Armed Struggle in Palestine: A Political-Military Analysis

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Published in cooperation with
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Bard O'Neill investigates the Palestinian guerrilla movement and assesses the probability that the fedayeen will achieve their aim of liberating Palestine—including Israel—by means of protracted revolutionary insurgency. His analytic framework incorporates several factors that have a critical bearing on the outcomes of protracted insurgencies; these include government response, environment, popular support, organization, cohesion, and external support. A discussion of these factors is followed by a general summation and an examination of the implications of the longer, more enduring trends that have emerged since the October War. Major O'Neill concludes that a Palestine state under PLO control may not be a real threat to Israel's security and existence.

Bard E. O'Neill is director of Middle East Studies at the National War College and senior research fellow in the National Defense University Research Directorate. Major O'Neill holds a Ph.D. in International Relations from the University of Denver. His publications include *Revolutionary Warfare in the Middle East, The Energy Crisis and U.S. Foreign Policy,* which he coedited, and a number of articles dealing with Middle Eastern affairs.

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To my parents

Andrew Thomas O'Neill
Edith May O'Neill

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Preface

In November 1977 Egyptian President Anwar as-Sadat shocked the world with his momentous decision to cross the psychological barrier dividing Arabs and Jews by visiting the state of Israel. Within a few weeks, the representatives of Israel and the Arab Republic of Egypt sat down at Mena House in Cairo to begin a new stage of direct negotiations that hopefully would culminate in the long sought after "just and durable peace."

Though the full implications of the fast-moving events in the Middle East had yet to be digested, scholars and observers quickly agreed that in spite of the hopes engendered by the Sadat initiative, peace would not come easily because two major issues continued to divide the two sides—the eventual disposition of the occupied territories and a settlement of the Palestinian question. This book deals with the latter of the two issues, which all parties have acknowledged is a core consideration. Specifically, it analyzes the strategic accomplishments and role of the Palestinian Liberation Movement and assesses its future in light of past and present capabilities.

Addressing the Palestinian issue is, of course, fraught with peril for the scholar. The emotions that have built up on both sides of the conflict over thirty years compel many advocates to demand total adherence to their version of events. Words, phrases, and sentences that appear perfectly innocuous to the writer may become suspect in the eyes of the zealot. For example, from the Israeli perspective, the matter of using Tel Aviv rather than Jerusalem to refer to Israel is assumed to be an indication of latent hostility. On the Arab side, meanwhile, an acknowledgement of the centuries of suffering and persecution of the Jews is often viewed as a sign of pro-Israeli tendencies. In view of these and other examples, it is important, I believe, that my personal view be stated forthrightly.

Simply put, I have no axes to grind on this issue. I believe that there is more than enough tragedy and blame on both sides of the conflict and that

if there is to be peace, *all* parties will have to make substantial, though not necessarily parallel, compromises.

My own thoughts about some of the possibilities with respect to a solution of the Palestinian issue are put forth in the final chapter. The conclusions are the product of several years of research and analysis during which I have been blessed with generous assistance and advice.

A number of colleagues gave of their time in order to read and critique all or portions of the manuscript—Professors Peter Van Ness, Paul D. Whelan, and Joseph S. Szyliowicz; Captain Jerome O'Brien, U.S. Navy; Colonel Thomas Pianka, U.S. Army; Ms. Sheila Buckley, International Security Agency, Department of Defense; and Mr. George Maerz and Mr. Greg Diercks, editors, National Defense University Research Directorate. Others, including Professors Joseph J. Malone and Adrea Rosenberg, thoughtfully provided documents and information that proved to be most useful.

Commander Frederick T. Daly, assistant director for administration and publications, National Defense University Research Directorate, patiently took care of administrative arrangements and clerical assistance. Several individuals—Mrs. Ginny Lanz, Miss Deborah Zambreny, Mrs. Evelyn Lakes, Miss Susan O'Keefe, and Mrs. Corinne Dodge—helped with the typing of initial drafts. Special recognition along these lines must go to Mrs. Gloria Eakin for her splendid cooperation in both typing the final manuscript and offering many constructive suggestions.

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Responsibility for the final result of this lengthy effort is, of course, solely my own. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of either the Department of Defense or the U.S. government.

Bard E. O'Neill
Washington, D.C.

Abbreviations

ALF	Arab Liberation Front
ANM	Arab Nationalist Movement
AOLP	Action Organization for the Liberation of Palestine
APO	Arab Palestine Organization
BSO	Black September Organization
CCPR	Central Committee of the Palestinian Resistance (now defunct)
HPCPA	Higher Political Committee for Palestinian Affairs (Lebanon)
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
MLC	Military Leadership Committee
PASC	Palestine Armed Struggle Command
PDF	Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP-GC	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command
PLA	Palestine Liberation Army
PLF	Palestine Liberation Front
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PLO-CC	Palestine Liberation Organization Central Committee (or Council)
PLO-EC	Palestine Liberation Organization Executive Committee
PNC	Palestine National Council
PPNLF	Palestine People's National Liberation Front
PRC	Palestinian Revolutionary Council
PRFLP	Popular Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PSF	Popular Struggle Front
UCPR	Unified Command of the Palestinian Resistance (now defunct)

1
Introduction

Armed struggle is hardly a new phenomenon in Palestine. Indeed, for millennia men have turned to violence in order to satisfy their claims and ambitions in the area. The types and forms of wars they have waged have varied considerably over the centuries, ranging from conflicts between major political groups (empires, colonial systems, and nation-states) to those involving small units such as tribal or insurgent groupings.

Historical Sketch

The Battleground of Empires

During the many centuries which spanned the pre-Christian era, Palestine was the scene of continual clashes between decaying and newly emergent empires. Some, like the Egyptian, Hebrew, Babylonian, and Hittite, were indigenous to the area surrounding Palestine; others, such as the Greek and Roman, constituted more distant intrusions. The period of Roman rule, which began in approximately 63 B.C., was marked by recurrent conflict with both outside invaders and dissidents within. The extension of Islamic rule to the area by 640 A.D. did not bring an end to the conflict and violence as the great Ummayyad, Abbasid, and Fatimid dynasties struggled against various enemies to assert their dominance.

The year 1099 A.D. saw a new force, the Christian Crusaders, enter the region in their quest to liberate the Holy Land. While successful in establishing a Crusader kingdom, they eventually met defeat at the hands of the Kurdish warrior Salah ad-Din al-Ayyubi in 1187. Though the Crusaders returned again in the thirteenth century, their stay was short lived and their presence was finally expunged once and for all.

As the Crusader episode drew to a close, Mongols from the East seized control in 1250. The next great invasion came in 1512 when the Ottoman

Turks implanted an empire that would last for four centuries, although not without eventual challenge from European powers which, at the end of the eighteenth century, began to move into the area because of global balance of power considerations.

By the time of World War I, a disintegrating Ottoman Empire found itself opposed by one of those powers, Great Britain, which managed to align with the local Arab leaders seeking to expel the Turks. When the war ended, it was the European powers, rather than the Arabs, who asserted control in the Levant, with the French ensconced in Syria and Lebanon and the British in Iraq, Transjordan, and Palestine.[1] European dominance proved to be relatively brief, however, since the global process of decolonization, expedited by World War II, engendered the transformation of mandates and protectorates into independent political units. Unhappily, the extension of the modern nation-state system to the area did not bring a new era of peace and tranquility, for the new nations soon crossed swords because of historical animosities, ideological differences, and territorial disputes.

The Conflict of Jewish and Arab Nationalism

Armed confrontation involving large collectivities was not the only sort of organized violence between social groupings in Palestine and its environs. The region also had a long legacy of conflicts among tribal and religious groups as well as localized rebellions against imperial, colonial, and indigenous authorities. In the contemporary era, such uprisings, for the most part, reflected the global trend towards national self-actualization—that is, the desire by people who share a common sense of identity to establish autonomous political units within which they can shape and control their own destiny. It is the intersection of two such nationalist movements, the Jewish and Palestinian Arab, that has generated the problem which is the focus of this study. Essentially, the current dilemma centers around the fundamental fact that, since the creation of the British mandate in 1922, both Jewish and Palestinian nationalists have laid claim to the same geographic area—the area that today is comprised of Israel, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and a small portion of the Golan Heights. (The precise boundaries of "Palestine" have varied throughout its history. Today, for instance, the Israelis would argue that from an historical point of view the East Bank of the Jordan also should be considered part of Palestine.)

Zionism and Palestine

The Jewish nationalist movement received its initial impetus from

members of the diaspora in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1896, its founder, Theodore Herzl, published a book entitled *Der Judenstaat,* which called for the formation of a Jewish state, hopefully in Palestine. After the idea was endorsed at the first World Zionist Congress in Basel a year later, the Zionists organized an extensive effort to persuade the major powers, especially Turkey, to adopt policies favorable to their aims.

Support from the Turks was crucial in view of the fact that permission for the emigration of a large number of Jews to Palestine was considered a sine qua non for success, given the Arab majority in the area. Though the Turks refused to allow European Jews to purchase a large tract of land, limited immigration nonetheless commenced, thereby giving rise to protestations by local Arabs whose own sense of nationalism was beginning to crystallize.

When the British consolidated control in the area during the war, they, too, were subjected to Zionist pressures. On November 17, 1917, the British foreign secretary, Arthur J. Balfour, indicated in a written declaration that Britain viewed with favor the establishment of a national home for the Jews so long as it did not prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine. The vigorous efforts of the Zionists and continued immigration following the Balfour declaration increased tensions in the area; over the course of the next two decades the Zionists and Arabs clashed violently, not only with the Mandatory Power but also with each other. Of the two nationalist movements, the Zionist was by far the more successful. It proved able, although not without considerable effort and cost, to create and sustain a Jewish state (Israel). The Palestinian Arabs (hereafter referred to as Palestinians), by contrast, were denied concrete expression of their nationalism in the form of an independent state, because, unlike their Zionist adversary, they were plagued by inept political leadership, poor organization, strategic miscalculations, and a lack of resources.[2] Political and material deficiencies such as these played a major part in the genesis and outcome of the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948.

The Creation of Israel and the 1948 War

Throughout the history of the Mandate, commissions of various sorts had investigated the Palestinian problem, but the British government, preoccupied with the Second World War, had postponed a major decision, confining itself instead to the immediate issue of regulating Jewish immigration. In the aftermath of the war, a weakened Britain, beset with economic difficulties, decided to turn what seemed to be an unsolvable problem over to the United Nations. After several months of intensive and skillful lobbying by the Zionists, the UN approved a partition plan on November 29, 1947, which made

provision for both Jewish and Palestinian states.

When the Palestinians rejected the plan, fighting ensued between the two sides. Taking advantage of the absence of a UN plan to implement the partition, the Zionists seized the initiative by acquiring weapons and training the forces necessary not only to defend their communities, but also to sustain the state that would be established after the British withdrew in May 1948. On the other side, the Palestinians proved unable to mobilize and organize the capability necessary to undercut the partition plan. A poorly coordinated intervention of regular Arab military forces did not spare the Palestinians from a major defeat, the consequences of which they would suffer for the next twenty-eight years.[3]

The Legacy of the 1948 War

Three specific outcomes of the 1948 fighting were especially significant for the Palestinians: the flight of the refugees; the expansion of Israel; and the extension of Egyptian and Jordanian control to the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, respectively. The large exodus of refugees from Israeli-controlled zones was due to the convergence of several factors. Many Palestinians fled because of systematic and deliberate coercion by the Zionists while others merely followed the example of their own leaders who had departed. There were also cases of notables encouraging the people to flee in the belief that the exodus would only be temporary. Finally, of course, there were the untold numbers who always seek refuge from the ravages of war. More important than the specific causes of the exodus, as far as this study is concerned, is the fact that hundreds of thousands were displaced and dispossessed.[4] For the next three decades most would languish in refugee camps in the Arab states contiguous to Israel, while the remainder would disperse throughout the Middle East and other parts of the world.

Though the members of the Palestinian diaspora were separated from their homeland, they did not forget it.[5] Yet, while the attachment to Palestine was kept alive, strengthened, and, at times, idealized in the art, literature, and poetry of the Palestinians, reconquest was left to the Arab states. Thus, for the better part of twenty years, the Palestinians waited in vain for the Arab armies to transform their longing for return into a reality. Because the June 1967 war seemed to shatter that possibility permanently, a new generation of Palestinian leaders surfaced. Determined to deal with these matters themselves, they turned to the restive masses in the camps for support—especially the younger elements that had been brought up to hate Zionism and Israel.[6]

The failure of the Arab states to regain the losses of 1948 was related partially to the second outcome of the 1948 war, namely, the expansion of Israel to a size far more viable and defensible than it had been under the

original partition plan. Taking advantage of breakdowns in cease-fire arrangements that punctuated the 1948 fighting, Israel seized the Negev and Upper Galilee, both of which were considered vital to its future security.

The death knell for the Palestinian state that was called for in the partition plan was sounded shortly after the final armistice, by the extension of Egyptian administration to the Gaza Strip and the annexation of the West Bank by Jordan. This third consequence of the war meant that the Palestinians were not only denied any form of statehood, but that they also became the political pawns of the Arab states. Moreover, it made subsequent Israeli arguments that there is no such thing as Palestinian nationalism appear credible to some listeners.

Palestinian Nationalism: 1949-1967

Despite the desperate circumstances of the Palestinians after the 1948 war, the fires of Palestinian nationalism still flickered. Though a younger generation of leaders had appeared in the 1950s, their dispersion had led them to identify with various ideological currents in the area (e.g., Nasserism, Ba'thism, Marxism). These conditions, as William B. Quandt has noted, " . . . did little to foster a sense of purpose and unity among the Palestinian elite."[7]

In the 1960s two major organizations emerged that sought to rectify this desultory situation—the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and *Al-Fatah.* (Fatah means "conquest" and is an acronym that reverses the order of the letters of the Arabic name of the Palestinian National Liberation Movement: *Harakat at-Tahir al-Watani, al-Filistini.)* The PLO was established at an Arab summit conference in 1964 as the official voice of the Palestinian people, and shortly thereafter it proceeded to organize a military component, the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA). In spite of its claim to autonomy, the PLO was, in fact, heavily influenced by Egypt. Since the PLO's main base of operations was the Gaza Strip, Cairo kept the organization on a short leash lest it cause problems with Israel at inopportune moments. Moreover, the PLA, equipped with tanks and artillery, had a conventional force structure, which was somewhat anomalous for a contemporary liberation organization. Since both the linkage to Cairo and the conventional force structure resulted in a low level of insurgent activity, the PLO was criticized by a number of Palestinian organizations as being insufficiently revolutionary.[8] When war did come in 1967, Israel crushed the PLA with relative ease.[9]

Shortly after the formation of the PLO, a rival organization, *Al-Fatah,* made its presence felt. *Fatah* was a strong proponent of irregular, rather than conventional, warfare, as the means to liberate Palestine, regardless of the strategy and views of the Arab states. Accordingly, it spent several years

following its formation in the late 1950s, planning guerrilla raids against Israel.[10] In 1965 it carried out its first attacks under the name *Al-Assifa* ("the storm"). According to Leila S. Kadi, this name was chosen so that in the event of a failure *Fatah* might continue its secret preparations for armed struggle.[11] Following several operations, *Fatah* decided to continue using the appellation *Al-Assifa,* and the latter became synonymous with its military wing.

With the exception of Syria, the Arab governments were either opposed or indifferent to *Fatah,* and many of its recruits ended up in Arab jails. Furthermore, there were a number of armed clashes with Jordanian and Lebanese forces seeking to prevent guerrilla raids from originating in their territories for fear of Israeli reprisals. This interference, plus the fact that *Fatah* was operating with a total strength of no more than two to three hundred men, rendered it incapable of inflicting serious military damage on Israel. Despite such problems, *Fatah's* operations were nevertheless a factor which helped precipitate the June war.[12]

The June War and the Palestinian Resistance Movement

The war, of course, was a great disaster for the Arab states, whose armies emerged from the conflict in defeat and disarray. While the outcome was a far cry from the war of liberation envisaged by the fedayeen,* it had the paradoxical effect of strengthening the latter. Two factors accounted for this: the new military situation and Israeli occupation of several Arab territories.

The magnitude of the defeat suffered by the Arab armies led Palestinian leaders to once again question the feasibility of conventional combat against Israeli forces. The thought of a regular armed confrontation with an enemy, whose relative military strength had increased substantially as a result of the war, seemed ludicrous. Minimally, such a course of action would require many years of preparation, years that the new, more militant fedayeen leaders, believed they could ill afford to lose. Moreover, the Palestinians, along with many Arabs outside the resistance movements, felt a strong psychological need to redeem their wounded honor and dignity. In a military-psychological setting such as this, the renewed call for an active and immediate armed struggle using unconventional techniques became an increasingly attractive alternative strategy for many Arabs.

The receptivity to the notion of a people's war was further increased by

*The term *fedayeen*, derived from the Arabic word *feda* or sacrifice, means "Men of Sacrifice." It is used to refer to all Palestinian insurgents, regardless of their organizational affiliation.

the spatial and demographic changes affecting the area which Israel controlled. Prior to the war, the idea of conducting a people's war in Israel, relying on some 300,000 Arabs living amidst 2.5 million Jews seemed absurd. When the war ended, however, some one million Arabs found themselves under Israeli control and the potential area of operations had expanded to include the occupied territories as well as Israel. Consequently, some Arabs concluded that armed struggle, in the form of guerrilla warfare and terrorism, had become a more plausible course of action.

The Strategic Aim of the Palestinian Resistance Movement

Taking advantage of the new developments, the fedayeen moved with alacrity to begin guerrilla and terrorist attacks and to organize for a protracted struggle against Israel. As part of this effort, the Palestine National Council (PNC) adopted a Palestinian National Charter in July 1968 which, in a series of articles, formally codified the ultimate aim of the movement as the total liberation of Palestine from Zionist control.[13] It was beyond debate that the Palestinian aim was tantamount to the destruction of the existing political-social-economic system of the Jewish state. As a *Fatah* pamphlet put it:

> The liberation action is not only the removal of an armed imperialist base, but, more important—it is the destruction of a society. [Our] armed violence will be expressed in many ways. In addition to the destruction of the military force of the Zionist occupying State, it will also be turned towards the destruction of the means of life of Zionist society in all their forms—industrial, agricultural and financial. The armed violence must seek to destroy the military, political, economic, financial and ideological institutions of the Zionist occupying State, so as to prevent all possibility of the growth of a new Zionist society. The aim of the Palestine liberation war is not only to inflict a military defeat but also to destroy the Zionist character of the occupied land, whether it is human or social.[14]

Since the fedayeen considered the attitude of the international community to be important in the liberation struggle against Israel, they made a concentrated attempt to transform their pre-1967 public image as a group that merely wished to "throw the Jews into the sea" by stressing two points. First, non-Zionist Jews would be allowed to remain in the new Palestine, and second, the new nation would be a "secular, democratic, nonsectarian state." Unfortunately for the fedayeen, there was sharp disagreement within their own ranks on both points, especially the meaning and implications of a "secular, democratic, nonsectarian state."[15] More specifically, there was (and still is) no agreement on the role of a Jewish population in such a state, the nature of that state's relationship to

the Arab world, and the state's political-economic order (e.g., Marxism or some variant of Arab socialism).

Since the majority of Israelis considered Zionism the raison d'etre of their state, to speak of destroying it was to speak of eradicating Israel and its people. Thus, it was not surprising that the new fedayeen propaganda line had little impact within Israel and that the Jewish population remained distrustful, unresponsive, and unimpressed.

The Strategy of Protracted Armed Struggle

Since the Palestinians fully expected Israel and its international supporters to oppose strongly the political transformation called for in the National Charter, they reconfirmed their commitment to a strategy of people's war. Inspired by the Chinese Communist, Algerian, Cuban, and Vietnamese examples, the fedayeen argued that revolutionary warfare was a historically proven means that would bring success against Israel. That is, by conducting a protracted popular war of national liberation, by emphasizing armed struggle, and by employing guerrilla, terrorist, and political-psychological tactics, the Palestinians contended they could succeed where the Arab armies previously had failed. While there was no agreement on precisely which of the revolutionary warfare experiences should be emulated or emphasized, there was an abiding faith that revolutionary warfare could and would succeed in the Palestinian situation.[16]

Of the specific forms of warfare associated with the strategy of protracted armed struggle, guerrilla warfare was singled out as being particularly important. Article 10 of the National Charter referred to commando action as the nucleus of the liberation war that had to be sustained and escalated by mobilizing, organizing, and unifying the Palestinians and the Arab masses.[17] Though the resources and forces of the Arab world were also considered important, the fedayeen recognized that it would take a considerable effort to bring them to bear.[18] In the meantime, self-reliance was critical; after 1970, as we shall see later, it became imperative.

The Purpose of the Study

The Palestinian commitment to a strategy of protracted insurgency necessarily placed many complicated demands on the leadership, demands it may not have appreciated fully. Indeed, when one goes beyond the romanticism and folklore surrounding contemporary insurrections, it becomes readily apparent that the successful conduct of an insurgency involves the interplay of many complex factors. The primary purpose of this study is to analyze the strategic accomplishments of the fedayeen

carefully and systematically in light of these factors. Since protracted insurgency is as much a political phenomenon as a military one, both dimensions will be accorded proper attention.

Methodology

The political-military assessment undertaken herein will rely on a framework for analysis which is based upon an extensive review of the literature on insurgency. This literature includes works by practitioners and academicians, as well as by historians and political scientists. Moreover, both the perspective of insurgency and counterinsurgency have been incorporated. The resulting synthesis, which is presented in the following chapter, in no way purports to be a probabilistic theory of insurgency, for the simple fact is that we are still a long way from any such theory in the scientific sense. Instead, the conceptual framework employed in this study is closer to what Lawrence Mayer has referred to as concatenated theory—that is, it explicitly identifies a number of factors having a major bearing on some outcome or dependent variable (in our case, the success or failure of a strategy of protracted revolutionary insurgency).[19] Though it is beyond the state of current knowledge to assign precise weights to the major causal factors, largely because they interact in a highly dynamic way, there is nonetheless an effort to suggest conditions under which specific factors are more critical than they might otherwise be. Since one of those conditions is the particular strategy employed by the insurgents, four separate strategies are discussed, and the importance of particular factors in each case is briefly noted.

Several advantages derive from the use of an explicit framework for analysis. First of all, a careful examination of past cases enables the analyst to ascertain key strategic questions that must be addressed. This, in turn, facilitates the ordering and interpretation of a large amount of data. Secondly, a framework for analysis directs attention to the interrelationships among the factors that are vital for a comprehensive understanding of strategy. Closely related to this is the fact that the framework suggests a number of general hypotheses relating two or more factors which can then be tested in future cases. A number of these are set forth at the end of Chapter 6. Finally, of course, the use of an explicit framework for analysis is an important device for explaining the particular case under investigation. Moreover, it is flexible enough to integrate the unique aspects of the Palestinian case.

One should not infer from this that a strategic assessment is the only way to approach the Palestinian issue. Indeed, there is already an insightful body of historical and analytical commentary on the topic by such experts

as William B. Quandt, Michael Hudson, Fuad Jabber, Ann Mosley Lesch, John K. Cooley, and Edgar O'Ballance that has done much to enhance our understanding. This study seeks to complement (and update) these writings by looking at the problem from a different point of view.

A strategic assessment of the Palestinians is important because it helps us to understand why things did not unfold in the manner the fedayeen hoped they would. Equally important, it directs our attention to many of the underlying and more enduring realities that have affected and continue to affect the nature and destiny of the resistance since the October 1973 war.

2
Framework for Analysis

The Nature of Insurgency

Insurgency may be defined as a struggle between a nonruling group and the ruling authorities, in which the former consciously employs political resources (organizational skills, propaganda, and/or demonstrations) and instruments of violence to establish a legitimacy for some aspect of the present political system which it considers illegitimate. Legitimacy and illegitimacy refer to whether or not existing aspects of politics are considered moral or immoral, or, to simplify, right or wrong by the population or selected elements therein. For our purposes politics is defined as the process of making and executing binding decisions for a society and, accordingly, all behavior associated with this enterprise comprises the "political system." On a general level, the major components of the system may be identified as: the political community, the regime, the authorities, and policies. Any or all of these may be considered immoral by insurgents, and it makes a great deal of difference precisely which one is at stake.[1]

The political community consists of those who accept interacting together in a situation where binding decisions will be made for all. In the contemporary international system this is, for the most part, equivalent to the nation-state. On this very basic point, violent conflict may result from considerations of legitimacy. In Burma, for example, there are a number of groups such as the Shan, the Karen, and the Kachin which do not accept the notion that they should be a part of the nation-state, and thus have sought through violent means to separate themselves from existing arrangements and establish separate political communities. In the United States, Great Britain, France, and Japan, by contrast, there is a general acceptance of the morality of the political community rooted in common history, tradition, and language.

Where there is a consensus on the morality of the political community, there can nevertheless be other grounds for violent conflict. For instance, there may be considerable discord over the salient values and structures

which provide the basic framework within which binding decisions and policies are made. Thus, while the Tudeh party in Iran has accepted the political community, it has used violence in an attempt to expunge monarchical principles and values, and to destroy the patrimonial structures of the Iranian government, hoping to replace them with a system in which binding decisions would presumably be made within the framework of a one-party regime, in which the value of equality would replace elitist values that reflect private and aristocratic interests.

On another level some groups may grant legitimacy to the regime but reject the specific individuals in power. This is exemplified by coups in which insurgents seize the key decision-making offices without changing the regime of their predecessors. Besides the well-known Latin American cases of the 1950s, one could point in this regard to the 1970 overthrow of the sultan of Oman, Said bin Taimur, by his son Qabus.[2]

Finally, violence may be used by nonruling groups in an effort to change existing policies detrimental to their interests. One illustration is the terminal phase of the recent insurgency in the Sudan, where the blacks in the South demanded a change in policies to enable them to obtain a greater share of the political and economic benefits of the society.

The important thing to remember in this discussion is that insurgency is essentially a political legitimacy crisis of some sort. The first task of the analyst, therefore, is to ascertain exactly what the issue is. In seeking an answer to this question, it is useful to examine carefully the articulated aims of the insurgents.

By focusing on the ultimate goal of the insurgents and relating it to the aspects of politics discussed above, one can identify six types of insurgent movements: secessionist, revolutionary, restorational, reactionary, conservative, and reformist. *Secessionist* insurgents, such as the aforementioned Karen in Burma, reject the existing political community of which they are formally a part; they wish to separate from it and constitute a new autonomous political community. *Revolutionary* insurgents seek to impose a completely new set of values and structures (regime) within an existing political community (e.g., Marxist insurgents). While *restorational* insurgent movements also desire to displace the regime, the values and structures they champion are identified with a political order of the recent past. The followers of the Imam in the Arab Republic of the Yemen and Sultan Ali Mirrah's Afar Liberation Front in the Haoussa region of Ethiopia are contemporary manifestations of this type. Although *reactionary* insurgents likewise seek to change the regime by reconstituting a past political order, their vision is one that relates to an idealized, golden age of the distant past. The Moslem Brotherhood in Egypt and other Arab countries, which seeks to recreate the flowering Islamic society of centuries

ago, is a case in point. *Conservative* insurgents, on the other hand, seek to maintain the existing regime in the face of pressures on the authorities to change it. This type of insurgent movement is illustrated by the Protestant defense organizations in Ulster who wish to retain the regime in Northern Ireland which they see as threatened by the Irish Republican Army, the Irish Republic, and "British capitulationists." Finally, *reformist* insurgents, such as the Kurds in Iraq and the Anayanya movement in the southern Sudan, have attempted to obtain more political, social, and economic benefits without necessarily rejecting the political community, regime, or authorities. They are primarily concerned with policies which are considered discriminatory.[3]

To accomplish their objectives, insurgent movements use political resources and instruments of violence against the ruling authorities. As far as political resources are concerned, organization is the critical dimension. This can be one of two types: conspirational, where small elite groups carry out and threaten violent acts; or internal warfare, where insurgent elites attempt to mobilize large segments of the population on behalf of their cause.[4] While the latter phenomenon is the most familiar to students of insurgency because of the well-known Vietnamese, Cambodian, Chinese, Algerian, and Portuguese colonial conflicts, there are also ample cases of conspiratorial insurgencies such as those led by the Bolsheviks in Czarist Russia, the Red Army in Japan, and the Moslem Brotherhood in Egypt.

In movements such as the last named, the organizational effort necessary for coordinating both violent and nonviolent activity is not as demanding as in an internal war setting, since there is far less concern with linking the insurgency to the mass population. This neglect of the population, however, often renders such groups impotent and, hence, has provided one of the key issues dividing insurgent strategies.

Turning to the violent aspect of insurgency, one can identify different *forms* of warfare. A form of warfare may be defined as one variety of organized violence emphasizing particular armed forces, weapons, tactics, and targets. Naval blockades, ground combat, air campaigns, and guerrilla operations are forms of warfare. Three forms of warfare are normally important in insurgent conflicts: terrorism, guerrilla war, and conventional warfare.

Terrorism, a form of warfare conducted either by individuals or very small groups, involves the threat or use of covert and sporadic violence—for example, murder, torture, mutilation, bombing, arson, kidnapping, and hijacking—in order to achieve both long- and short-term political aims; unlike conventional soldiers and guerrillas, terrorists direct their operations primarily against unarmed civilians, rather than enemy

military or economic targets. Moreover, the longer-term aim is not so much the desire to deplete the government's material resources as it is to erode its psychological support by instilling fear among officials and segments of the population at large. Though the general purpose of terrorism is to alter the behavior and attitudes of specific groups, this does not exclude the simultaneous pursuit of more proximate objectives, such as extracting particular concessions (e.g., payment of ransom or the release of prisoners), gaining publicity, demoralizing the population through the creation of widespread disorder, provoking repression by the government, enforcing obedience and cooperation from those inside and outside the movement, fulfilling the need to avenge losses inflicted upon the movement, enhancing the political stature of specific factions within the insurgent movement, and undermining policies of rival insurgent groups.[5] Since the particular aims being pursued will vary from incident to incident (even in the cases of those which are similar), it is difficult and sometimes dangerous to generalize about terrorist acts.

Julian Paget has characterized guerrilla warfare as a form of warfare based on mobile tactics used by small, lightly armed groups who aim to harass their opponent rather than to defeat him in battle.[6] Guerrilla warfare differs from terrorism in that its primary targets are not unarmed civilians but usually the government's armed forces, police, or their support units and, in some cases, key economic targets. As a consequence, guerrilla units are larger than terrorist cells and tend to require a more elaborate logistical structure as well as base camps. Like terrorism, however, guerrilla warfare is a weapon of the weak; it is decisive only when the government puts a low value on defeating the guerrillas, and fails to commit adequate resources to the conflict. In most cases it has been necessary to accompany guerrilla warfare with other forms of violence or to develop into mobile conventional warfare (the direct confrontation of large units in the field) in order to achieve success.[7]

Whether or not an insurgent organization will have to move to conventional warfare is, in part, related to whether or not the insurgency is auxiliary or independent in nature. In the former case, suggests Otto Heilbrunn, the insurgents pursue only tactical aims, for they do not have to defeat the enemy; a regular army will be charged with that mission (e.g., Yugoslavia in World War II). Independent insurgent movements, on the other hand, have strategic aims, because they often must regularize their forces in order to be successful on their own. Even if regularization of forces is unnecessary, the independent insurgent movement must still rely largely on its own capability if it is to succeed.[8]

Major Analytical Variables

In their quest for victory, insurgents have devised various strategies

intended to maximize the effectiveness of political techniques and violence. These strategies can be differentiated by examining six general variables—popular support, organization of the insurgent movement, cohesion of the insurgency, external support, the environment, and the effectiveness of the government. Since these variables have a major impact on the outcome of insurgencies, they will constitute the criteria for assessing the political and military achievements, as well as the strategy, of the PLO in later chapters. After discussing each of these, we shall consider their relative importance in the context of various insurgent strategies.[9]

Popular Support

For many insurgent leaders, popular support is an overriding strategic consideration. In the words of Mao Tse-tung, "the richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people."[10] The significance ascribed to civilian support can be understood by viewing it as a means to offset advantages which the government possesses by virtue of its control of the administrative apparatus of the state and, most especially, the army and police. Since insurgents know that they would risk destruction by confronting government forces in direct conventional engagements, they opt instead to erode the strength and will of their adversary through the use of terrorism and/or guerrilla warfare, which are designed not only to increase the human and material cost to the government but, also, to demonstrate its failure to maintain effective control and provide protection within the country. Eventually, according to insurgent logic, the government will grow weary of the struggle and seek to prevent further losses by either capitulating or negotiating a settlement favorable to the insurgents.

For the purposes of this study, popular support is divided into two categories: active support and passive support.[11] The latter includes individuals who merely sympathize with the aims and activities of the insurgents, while the former includes those who are willing to take risks and accept personal sacrifices on behalf of the insurgents. In the active support category are individuals who provide insurgents with supplies, intelligence information, shelter, concealment, liaison agents, and who, in some cases, carry out acts of disobedience or protest, all of which risk severe punishment by the government. Although most discussions of popular support tend to emphasize active support, passive supporters are important in the sense that, at a minimum, they are not apt to betray or otherwise to impede the guerrillas.

In focusing on the need for active and verbal support from the masses, insurgents do not neglect the role of the intelligentsia, since it is the principal source for recruitment into both high- and middle-level leadership positions (e.g., commanders of guerrilla units and terrorist networks and political cadres).[12] The importance of the intellectuals has

been noted by Ted Robert Gurr, who points out that their desertion from the government has repeatedly been a harbinger of revolution.[13]

It has been argued that community support and security are "safeguarded best when the native population identifies itself spontaneously with the fortunes of the guerrilla movement."[14] However, since spontaneity is often lacking, the insurgent movement must actively proselytize the people. Generally, insurgents will employ one or several of the following methods to gain desired support and recruits: (1) esoteric appeals (2) exoteric appeals, (3) terrorism, (4) provocation of government counter-terrorism, and (5) demonstrations of potency. All of these, in one way or another, aim at convincing the people to render support because the insurgents' goal is both just and achievable.

Esoteric appeals, directed at the intellectuals, seek to clarify the situation by placing it in an ideological or theoretical context that orders and interprets political complexities. In the words of Gabriel Almond:

> An ideology imputes a particular structure to political action. It defines who or what the main initiators of action are, whether they be individuals, status groups, classes, nations, magical forces, or deities. It attributes specific roles to these actors, describes their relationships with one another, and defines the arena in which actions occur.[15]

Marxist revolutionaries, for example, have found that Lenin's exegesis on imperialism has powerful intellectual attraction in Third World countries because it provides a coherent, logical, and all-encompassing explanation of the poverty, illiteracy, and oppression which characterize the political and social milieu. Furthermore, by pointing a finger at indigenous feudal or capitalist classes and their links with external imperialist elements, it provides an identifiable target for the frustrations of the intellectuals, many of whom are either unemployed or underemployed.[16] Although Almond has suggested that ideology is rarely perceived by persons on the point of admission to political movements, one must still account for those few who do respond to ideological incantations.[17] This analysis is especially important in circumstances where intellectuals join one insurgent group, as opposed to its rivals, because it is more ideologically oriented and provides intellectual satisfaction.

Even though the esoteric appeal is primarily directed at the intellectuals, it is also relevant to the masses, who often need to focus their discontent on a real villain if they are to be galvanized into action. One of the functions of ideology, the identification of friend and foe, meets this need. Indeed, identifying the source of frustration and grievances is important because "discontented people act aggressively only when they become aware of the

supposed source of frustration, or something or someone with whom they associate frustration." Moreover, doctrinal justifications for violence can themselves intensify discontent by raising expectations and defending violence as a means to their attainment. This, of course, presupposes that there are existent grievances—the exoteric dimension—"because men's susceptibility to these beliefs is a function of the intensity of their discontent."[18]

Exoteric appeals focus on concrete grievances of both the intelligentsia and the masses. In the case of the former, the issues of unemployment and underemployment are often exploited, whereas for the latter, emphasis is directed to the more varied matters, such as corruption and repression by local officials as well as the need for food, land reform, jobs, medical assistance, and other social services.[19] If they are successful in achieving their goal, the insurgents promise, such problems will be effectively dealt with.

In those situations where foreign nations either impose their authority directly (imperialism), exert tremendous influence through international economic networks (neoimperialism), or intervene in support of the local authorities, the insurgents will frequently merge nationalist themes with esoteric and exoteric appeals. Relying on a formulation such as Lenin's theory of imperialism, they will identify the external enemy as the source of national deprivations. For many intellectuals this, again, provides both a cogent explanation and target, while for the masses it is manipulated in such a way as to provide a simplified explanation and tangible enemy.

Where esoteric and exoteric appeals are unsuccessful or difficult to implement because of effective government action and/or environmental disadvantages, the insurgents may turn to terrorism or the provocation of counterterror. In this context, the purpose of terrorist acts is to obtain popular support by demonstrating the government's weaknesses and the insurgents' strength.[20] Whether or not the insurgents will be successful in this undertaking, however, depends on two factors: the target of terror and the duration of the terrorist campaigns.

As far as the target is concerned, if terror is aimed at individuals or groups disliked by the people, it can facilitate the identification of the insurgents with repressed and exploited elements. By manipulating resentment (based on grievances), and using selective terror against hated individuals and groups, the insurgents may well be able to increase popular support. Such was the case in the Cypriot insurrection against the British, according to Paget. On the other hand, if, at the outset, potential support is low, terror can create hostilities toward the insurgents.[21] Whatever the case, it can end up alienating potential domestic and international supporters if it becomes indiscriminate and unduly prolonged.[22]

A fourth means which the insurgent utilizes in winning popular support is "catalyzing and intensifying counterterror which further alienates the enemy from the local population."[23] In other words, the guerrillas seek to provoke government reprisals against the population which, in turn, will increase resentment and win the insurrectionary forces more adherents and support. Whether such an insurgent ploy will succeed, however, will be determined largely by the nature of the government response and by ethnic considerations. If the government's actions are violent—wanton killing, as in the case of the Pakistani army in Bangladesh in 1971—and widespread, they would appear to effect more resentment and hatred than, say, such nonviolent actions as curfews, resettlement, etc. While ruthless methods by the government might restore law and order in the short run, the long-term effect may be, as Richard Clutterbuck suggests, to provide the seeds for further insurgency.[24]

The effect of the ethnic variable is less clear. Jerry Silverman and Peter Jackson have argued that ethnic solidarity between the people and guerrillas may be important in terror-counterterror situations, since it can cause the population to forgive insurgent excesses but not the government's.[25] In light of the fact that this analyst found situations in Vietnam where the people reacted to American air and artillery strikes by blaming the revolutionary provocateurs, the ethnic factor cannot be considered foolproof. Nevertheless, on balance, it seems sound and suggestive.

The final means the insurgents employ to establish popular support, demonstration of potency, has two dimensions: retaining the military initiative and meeting the needs of the people through social services and a governing apparatus. The latter aspect demonstrates not only the reality of the guerrilla presence, but the corresponding government failure to deal with shadow government political cadres. Besides governing, guerrilla political operators will seek to meet some of the people's basic needs and cooperate with them in essential tasks.[26] Quite often extension of such aid to the people will be the first step in involving them with the insurgent movement, either actively or passively. This would seem to be especially true in those contexts where the regime has been delinquent in responding to popular demands.

The second feature of demonstration of potency is gaining the military initiative in order to create the impression that the insurgency has momentum and will succeed. A number of writers have stressed the importance of initiative to the guerrillas because, in addition to winning adherents for the movement, it boosts and sustains morale within insurgent organizations. "Units that are active and successful in the accomplishment of assigned missions build up a high espirit de corps and attract followers; success is contagious." Putting it another way, "no guerrilla movement in the field can afford to remain inactive for long; by so

doing, it loses its morale and sense of purpose."[27]

In his quest to gain the initiative, the insurgent has at his disposal a flexible arsenal—ambushes, sabotage, kidnapping, assassination, mass attacks, etc. In order to employ such diverse methods effectively, however, the insurgent must have a coordinated strategy, a requisite that involves another major criterion, cohesion. Although the question of cohesion will be discussed in a separate section, a few comments about its relationship to popular support are necessary at this point. Of special significance is the fact that an insurgent movement with competing focuses of loyalty will not only raise command and control problems that undercut military operations and initiative, but will lead some potential supporters to believe the resistance is in a state of confusion. As a result, the corresponding image of weakness may dissuade many from joining. Moreover, any violent conflict between rival factions will undoubtedly sap the movement's strength, divert it from the main enemy, and deny it a positive image in the people's eyes. The spectacle of various guerrilla organizations criticizing each other in order to enhance their stature is bound to be bewildering to potential supporters.

Military initiative will require continuous local victories. Since the guerrilla is usually weak at the outset of hostilities, these may be only small successes, but such tactical modesty at the beginning may be necessary for eventual victory.[28] Local victories in guerrilla war, however, are heavily dependent on popular support; hence initiative and popular support are interdependent.

Initiative will require freedom of action. In Mao's words, "Freedom of action is the very life of an army and once this freedom is lost an army faces defeat or annihilation."[29] Although freedom of action is normally associated with operations in the target country, there are circumstances in which it is related to sanctuaries outside the territory being contested. These sanctuaries, which involve external support, are of great importance if, during the incipient stages of the conflict, the resistance movement has difficulty operating within the target country's borders. In such situations the attitude of contiguous states will assume a major role in the conflict for, in a sense, they are the insurgent's last fallback position. One should not conclude from this, however, that guerrillas can indefinitely operate from outside the target state. In most cases, they must, at some point, organize the population and establish a popular base within the target country. Douglas Hyde, for instance, has called attention to the fact that guerrillas from Sarawak found that operating from bases across the border in Indonesia had a deleterious effect on the revolutionary movement, because it prevented direct and continuous contacts between leaders and the guerrillas in Sarawak. As a result the insurgents had to make an effort to set up bases in Sarawak itself.[30]