acts of group political violence by the Arab minority in Israel was done by examining the connection between three components that had the potential to bring about this phenomenon: the Israeli government's policy toward the minority group, the influence of external events that were relevant and connected to the Arabs in Israel and the presence of a leadership factor in the Arab sector that steered the patterns of action into characteristics of protest or violence or, alternatively, steered it toward dialogue.

The first conclusion is that in all the events in which group political violence on the part of the Arab minority appeared in a political context there were events that were planned, organized and led by leadership factors in the Arab sector. In all of these events there was no leadership factor found who was of a parallel, or higher, position who acted to prevent the violence or, at least, to restrain it. All of the events in which group political violence appeared, except for the case after the slaughter in Sabra and Shatilla (1982), were preceded by long-term preparation by the initiating bodies. This preparation included a number of steps: widespread advertising in newspapers about the planned events, preparatory demonstrations in the field, the mobilization of the public through the use of expressions that created an agitated atmosphere and the public mood of readiness for confrontation, the crossing

of lines drawn by the government concerning forms of protest that were permitted and violence and the readiness to pay the price of there being sacrifices to protect the interests of the Arab minority.

In this framework the Arab factors in the leadership of Maki led the violent events in Nazareth in May 1958. They chose this pattern of action because some of them believed that verbal protest was useless and because they wanted to imitate the success of the violent protest that had taken place in Algeria against the French. On "Land Day" the National Committee for the Protection of Lands, supported by the Communists, led the events. Other leadership factors such as a number of heads of local Arab councils tried to question the decision to react violently in response to the order of land appropriation, but they retracted after they realized that they would be accused of collaboration with the government. The choice of violent action came after the realization that the government was determined to appropriate the land and after all efforts at dialogue failed. In September 1982 the Communist stream which, at that time, was the strongest factor of political leadership, led the violent events following the slaughter in Sabra and Shatilla refugee camps in Lebanon. Other leadership factors, such as the Sons of the Village movement and the student unions, joined the struggle and were not opposed by any other leadership factor that tried to call for the cancellation of any violent reaction. The decision to demonstrate and confront the officers of law enforcement was an expression of the prevalent mood of the leadership factors who wished to identify themselves with those killed in the refugee camps in Lebanon and was an authentic expression of public outrage.

In the test case of the Aroha lands in September 1998 the northern branch of the Islamic Movement led the events together with civil and religious partners. The Higher Follow-Up Committee did not intervene to stop the violence and supported the demands made of the government by the Islamic Movement and the municipality of Umm el Fahem, which was dominated by this branch. In this case as well, the choice of violence was because of a combination of two components. One was the failure of the efforts at dialogue to solve the disagreements between the parties and the other was a trial balloon by the northern branch to test its political power in the field which had strengthened significantly during the second half of the 1990s. In October 2000 the Islamic Movement and Balad led the activist line while the Higher Follow-Up Committee did not act to restrain it even after it became clear that the proportions of the protest were unprecedented and the number of victims was high. The choice of violence was made because Balad and the Islamic stream at this time enjoyed wide popular support in the Arab sector, and because the two leaders doubted the ability to have any discussions with the establishment. Sheikh Salah never believed this while Azmi Bishara said that he had lost his faith in bringing about any change through dialogue. In all of these cases, there was no restraining leadership and the conclusion is that,

in a situation in which this does not exist, political violence that strives for changing the status quo will take place if those with political power choose to use force. This is what happened in all the cases throughout the history of the Arab minority in Israel since 1958.

The transition to the line of violent actions during the 1990s came about because of the rise of a new generation of leaders. When side by side with the charismatic and traditional figures new, educated, figures appeared who represented the second generation that had grown up after the establishment of the state. Some of these educated people began to put their personal seal upon the establishment of the map of the political leadership of the Arab sector. They steered themselves into the political and parliamentary system because they understood that they would be able to influence and actualize political demands through proposing and legislating laws that would improve the lot of the Arab minority. Others preferred to adopt a separatist approach on the national level and satisfied themselves with taking part in the municipal elections. Some of these people became leaders because of their charisma (Sheikh Salah and Bishara) were outstanding examples of this and, within a short period, they became legal leaders. For years they exploited their public positions in order to change the dialogue that was being held between the minority and the government accompanied by their growing demands to receive the right to be a recognized national group, also through their readiness to act with violence to achieve their goals.

The second conclusion is that in a reality in which there is no leadership, that of its own free will chooses political violence, the chance of there being such violence is reduced. In all the cases researched in this study which had the potential for the outbreak of violence it never actually took place because there was no leadership factor (national or local) that wanted to adopt the line of violence. In the events of the establishment of the state and the foundation of the military government, in the Kfar Kassem massacre and the Suez Campaign (1956), in the cancellation of the military government and the June War of 1967 and the 1973 War there were no acts of political violence registered, mainly because there was no Arab leadership factor that mobilized the wider public to participate in violence.

During the events of "Land Day" in 1982, on "Peace Day" in December 1987, in the incident in which twenty-one Palestinians were killed on the Temple Mount (October, 1990) and in the reactions to the "Defensive Shield" (2002) and "Cast Lead" (2008) campaigns few expressions of protest were registered and those that were developed into localized confrontations that ended quickly. The conclusion that can be drawn from this analysis is that without any generative leadership factor to motivate the populace to act violently the phenomenon does not take place. In such a situation the most that is registered are a few limited confrontations led by local leadership factors that take place until a higher level of leadership intervenes and halts

the violence in parallel to the restraint carried out by the government. This is what happened in more than a few cases that were close to widespread escalation until moderate leaders, principally Ibrahim Nimer Hussein, who was the chairman of the Higher Follow-Up Committee for many years, and the heads of local councils who acted as a political bridge between the Arab population and the Israeli establishment, used their considerable weight to restrain the passions and prevent a much wider outbreak of violence.

A third conclusion is that when the Israeli government acted forcefully to reestablish public order the chances of an outbreak of violence in a political context grew. In all the events in which political violence was registered in the Arab sector (except for the event of Sabra and Shatilla) the government's policy toward the Arab minority in Israel was applied forcefully. In May 1958 the police refused to permit the holding of a demonstration in Nazareth and when it began, despite the prohibition, the police acted with force to disperse the protestors. In March 1976 the government was determined to apply the order for land appropriation near Sakhnin and used force in order to carry out its intention. After violent incidents broke out additional force was used to disperse the rioters. In September 1998 the government enforced its policy on the Alroha lands and destroyed the protest tent that had been set up in the area that was slated for appropriation for the purposes of carrying out army training. In this case as well, after the outbreak of violence, the policy whose purpose was to restrain the rioters was strongly enforced. In the events of October 2000, the power of the government was used regarding the policy of allowing Israeli elected figures to enter the Temple Mount area and, during the stage in which the violent events spread to a large number of villages, the government used force against the demonstrators.

The fourth conclusion is that external events that take place within the Israeli, Palestinian and Arab-Islamic arenas can affect which pattern of violence is chosen but are not enough to bring the Arab minority out into the streets. The external events that were examined in this research are all relevant to Israeli Arab citizens because of the religious, ethnic and national components they have, but the measure of their influence and connection to this population is different for each case. There is importance to the timing in which the event takes place as it relates to the position of the Israeli Arab citizens at a given time in history, especially regarding components such as the nature of the leadership and the level of political awareness of their minority status.

It was found that the effect of the external events in most cases resulted in an absence of violence or some limited, local violence. This was the case in 1948, during the Kadash (Suez) campaign in 1956 (during which even the massacre in Kfar Kassem did not generate a violent reaction by the Arab minority), and during the wars of 1967 and 1973, in the outbreak of the first Intifada (1987), during the Gulf War (1990–1991) and in reaction to the

“Defensive Shield” (2000) and “Cast Lead” (2008) campaigns. An exception to this was the reaction of the Arab minority to the events in Sabra and Shatilla (Lebanon, 1982) in which the phenomenon took place in full force after the leadership of the Arab minority at the time took a deliberated decision about it. The basis for this was the passion aroused on the basis of their shared national-ethnic identity together with reports received about the large number of victims.

Of the seventeen remaining cases that were examined in this book, in five of them—on May 1, 1958, in Nazareth, “Land Day” in 1976, the reaction to the events in Sabra and Shatilla in 1982, the Alroha land affair in 1998, and the October 2000 events—it was found that group political violence of a widespread nature took place. In all the other events there was no use of violence and, at most, there was disorderly behavior of a limited nature that did not develop into confrontations in a large number of the villages.

To summarize, the relations between the Arab minority and the government in Israel moves along a continuum that includes dialogue, protest and violence. One can see from the historical analysis done here that in every event that took place there was the potential for escalation. The mutual relations that existed between the parties were made up of a combination of three components operating together. The government, on its part, tried to restrain the exhibitions of violence, both by using force and through dialogue with influential public figures in the Arab sector. The strict security supervision that characterized the government’s policy produced long-term deterrence in the Arab population although this supervision also became lax, certainly after the full cancellation of the military government in January 1968; and yet this supervision, like the policy of political, social and cultural exclusion of the Arab public—certainly until the 1990s had an effect upon the patterns of actions carried out by the Arab minority which, over time, developed a special Palestinian national identity side by side with its Israeli citizenship. From the 1990s onward a significant change took place in policy which expressed itself not only in affirmative action toward the budgets of the Arab villages but also in ongoing discussion with a representative of the Arab sector in order to have them take part in the decision-making process about areas of life that affected them directly.

Some of the factors in the Arab leadership, and in the public as well, saw the change in policy as a blessing and supported dialogue which was the preferred fallback position during critical times, as well when one considered there would be a need for such channels at the height of the storm. Other leadership frameworks, mainly those associated with Balad and the northern branch of the Islamic Movement, expressed reservations, not to mention boycotted the dialogue with the government, and chose, at least until 2000, to turn to the use of protests and violence in order to further the interests of the Arab sector, as they saw them. The deep scars left by the events of October

2000, as well as the strict security supervision of these bodies during the following years that included arrests and the incarceration of the leaders of the Islamic Movement and Balad, created a clear line of separation for these movements and the whole Arab sector between protest activities that were permitted and violent activities that were prohibited in the democratic regime that existed in the State of Israel.

Finally, since 1948 the complex network of relationships between the Israeli governments and the Arab minority had constantly moved through the three circles of nationality, religion, and citizenship—all of which can intermingle at points of contact. At any point of time the official policy of the government is to bring the Arab citizens closer to Israeli society and, among the most prominent examples of the expressions of this are: the establishment of the system of civic service that has begun to involve a growing number of young Arab men and women; the regulation of master plans for the Arab villages; the integration of a growing number of Arabs into the different government ministries; the encouragement of industrial and economic enterprises involving Jews and Arabs; making the different services more available to all the Arab villages (a graduated process); and the provision of incentives to Jewish employers who employ Arabs in their factories and businesses. Despite this, political, economic and social gaps between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority still exist, also because of cultural differences.

Parallel to the activity of the establishment, over the last few years, there has been a marked radicalization in the language used in the public discourse of some of the Jewish majority, which has wanted to exclude the Arab presence from the public space and, among the expressions of this have been the refusal to appoint an Arab government minister, the opposition to full equal rights for minorities, the call to prohibit the renting of dwellings to Arabs in urban areas of a Jewish character and the call to boycott businesses that employ Arabs (such as supermarkets and others). This social phenomenon has received prominent coverage in the media during periods of escalation in the security situation and is constantly reflected in the public opinion surveys.

The Arab entity is also experiencing a profound process of change and, while the Arab leaders are prominently presenting their identification with Palestinian nationality and constantly attacking the Israeli government about national, civil and religious issues, they also feel that a decisive majority of their public, mostly made up of young people, do not tend toward joining protests—not to mention violence. The Arab population is deeply involved in a process of self-empowerment which expresses itself in the increasing number of associations that are involved in different areas and with the efforts being made by the young people to maximize the advantages offered by Israeli citizenship. When we compare this with what is happening in the

neighboring Palestinian arena which, since 2007, has been going through a process of geopolitical division we see growing personal interests and an expectation that the leaders of the sector should act in order to, first and foremost, tend to their own flock and not necessarily to the Palestinians living in the territories.

Indeed, in order for the intoxicating quiet to not be something that is misleading for both sides, what has been done up until now has not been enough—certainly not in a period when the winds of radical Islam are also blowing through Arab society in Israel. The constant need to keep the level of the flames low, especially the rhetoric, so as to prevent ferment after which there might be another explosion, is the responsibility of both Jewish and Arab leadership factors. Education toward tolerance and the acceptance of others, cooperative enterprises involving Jews and Arabs and the shared calls made by moderate public personages (including religious leaders) together with explanatory information and the strict enforcement of the law against offenders, could remove the incitement and violence. It should be possible to inculcate the importance of taking these steps into the next generation of both communities through education toward the more ethical, just, and egalitarian values that one should expect from a society that believes in democratic values as a way of life for all its citizens. This, by the way, should be done irrespective of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians living in East Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. Given the scenario that this conflict will be resolved via a political arrangement it is appropriate to also include in it the question of the fate of the Israeli Arabs and to make sure that such an arrangement does not do any damage to their basic rights and obligations as citizens of a state that characterizes itself as democratic.

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