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## The Long Game: Hamas, The IRA, and the Politics of Radicalization in Palestine and Northern Ireland

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# The Long Game:

Hamas, The IRA, and the Politics of  
Radicalization in Palestine and Northern  
Ireland

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Government Department Senior Thesis

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## Introduction: A Tale of Two Cities

*Political Grievance and Radicalization in*

## *Palestine and Northern Ireland*

“When the widow of a murdered Israeli physician – a man of peace whose practice included the treatment of Arab patients – tells us that it seems that the Palestinians are interested in killing Jews for the sake of killing Jews, Palestinians should take notice. When the parents of a Palestinian child killed while in his bed by an errant .50 caliber bullet draw similar conclusions about the respect accorded by Israelis to Palestinian lives, Israelis need to listen. When we see the shattered bodies of children we know it is time for adults to stop the violence.”

–Sen. George Mitchell, “The Mitchell Report,” 2001<sup>i</sup>

“It’s typical of Mexico, of the whole human race perhaps – violence in favour of an ideal and then the ideal lost but the violence just going on.”

–Graham Greene

“Cruelty has a human heart...”

–William Blake

### **Introduction: Best of Times, Worst of Times**

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the auspicious day of Barack Obama’s formal inauguration as President of the United States, media reports surfaced of yet another high-level appointment in the new administration. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict – ignited anew in September 2000 and then neglected by American policymakers for seven years – was now, more than ever, in need of American attention.<sup>1</sup> While speculation had been rampant over whether President Obama would task a high-level envoy with the Israeli-Palestinian brief, multiple accounts had pegged former diplomat Dennis Ross as the likely choice. Ross, a Clinton administration figure well known for his prickliness and work in the mid-1990s on

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<sup>1</sup> In September 2000, shortly after the collapse of the Camp David peace talks and amidst the implosion of the Barak government, Likud leader Ariel Sharon made a controversial visit to East Jerusalem’s Western Wall. Sharon remains a hated figure among Palestinians for his decades of extreme violence against them, and his visit so close to the al-Aqsa Mosque in the midst of tense Arab-Israeli relations provoked riots – the start of the Second Intifada.

the Oslo peace process, ultimately was not given the portfolio. Nor were fellow Mideast hands Martin Indyk or Daniel Kurtzer, both former ambassadors to Israel under Clinton, given the job.<sup>2</sup> The charred aftermath of the Gaza War demanded the resurrection of the badly maimed peace process. But unexpectedly, the most influential troika of Mideast policymakers in American politics had been denied the responsibility.

The recent war in Gaza illustrated both the massive challenges and extraordinary necessity of a renewed diplomatic effort in the conflict. But Obama did not choose his high-level envoy on Israeli-Palestinian issues from among Ross's ilk of process-obsessed, "confidence-building" professional negotiators. Instead, President Obama chose a former Senate Majority Leader and scourge of MLB steroids, George Mitchell, who, despite authoring a 2001 report on the causes of the Second Intifada, is not widely associated with the Middle East. In his official acceptance of the post on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, it was one bullet on his resume that garnered the most attention from Vice President Biden and Secretary Clinton. As President Clinton's chief envoy for the Northern Irish peace process, Mitchell had patiently overseen the negotiations that ended the Northern Irish "Troubles," the conflict between Irish Catholic nationalists and Protestant, pro-British "unionists"<sup>3</sup> that eventually enmeshed the British Army. With the Good Friday Agreement signed

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<sup>2</sup> Landler, Mark. "No Shortage of Advice on Mideast for Clinton." The New York Times. 12 Jan. 2009. 1 Feb. 2009 <<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/13/world/middleeast/13diplo.html>>. All of these figures have since written books on the failure of Oslo – though not so much on their own shortcomings. A notable exception from the shortlist was fellow diplomat Aaron David Miller, a current bête noire of President Clinton. In the same NYT piece, Miller quipped that Israeli peacemakers "ought to have term limits."

<sup>3</sup> Unionism refers to the political ideology held almost entirely by Northern Irish Protestants, supporting the sustained union of Great Britain and Ulster.

in 1998, Mitchell established an equitable and democratic political system capable of addressing the concerns of the aggrieved communities, while integrating the IRA into the legal political process.

The appointment of Mitchell, and the pronounced relevance of his Irish experiences to the new role of Mideast peacemaker, marks a curious serendipity for me. Ever since my adolescence I have been fascinated by the Troubles, initially cultivating an interest in the conflict while trying to learn more about the country of my grandparents. Of initial and admittedly visceral interest to me were the cloak and dagger machinations of the IRA and its many enemies, a thoroughly unromantic, Machiavellian feud worthy of the Borgias or the Yorkists. While this dirty war is macabrely interesting, it is the awful human cost of the conflict that has sustained my interest. In college it would be the Israeli-Palestinian struggle, another of the twentieth century's most enduring nationalist conflicts, which would most interest me. The more I studied the endlessly complex history of the Mideast, the more I discerned the same human traumas, of statelessness, prejudice, and despair, which had wracked Northern Ireland. Throughout all my research, I found enduring parallels between both campaigns – in the revanchism and colonialism, the bigotry and the humiliation, the organized dispatching of death. And yet, in all of this research, I found only three brief journalistic pieces comparatively analyzing the Troubles and the Intifadas. This was clearly an unexplored avenue of research. The Long Game is an attempt to answer a deceptively simple question: given that the Northern Ireland peace process arguably constitutes “the most successful conclusion to movements of terrorism through nonviolent means”<sup>ii</sup> in modern



times, can analysis provide lessons relevant to the Mideast peace process – and its discontents?

The value of a comparative study of the two conflicts stems from a remarkable similarity in the structural organization of political violence by its most influential practitioners: the IRA and Hamas. At the core, I have merely tried my best to approach a beguiling question in a fresh, dynamic way. The stultifying discourse of conflict that serves as lingua franca for the Israeli-Palestinian issue has largely reduced strategic debate to how best the conflict can be *managed* – not ended. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s focus on “economic peace” and unwillingness to commit to a two-state solution – the consensus that has governed peacemaking for decades – belies such thinking. The Clinton Administration’s cadre of Mideast negotiators operated amidst the most rapid institutionalization of Palestinian democracy in history - yet remained obsessed with Israeli-Arab “confidence-building” measures, doing little to legitimize the gains of Oslo. So long as Palestinians continue to view the creation of Israel as “al-Nakba” – the catastrophe – whilst successive Israeli governments refuse to grant their aspirations any legitimacy, there can be no progress. Peace requires empathy, a substantial compromise in the context of internecine conflict. The “long war” both conflicts have become mandates an equally expansive, broad-based and labor-intensive approach – a demanding process that can only be called The Long Game.

In accepting his envoy position, Senator Mitchell argued that “there is no such thing as a conflict that can’t be ended.”<sup>iii</sup> Should the reader not accept this proposition, consider the alternative future for the Mideast. Can Israel be a beacon



of enlightened tolerance, as its socialist founders envisioned, if it is engaged in the systematic dehumanization of Palestinians, starved, quarantined and bombarded for the crimes of Hamas? Hamas has been unable to strike inside Israel since 2005, and in the 2009 Gaza War, proved a pitiful imitator of Hezbollah in 2006; will Hamas ever be able to realize any of its goals through solely violent means? If there is one conviction that has driven the author to write this thesis, it is the grim lesson of the fruitless British and Unionist quest for an “acceptable level of violence” from Northern Ireland’s murderous paramilitaries. People – Israelis and Palestinians – will continue to die so long as violence is considered “acceptable,” to the humanitarian and strategic detriment of both nationalities, the wider Middle East, and the United States. The morass of a conflict as deadly and durable as that of Israel and Palestine deserves thinking and analysis sufficiently novel to change the tired discourse of the conflict. In its own small way, I hope this thesis is a harbinger of that change – just as I hope the same will prove true of George Mitchell’s new office, somewhere between Belfast and Jerusalem.

### **Two Splendid Little Wars: The Rationale for Comparative Study**

The IRA cannot claim the grisly honor of having slain more people than any other terror group; the carnage incurred on the morning of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 nearly matches the thirty-seven hundred killed in thirty years of Northern Irish violence. Instead, the bloody distinction of “The Troubles” lies in its intractability, as a steady locomotion of death claiming around two victims a week. Had a conflict akin to the Troubles occurred in the United States, it would have claimed six hundred thousand lives over its thirty-year span.<sup>iv</sup> In a stunning testament to the

impact of the warfare on Northern Ireland's population, some one in fifty of its citizens were wounded in the conflict, a ratio comparable to about five million people in the United States.<sup>v</sup> This was a war that lived alongside the citizens of Northern Ireland for entire generations, in its homes, workplaces, and streets. In terms of influence, amidst the sundry array of often fringe militant groups that perpetuated the bloodshed, it is the Provisional Irish Republican Army, formed in 1969, which stands apart. What the IRA can claim as its unique achievement relates not to the total human and financial cost, but to adaptability, sophistication, cunning, and patience – attributes that can be scarcely applied to most of the IRA's Unionist and Republican peers. This was a group defined by resiliency and responsiveness to changing public opinions, even under great external pressure and internal tumult.

Therefore, the fact that the sturdy IRA killing machine willingly put itself out of business should hold great currency for those concerned with Hamas. At the heart of this paper is the belief that the conflicts in Northern Ireland and between Israel and Palestine are sufficiently analogous, such that: A., a meaningful analysis can be made, and B., that this comparison can help explain each of these conflicts. Of course, the comparative approach I have chosen is necessarily imperfect. The potential danger of any comparative study is that it will not do justice to certain dynamics or distort "local particularities [which] can be overlooked or misinterpreted."<sup>vi</sup> As a result, not every variable in one conflict will find a mirror in the other. For example, while there is a Jewish extremist underground that might be roughly compared with Unionist paramilitaries, it is neither as actively organized nor in as close contact with Palestinians as Loyalist extremists were with Catholics.

But this cost is vastly outweighed by the unique insights that can only be generated through comparative analysis, an approach that captures fundamental dynamics normally ignored. The strengths of such comparison lie in “the theoretical rigor it brings to the research,” in the ability to discern “human universals that hold true for different societies.”<sup>vii</sup> Senator Mitchell seemed to share this notion, when in his Foggy Bottom remarks he noted that while “conflicts are created, conducted, and sustained by human beings,” they could also “be ended by human beings.”<sup>viii</sup> The goal of this paper is to respect the particularities of each conflict while distilling insight from one in terms of the other – to find the universals where they exist.

This thesis thus charts two powerful terror groups throughout the Troubles (1969-1998) and the two Intifadas (1987-2003, 2000-2004), ignoring the obvious differences between them in favor of distilling less evident but crucial similarities in the drivers of violence. Comparing the role of Hamas to the unique example of the IRA in Northern Ireland may help illuminate the path for anyone interested in how barbarity is manufactured, and how it is dismantled. A once intractable foe itself, many observers believed the IRA could and should not be accommodated, calling proponents of political integration Chamberlain-style appeasers.<sup>4</sup> In this vein, it is

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<sup>4</sup> An atypical proponent of this typical skepticism was Conor Cruise O'Brien, one of twentieth century Ireland's most influential and best-known political intellectuals, as well as a former UN envoy to the Congo. Though Catholic, he made an influential career out of fierce unionism, positing that negotiated peace was “inherently distasteful to terrorists and their admirers,” and arguing in 1998 that the Good Friday Agreement was “basically similar” to the appeasement of Hitler; O'Brien: “In both cases, there is a naive belief that violent men, retaining all their weapons in order to exercise an implied and continuous threat, can somehow be incorporated in a peace process and thereby rendered harmless.” O'Brien was similarly skeptical of Mideast peace efforts, arguing in 1986 that “the very most that could come out of a negotiation between Jordan and Israel” was giving “a slice” of the West Bank to King Hussein. He was wrong about both conflicts. Given the IRA disarmament and sustained peace in Northern Ireland, and the 1988 normalization of relations between Israel and Jordan, O'Brien's knee-jerk conservatism is indicative of a larger trend towards complacency in the corridors of official influence and power. **Sources:** Cruise O'Brien, Conor. “Thinking About Terrorism.” [The Atlantic.com](http://www.theatlantic.com).

important to note that the paper's central focus is upon the role of the Provisional Irish Republican Army and Hamas from, respectively, 1969 and 1987 onward. A reasonable criticism might suggest that such a focus underestimates the importance of even more extreme militants, nonviolent moderates, state governments, or Jewish and Protestant extremists. I would contend that while the activities of all these other players are very important, the IRA and Hamas have wielded the most disproportionate influence on the prospect of peace – a testament to their popularity and implacability. As the terrorist “MVPs” of their respective conflicts, both have constituted the single biggest potential “spoilers” for peace, owing to their violent capabilities. But both groups have tantalizingly shown an amenity towards political integration; even more thuggish rival militants, such as Islamic Jihad and the Real IRA, have scorned such possibilities.

The comparison of Hamas and the IRA is unusual. Most prominent Mideast pundits tend to define Hamas in terms of its Islamism.<sup>5</sup> In truth, Islamic values are more important for some Hamas members than for others. The extent to which the

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June 1986. *Atlantic Monthly*. 09 Feb. 2009 <http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/86jun/obrien.htm>. Cruise O'Brien, Conor. "This peace means war: I will not applaud a Nobel prize given to appeasers of the IRA." *The Guardian* [London] 17 Oct. 1998. *Guardian.co.uk*. 19 Dec. 2008. 9 Feb. 2009 <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/dec/19/conor-cruise-obrien-northern-ireland>>.

<sup>5</sup> This is extremely common among Mideast pundits across the political spectrum, right to left. Arch neo-conservative Daniel Pipes forcefully argued at the time of Hamas's 2006 legislative victory that the election was “a mistake,” and that owing its Islamism, “Hamas should be destroyed, not legitimated, much less courted.” *The Atlantic's* relatively centrist but enthusiastically pro-Israel Jeffrey Goldberg argues “it is theologically impossible for Hamas to change” as its members are “jihadi at their core.” Finally, on the left, Israeli novelist Amos Oz, a prominent dove, dissident, and peace activist, considers Hamas to be “a fanatic organization par excellence,” and argues Israel “cannot cure [radicalism], but we can contain it”

**Sources:** Goldberg, Jeffrey. "What Makes Hamas Different Than the PLO?" *The Atlantic*. 17 Mar. 2009. 17 Mar. 2009 <[http://jeffreysgoldberg.theatlantic.com/archives/2009/03/what\\_makes\\_hamas\\_differenttha.php](http://jeffreysgoldberg.theatlantic.com/archives/2009/03/what_makes_hamas_differenttha.php)>.

Pipes, Daniel. "Don't deal with terrorists." *USA Today*. 25 Jan. 2006. *USA Today*. 09 Feb. 2009 <<http://www.danielpipes.org/3309/dont-deal-with-terrorists>>.

Wiener, Jon. "Amos Oz on Hamas: 'Termination of the Israeli Occupation Is Urgent'." *The Nation* 1 Feb. 2006. *TruthDig*. 17 Feb. 2009 <[http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060201\\_amos\\_oz/](http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/20060201_amos_oz/)>.

IRA drew on the language and symbols of Marxism waxed and waned greatly throughout its existence. Of much more lasting importance to both conflicts is the revanchist dream; these are failures of national determination, not movements that are primarily driven by religious fervor or sectarian antagonism. Both conflicts find their justification in centuries of historical grievance for Ireland and one hundred years of suffering for Palestine. Both conflicts' modern impetuses germinated in the setting sun of the British Empire. Both struggles congealed through the decades as the result of displacement generated by colonization, carried out by a vastly more powerful and ethnically distinct group of settlers. In both Northern Ireland and Palestine, ethnic and economic discrimination, political repression, and military occupation radicalized a substantial number of people, neighborhoods, and communities. It is from within the social, religious, and professional networks of such communities that militant resistance groups developed. What followed that critical gestation is what defined the conflicts: a revanchist campaign of violence on behalf of and by a radicalized population against its perceived colonizers, occupiers capable of reacting with all the force of official repression.

### **The Heart of the Matter**

This comparative study developed out of years of interest in Northern Ireland, Israel, and Palestine. Fascinated by both, I have read hundreds of pieces of journalism, about a dozen extensive ICG reports,<sup>6</sup> and about thirty books, in whole

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<sup>6</sup> The International Crisis Group is the best source today for rigorous, detailed analysis of conflict around the world. Its Middle East section, drawing on unparalleled access to politicians, militants, and civil society in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank, produces lengthy periodic reports on the status of the conflict and life inside the territories. ([www.icg.org](http://www.icg.org)).

or in part. Yet, the conundrum of how to reconcile warring parties to peace is only the loftiest mystery of the conflicts' countless puzzles. On a visceral level, the stories of both conflicts are wrenching, human sagas, chock-a-block with the paradoxes of violence and personality. The enigmatic human element is a quality of the conflicts most "political scientists" fail to pursue; yet as with all human organizations, Hamas and the IRA are products of human failures, impulses, and exigencies.<sup>ix</sup> How, one may reasonably ask, did a man like Dr. Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi, a brilliant pediatrician known for his pro bono medical work with impoverished Bedouin tribes,<sup>x</sup> develop into a terrorist mastermind willing to justify the murder of children?<sup>xi</sup> Why did the IRA's "Young Guard" in the early 1970s disproportionately tend to have been educated by the Redemptorist order of Catholic priests? Why do the brutal terror masterminds of Hamas find it important to administer social welfare in their communities, with its leaders publicly sweeping streets and arbitrating minor grievances? Why does militancy continue to flourish in Palestine, while it is scorned across communities in Northern Ireland?

Unfortunately, precious few of these questions can be *unequivocally* answered; to quote the journalist Richard Ben Cramer, "the Middle East will make you wrong."<sup>xii</sup> In this context, this paper focuses on the following three fundamental questions.

*Question One: How do powerful, militant terror groups – like Hamas and the IRA – develop and prosper within communities?*

In both 1969 Northern Ireland and 1987 Palestine, popular dissatisfaction among the Irish Catholic and Arab communities ignited rioting and violence against

the symbols of Unionist and Israeli mistreatment. Unlike most riots, however, such as those in the Watts neighborhood of 1965 Los Angeles, this unrest would mark the start of a sustained campaign of political violence from within the aggrieved community. That “Summer of Love” in Belfast saw the fiercely militant Provisional Irish Republican Army formally split from the creaky Official IRA, while the winter of 1987 saw the formal establishment of Hamas by a network of Gaza Islamic activists. Since then, both the PIRA and Hamas have shown themselves to be the most lethal agents of terrorism in their respective conflicts, more influential in their communities and more capable than any competing militant networks.

This series of developments begs the question: how were the founders of Hamas and the IRA able to create, and successfully sustain, their terror groups? This is a crucial question. By distinguishing some of the variables favorable to the successful genesis of terror networks, students of political violence can better discern the organizational motivations and aims of such groups, as well as those drivers of terror at the individual level. As the successful mitigation of terrorist grievances can sharply reduce the appeal of extremism, such a comprehension should be highly valued as a cornerstone of peacemaking, and should not be equated with going “soft” on terrorist crimes. Based on the evidence that was reviewed for this thesis, this study suggest that three major variables determine the ability of terror groups to form within their communities as popular, influential political players.

The first variable has been implicitly stated: there must be popular radicalization of the terror group’s home community. The community that a terror



group hopes to guide must be radicalized sufficiently to accept violent means as a strategy of grievance resolution. I will use radicalization to describe the delegitimization of official institutions and nonviolent efforts as an effective strategy for mitigating a community's discontents.<sup>7</sup> To quote Tip O'Neill, all politics is local - if people have no stake in a system unconcerned with their views, they are far more likely to be drawn to violent subversion against that system. Radicalization can occur on three levels: individual, neighborhood/community, and nation. At each level, in both Northern Ireland from 1921 onwards, and Palestine since 1967, Irish Catholics and Palestinians were subject to pervasive ethno-sectarian discrimination and economic exploitation. Both populations further suffered from rampant political repression. Trapped in a state they did not want to be in, neither national group had any reasonable expectation of influence within the corridors of power. Finally, bellicosity and violence aimed at co-nationalists, committed either officially or by fringe unionist or Zionist militants, constitutes another concrete way in which people can be radicalized.

Nonviolent resistance, modeled after the campaigns of Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi, largely characterized the early years of the Troubles and First Intifada. But under assault from two sides – intra-community radicals, such as of the IRA and Hamas, and official repression, of the sort carried out by Israeli and Unionist forces - such nonviolence withered on the vine. Indicative of this

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<sup>7</sup> Such radicalism does not necessarily imply violence. There are two radicalizations – of behavior and thought. A strict Muslim father in London who frowns on the influence of Western movies or dress is ideologically radical within Britain - but is not acting on violence. While most militants are radicalized in both realms, an interesting phenomenon described among unionist terrorists in Peter Taylor's Loyalists is the slaying of lone Catholics as random crimes of opportunity. The subjects of the book's interviews are relatively bemused in explaining why they did it, indicating a behavioral radicalization and need to strike out – without much enduring intellectual radicalization.

desiccation are the shoot-to-kill policy enforced against protestors in the First Intifada while the sectarian targeting of Catholic neighborhoods and the “Bloody Sunday” incident of 1972 proved a similar boon for the IRA. By the early 1970s, in the absence of any prospect for institutional reform and with the fading hope of nonviolent resistance, the IRA had come to be viewed as a better defender of Catholics than the RUC<sup>8</sup> and army. Similarly, by the Second Intifada, given the abysmal failure of the Fatah-dominated PA’s institutions, many Palestinians would view Hamas in much the same light. Finally, as terror groups must be well financed and staffed to operate, with a message capable of dehumanizing their opponents, such repression and political stagnancy presents an opportunity for militants.

The second independent variable for this question regards the embryonic core of these terror groups – social networks. The strength of a community’s informal associations – educational, religious, professional, familial – constitute a compelling, alternative source of power and organization. It is from these unique personalized networks that both Hamas and the Provisional IRA emerged and prospered. Post-World War II, the IRA had existed in one form or another since the late nineteenth century. But by the 1950s, IRA activism centered largely upon just a handful of intermarried families, like the Caraher, Adams, and Hannaway broods, in a few neighborhoods and communities. Naturally, however, social associations extended beyond this hard-core of families, to friends, fellow religious communicants, and

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<sup>8</sup> The Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) was the police force for Northern Ireland from 1922 to 2001, when, as part of the Good Friday Agreement, its name was changed to the Police Service of Northern Ireland. The RUC was despised by most Catholics as an overwhelmingly Unionist force, and was viciously targeted by the IRA; three hundred and three officers were killed throughout the course of the Troubles. **Source:** McKittrick, David, Brian Feeney, Seamus Kelters, and Chris Thornton. *Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles*. London: Mainstream, 1999. 1478.

classmates. Centered upon traditionally nationalist areas of Northern Ireland, such as the South Armagh hinterland, the Falls Road of Belfast, and the Bogside in Derry, these networks remained intact even in periods of IRA inactivity.

Likewise, Hamas emerged in the late eighties from Palestinian professional, educational, and religious networks, with Gaza's Islamic University and Ahmed Yassin's charity, al-Mujamma' al-Islami (Islamic Complex), at the center. The result was a particular form of organizational coherence – one that stemmed largely from the strong personal ties that bound the group's members. Such personalistic relationships help to explain why Hamas and the IRA became the "MVPs" of their respective conflicts. As the skeleton around which the body of the organization formed, the informal radical networks of Gaza and Northern Ireland provided an infrastructure capable of seizing the opportunities that would arise to intensify conflict. Finally, such social associations offer the established terror groups the cover of popular support, logistical aid, and manpower; both the IRA and Hamas have proven selective in their recruitment, often turning away volunteers.

Finally, the third variable is that a historical narrative of grievance. The IRA proved itself a master at co-opting the cultural, political, and religious symbols of Irish Catholic subjugation, making the Troubles merely the latest in a storied tradition of resistance. Hamas has framed itself similarly as a new brand of defender for the Palestinian people, a sober and modest organization devoted to Islamic piety. Both have proven capable of harnessing the emotive historical memory of two historically aggrieved peoples. Any organization capable of co-opting such mythos is a force to be reckoned with. The banality of terrorism, to echo Hannah Arendt's

observation of Holocaust planner Adolf Eichmann, can be largely obscured by this romantic and deeply felt vision of history. The power of ideas is a frequently ignored but integral quality to the sustaining of terrorism, and their importance should not

**Figure One: Model for Pop. Radicalization and Formation of Hamas/IRA**



be discounted solely because of the violence militants practice. The injustice of “Al-Nakba,” as Palestinians call the loss of their country in 1948, or of the creation of a unionist-dominated canton in Northern Ireland, is inextricably bound to future militancy.

*Question Two: What factors enable the sustained success of terror groups like Hamas and the IRA?*

Having established their militant bona fides in the form of successful attacks and proven their ability to protect vulnerable communities, the IRA and Hamas prospered, eventually becoming the most lethal militant groups of their respective conflicts. This success was not for lack of competition. A cursory examination of these two conflicts’ histories reveals dozens of mostly obscure terrorist groups, often more brutal than either the IRA or Hamas. Why is it, then, that organizations

such as the INLA and Islamic Jihad - both deadly terror groups in their own right - have not enjoyed the same measure of support and success as Hamas and the IRA? What characteristics have made Hamas and the IRA the best organized and most broadly supported militant groups, unable to be crushed? A thorough understanding of the structure and internal dynamics of these two organizations will provide fresh illumination of the variables that nourish militancy and radicalism – and how such extremism can be stanchied.

A unique characteristic shared by both Hamas and the IRA, and a significant reason for their longevity and adaptability, is each group's cohesive, dynamic internal structures. Two key factors have ensured the integrity and effectiveness of both groups. First, unlike more ideologically homogenous, rigid terror groups, such as the Zarqawi organization in Iraq (2003-2006) or the leftist Baader-Meinhof group<sup>9</sup>, both the IRA and Hamas are heavily factionalized, with competing ideological wings. Such internal diversity of opinion is not always a boon for terrorist groups. After all, within Fatah, the acute tensions pitting the "Old Guard" and the "Young Turks" have left that organization strategically paralyzed. But the existence of a pluralist decision-making structure within Hamas and the IRA militates against such division. In both, major strategic decisions are made by consensus. Such a dynamic has translated into multiple checks and balances within the Hamas and IRA decision-making structures.

By creating many centers of power under the guidance of a few revered,

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<sup>9</sup> The Baader-Meinhof Gang, also known as the Red Army Faction, was a Marxist-inspired West German terror group active in the seventies. The arrest of its leadership and lack of popularity doomed the organization.

prestigious leaders, like the IRA's Joe Cahill or Hamas's Sheikh Yassin, competing factions are at once able to air their divisions – within the cohesion these leaders offer. As a result, once a strategic or tactical decision is made by the consensus of factions and these charismatic “godfathers,” it is generally accepted, even by the dissidents – who at least got the chance to air their grievances. Such decentralization historically has allowed both terror networks to avoid decapitation, as has happened to Fatah or Japan's Aum Shinrikyo. While the IRA survived the imprisonment of multiple Chiefs of Staff in the early 1970s, Hamas survived the slayings of two supreme leaders, Yassin and Rantissi, within one month. Further, this pluralism binds hawks and doves together, moderating decisions and limiting the influence of extremes to drive internal strategy. This moderation reinforces the historical deftness both Hamas and the IRA have shown to public opinion. Finally, consensus-based decision-making allows for inclusiveness and ideological flexibility, which in turn sharply limits organizational splits. Such a “big tent” of militants militates against hardliner secessions that can acutely intensify conflict. Despite public and deepening differences between the territorial and external leadership of Hamas, that organization has never suffered a split – in sharp contrast to the PFLP and the internally fractious Fatah. Likewise, the Adams leadership of the IRA proved judicious in anticipating organizational splits in 1986 and 1997, minimizing rank-and-file support for the dissenters, thereby marginalizing hardliners and widening that faction's own freedom of movement. Both the IRA and Hamas have thrived largely because of this flexible, adaptable, and inclusive structure.

Intensified political radicalization within host communities throughout the course of the conflict is a second major variable to consider. Much like playing as white in chess, in the “cycle of violence” between official apparatuses and militant groups, terrorists, despite their limited numbers and capabilities, begin with the advantage. With terrorists ensconced within aggrieved host communities, counterterrorism operations run the risk of endangering civilians and inflaming public opinion, while the militarization of law enforcement inevitably leads to civilian casualties. Repressive, draconian legal weapons tend to assign guilt along ethnic or religious grounds, whilst radicalizing the wrongfully accused and their peers. Further, by provoking official forces through armed attacks or even harassment, terrorists can reap the public relations benefits of military overreaction – without any of the gruesome risk (civilians are more likely to die).

The high-water marks for IRA popularity have been at the times this cycle of violence was most rapidly spinning: in the first several years of the Troubles (1969-1973) and during the early eighties, following the deaths of ten hunger strikers in the Maze Prison. The same has been true of Hamas, which arguably saw its greatest military effectiveness in the four to six years following the start of each Intifada, culminating in its 2006 PLC<sup>10</sup> victory. Aptly, both the IRA and Hamas have seen their popularity ebb in times of peace; for the IRA, in its multiple ceasefires, for Hamas, from the mid to the late 1990s. The importance of such sustained radicalization in ensuring the continued material and ideological support necessary for the IRA and

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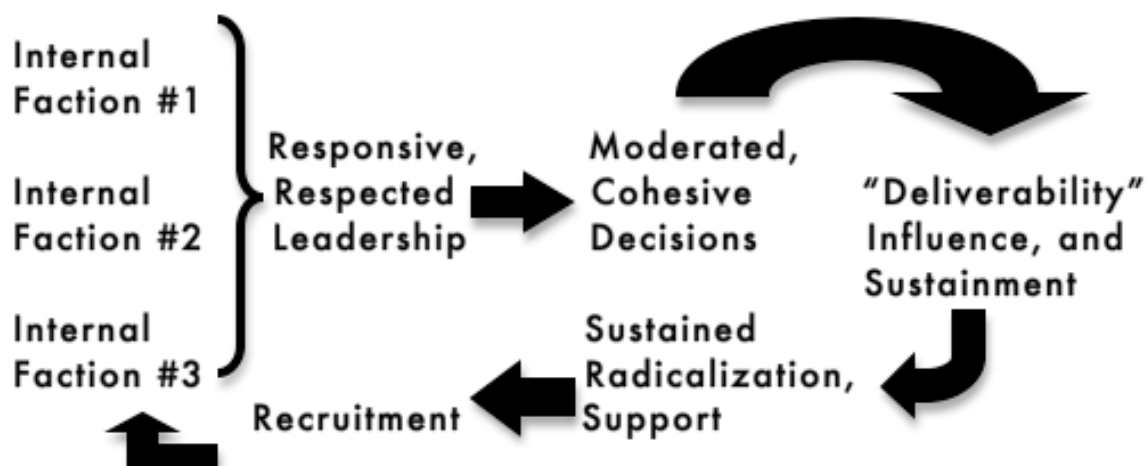
<sup>10</sup> The PLC, or Palestinian Legislative Council, is the parliamentary body of the Palestinian Authority, created following the Oslo Agreement of 1996. Hamas’s electoral victory in the 2006 PLC election was shunned by the world and resulted in a debilitating blockade on the Palestinian Territories.



Hamas to function cannot be overstated. Short-sighted, ham-fisted, broadly repressive responses from Unionist and Israeli forces have proven time and time again the tinder with which militant groups burn.

While the above variable underscores on the need for more nuanced counterinsurgency strategies, the third key variable focuses on the capacity of militant groups to “deliver.” In short, terror organizations like the IRA and Hamas must be able to demonstrate to their respective communities that violence is necessary to achieve certain goals and that violence makes sense given the context of their community possess a sustained relevance for their violent campaigns. One may picture the two organizations as companies, trying to profitably deliver a product. Like a company, both groups must accede to the demands of the marketplace. The “firm” that is the most effective at delivering the demanded product – violence, protection, vengeance, or peace – is likely to be the most successful.

**Figure Two: *Model for Hamas/IRA Sustainment***



More so than any competing terror group, both the IRA and Hamas have

coupled a sustained adaptability to changing conditions with an attuned and responsive sense of public opinion. This combination has allowed them to remain the most influential active militant groups in their respective conflicts, adaptable in the face of shifting popular demands. Tactically, both groups have shown ingenuity and resiliency, able to build an eleven-foot ladder when security forces construct a ten-foot wall. Strategically, both groups have remained highly cautious of the need to maintain public support. Demonstrated ability to think strategically, with a capacity for long-term planning – a key variable. The result is an organization not just capable of violence – but capable of using violence to influence political and social headwinds, with the backing of a significant number of sympathizers.

*Third Question: What factors are integral to eliminating the violent campaigns of the IRA, Hamas, and other terror groups?*

Though insightful analysis of the IRA and Hamas is endlessly fascinating, for those who are interested in promoting peace, there must be a prescriptive element. It is in this altruistic context of hoping to change the violent behavior of militant groups that we now turn to. In evaluating the fortunes of the IRA, a now-dormant terror group from a community now committed to peace, against those of Hamas, an active, lethal organization in control of the Gaza Strip, one also can capture the most acute differences in their respective conflicts. Why is it that, despite decades of high-level international diplomacy, of “trust building” and “roadmaps,” the Israeli-Palestinian conflict seems as intractable as ever? Why is it that in Northern Ireland dissident republicans’ jarring March 2009 murders of two soldiers and a police officer have done little to shake the integrity of peace and its power-sharing

executive? What measures and factors can end the military stalemate of both conflicts? What can the saga of the Northern Irish peace process tell us about the unyielding conflict of the Middle East?

The first and newly relevant factor is American involvement in the peace process – specifically, as an “honest broker,” a role that the U.S. has yet to play. It is difficult to exaggerate the centrality of U.S. influence and prestige to the ongoing effort to salvage a two-state solution. In the face of a widely unpopular, corrupt Palestinian Authority, Hamas’s terrorism and ongoing control of the Gaza Strip, and a right wing Israeli government eager to expand settlements and ignore international opinion, only the U.S. has the leverage to arbitrate a lasting resolution to the conflict. As Israel’s closest ally and largest disburser of aid and military assistance, the U.S. has long retained the potential to sway Israel in a way the United Nations never has. While Palestinians mistrust the U.S. for its perceived bias towards Israel, only the U.S. has the ability to influence Israel or their Arab neighbors’ most dearly held issues: land, self-determination, Jerusalem, settlements. But in terms of acting as an honest broker, the Clinton Administration showed itself to be far more even-handed in dealing with Northern Ireland – more so than almost any other president in dealing with the Mideast.

Until the mid-1990s, under the Clinton administration, executive policy on Northern Ireland had been shaped by the U.S.’s close relationship with the U.K. – namely, one of prudence and general disinterest. The calculated apathy of successive administrations was not, however, mirrored within the Congress, bastion of powerful Irish-Americans like Senators Ted Kennedy and Daniel Patrick

Moynihan, as well as House Speaker Thomas “Tip” O’Neill. The importance of such prominent politicians reflected the traditional influence of northeastern, ethnic Catholics within the political arena. By the eighties and the rise of the “Reagan Democrat,” this bloc had become a crucial swing vote. These two powerful forces – the American “special relationship” with Great Britain, and the power of the Irish lobby in U.S. domestic politics – would eventually place the Clinton Administration in a unique position of influence.

Able to reach out through the lobby to Irish politicians, including those of Sinn Fein, whilst doing little damage to the transatlantic alliance, despite British anger over the overtures, the U.S. leveraged their position into one of credibility with both partners. This similar credibility was integral to the most successful Mideast peace initiative ever conducted by the U.S.: the Camp David Accords, negotiated in 1978 by Jimmy Carter, Menachem Begin, and Anwar Sadat, which preceded a formal peace between Egypt and Israel in 1979. For a number of reasons, the U.S. lacks any such credibility with Palestinians – to Israel and America’s enormous detriment. Northern Ireland can prove an illuminating contrast to the Mideast failures.

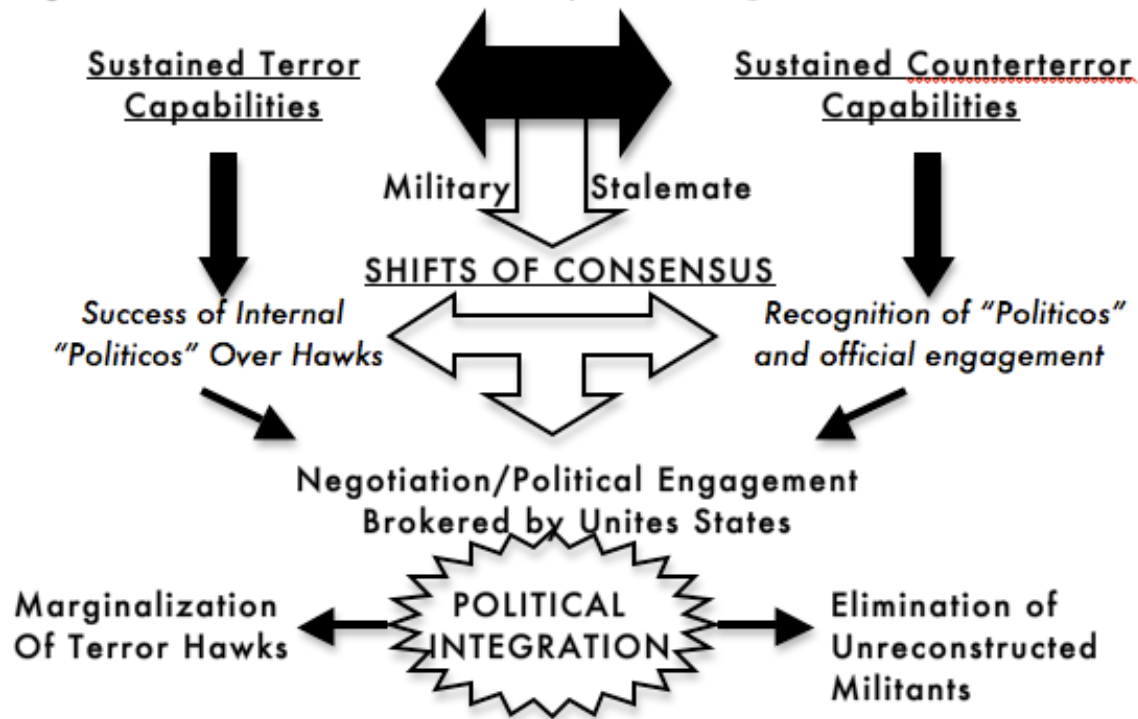
Unfortunately for policymakers, the second factor is arguably the most influential in determining the viability of peace: the internal dynamics of the IRA and Hamas, a mostly inaccessible quantity for non-terrorists. What is crucial is that two developments must occur. First, relative moderates must prevail within the terror network against hawks, but must do so while retaining a coherent and stable leadership structure. During the 1980s, an IRA faction aligned with Sinn Fein leaders Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness quietly oversaw a major shift of

consensus over the aims and abilities of militant republicans. The pragmatic wing of the IRA grudgingly realized that further armed militancy could never defeat the British or reunify Ireland, so long as a majority of Northern Ireland was Protestant. In exchange for a more equitable political system, capable of diminishing the underlying drivers of violence, these “politicos” agreed to give up the armed struggle. This victory of politically amenable militants, as well as their co-opting or marginalization of hardliners, has serious implications for the future of Hamas. While Hamas has seemed to practice the IRA’s “Armalite and ballot box” strategy, pursuing electoral success even while engaging in armed terrorism, more pragmatic members of Hamas remain unable or unwilling to shift the consensus on conflict. Like the IRA, Hamas is both unable to be crushed and incapable of achieving its stated aims through violence. The question of whether there is a similar potential for Hamas members to similarly delegitimize violence as the *primary* means of mitigating grievances is an open one.

The final factor is the political integration of terror groups. Practically speaking, even sharp marginalization of hawkish factions within the IRA and Hamas is not enough to end their terrorism overnight. Once established, terror networks as entrenched, dynamic and versatile as the IRA and Hamas are unlikely to be defeated militarily, retaining a capacity for coercive violence that will continue to demand attention. But as the British Army ultimately concluded, neither would the IRA ever be able to win. The strategic goal of Britain, the U.S., the Republic of Ireland, and cross-community moderates in Northern Ireland eventually became: A., separating the political amenable elements of the IRA from those that could not be reconciled,

and B., engaging “politicos” while eliminating the “hard-core”. Former British customs agent/IRA mole Eamon Collins recalled in his memoirs that, upon being arrested for multiple counts of murder, he was asked what he would advise them to do, were the authorities “given unlimited resources to fight the IRA.” Collins replied,

**Figure Three: Model for IRA/Hamas political integration**



“Support, encourage and make possible at every turn the development of Sinn Fein.”<sup>11</sup> Political integration of as much of a terror group as possible into a legitimate political system, capable of mitigating many of its community’s grievances, is a crucial factor in peacemaking. This is the real goal of political integration: the creation of a nonviolent means of political agitation as the most effective way of addressing a community’s perceived injuries. The political

<sup>11</sup> Collins, Eamon, and Mick McGovern. *Killing Rage*. London: Granta Books, 1997. 295. Collins was murdered in Newry, Co. Dundalk, in 1997, probably by IRA figures associated with Army Council Chief of Staff Thomas “Slab” Murphy. Collins had given evidence against Murphy in a Dublin libel case.

integration of the IRA as Sinn Fein has proven successful; whether the same can be true of Hamas, spurned, boycotted, and plotted against<sup>12</sup> after its 2006 legislative victory, is a crucial question that will be examined.

### **One Man's Freedom Fighter: Definitions**

Given the proven ability of rhetoric to shape the contours of debate, particularly with regards to terrorism, it seems of the utmost importance to posit clear definitions of the subjectively understood language of nationalist conflict. For the purposes of this study, *radicalism* and *extremism* are understood as a set of norms constituting a transgressive alternative to those of society. Radical or extreme norms vitiate the societal set's legitimacy, serving as a reconstitution of such norms. *Radicalization* is a process marked by a sustained shift in amenability towards increasingly transgressive norms, aimed at mitigating a perceived grievance. Aptly, *deradicalization* is a shift in amenability away from a sustained belief in radical tactics as a means of such emancipation. *Militant* means believing in the use of force as a legitimate right, and can also refer to combatants carrying out such acts.

The problem of defining *terrorism* is a common one to analysts of groups like

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<sup>12</sup> In the summer of 2007, Fatah and its Preventive Security head Muhammed Dahlan were revealed to have been planning a U.S. and Israeli-backed coup d'état against the Hamas-Fatah unity government, using Abbas's Presidential Guard soldiers trained under U.S. General Keith Dayton. Following an assassination attempt on PM Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas caught wind of the effort and turned the tables on Hamas, killing most of the plotters, tearing down Dahlan's mansion, and forcefully ejecting the rest from Gaza. **Source:** Rose, David. "The Gaza Bombshell." *Vanity Fair* Apr. 2008. [Vanityfair.com](http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2008/04/gaza200804). 16 June 2008 <<http://www.vanityfair.com/politics/features/2008/04/gaza200804>>.



Hamas and the IRA. For our purposes, it is a violent tactic meant to influence public and official opinion, in keeping with the strategic interests of *terrorists*. Specifically, as defined by the U.S. State Department, terrorism is the use of political violence against noncombatants in order to achieve one or both of two goals: to prompt official overreaction, fueling recruitment and popular support, and to instill fear in the population, disrupting and delegitimizing the political system as unable to protect its population. However, not every violent act committed by a terrorist organization is itself an act of terrorism. The disappearance of high-level and potentially embarrassing informants within the IRA belies a desire for no public dissemination, rather than the widespread publicity of terrorism.

Geography, religion and ethnicity present further conundrums of usage. To wit: while Irish Catholics would almost uniformly call Sinn Fein Minister Martin McGuinness's hometown "Derry," any self-respecting Irish Protestant would call it "Londonderry."<sup>13</sup> In this paper, *Northern Ireland* describes the six counties of the island of Ireland - Antrim, Armagh, Fermanagh, Down, (London)derry, and Tyrone - that are a part of the United Kingdom, per the 1922 Anglo-Irish Agreement. While some Unionists prefer to call the region "Ulster," that name, of one of Ireland's four traditional provinces, fits badly, as historical Ulster also includes Counties Cavan, Donegal, and Monaghan. When describing political players, sectarian labels like

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<sup>13</sup> Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams once wrote of an anecdote in which an RUC officer decided to have some fun with a Sinn Fein politician at a traffic stop. After determining the car was headed to Derry, the officer wryly, repeatedly asked whether he meant Londonderry. Refusing to concede the point, the driver repeatedly answered Derry - leading to several hours of delay. Finally, after being asked the question once more, the Sinn Fein man got the best of him, answering "I'm too late for Derry. I'm going to Strabane instead." Such is the quandary of language. **Source:**

Catholic or Protestant add little to a sophisticated understanding of the conflict. Nor are the ideologies of nationalism in both Northern Ireland and Palestine cohesive political doctrines, and different strands of thought deserve distinction. For our purposes, *Irish Republicanism* refers to the specific doctrine of advocacy for the reunification of Ireland, while *nationalism* refers to a broader ideology of advocacy for the perceived nationality. Advocates of the above ideologies can express both beliefs peacefully, as with moderate Catholic political parties in Northern Ireland or the Irish language movement of the past fifty years. *Unionism* refers to the political ideology found almost exclusively among Irish Protestants, advocating for the continued union of Northern Ireland with Great Britain. *Loyalism* specifically refers to militant Unionism, of the sort practiced by Protestant terrorist groups. Finally, the usage of the term *IRA* is itself contentious; for simplicity's sake, the term will refer to the incarnation formed following a 1969 split, commonly known as the Provisional IRA. Other manifestations, such as the Official IRA, Continuity IRA, and Real IRA, will be referred to as such.

Defining key political terms in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is similarly vexing. While the meaning of the word *Palestine* is a tortuously debated topic, for our purposes and unless explicitly stated otherwise, the term refers to the West Bank and Gaza Strip. *Islamism* refers to political ideology or organization informed by Islamic values and teachings; such agitation can be peaceful, as with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, or violent, as with Hamas's Al Qassam Brigades. Finally,

*Zionism* refers to a nationalist ideology in favor of the creation of a Jewish state, and has in modern times come to signify support for the existence of Israel.

### **“The Long Game’s” Structure**

In terms of structure, the paper will attempt to match each stated question to a chapter, after providing some necessary background for the conflict. Chapter One, “Vicious Cycles,” offers a historical overview of the conflict, paying special attention to the dynamics and dilemmas that will recur throughout the thesis. Chapter Two, “All Politics Is Local,” zeroes in on the formation of Hamas and the IRA, with a special emphasis on the role of popular radicalization in militating against non-violence. Chapter Three, “Dead Draw” will provide an organizational analysis of the IRA and Hamas, emphasizing the heterogeneity of their internal structures, consensus-based decision-making, and lethal, adaptable capabilities. “Dead Draw” will emphasize the importance of distinguishing tactical versus strategic consideration, the confusion of which is an error repeatedly made by policymakers and militants in both conflicts, and which plays a vital role in sustaining violence. Finally, Chapter Four, “Endgame” analyzes the failure of peace efforts in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The marginalization of the IRA’s hardliners and the political integration of militants was a key variable in making peace. The question of what politically amenable faction remains in Hamas, and how they can neutralize or be induced to marginalize hardliners, is crucial to the future of the peace process. A conclusion, “Through the Looking Glass,” will attempt to summarize the thesis, with specific policy recommendations in light of the paper’s findings. Several attached

appendices will provide maps, a glossary, a breakdown of important organizations, and detailed biographical sketches of key Hamas and IRA figures.



## Chapter One: Vicious Cycles

# *The Origins and Dynamics of the Northern Irish “Troubles” and the Palestinian–Israeli Conflict*

*“There is no such thing as political murder, political bombing or political violence. There is only criminal murder, criminal bombing and criminal violence. We will not compromise on this.”*

*–PM Margaret Thatcher, 1981<sup>xiii</sup>*

*“Palestine will remain for the Palestinians not a borderland, but their birthplace, the center and basis of their national existence.”*

*–Revisionist Zionism founder Ze’ev Jabotinsky, 1922<sup>xiv</sup>*

*“Flawed, tarnished, often irrelevant, the dream is the one great asset for an Irish rebel, for it proffers legitimacy, hope, and a glimpse of the Republic, a grail and a goad. The clever...may devastate the Provisionals with argument; but you cannot kill a dream with arrogance or logic or the weight of reason.”*

*–J. Bowyer Bell<sup>xv</sup>*

*“History doesn’t repeat itself, but it does rhyme.”*

*–Mark Twain*

## **Introduction: The View From ‘22**

In October 1921, the fifth year of a grinding guerrilla war, plenipotentiaries representing the armed Irish Republican movement arrived in London. Having coolly frustrated all British intelligence efforts to smash it, the well-organized and methodical leaders of the underground had been brought into the sunlight, invited to make peace. They sought some form of comity for the nationalist movement, and the delegation’s leadership represented both the public and clandestine faces of this faction. Lead negotiator Arthur Griffith was the widely respected founder and head of Sinn Féin (We Ourselves), the nationalist political party that had convincingly

won several seats at Westminster. His more infamous deputy was Michael Collins, the crafty military tactician who had fashioned the Irish Republican Army into a modern guerrilla force. Though the pair's respective efforts had forced the government of PM David Lloyd George to negotiate over the issue of Irish sovereignty, their team arrived in London aware of the imperfect nature of their victory. Collins and Griffith were all too aware that the likely partitioning of Ireland into a twenty-six county "free state" and into a six-county, majority Protestant Unionist canton would be unacceptable to many Irish Republicans. Fatefully, this group included Sinn Fein President Eamon De Valera.<sup>xvi</sup>

Pragmatically, however, there was little choice for the negotiators. Aware of the missed opportunities of the past, the facts on the ground mandated no consideration for what concessions Sinn Fein would *ideally* want granted. Both Collins and Griffith were acutely conscious of the widespread opposition of British conservatives to any kind of deal, and of the ability for British and Unionist forces to violently reverse any withdrawal. On a personal level, both Collins and Griffith also knew that they risked assassination from their own comrades over this compromise. Nevertheless, the Irish team painstakingly negotiated out what would become the Anglo-Irish Agreement, signing it on December 6, 1921.<sup>xvii</sup> Collins ardently tried to convince his fellow Republicans that the Treaty constituted a "stepping stone" towards reunification. This "pro-Treaty" argument rationalized that with the establishment of Irish sovereignty, Sinn Fein could project greater political power in influencing British policy on the Northern province.

The argument was to no avail; the signing marked the beginning of an incipient Irish Civil War.<sup>xviii</sup> While Southern voters approved the Treaty by a wide margin, IRA members in the northern six counties were outraged; as former IRA lieutenant Jim McAllister recalled, "At first we couldn't believe it. We couldn't believe that Collins had done it. If partition was to be, which we didn't want at all, we could not believe they had put us in the North...Now we were fighting on our own."<sup>xix</sup> Now without overt southern support, Northern Catholics would be forced to contend with a hostile, empowered Protestant majority. Politically, the Unionist-dominated political machine at Stormont would institutionalize prejudice, legislating economic and social discrimination as overseers of what PM James Craig<sup>14</sup> called "A Protestant Parliament and Protestant State."<sup>xx</sup> Legally, a code of British-authored repression would be enforced by Northern Ireland's police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, many of whose members were drawn from various chauvinistic Unionist organizations like the Apprentice Boys and the Orange Order. Backed up by the much more unprofessional, volunteer B-Specials and a garrisoned British Army, for five decades the unionist order held a firm grip on Northern Ireland.<sup>xxi</sup> Contrary to this Protestant unity, in 1922 the IRA and Sinn Fein rapidly split, with De Valera becoming the most prominent opponent of the compromise. Irish constitutional politics was born amidst a bloody eruption of internecine

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<sup>14</sup> The Anglo-Irish Treaty established an independent government in Northern Ireland, with a parliament based at Stormont and led by the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. In practice unionists dominated this parliament; throughout its fifty-year existence, every PM was a member of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). Until the ascension of PM Terence O'Neill in 1967, they were also all rock-ribbed conservatives unabashed about their enforcement of discrimination. PM Craig, in office from 1921 to 1940, was also a Grand Master of the chauvinistic Orange Order, calling himself an "Orangeman first and a politician and Member of this Parliament afterward." **Source:** "Discrimination - Quotations on the topic of Discrimination." *CAIN: Northern Ireland Conflict, Politics, & Society*. 2 Apr. 2008. University of Ulster. 15 Feb. 2009. <<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/discrimination/quotes.htm>>.



violence.<sup>xxii</sup> The “Big Fella” himself, Collins, would be one of the intra-Republican feud’s first casualties, felled in 1922 by anti-Treaty gunman Denis “Sonny” O’Neill during a roadside attack near Mouth of Flowers, Co. Cork.<sup>xxiii</sup>

But even as Britain disengaged from the South, and as Ireland grew consumed with “one of the most pointless civil wars recorded since Swift [wrote] ‘Gulliver’s Travels,’”<sup>xxiv</sup> half a world away, the Empire was redoubling their efforts in another colonial project. In the summer of 1921, while the IRA, Sinn Fein, and the island began to fragment under the weight of political compromise, British mandate forces were attempting to institutionalize its control over Palestine, a war spoil courtesy of the former Ottoman Empire. Unbeknownst to Britain’s erstwhile Hashemite allies,<sup>15</sup> British Colonel Mark Sykes and French diplomat François Georges-Picot had inked an agreement that would divide the Middle East into two spheres of influence.<sup>xxv</sup> In the wake of Britain’s post-WWI expansion within the Middle East, PM Lloyd George now sought to create a “unified, working political entity” in the holiest of lands.<sup>xxvi</sup> Having never intended to hand Palestine over to Hashemite rule, the Lloyd George government had instead secretly promised national determination to a new nationalist movement gaining traction in the region. Following years of high-level lobbying by prominent Britons, particularly the Rothschild banking dynasty, on November 2, 1917, Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour

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<sup>15</sup> The House of Hashem refers to a powerful Arab clan from the Hijaz of western Saudi Arabia that traces their ancestry to Muhammed’s daughter, Fatima. At the time of World War I, the Hashemites allied themselves with Britain against the Ottoman Empire, forming an independent Hijaz with the expectation they would also come to rule the Empire’s territory. It was the Hashemites to whom T.E. Lawrence, AKA “Lawrence of Arabia,” was dispatched to assist. Though Hashemites came to rule the newly-formed nations of Iraq, Jordan, and Syria, only Jordan remains Hashemite today. The Sykes-Picot divvying up of the Levant abrogated prior assurances to the Hashemites that they would control Palestine.

had quietly declared the Crown's commitment to establishing a Zionist state and a Jewish homeland in Palestine.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Since the end of the war, the former Ottoman Governorate had seen an influx of Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants, many fleeing the pogroms and anti-Semitic subjugation of the USSR and Eastern Europe. In the same time frame, the British colonial forces began integrating Palestine's environs into its economy, resulting in improved infrastructure and prosperity. As World Zionist Organization and noted chemist Chaim Weizmann later recalled, "On the surface at least, [relations were] not altogether unsatisfactory."<sup>xxviii</sup> But even as the Muslim, Jewish, and Christian communities of Palestine appeared to be maintaining a relatively copacetic coexistence, warning signs over the wisdom of Britain's newest colonial promise were apparent. Perhaps most candid in identifying the unaddressed fissures within 1921 Palestine was Ze'ev Jabotinsky. A Zionist dissident whose ultraconservative brand of nationalism would provide the basis for the modern Likud party,<sup>16</sup> Lieberman was bellicose in his rhetoric and uncompromising in his vision<sup>17</sup>: "If you wish to colonize a land in which people are already living, you must provide a garrison for the land...Zionism is a colonizing venture and, therefore, it stands or falls on the question of armed forces."<sup>xxix</sup>

Judging by the evidence, the British seemed to anticipate the combusive nature of their commitment. Mandate authorities throughout the early 1920s

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<sup>16</sup> A portrait of Jabotinsky hanged over the childhood dining room table of none other than a young Benjamin Netanyahu.

<sup>17</sup> Jabotinsky was an admirer of Benito Mussolini, repeatedly seeking his aid in the Zionist project; his youth movement, Betar, borrowed heavily from the imagery, ideology, and rhetoric of Italian fascism. **Source:** Morris, Benny. *Righteous Victims: a History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001*. London: Vintage, 2001. 108.

passed a series of emergency laws dealing with terrorism, while a new influx of experienced civil constables joined the new Palestine Police. What these two legal developments shared were roots in the British administration of Ireland; much of the Mandate law was replicated from Irish Emergency Law passed following the 1916 Easter Uprising, while the newly recruited policemen were largely former officers of the disbanded Royal Irish Constabulary.<sup>xxx</sup> These laws, designed for the collective suppression of nationalist resistance movements, and these policemen, the apparatuses through which such aspirations were curbed, would help establish the tone through which Britain would administer Palestine. But as in Ireland, the broadly repressive measures of Britain would be counter-productive, unable to arrest the national ambitions of two peoples.

### **The Weight of History**

The histories of Ireland and Israel are inextricably bound to the colonial machinations of Great Britain, embodied in the resettlement of Scottish and Jewish émigrés. This chapter will show the dynamics that would subsist throughout decades of political turbulence, on full display in two corners of the British Empire. In the example of 1922 Ireland, a militant national determination movement was imploding under the weight of compromise, wracked by division over compromise, even while Northern Unionists established an unrepresentative and repressive civil authority. In the Middle East, Britain's conglomeration of Palestine into a political

unit and Zionism's burgeoning momentum would soon collide, as the Jewish national movement would prevail in bloodily expelling the colonists and in establishing a nation.

This chapter will attempt to accomplish four things. First, by succinctly providing a historical overview of the Irish and Palestinian-Israeli conflicts, this chapter will provide the background badly needed to accurately understand the motivations and origins of Hamas and the IRA. Second, history tends to repeat itself, particularly in these two climes. By highlighting the dynamics of conflict that have persisted for decades, the reader can better comprehend issues – ideological splits, political integration, the strategic rationale for terror – that are as relevant today as they were in 1969, or 1987. Third, sketching the history of Northern Ireland and Palestine reveals the many parallels the two conflicts share. Finally, shining a light on the past helps to illuminate what J. Bowyer Bell calls “the purity of the dream.”<sup>xxxix</sup> The lingering possibilities of an unquenched desire – for a united Ireland, or a Palestinian state – are passed on from generation to generation, the historical justification for sustained conflict. “Part found and part made and seldom static,”<sup>xxxix</sup> this framework speaks to the lasting power of ideas, the romantic allure of an Ireland that never was, or a Levant that will never be. The grip of this dream, even in the face of vitiating circumstance, is of a power to be reckoned with. Only by looking to history can we understand the litany of grievances and comprehend the accumulation of myth and truths.

### **The Winter Of Their Discontent**

The history of Ireland is an account inextricably tied to that of invaders and settlers; according to legend, even the Irish National Apostle, St. Patrick, was a Briton kidnapped by pirates in 432.<sup>xxxiii</sup> Though throughout history, Spanish, French, and Viking forces have at various times encamped in Ireland, the arrival of the Normans in the late 1160s is today regarded by most Irish Nationalists as the arrival of the most pernicious colonists: the British. The 1169 campaign of King Henry II's forces, led by the Norman knight Richard "Strongbow" FitzGilbert, marked the start of a precedent of indirect control of Ireland from London. From thenceforth, "the Normans would not so much assist Irish kings as supplant them."<sup>xxxiv</sup> This dynamic persisted for centuries, amidst continual and fruitless Irish resistance by lonely guerrilla fighters, fecklessly attacking from wood vales and peat bogs.

What changed the basic calculus on the ground in England's first colony came in the early 1600s, under the Protestant reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. Elizabeth and the Tudors had been the first to settle Scottish Presbyterians and Anglicans in Ireland's northernmost province, Ulster, in order to create a physical buffer from the island's restive hinterland.<sup>xxxv</sup> But her successor James I redoubled the project, seizing and making plantations of six of the province's counties.<sup>xxxvi</sup> The agricultural project strongly incentivized planters to hire only Protestants, leading to renewed sectarian strife and a serious Catholic rebellion in 1641.<sup>xxxvii</sup> The 1649 arrival of the hotly hated Oliver Cromwell and his New Model Army marked the start of a bloody, anti-Catholic campaign of ethnic cleansing. Cromwell's forces engaged in the mass murder of civilians at Drogheda and Wexford, well-publicized incidents that aided in the efficacy of the Crown takeover of land. Within ten years of the campaign, two

fifths of Irish land had transferred from Irish Catholic ownership to that of British Protestants, and Catholic landownership had dropped from sixty to twenty percent.<sup>xxxviii</sup> One of the biggest campaigns of genocide and ethnic cleansing in Western Europe, the campaign was tactically successful in its brutality. Following the decisive 1690 loss of Catholic forces at the Battle of Boyne to William of Orange, Britain effected penal laws that deprived Catholics of the right to own property or receive an education, and made the few existing Catholic professionals renounce their religion.<sup>xxxix</sup> While Catholics were brutally subjugated and eternally longing for revenge, the mostly impoverished Scot-Irish tenant community would be forever possessed by the fear that violent retribution would some day come.<sup>xl</sup> Strategically, though the establishment of plantations served to make an invasion by Ireland's French or Spanish coreligionists less likely, the noxious sectarianism it instilled in Ireland's inhabitants was hugely damaging.<sup>xli</sup> The entrenchment of Britons in Ireland would ensure that any agitation on the island would demand the concern of the Crown.

The Irish were beggared under exploitative economic management and the suppression of cultural tradition, as with the Anglicization of the Irish language. A tradition of resistance soon developed among the peasantry in occasional, spontaneous rebellions against their mistreatment. In response to the constant recalcitrance of the Catholic community, the ideology of Unionism began to develop among Irish Protestants, thriving on a "sense of siege" within Ulster.<sup>xlii</sup> In this context, the late 1700s saw the development of a repressive security apparatus, with the 1782 formation of the Irish Volunteers. This official power was unofficially

buttressed with the formation of the Orange Order in 1795, a Protestant social organization known for their anti-Catholicism and confrontational marches.<sup>xliii</sup> Politically, the based in Dublin-based parliament<sup>18</sup> served to consolidate and preserve the influence of Unionism at a single seat of power.<sup>xliv</sup>

Likewise, within the Irish nationalist community, a new ideological and organizational cohesion developed with the formation of the United Irishmen, a secret society devoted to the establishment of a free Irish republic. The group's most influential thinker was Dublin attorney Theobald Wolfe Tone, a Presbyterian who was profoundly influenced by the ideals of the American and French Revolution, and who sought to create a non-sectarian, independent Ireland.<sup>xlv</sup> The bloody 1798 quashing of a nascent rebellion led by Wolfe Tone and bankrolled by France led to the Act of Union of 1800. The Act effectively prorogued the Irish Parliament out of existence, placing direct control in the hands of London and removing even the limited attention towards Catholic issues the Unionist body had exhibited.<sup>xlvi</sup> By the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the two abiding political ideologies of the Irish conflict – resistant Republicanism and conservative unionism – were well established, clashing in grinding opposition under the auspices of British control.

Following the Act of Union and throughout the 1800s, Ireland experienced worsening sectarian polarization, as Catholics were further politically and socially marginalized. In the 1840s, Britain's complete ineffectuality and apathy in mitigating the Great Famine would mark the apogee of Catholic disenfranchisement. Caused by a potato root blight, the famine resulted in the deaths of one million and

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<sup>18</sup> This Irish Parliament, in existence from 1297 to 1800, was dominated by the Anglo-Irish, unionist, aristocratic "Ascendancy."

the emigration of millions more, many to America.<sup>xlvi</sup> Though Ireland continued to produce enough food to feed its denizens, British authorities exported much of it, ignoring the crisis to a genocidal degree. The deep bitterness over British inaction was compounded by the humiliation of “soupers” – Catholics who, in exchange for converting to Protestantism, received food. This shame and anger contributed to a new and distinctly violent form of Irish Republicanism that has existed ever since.<sup>xlvi</sup> The emigration of many of those Irish to New York City provided an external base for Republican efforts, and coincided with the creation of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, a secret militant organization, in 1858. The IRB would be the first Irish nationalist group to launch bombings against mainland Britain, as well as the first to have a significant base of operations and support outside the theatre of conflict.<sup>xlvi</sup>

In a dynamic that would be repeated throughout the history of Irish Republicanism, the ultimate collapse of the IRB in 1867 came amidst a harsh official response of executions, torture, and deportations. Most integral to the IRB’s failure was a paucity of widespread popular support, largely the result of ineffective military operations and the relative promise of nonviolent political settlement. By 1890, Irish pro-Home Rule MPs led by Charles Stewart Parnell had convinced British Liberals to support independence. The movement nearly achieved political devolution for Ireland before a personal liaison scandalized and destroyed Parnell.<sup>1</sup> With an increasingly restless Catholic populace in an era of simmering tension over land reform, Parnell’s coalition splintered. In a dynamic that would be repeated in years to come, unionists revived groups like Orange Order in a



conservative backlash.<sup>19</sup> Ultimately, both armed and nonviolent Irish Republican efforts failed to emancipate Ireland in the 1800s. Ideologically, however, both would provide the philosophical underpinnings for the two main schools of Irish Republicanism. While the rise of the IRB provided the most cohesive example to date of the more radical, rejectionist strand of “physical force” Republicanism, Parnell gave voice to a nonviolent political nationalism more willing to participate in official institutions.

Amidst extensive land agitation and the repeated failures in Parliament to address the Home Rule issue, British Conservatives grew more closely allied to unionism. Around the turn of the century, this aristocratic coalition increasingly came to include Northern Ireland’s Scot-Irish Presbyterian community, a historically underprivileged and theologically fiery population. By 1912, the unionist community, led by Tory leader Andrew Bonar Law and Ulster Unionist head Edward Carson, had grown increasingly militant, as security apparatuses increasingly enforced the latter half of envoy Arthur Balfour’s “carrot and stick” policy.<sup>li</sup> In the face of efforts by PM Herbert Asquith to grant Ireland Home Rule, unionists adopted an increasingly martial posture, even smuggling thousands of rifles supplied by Germany into Northern Ireland.<sup>lii</sup> Urged by Bonar Law not to be “bound by the restraints which would influence us in a normal constitutional struggle,” over 100,000 Irish Protestants joined the paramilitary Ulster Volunteer Force in 1912.<sup>liii</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Such revival would come again in the late 1960s, as unionist social organizations like the Orange Order and Apprentice Boys found renewed popularity. More ominously, the name of the pre-World War I Ulster Volunteer Force was also revived as the title of a new loyalist terror group. This reactionary backlash also calls to mind the resurrection of the Ku Klux Klan in the civil rights era – a group that though powerful pre-WWII, had been extinct for decades.

As Ed Moloney writes, “the first Irish paramilitary group, the first effort to import weaponry from Britain’s enemies, came not from Irish republicans but from people who loudly proclaimed their loyalty to Britain.”<sup>liv</sup> Their “sense of siege” once again stoked by Protestant leaders, pre-WWI unionist agitation saw a shift from the landed gentry towards the working class.<sup>20</sup>

The implosion of Home Rule efforts coincided both with the start of World War I and the reappearance of the IRB, which since 1868 had been organizing in New York City under the name Clann na Gael. But they would soon return, bursting forth with the surprise Easter Rising of 1916, in which a small group of rebels, mostly drawn from the Irish Volunteers<sup>21</sup>, launched attacks across Ireland in a failed insurrection. While the most drawn-out fighting resulted in rebel control of Dublin’s main avenue, O’Connell Street, and the occupation of its General Post Office, most of the other military operations were poorly thought-out and easily crushed. After surrendering to British authorities, sixteen of the plot’s leaders, including trade unionist James Connolly and Clann na Gael leader Padraig Pearse, were executed by firing squad.<sup>lv</sup> While the initial influence of the Uprising itself was uncertain, owing the IRB’s fringe status, the execution of the leaders cemented a public outcry of support, for what they viewed as a brutal and clumsy British effort to make examples out of the sixteen nationalists.

The importance of the Easter Rising for the mythology of Irish Republicanism is hard to overstate; in an atmosphere of tense sectarianism and a brutally assertive

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<sup>20</sup> This schism in unionist political organization remains today in Northern Ireland, with the middle-class, classically conservative Ulster Unionist Party competing against the fiercely evangelical, working class Democratic Unionist Party for Protestant votes.

<sup>21</sup> The Irish Volunteers was the official army of Ireland – controlled, of course, by the British.

unionist establishment, the insurrection and rapid quashing of the rebel leadership came to stand for the treatment of all Irish Catholics. The center of gravity shifted away from politics and towards physical force, in the form of a vigorous and ruthless IRA campaign lasting from 1919 to 1921. This campaign was met with a similarly uncompromising response, most memorably embodied by the Black and Tans. A military auxiliary force drawn largely from WWI veterans, the Black and Tans, so named for their two-toned uniforms, were a mostly unprofessional, terrorizing force, known for carrying out brutal reprisals and extrajudicial crimes at any provocation.<sup>22</sup> For the IRA's part, 1917 saw the formation of its political wing, Sinn Fein, and a landslide 1918 victory in parliamentary elections. The winners' decision to reject being seated at Westminster would provide the foundation for the enduring republican practice of abstentionism.<sup>23</sup> In 1919, these Irish Republican politicians opted instead to convene a subversive "Revolutionary Dail" as an alternative parliament. For the first and only time, a representative political body independent of Britain and consisting of legislators convened from all thirty-two counties. Considered the only legitimate representation of the Irish people by republicans, the primacy and influence of the 1919 Dail over all other forms of political organization would be far-reaching, eroding only in the late 1970s.

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<sup>22</sup> The Black and Tans, along with Oliver Cromwell and Margaret Thatcher, arguably remain the most hotly hated repressive force in all of Ireland's history. Their role in radicalizing massive swathes of the Catholic community is difficult to overstate. Successful IRA attacks against these fiercely unsympathetic characters further inured average Catholics to political violence.

<sup>23</sup> While taking their seats at Westminster would have required Sinn Fein politicians to swear allegiance to the British Crown, abstentionism allowed widespread political organization and the beneficial publicity of electoral success – without having to concede the legitimacy of the political system.

This political success came hand in hand with sophisticated guerilla attacks – a policy later enshrined by IRA propagandist Danny Morrison as “the Armalite<sup>24</sup> and the Ballot Box” strategy. In concord with the electoral success of Sinn Fein, the IRA grew increasingly effective, culminating in November 1920’s “Bloody Sunday.” In an intricately planned operation, IRA members killed twelve British intelligence officers and soldiers in a day, all belonging to the “Cairo Gang,” an anti-IRA counterintelligence unit. In two incidents that same day which only exacerbated the glow of the IRA’s success, the British Army massacred fourteen civilians at a Gaelic football match and extrajudicially killed three alleged IRA members at Dublin Castle.<sup>lvi</sup> The IRA would thenceforth retain popularity on par with Sinn Fein’s, eventually forcing the British to negotiate.

Following the Anglo-Irish Agreement and in the closing months of the Irish Civil War, Eamon De Valera, who had supported anti-Treaty forces but hated the internecine conflict, was influential in convincing fellow republicans in 1923 to dump arms. De Valera went on to enter Irish politics under the Fianna Fail (Soldiers of Destiny) party, and was the Irish head of state from 1932 to 1948. Though Ireland would remain one of Europe’s poorest countries for decades after the Great Depression, the state’s incorporation was a gargantuan achievement for Irish Republicans.<sup>25</sup> More problematic was the consignment of Northern Irish Catholics to a grim, second-class status, in a repressive political system that made no effort to

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<sup>24</sup> The Armalite rifle was a powerful, American-made semiautomatic rifle that would come to be known as the Provisional IRA’s weapon of choice, even becoming enshrined in popular folk songs. A deadly and easy to use weapon, they were first exported to Ireland in the 1970s by the New York-based George Harrison’s arms smuggling organization.

<sup>25</sup> Though the Irish Free State sustained a formal claim on Northern Ireland in Articles II and III of its constitution, these provisions were eventually repealed in 1999 as part of the Good Friday Agreement.

represent the minority. The fundamental inequities that had driven Irish terror had been institutionalized, not eradicated, with the partition of Ireland. But after so much bloodshed, the extensive poverty of the "Hungry 30s," and the Catholic Church's obdurate and abiding opposition to armed resistance, militancy was unfeasible on a national scale. By the end of World War II, the IRA had even come to accept the existence of the Irish Free State as mostly legitimate, proscribing its members from targeting the nation's soldiers and police. By World War II, there was little appetite within the Catholic community to spill blood in a fruitless quest to wrest Northern Ireland from a powerful, majority-backed Unionist power.

Within Northern Ireland, however, conditions remained acutely unequal. Though by 1948, Northern Ireland was peaceful, its roughly five hundred thousand Catholics remained subject to rampant social and economic discrimination, particularly in the housing and employment sectors.<sup>lvii</sup> Though this collective misery meant there would always be an audience for physical force republicanism, actual involvement in the rump of the 1919 rebel forces, the IRA, was limited to a very few ardent supporters. Most were from a few heavily intermarried, prominent families, like Belfast's Hannaways, Adamses and Burnses.<sup>lviii</sup> Twice in the postwar period, this hard core of republicans launched unsuccessful and unpopular military campaigns. The first, known as the Forties Campaign and led by Easter Rising veteran Sean Russell, remains most notable for Russell's futile dealings with Nazi Germany, who flirted with arming the IRA.<sup>lix</sup> The effort's collapse owed itself largely to Russell's

Nazi overtures<sup>26</sup> and to a disastrous bombing in Coventry, England, which killed five civilians; both incidents gave the Irish and British governments pretext to pass and enforce repressive, emergency internment laws against IRA suspects.<sup>lx</sup>

After a painful reconstruction, and encouraged by the election of two IRA members on the Sinn Fein ticket to Westminster, in 1956 the IRA began a series of border raids codenamed Operation Harvest. Universally known as the Border Campaign, the raids once again resulted in the introduction of draconian laws and internment without probable cause, both in the Irish Republic and in the North. The campaign was a tactical disaster, seeing the arrest of most IRA members and the killing of six – the same number of Irish Protestants murdered during the conflict. But most damaging to the effort was the cold truth that popular support among Northern Irish Catholics did not materialize. In both campaigns, the IRA was out of touch with the mood on the street, starting a war when there was no appetite for it and no audience that would sustain it. Unionists, triumphant, felt no need to change the political dynamics of Ulster – even though the political repression enshrined in 1921 were a root cause of sustained Irish radicalism. Despite the fizzling of armed resistance, the structural inequities of the Northern state remained a major liability. Trapped within a state they had no choice in creating, abandoned by their southern coreligionists, repressed by chauvinistic, arrogant Unionist politicians, and subject to occasional bursts of sectarian violence, the populace of Northern Irish Catholics would, with time, explode.<sup>lxi</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Russell actually passed away in 1940 from natural causes while on Nazi U-Boat U-65, being ferried to Ireland as part of a Gestapo spy plot.

## A Land Without People

**For twelve centuries,** following Emperor Hadrian's quashing of the Jewish Bar Kochba rebellion in 135 A.D., Jews had been banished from their *Eretz Israel*, leaving Muslim and Christian Arabs the long-established majority population in the land known as *Falistin*.<sup>lxii</sup> While Jews had successfully invaded Palestine towards the end of the second millennium B.C, taming its many tribes and establishing two kingdoms, the efficacy of a Roman invasion led by Pompey in 63 A.D. crippled Jewish sovereignty. In the wake of Jewish expulsion following two failed rebellions, Arabs came to constitute Palestine's majority population. Mostly dispersed within the Galilee hill country, seventy percent of Palestinians lived a hardscrabble life as peasants, or *fellahin*, more similar to modern Sicily than ancient Egypt. Constant feuding between villages and marauding Bedouin horsemen reinforced the institution of familial clans as the primary unit of political organization.<sup>lxiii</sup> The sheikhs of each competing clan would be forced to contend with the increased centralization of power by the Ottomans in the late 1800s, resulting in a weakening of the clan system, but not its eradication.<sup>lxiv</sup>

The brief incursion of Napoleon's forces into Palestine at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was an omen of external meddling to come. By the late 1800s, the increasingly Western governance of the Ottoman Empire gradually effected a modernizing influence on the lives of those in its three Palestinian *sanjaks*. Following the British-backed return of Ottoman rule in 1840, following a decade-long Egyptian occupation fiercely resisted by Palestinians, the Turkish pashas

instituted their reform policies of Tanzimat. While the efforts resulted in a steady increase in literacy, owing a new focus on education, the new tax policies bankrupted rural Palestinians, resulting in an exodus towards urban centers,<sup>lxv</sup> as well as a consolidation of power by rural landowners. Concomitant with this program of modernization was a more acute development of a Palestinian national consciousness, embodied by the success of independent Palestinian merchants in port cities like Jaffa and Gaza. The development of Palestine, rather than quashing nationalist sentiments, enabled such philosophy to coalesce for the first time.

The Jews that remained in Palestine, throughout the collapse of the Byzantine Empire, the four-century rule of the Caliphs, the two-century rule of the Mamluks, and the 1516 Ottoman conquest of the region, remained a small population. Generally deferential to their Muslim rulers, Palestinian Jews were largely Orthodox, concentrated in Judaism's "four holy towns," Jerusalem, Safd, Hebron and Tiberias. A "numerically insignificant" population, Palestine's Jews generally lived in peace, albeit as second-class *dhimmi*<sup>27</sup> citizens, for centuries.<sup>lxvi</sup> The same relative stability of Jewish life under Ottoman rule would not be found among their coreligionists in Europe. Throughout twelve hundred years of exile, amidst the Jews of Europe, the dream of *aliyah*, of return to the Holy Land, remained a central religious and cultural touchstone throughout centuries of repression and prejudice.

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<sup>27</sup> The Ottoman *dhimmi* classification was given to Jews and Christians within their empire, mandating they pay a tax Muslims were exempted from. While the tax and title itself were somewhat prejudicial, Sephardic Jews living under the Ottomans never had to contend with any violent, European-style pogroms.



As with many forms of nationalism, the philosophy of Zionism developed in the 1800s under conditions of extreme intolerance and pressure, albeit under the distinct influences of Eastern and Western European society. In Eastern Europe, particularly in Russia's "Pale of Settlement" between Memel and the Black Sea, Jews lived lives of constant oppression, denied basic cultural and economic rights, subjected to brutal twenty-five year military conscriptions, and subject to periodic pogroms. Such pogroms, in which mobs pillaged Jewish communities, killing, raping and brutalizing their inhabitants, accelerated during the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly following the 1881 assassination of Russian Czar Alexander II.<sup>lxvii</sup> By the late 1800s, such terrifying and demonic ethnic cleansing, supported by codified discrimination in the form of anti-Semitic laws and forced deportations, had convinced most Eastern European Jews of the inefficacy of armed resistance.<sup>lxviii</sup> Thinkers such as Leo Pinsker, a Russian Jewish doctor who in 1882 published Auto-Emancipation, concluded that anti-Semitism was deeply ingrained in European culture. For Pinsker, the only practical solution to the continuing slaughter of Jews was to establish a Jewish homeland – thought not necessarily in Palestine.<sup>lxix</sup> Rejecting his former assimilationist views, Pinsker wrote that, living "like a [people] without a shadow," salvation could only come by gradually purchasing and populating a new home, possibly in North America, lest they forever live like "vagrants and parasites, outside the protection of the law." Among Eastern European Jews, such an exodus was a practical solution to escape state persecution, motivated as much by a desire for national expression as by the religious and cultural vision of *aliyah*. Even with little formal organization, a dramatic flood of

Eastern European Jews began to reflect the new thinking, with over two and a half million emigrating to the U.S. by the start of World War I.<sup>lxx</sup>

Among Western European Jews, however, the nascent ideology of Zionism sprang from a distinct set of conditions; Jews were not subject to the same salvos of genocide as were their coreligionists in the East. Rather, throughout the 1800s, following liberalizing legislation in nations such as France, Britain, and Germany, Jews began to assimilate, moving into the middle class and increasingly self-identifying along national, rather than sectarian, lines.<sup>lxxi</sup> Among those living amidst the “assimilated” masses of European Jews in the late 1800s was a Vienna journalist named Theodor Herzl. Herzl grew up in Budapest, ensconced in the comfort of a prosperous, middle-class Jewish family, integrated such that while he spoke perfect German and French, he knew not a word of Hebrew or Yiddish.<sup>lxxii</sup> A secular, cosmopolitan elite, who held a law degree and dabbled in theatrical writing, Herzl lived a life distant from that of vitriolic, codified anti-Semitism.

But in the wake of the 1894 Dreyfus affair, in which French Jewish officer Alfred Dreyfus was wrongly condemned to the hell of Devil’s Island for a baseless charge of treason, Herzl, as surely as Pinsker, came to see anti-Semitism as woven in the fabric of European society. Citing the existence of such grotesque intolerance in Europe’s supposed bastion of liberal progress, France, in 1896 Herzl published The Jewish Question, a treatise that constituted the formative manifesto of Zionism. Heralding widespread Jewish nationalism as an inevitable development, Herzl, envisioning himself as a new Messiah, gave rise to modern Zionism.<sup>lxxiii</sup> A secular socialist who was never particularly religious, one of Herzl’s most important tenets,

and one he urgently and evocatively reinforced with the teachings of Jewish history, was of the primacy of nationalism, rather than religion, as a binding ideology.<sup>lxxiv</sup> With remarkable foresight and a vigor that likely led to a premature death in 1904 at the age of forty-four,<sup>lxxv</sup> Herzl was instrumental in junking the school of gradual assimilation in favor of a newly assertive, distinct nationalism.

By 1881, while the pogroms intensified and Zionism began to coalesce in Europe, in Palestine, the population continued to grow, reaching four hundred and fifty-seven thousand. Under Ottoman rule, Palestine's four hundred thousand Muslims, thirteen to twenty thousand Jews, and forty-two thousand Arab Christians were becoming an increasingly urban people, with a third of the total population living in cities like Jaffa, Gaza and Haifa. Life remained difficult in the sliver of land the size of New Jersey, with rampant disease exacerbated by continually impure water supplies.<sup>lxxvi</sup> Though situated between the Mediterranean and Dead Sea, and betwixt the Gulf of Aqaba and the Litani River, Palestine remained a largely uninhabitable badland, with dry wilderness arching from the Negev to Judean deserts.<sup>lxxvii</sup> But such difficulties would not derail a rapidly emerging consensus in the 1890s that Jews needed a homeland – and that that homeland should be in the Holy Land of Eretz Yisrael. Herzl, aware the Zionist movement would need a Western power's backing to succeed, began a sustained lobbying effort among high-profile European Jews, seeking to garner well-connected support for his efforts. While his efforts won some adherents, such as the Rothschild banking dynasty, Herzl was to be disappointed by most prominent Jews he courted; many,

comfortably integrated into high society, balked at Herzl's implicit ethos of an assertive Judaism, one they feared would prompt an anti-Semitic backlash.<sup>lxxviii</sup>

Herzl would find success by uniting the two Jewries of Europe, East and West; while Western European Zionists would provide the political and financial support necessary for the endeavor, it would be largely Eastern European Jews who immigrated into Palestine. Fissures were apparent from the start within the new Zionist community. While Eastern Jews tended to be more conservative and religious, owing in large part their cultural isolation within their anti-Semitic homelands, Western Jews were largely secular, bourgeoisie, and marginally socialist. Indeed, the strongest initial consternation over the notion of mass Jewish migration to Palestine came not from any European power or Arab notables, but among the ultraorthodox communities of the East, who viewed the project as blasphemous. In spite of this division, Herzl's ideology would remain the ideological impetus in creating a Jewish homeland, the glue uniting European Jewry in the effort. It was ultimately the portrait of Herzl, who died exhausted at age forty-four in 1904, which looked down on David Ben-Gurion on May 14, 1948, as he announced the independence of the state of Israel.<sup>lxxix</sup>

Fortunately for Herzl's successors, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire following World War I would mark the start of British efforts to enact the Balfour Declaration's promises.<sup>lxxx</sup> By early 1918, the government of PM Lloyd George had determined that, given the coming enfranchisement of multiple Arab governments, the Middle East would have to accept Zionist control over Palestine.<sup>lxxxi</sup> That winter, in connivance with the soon-to-be King of Syria, the Hashemite Faisal, the British

succeeded in wresting control over Palestine from the French. Nearly concomitant came an agreement between Chaim Weizmann and the diffident Faisal, providing for Jewish immigration and economic development so long as Syria was created and Palestinians were treated fairly.<sup>lxxxii</sup> Though over eighty-five percent of Palestine's residents were Arab, this agreement implicitly called for the creation of a Jewish homeland, a goal further advanced through the 1920 appointment of an ardent Zionist, Sir Herbert Samuel, as civilian high commissioner.<sup>lxxxiii</sup> Prominent Palestinians, who given their numbers saw no reason to compromise, boycotted Samuel's moderate administrative initiatives, such as a proposal to create a Jewish, Christian and Muslim legislative council.<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Hard feelings over the intransigence of Palestinian notables drained what little British goodwill remained for Palestine's Arabs, and hardened Britain's support for the Zionist initiatives. As in Ireland, British colonists lacked strategic depth in their thinking, unable to ever reconcile their promises of Jewish statehood with the overwhelming resistance of Palestinians.

The decades after World War I saw several waves of Jewish immigration into Palestine, as well as the wide-scale purchasing of arable land by the Jewish National Fund, founded in 1920.<sup>lxxxv</sup> Between 1922 and 1936, a whopping two hundred and eighty seven thousand Jews settled in Palestine, rising from comprising sixteen percent of Palestine's population to almost thirty percent. The rise of fascism in Europe precipitated a fresh wave of émigrés in the early thirties, with almost one hundred and seventy thousand of the above total arriving only between 1933 and 1936.<sup>lxxxvi</sup> Coupled with the rapid growth of the native Arab population, this massive

boom severely strained Palestine's infrastructure, agriculture, and housing. Arab notable families who had served as absentee landlords for generations began selling land to Zionist organizations, putting scores of *fellahin* out of work. By the outbreak of World War II, the twenty-nine percent population of Jewish immigrants owned ten percent of all arable land – in a country in which two thirds of Palestinians were peasants.<sup>lxxxvii</sup> The simultaneous “selling out” of Palestinians by their landlords, and the replacement of Arab agricultural workers with eager kibbutzniks, would have a profound, alienating effect on Palestinians, exacerbating growing Arab uneasiness over the rise of Zionism. Following several bloody riots that killed hundreds of Jews and Arabs, in 1930 a British commission announced support for limiting Jewish immigration while setting aside land for unemployed Palestinian. This proposal, embodied in the Passfield White Paper, prompted an intense Zionist lobbying campaign. The pressure worked; in 1931 PM Ramsey Macdonald formally quashed Passfield's recommendations, in what came to be known as the “Black Letter.”<sup>lxxxviii</sup> Disillusioned, by World War II most Palestinians had come to believe Britain was firmly committed to advancing Zionism at the expense of the native population.

The interwar period saw further violence, along with more investigatory commissions. The most significant of these bodies was the 1937 Peel Commission, which concluded the British Mandate over Palestine to be untenable, recommending the first of many two-state solutions. After the formal rejection of this solution by the World Zionist Congress, efforts to resolve the conflict stalemated. But the outbreak of World War II and the monstrosity of the Holocaust would sharply change the discourse of Zionism. In an act of horrifically bad timing, in 1939 the

British had finally succeeded in limiting Jewish immigration to fifteen thousand a year – thereby restricting the escape of European Jews from the clutches of the Nazi war machine.<sup>lxxxix</sup>

It is worth noting the introduction of well-organized guerilla terrorism – but as in Northern Ireland, not by the party usually associated with such violence, Palestinians. Jewish terrorism against the British Mandate had been steadily on the rise since the 1930s, with much of the violence orchestrated by Eastern European Jews associated with the Zionist youth movement, Betar. While more moderate militant groups like the Haganah and Palmach focused mainly on aiding illegal Jewish immigrants and nonviolent sabotage, more extreme organizations, like the Irgun, began violently targeting British forces. Inspired by the ideology of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the Irgun, whose members included future Prime Ministers Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Shamir, would provide the ideological basis for the modern Likud party.<sup>28</sup> Even more extreme was the terrifying Stern Gang, a group whose leader, Avraham Stern, was so virulently anti-British that he maintained contacts with Nazi Germany – in the midst of the Holocaust.<sup>xc</sup> This revisionist underground would remain an avidly dissonant voice amidst the more mainstream, socialist ideology of Israel's founders.

Ultimately, the West's appalling failure to halt the Holocaust would lead to a massive shift in amenability towards the creation of Israel, culminating in 1948's War of Independence. The war was precipitated in the summer of 1947 by a UN

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<sup>28</sup> The Irgun would largely disappear following the 1948 Altalena incident, an incident in which the Hagana, led by future PM Yitzhak Rabin, sank a ship smuggling Irgun arms and fighters into Palestine. Irgun leader Menachem Begin remembered the attack, which killed dozens, as one of only two times he ever cried – the other being upon the independence of Israel.

inquiry, known as UNSCOP, into the political future of Palestine. UNSCOP concluded what the USSR and USA had already determined: that the land be divided between the Zionist movement and the native Arabs. With Palestinians wholeheartedly opposed to any partition, Arab notables failed to offer any alternative plan – a crucial miscalculation that provided pretext for the forcible expulsion of Palestinians from the prospective Jewish state.<sup>xcii</sup> A civil war followed, and by March 1948, the planned ethnic cleansing of Palestinians by the Hagana paramilitary group had begun. Known as “Plan D,” the Zionist forces moved quickly to fill the power vacuum left by the evacuating British, while systematically driving Palestinians into exile and committing massacres of civilians; <sup>xciii</sup> the best known of these was the April sacking of Deir Yassin.<sup>29</sup> Following the Israeli declaration of independence that May, the newly established state handily defeated the much less competent militaries of six Arab countries.

The result of this ethnic cleansing: seven hundred and fifty thousand Palestinians, ninety percent of them from the UN-designated Jewish state, either fled or were expelled from the land, becoming refugees. The biggest population movement since World War II, these Palestinians survived the harsh winter of 1948/1949 only by the grace of the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which to this day administers refugee camps. Further attempts to repatriate the refugees and create a Palestinian state were hampered by two major factors. The first was

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<sup>29</sup> A small village of six hundred outside of Jerusalem, in April 1948 Irgun and Palmach fighters killed over one hundred of its inhabitants while raping some of its female. The survivors were then driven from the town, which was subsequently razed. The incident was widely publicized via radio and in subsequent depopulations, with the ominous warning to “remember Deir Yassin.” The incident played a huge part in convincing Palestinians to flee their land; without any visible coercion, the effort looked less barbaric.



the entry of Israel into the UN, and its steadfast obstruction of any such settlement; this auspicious entry has been typical of Israeli-UN relations ever since. The second factor was sustained Zionist terrorism, most audaciously evidenced by the assassination of UN envoy Folke Bernadotte<sup>30</sup> by Stern Gang militants.<sup>xciii</sup> As these two factors frustrated efforts by statesmen like Ralph Bunche and George Marshall to amend the 1948 War's results, Arab nations, fearful of the implications of massive refugee populations, began to make their individual, long-term policies. The last, best chance to grant some form of Palestinian statehood expired. The result was a wound so deep, so traumatic among the Palestinian people, that it is known as "al-Nakba" – the catastrophe. The political repression thus visited upon this stateless people remains the fundamental exigency driving armed militancy against Israel.

The growth of the Israeli nation, amidst a gradual shift away from the idealistic socialism of its first generation, faced its first serious challenge with the rise of Pan-Arabist nationalism, embodied most fiercely by Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser. In May 1967, Nasser closed the Straits of Tiran while massing troops near the UN-administered Sinai, bolstering his bellicose rhetoric with falsified Soviet intelligence of Israeli war plans against Syria. Nasser's miscalculation that the UN peacekeeping force would not leave when ordered proved fateful. Fearful that this was the prelude for invasion, Israel launched a preemptive strike on June 5<sup>th</sup>, destroying most of Egypt's air force. In six days, Israel defeated the forces of Nasser, Syria, and Jordan, whilst invading lands they had not taken in the 1948 War: East

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<sup>30</sup> Bernadotte, tasked with salvaging a Palestinian state in the war's aftermath, was shot to death in September 1948 while driving through Jerusalem, in an attack approved by future PM Yitzhak Shamir. Bernadotte's chief lieutenant, African-American civil rights campaigner and future Nobel Peace prize winner Ralph Bunche, took over from him and succeeded in establishing the 1949 armistice.

Jerusalem and the West Bank from Jordan, the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, and the Golan Heights from Syria. It was a stunning victory whose luster would be dampened over the years by Israel's new responsibility for the overwhelmingly Arab territory. Following the nearly disastrous 1973 Yom Kippur war, in which Egyptian President Anwar Sadat launched an initially successful surprise attack against Israel, the gravity of 1967's implications began to sink in.

The rise of spectacular Arab and Palestinian terrorism against Israel has its origins in this time period. In 1964, former engineering student and Fatah founder Yasser Arafat, a forceful proponent of Palestinian national liberation, took over the PLO, forcing out Chairman Ahmed al-Shuqairi. Initially a means for Arab autocrats to pay lip service to Palestinians while co-opting any of their militants, Arafat revitalized the PLO into an umbrella group capable of launching guerilla attacks against Israel. Arafat was the axis around which the PLO spun, administering his fiefdom through patronage and pressure. In a dynamic that would be repeated among the founders of Hamas, Arafat managed to keep the deeply splintered PLO together largely through his shared background with most of its leaders; the management of the PLO remained remarkably constant until the 1980s, when these old-timers started to die off.<sup>xciv</sup> Arafat's increasing isolation and fading power in the eighties eventually culminated in the PLO's efforts to strike a deal creating a Palestinian homeland - a homeland they would run.

Arafat's deceptively jovial personality masked a versatility that enabled him to appear all things to all people: a committed Muslim or ardent Marxist, a dovish moderate or an unreconstructed terrorist. This father of Palestinian terrorism was

endlessly capable of reinvention, moving his base of operations three times while ironing over countless internal fissures. This skill at co-opting was most evident in his management of Palestinian rage over 1967 and the 1971 expulsion of the PLO from Jordan. In keeping with Arafat's need to maintain internal cohesion, in 1972 he acquiesced to PLO hawks by forming Black September, a hard-line terror faction – thereby keeping his power intact. The stated purpose behind the creation of Black September was, in the words of leader Salah Khalaf, “to make the world feel that the Palestinian people exists.”<sup>xcv</sup> They quickly succeeded in capturing the world's imagination with the 1972 Munich Massacre. The incident highlights the costs Arafat was willing to bear to retain control of his organization; by placing himself at the center of these decisions, however, he weakened the organizational integrity of the PLO. The fact that such competing bases of power settled their differences through the arbitration of only one person provides a marked contrast from Hamas's leadership structure.

By the 1980s, the lack of any national determination for Palestinians had led to an increasingly restive population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The sustained political repression, economic exploitation, and brutal military occupation of Palestine began changing the popular consciousness of Gaza and the West Bank. One sign of the times: over the course of the occupation of the 1967 territories, the number of religiously observant Muslims in the Gaza Strip doubled, as mosques mushroomed across the canton.<sup>xcvi</sup> Occupation authorities generally encouraged this growth of Islamism as a means of splitting Fatah's base. Indeed it did.

### **Conclusion: The Secret Strength of Things**

This thesis proposes that terror networks are most powerful, deadly and sustainable when they draw upon the popular grievances of a radicalized people. There is no more noxious and polarizing a conflict of such grievances today than that of Palestinians and Israelis, a disputation exploited by Osama Bin Laden as pretext for his barbarities and a significant factor in the successful dissemination of radical Islam. Such self-interested proselytizing obscures the conflict's fundamentally nationalist roots and its infuriating effects on the wider Muslim world. Succinctly, the Second Intifada rages today framed within decades of political repression of Palestinian self-determination. Following World War I, the native population of Palestinians was gradually displaced by a British-backed colonial settlement of Jewish émigrés, culminating in the 1948 ethnic cleansing of Arabs from Palestine and the founding of the Israeli state. This inaugural and deeply traumatic uprooting has dominated the Palestinian consciousness, and following the 1967 war, has been married to a brutal military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The indignities and wanton violence of such occupation has begat its own combatants; since the early 1960s, Palestinians have successfully organized and executed terror attacks against Israeli and Jewish targets, a horrifying campaign of crimes against humanity that often targets civilians.

The commission of such terrorism, and the collective punishment Israeli responses offer, have constituted a vicious cycle that successive American presidents have found hard to disrupt. The "Long War" of the Northern Irish "Troubles" was similarly intractable. A primarily nationalist struggle spearheaded from within a native community displaced by colonial settlement, the conflict was

largely the product of a politically repressed and discriminated Catholic population. Increasingly fiery throughout the 1960s, the dispute between Protestant and Catholic communities boiled with the introduction of a British military occupation. The IRA, in its fierce destructive capability, substantial popular support, and appropriation of the cherished symbols of Irish nationalism and revolutionary fervor, came to occupy a decisive role in the future of Northern Ireland. Ultimately, it was the willingness of this group to shift consensus over its stated goals and transition into a peaceful movement that stood between a legacy of peace or a future of war. Today, in Gaza, it may be Hamas that rehearses for the same role.



# Chapter Two: All Politics Is Local

## ***Popular Support, Radicalization And The Roots Of Terror In Palestine And Northern Ireland***

*"The lack of Israeli security is born of the lack of Palestinian freedom."*

*–Imprisoned Fatah/Tanzim leader Marwan Barghout<sup>xcvii</sup>*

*"[Then-IRA lieutenant Gerry] Adams put us all in this house and wouldn't let us out...[Belfast commander Billy] McKee wanted a gunfight, but Adams didn't. Adams wanted ordinary people involved in the rioting as a way of radicalizing them. That impressed me."*

*–A former IRA member, on 1969<sup>xcviii</sup>*

*"As Ehud Barak once admitted, had he been born a Palestinian, he 'would have joined a terrorist organization.'"*

*–Profs. Stephen Walt and John Mearshimer<sup>xcix</sup>*

*"The method of collective punishment so far has proved effective."*

*–IDF Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan, 1955<sup>c</sup>*

### **Introduction: People Power**

**It was not a fighter jet,** nor a tank, but an IDF<sup>31</sup> tractor-trailer that passed through Erez Crossing on Gaza's northern border on the night of December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1987. Nevertheless, it would be this truck, more than any IAF F-16 or troop carrier, which would alter the dynamics of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict forever. In

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<sup>31</sup> IDF stands for Israeli Defense Forces, the official military of Israel to which most Israelis are conscripted in their early twenties. IAF stands for Israeli Air Force.

circumstances that have variously and vigorously been described as a simple accident or cold-blooded murder, the tank-transporter plowed into two panel vans packed with Palestinian day laborers returning from Israel.<sup>ci</sup> The incident, which killed four and injured eight of the Palestinians, all from Jabiliya refugee camp, was initially reported as solely a traffic accident.

But rumors quickly swept throughout the Gaza Strip and the West Bank that the Israeli driver had intentionally hit the vans – possibly in revenge for the Palestinian stabbing attack two days earlier. The next day, as thousands poured into the streets of Jabiliya for the laborers’ funerals, many of them began pelting stones and screaming “Jihad, Jihad”; a crowd surrounded the nearest IDF outpost, cutting it off from reinforcements. The following day, Palestinians repeated the siege, this time drawing live fire from the outpost, wounding many and killing a seventeen year-old Palestinian.<sup>cii</sup> Enraged by this show of force, protests and rioting spread and continued, sustained by the catharsis of standing up to the military occupation. The First Intifada, or “shaking off,” had begun.

What remains most remarkable about the start of the First Intifada is that despite the attempts of all prominent Palestinian political players to claim credit for the outbreak,<sup>ciii</sup> the civil protests, commercial strikes, and stone-throwing caught them all, particularly the PLO, by complete surprise.<sup>civ</sup> A spontaneous uprising coordinated only by a collective frustration with the dire living conditions and misery of the Palestinian territories, the largely nonviolent tactics of the protestors were anathema to the PLO’s entire ethos of armed struggle. But by 1987, such militancy had borne very little fruit; with the PLO forced into the distant exile of

Tunis, its leaders were out of touch with popular sentiment and unable to mitigate the deep economic, social, and political frustration of Palestinians. The expulsion of the PLO from Beirut during the Lebanon War, as well as sporadic Israeli assassination efforts against leading PLO officials, had further taken a huge toll on the group's morale. Already ideologically weakened by the decline of pan-Arabism and seemingly incapable of organizing armed or nonviolent resistance in the territories, incidents such as the 1988 IDF slaying of Arafat's deputy, Khalil al-Wazir, in the remoteness of Tunisia, seemed only to underscore the PLO's impotence.<sup>cv</sup>

In the two decades following the 1967 war, and in the absence of much serious resistance, Israel had held a free hand in the territories. A creeping annexation of territories, advanced by the gradual incursion of settlements into the West Bank and Gaza Strip, had continued unabated, advanced largely by Ariel Sharon during his stints as Agriculture and Housing Minister. While many settlers were secular professionals, drawn to the bedroom communities of the settlements for the generous government incentives, many more were ultraconservative religious settlers, populating religious West Bank cities such as Jerusalem and Hebron. By the late 1970s, over twenty-eight percent of the West Bank had been expropriated by Israel, and the brashly nationalist Likud, led by its uncompromising and religiously inclined leader Menachem Begin, was on the rise. With the center of gravity shifting to the right, religious leaders such as Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook and Chief Rabbi Shlomo Goren began to successfully agitate for, in apocalyptic terms, the settling of ancient Samaria and Judea as the means for the advent of the Messiah.<sup>cvi</sup> The success of the settlement project, and the uncompromising and often brutal



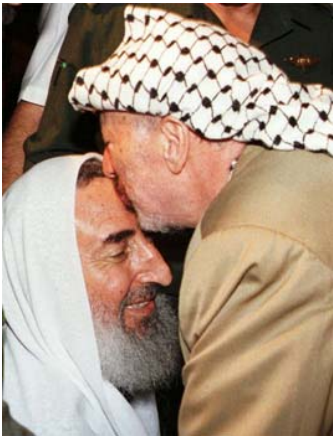
treatment of Palestinians by its practitioners, served as an inflammatory provocation to the wider Arab population.

Other political shifts had changed the dynamics of Israel-Palestinian relations. Israel's newly liberalized financial system, a moribund Palestinian economy, and the proximity of the captive market of the Territories had enabled a neocolonial trade regimen to develop. Bolstered by restrictive permit laws, Israeli firms dumped products in the territories, wrecking local manufacturers,<sup>cvii</sup> while exploiting staggering unemployment levels to employ one hundred and twenty thousand Palestinians at substandard wages. Palestinian agriculture was directed to follow Israeli demands using cutthroat tariffs, even when unprofitable, allowing the cheap production of staples like tomatoes and cucumbers and enabling Israeli farmers to plant cash crops, like flowers and citrus fruit.<sup>cviii</sup> A warren of checkpoints throughout the territories choked off the transit of Palestinian products, with crops often rotting, goods destroyed, and drivers harassed at military stops. Tenuous hopes in 1967 that the Israeli occupation would improve the Palestinian economy had eroded by 1987, swamped by the maltreatment and indignities of the one hundred and fifty thousand Arabs relying on the 'slave markets' for subsistence.<sup>cix</sup>

By the day four Palestinian laborers were crushed in that truck accident, the people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip had been subjected to twenty years, nine months, and twenty-nine days of Israeli occupation, and its concomitant economic, military, and social repression. The possibility that Arab neighbors would save the Palestinians had been critically discounted with the Six-Day War, and seemingly erased with the Camp David Accords. With little reason to hope for any coming

change, with little left to lose, and with a collective will to do *something* to empower themselves, a car accident snowballed into an apotheosis of grievance. A population radicalized by the sundry indignities of military occupation, and denied self-expression, self-determination, and the pursuit of prosperity, now revolted, in largely non-violent circumstances. But while much of the non-violence was the result of an admirable determination on the part of community organizers, business owners, and religious leaders to resist occupation through civil disobedience, for many would-be guerillas, it was by default. With a mostly dormant PLO, there was little organized militancy in the Territories, even as droves of young Palestinians aspired to arm themselves with more than stones.

The PLO of 1987 was a tired animal, divorced from popular sentiment, and in want of any tangible achievements. It lacked the urgency and legitimacy of an indigenous resistance movement; the Fatah cronies and racketeers derisively



nicknamed “The Tunisians” had not suffered from decades of military occupation. Other men had. Abdel Aziz al-Rantisi was a pediatrician, well known for walking miles through dusty villages to treat Bedouin tribesmen free of charge.<sup>cx</sup> Arrested several times by the IDF throughout the eighties for tax resistance, by 1987 Rantissi had been

barred from practicing medicine and seen his clinic seized.<sup>cxii</sup> Mahmoud al-Zahar was a surgeon and head of Gaza’s professional medical association; in 1981, he had been arrested after leading a strike over the Israeli imposition of a VAT on the Palestinian territories.<sup>cxiii</sup> Said Siam was a schoolteacher in several of Gaza’s UNRWA

schools, as well as the head of Gaza's teachers' union.<sup>cxiii</sup> And Sheikh Ahmed Yassin (pictured left, with Yasser Arafat), a former schoolteacher, was the longtime head of Gaza's Islamic Complex, a social welfare and educational community center that administered charity throughout the territories. He had been arrested and jailed in 1984 for importing arms, which, IDF officials noted with curiosity, were not used.<sup>cxiv</sup>

These men, among many, were pillars of their communities, bound together with many others like them through a web of associations. Both Zahar and Rantissi were educated in Egypt and taught at the Islamic University in Gaza, founded partially by Yassin. Rantissi helped administer Yassin's charitable organization. All four organized resistance among Palestinians throughout the eighties. All four had been members of the Palestinian *Ikhwan*, an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. And all four had, through arrests and harassment, paid a price for their outspokenness. As in economics, where high demand spurs greater supply and supply boosts demand, there emerged new firms to supply the violence. In October 1987, Yassin met with Saleh Shehadeh, another Islamic University professor, to discuss the foundation of a new Islamic resistance movement – one with an armed wing. On December 8<sup>th</sup>, a group of prominent Islamist activists – all engineers, doctors or teachers - quietly convened in Gaza City. As Yassin would later recall, "During this meeting we agreed to call the movement Hamas, an acronym for the Islamic Resistance Movement... each one of us would be responsible for the areas in which we lived. I was to be the head."<sup>cxv</sup>

Though Yassin would later claim that Hamas had orchestrated the start of the Intifada,<sup>cxvi</sup> the fact was that the newly incorporated organization successfully

“piggybacked” off of the Intifada’s popular rage. As Yassin’s deputy, school headmaster Abdul Fattah Dokhan witnessed first-hand this reliance on the Intifada’s popular support: “We used to wait for such opportunities in order to step-up our conflict with the enemy, encouraged by a larger consensual support.”<sup>cxvii</sup> The organizers of Hamas knew, in their wait for the right moment, that effectiveness would only come after a communal radicalization. Armed militancy, launched by ill-equipped, fledgling combatants, needed such widespread tolerance and support to be effective. The loose, organic network came as a fortuitous alternative to the creaky structures of the PLO; as Dokhan would later explain, Hamas was designed as “a coalition...[eager to] embrace all Palestinian resistance organizations and their supporters and friends.”<sup>cxviii</sup> Organizers working in the name of Hamas soon found ample success in recruiting sympathizers and members, particularly from university campuses and mosques.<sup>cxix</sup> The fathers of Hamas had taken one of Mao’s more sagacious adages to heart: “the guerrilla must move amongst the people as a fish swims in the sea.” From seven members to thousands, Israel has found quashing Hamas as difficult as catching a school of piranhas.

### **Piranhas In The Sea**

**This chapter** will attempt to prove the centrality of a radicalized populace to the success of the IRA and Hamas in forming and thriving. Radicalization is the process by which nonviolent means of reconciling a party’s grievances are discredited, leading to a collective shift of consensus over the efficacy of violence. Such radicalization can come at the individual, community, regional, and national

levels, and provides the oxygen needed for militancy to truly ignite. The terrorism of the two groups that will be compared in this paper, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) and the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), would not have been possible without the collective radicalization of the Northern Irish Catholic and Palestinian populaces under political repression. Given the difficulty most people have in readily supporting or committing acts of violence, this was a long process and required the delegitimization of potential, non-violent paths to righting the system's political inequity.

Using the narrative of the formation of the Provisional Irish Republican Army in 1969, and of Hamas in 1987, this chapter will show that the roots of both groups lie in three key factors: popular extremism, radical social mobilization, and a historical narrative of grievance. For political violence to be organized and sustained past rioting, there must be a mobilization of preexisting social networks towards the goal of sustained conflict. Such networks, besides offering material aid and recruitment for the terror organization, diffuse a message of radicalism throughout the community. Arguably the most enduring frame for this stated ideology is that of history; by framing the modern drivers of radicalism within the inequities of the past, terrorists can create a cogent, simple argument that will resonate with their host community. These factors reinforce one another, such that a historical narrative or mobilized social network helps augment popular radicalism. It is to the roots of this rage we now turn.

### **Incarceration Without Representation**

The rise of both Hamas and the Provisional IRA was directly preceded by a massive outpouring of spontaneous, collective anger within both communities and against the existing power structure. But though both organizations' stated strategic goal was that of a revanchist retaking of their respective homelands, the displacement of the Irish and Palestinian people was not the primary reason for the explosions of 1969 and 1987. In both conflicts, only a hardcore fringe fights *solely* to reunify Ireland or destroy the state of Israel; these fighters likely cannot be accommodated by any political integration.<sup>32</sup> Popular radicalization is the path of least resistance to organized terror, and can occur on three levels: individual, such as when a person is mistreated by soldiers or mistakenly arrested; community-neighborhood, as when there is aggressive patrolling of a neighborhood or rioting; and national, as when British troops were dispatched to Northern Ireland. In both Ireland and Palestine, the crucial factors in provoking radicalization sufficient to sustain a violent terror group were A. institutionalized repression, the factor Rashid Khalidi argues "guarantees Israel's eternal insecurity,"<sup>cxx</sup> B. the delegitimization of nonviolent means amidst rising expectations, and C. violence against Catholic and Arab communities.

### A. Institutionalized Repression

In both the Palestinian Territories and Northern Ireland, Palestinians and Catholics were deprived of effective political representation. The binding ideology of Northern Ireland's post-partition conservative unionism was of a "Protestant state

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<sup>32</sup> The hardcore IRA members who created the Real IRA, as well as the founders of Palestinian Islamic Jihad (which split from the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood in the early 1980s over its lack of militarism) are good examples of this hardcore, interested more in ideas than reality.

for a Protestant people” – a bedrock principle that would guide Northern Irish governance for almost fifty years. All six prime ministers who ruled in the North from 1920 to 1971 belonged to one party, the Ulster Unionists, and came from aristocratic backgrounds; both James Craig and Basil Brookeborough were viscounts, while Terence O’Neill, James Chichester-Clark, and Brian Faulkner were made barons. Given that the vast majority of Protestants were of working-class, Scot-Irish origins, such figures were not even representative of most unionists – a neglected population that would constitute the core of the Rev. Ian Paisley’s movement. The leadership of Northern Ireland prior to the outbreak of the Troubles was stagnant and reactionary, attempting to maintain neo-colonialism under the guise of democracy.

Unsurprisingly, the maintenance of Northern Ireland as an exclusionary, unionist canton resulted in pervasive discrimination. The Protestant community, constantly enmeshed by a “sense of siege” over their disloyal Catholic neighbors, institutionalized this injustice as a means of defense – by keeping Irish Catholics down, they could never drive Protestants into the sea.<sup>cxxi</sup> Among Catholics, this “defensive wall” was most vividly represented by the B Specials<sup>33</sup> and the Special Powers Act. A sixteen thousand strong, exclusively Protestant auxiliary police force, the B Specials<sup>cxxii</sup> were seen by Catholics as a “nakedly sectarian” organization, an

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<sup>33</sup> Seventeen B Specials would be among the first Unionist officials to be investigated for violent misconduct in Northern Ireland, following the August 1969 shooting death of Catholic factory worker John Gallagher in Armagh. The Scarman Tribunal, Britain’s official inquiry into the 1969 riots, found that the B Specials had fired into the crowd outside a civil rights meeting “with no justification,” excoriating the officers for lying about “firing from a crouching position with their guns at their hips.” **Source:** McKittrick, David, Brian Feeney, Seamus Kelters, and Chris Thornton. *Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles*. London: Mainstream, 1999. 37.

opportunity for neighborhood Protestants to harass Catholics one night a week.<sup>cxxiii</sup> The Special Powers Act was a draconian code of laws enabling Stormont to arrest and endlessly intern suspects without a warrant, ban organizations, and impose curfews.<sup>cxxiv</sup> The conditions of Northern Irish Catholics were meant to arrest any agitation that might overturn the Unionist applecart. Urban Catholics were crammed into dreary public housing projects and subject to staggering unemployment levels, while rural Catholics were left to eke out a pre-industrial living in agriculture, amidst familial land seized centuries ago by Protestants.<sup>cxxv</sup> This miserable treatment would ultimately not be able to prop up the Stormont system – but did make Catholics more amenable to tolerating the risks of civil instability, sectarian violence, and fiscal devastation.<sup>cxxvi</sup> Having already been proudly beggared by the existing political system, by 1969 several generations of Catholics had no real stake in Stormont – and therefore, no objection to its destruction.

The same discrimination was even more blatant in the West Bank and Gaza Strip of 1987. As described in this chapter's introduction, Palestinians had lived for two decades under military occupation, without even the spurious sheen of legitimacy Stormont brought to Northern Ireland. Occupation policies in the Territories reflected what every Israeli child had been taught in school: that Israel had been "a land without people for a people without land." This denial of the humanity and even existence of Palestinians helps to frame their barbaric treatment. For a nonexistent people, a lot of attention was paid by Israeli forces towards humiliating Palestinians. Ferried into Israel to work at subsistence wages,



Palestinians were treated as subhuman by their employers, humiliated at having to work on land they were acutely aware had been that of their ancestors. Hamas co-founder Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi recalled returning to the home his family had fled in 1948, only to find “a right-wing family living there ... the issue of forced exile from our homeland has had a profound effect on my thinking.”<sup>cxxvii</sup> Throughout the eighties, a warren of checkpoints, military patrols, and barbed wire walls choked off the ‘Territories’ inhabitants from one another. In 1981, Defense Minister Ariel Sharon initiated a policy ordering the IDF’s elite paratroopers<sup>34</sup> to harass, intimidate and humiliate suspected Palestinian militants, a tactic copied by checkpoint guards, particularly against students.<sup>cxxviii</sup> This abuse was meant to maintain stasis over the territories, as Israeli policymakers had never really figured out how to govern millions of resistant Palestinians. Lacking any political means through which Palestinians could address this mistreatment, Gaza became an unbearable prison.

### *B: Delegitimization of Nonviolent Means of Accommodation*

This institutionalized discrimination was integral to the radicalization of many average Palestinians and Catholics against the system. But this intellectual radicalization did not precede a widespread, violent radicalization of behavior. For four decades after the partition of Ireland, the IRA had been reduced to a shell of its

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<sup>34</sup> Special Forces paratroopers have had particularly aggressive reputations among Irish Catholics and Palestinians. In Northern Ireland, it was a paratrooper unit that was responsible for 1972’s Bloody Sunday massacre – an act that led to robust IRA targeting of such units, culminating in the deaths of sixteen members at Narrow Water Castle in 1979. In Israel, the hated “red beret” unit Sayeret Matkal has had a distinguished roster of alumni; Benjamin Netanyahu, Ehud Barak, and IDF chiefs of staff Moshe Ya’alon and Shaul Mofaz were all members.

former self, while in Palestine from 1967 on, little actual militancy originated from within the Occupied Territories. In both Stormont-era Northern Ireland and occupied Palestine, organized, sustained militancy took root only after multiple avenues of nonviolent accommodation for minorities had been discredited. When people have hope for nonviolent, political accommodation, radicalism wanes; polling of Palestinians in the late 1990s found enthusiastic support for the peace process and miniscule approval ratings of the anti-Oslo Hamas.<sup>cxxix</sup>

In the 1960s, Catholic resistance manifested itself through peaceful political agitation – an implicit acknowledgment of the legitimacy of the Northern Irish state to mitigate their grievances. Two paths seemed to offer this salvation: moderate, reformist unionism and civil rights agitation. By the 1960s, the Stormont system's cracks were starting to show, as some Unionists became aware of the untenability of the "Protestant state." John Beresford Ash, a Derry factory owner from one of the North's four oldest families, was one of the only major employers to hire Catholics<sup>cxxx</sup> in the nationalist's "capital city of injustice."<sup>cxxxi</sup> Ash would later recall warning fellow UUP members that "if the Protestant people didn't make some normal, reasonable concessions to normal, reasonable requests from Catholics, there was going to be big trouble ahead."<sup>cxxxii</sup>

Ash's warning seemed prophetic when in 1963 Captain Terence O'Neill became Prime Minister. A moderate unionist who had vaguely promised political reform for Catholics, O'Neill's ascension was followed in 1965 by the entry of the Northern Nationalist Party into Stormont as the official opposition. Within civil society, 1967 saw the founding of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association

(NICRA), an organization modeled upon African-American civil rights groups.<sup>cxviii</sup> These groups were fairly pragmatic in their reasoning arguing that if “Nationalists were obligated to be British citizens, they should have British rights.”<sup>cxv</sup> Even the Dublin-based, Marxist IRA of Cathal Goulding<sup>35</sup> was allured



by the non-violent protests.<sup>cxv</sup> O'Neill's (pictured right) apparent moderation of hardline unionism, in conjunction with the rise of peaceful civil rights protestors, seemed a sudden bright spot for Northern Irish Catholics. For a time in the late 1960s, it looked as if real political reform – capable of changing the very character of Northern Irish governance - was attainable.

These rising expectations belied a mirage. Reactionary unionists bent on propping up the same, homogenous political system destroyed both the unionist moderation and Catholic rights movement. O'Neill, whose proposed reforms were cautious at best and condescending at worst, was destroyed by his fellow Ulster Unionists; in 1969 Commerce Secretary and future PM Brian Faulkner resigned, sparking a three-way split of the party and O'Neill's resignation. The fall of O'Neill, as well as the subsequent reigns of conservatives Chichester-Clark and Faulkner, discredited the ability of Unionism to deliver any kind of compromise over the political role of Catholics in the state. By 1969 it was the rhetoric of the Reverend

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<sup>35</sup> The IRA of the 1960s was an extremely listless, poorly supplied organization with very little inclination or capability for violence. Ideologically, the leadership's idealistic Marxists, like Goulding and Englishman (!) Roy Johnston, were focused on trying to bind Protestants and Catholics together along class lines. This naïve, unpopular ideology, appalling ignorance of popular opinion, and lack of military organization would cause a great deal of rumbling. In 1969, the IRA's newly ascendant younger members and more conservative, religious traditionalists split from the group.

Ian Paisley that had come to resonate among Northern Ireland's working-class Protestants Unionists. Paisley (pictured below), an evangelical Presbyterian minister, was a fiery, fiercely anti-Catholic rabble-rouser. He had also excoriated



O'Neill for his overtures towards the Catholic community, lumping him together with moderate Protestant clerics as "the ecumenists both political and ecclesiastical who are selling us [out]." <sup>cxxxvi</sup>

Though the civil rights movement had attempted to work with O'Neill, their exhortations for pacifism grew increasingly tenuous as Paisleyite sectarianism against Catholics grew more and more intense. By the

riots of mid-1968 and the concomitant rise of sectarian attacks, peaceful solutions seemed hardly possible to many.

A study of post-1967 Palestine shows a similar advancement in the formation of a civil disobedience movement – a nonviolent vanguard that would be violently slapped down by official forces. For the first ten years of the occupation, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan's policy of "non-intervention" had allowed Palestinians to organize social or religious institutions – so long as the organizations were expressly apolitical and posed no threat to Israel. <sup>cxxxvii</sup> In fact, the legal sanctioning of such Islamist organizations was done in large part to create an internal Palestinian counterweight against PLO influence. <sup>cxxxviii</sup> A direct line can be drawn between the creation of such Islamist social organizations and Hamas, making this Israeli strategy a prime example of unwanted "blowback." Institutions of higher

education began operating in the territories, educating a new generation of Palestinians. The 1982 defeat of the PLO in Lebanon also provided political an opening for the *Ikhwan* in the territories.<sup>cxxxix</sup> Heavily involved in social welfare programs, in the mid-1980s the *Ikhwan* began focusing on political organization, via student and professional association elections. This strategy was explicitly nonviolent, a stance deeply informed by the *Ikhwan's* tension with the PLO and subscription to Islamic moral teachings.<sup>cxl</sup> *Ikhwan* elements would be crucial in organizing first peaceful, then violent resistance to the occupation.

From the start of the Intifada, protests could be characterized in two ways: violent riots and civil disobedience. The Israeli reaction to the civil disobedience ensured the rioters' vision would prevail in setting the tone of the Intifada. A frequent question posed by critics of the Palestinian national movement is, "Where is the Palestinian Nelson Mandela?"<sup>36</sup> Among the many activists involved in the Intifada, it seems like a few potential Mandelas existed – the most notable of which was psychologist Dr. Mubarak 'Awad (pictured right).<sup>37</sup> A Palestinian-Christian who had living in Jerusalem during the 1967 invasion, 'Awad had gone on to study in the U.S., earning his doctorate and working extensively with abused children. In 1984,

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<sup>36</sup> A 2006 editorial titled this, by former *New Republic* editor Michael Kinsley, is typical of this tendency for pundits to bemoan the absence of a "miraculously forgiving" Palestinian leader akin to Mandela. That Kinsley calls a comparison of Israeli policies to apartheid South Africa "bizarre" belies what most people with this viewpoint want: for a Palestinian leader to not challenge the creation of Israel as an injustice in and of itself. Further, Mandela was imprisoned for crimes he did commit – namely, a bombing campaign against government property carried out by his African National Congress. A future Palestinian leader will probably need, much like Gerry Adams, the credibility of such militancy to lead militants into government; imprisoned Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti comes to mind as a possibility. **Source:** Kinsley, Michael. "Where is the Palestinian Nelson Mandela?" *Guardian.co.uk*. 12 Dec. 2006. 13 Jan. 2009  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2006/dec/12/israel.comment>.

<sup>37</sup> AKA "Half-Nelsons."

amidst the “Iron Fist” strikes of the IDF, he had returned to the West Bank, founding the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence. The Centre, staffed by Palestinians and Israelis, had helped organize nonviolent resistance, whilst preaching of



the need for creating self-governing institutions as prelude to an independent government.<sup>cxli</sup> Many within the West Bank’s increasingly well-educated pool of activists took up Dr. ‘Awad’s cause, forming the pacifist umbrella group responsible for much of the early Intifada’s organization: the United National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU).<sup>cxlii</sup> UNLU was instrumental in organizing widespread tax resistance; territorial revenue dropped forty percent in six months.<sup>cxliii</sup> Boycotts, daily commercial strikes, the creation of “no-go” neighborhoods for Israeli troops, and public calls for Palestinians to stop working for Israelis further buttressed the Palestinian sense they were becoming independent.<sup>cxliv</sup>

It was not to be. While the rioters used stones, clubs and Molotov cocktails against Israeli vehicles and troops, activists studiously avoided using firearms – despite the presence of thousands of guns in the territories – as they were not felt to be necessary for victory.<sup>cxlv</sup> But by refusing to distinguish between protestors, the IDF destroyed any chance Palestinian pacifists had of restraining the radicalized populace. Against the protests of the United States, the nation’s biggest creditor and ally, in May 1988 Israel deported ‘Awad to America and shuttered *al-Fajr*, an East Jerusalem newspaper that had been a key agent in publicizing civil disobedience.<sup>cxlvi</sup> IDF troops shut down printers, forced shops to stay open during strikes, and

arrested scores of civilians.<sup>cxlvii</sup> While the Israeli escalation of violence in the territories did little to eliminate existing militancy, it radicalized many more and discredited pacifism as a fool's game. Imagine if Great Britain had deported Gandhi, and one might understand the cycle of violence that followed.

### *C: Violence Against Catholic/Palestinian Communities*

By 1969 in Northern Ireland, and by 1988 in Palestine, nonviolent efforts had failed to mitigate pervasive discrimination and maltreatment – the causes of widespread rioting. But it was violent repression by Israeli and Unionist forces delegitimized whatever popular good will remained towards using *solely* nonviolent means. Catholics and Palestinians, wanting badly to hit back, were radicalized such that terror was ripe to be sown.

Even amidst the relative calm of the mid-1960s, Northern Irish terrorists had been committing acts of political violence indicative of what was to come. The first murders of the Troubles arguably occurred in the summer of 1964, when two young men and a seventy-seven year old widow, all Catholic, were murdered in three separate incidents. The killers were members of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)<sup>38</sup>, a small, extremist Unionist group led by ex-soldier Augustus “Gusty” Spence.<sup>39</sup> By the late 1960s, civil rights marches were actively targeted by extreme unionist

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<sup>38</sup> That the UVF had chosen to resurrect the name of Edward Carson's pre-WWI volunteer militia speaks both to their members' egos and to the patriotic role they believed they were playing in protecting the Protestant state's integrity. The 1964 killings came a full five years before the IRA killed a police officer and seven before they murdered Gunner Robert Curtis – the first British soldier to die in the Troubles. The UVF would also be the first terror group to kill a policeman – Constable Richard Arbuckle, a Protestant, in 1969. Arbuckle's Catholic partner, Sgt. Dermot Hurley, was later murdered by the IRA in 1971. **Source:** McKittrick, *Lost Lives*, 42.

<sup>39</sup> Spence would, after being released from prison, move towards peace, helping create the loyalist ceasefire of 1994.

associations like the Peep O'Day Boys, intimidating mainstream supporters into staying home while emboldening the movement's fringes to provoke. An October 1968 march in Derry – one of the most Balkanized of the North's cities<sup>40</sup> - ended with the RUC clubbing eight-six demonstrators into the hospital; among the beaten was Westminster Nationalist MP Gerry Fitt.<sup>cxlviii</sup> The summer of 1969 saw the worst riots in Northern Ireland's history; British troops were dispatched for the first time to Northern Ireland as 1.6 percent of Belfast households were forced to move – the biggest forced population movement in Europe since the Second World War.<sup>41</sup>

The initially welcome reception of British troops soon soured amidst allegations they had done nothing to prevent a Protestant mob from burning down Bombay Street, a Catholic neighborhood.<sup>cxlix</sup> By the end of 1969, much of what NICRA stood for – pressuring the state through non-violent means to improve the treatment of Catholics – seemed positively quaint, as mobs burned down entire Catholic neighborhoods with apparent impunity. The 1972 Bloody Sunday shootings, in which British paratroopers shot and killed 13 unarmed civil rights marchers during a NICRA rally in Derry, would spell the death knell for nonviolent protest as the most prominent means of resistance.

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<sup>40</sup> Derry's Protestant neighborhoods are largely enclosed by a massive stone wall dating back to the 1600s, a barrier that had withstood a 1688 siege by the Catholic King James against the Protestant King William of Orange. The "Maiden City's" wall overlooks the riverside Catholic slum unappealingly known as "the Bogside"; the annual Orange Order march through the city culminates in Protestants throwing coins at the Bogside from the city ramparts. **Source:** *Moloney, Ed. A Secret History of the IRA.* New York: W.W. Norton, 2002. 63-64.

<sup>41</sup> The riots killed eight in two days. Among the casualties were two of the IRA'S first victims – both Protestant civilians – and a nine year old boy, shot through his bedroom wall by an RUC high-velocity bullet "completely inappropriate for use in a heavily populated urban area." **Source:** *Ibid*, 71.



In Palestine, Israeli forces similarly botched their reaction to the Intifada by responding with force first. Despite the legendary Israeli General Moshe Dayan's 1967 warning that "the one thing you cannot do is humiliate these people,"<sup>42</sup> such abasement has proven an enduring Israeli response to Palestinian restiveness.<sup>cl</sup> The early fifties had seen the formation of Unit 101, an IDF commando force led by Ariel Sharon;<sup>cli</sup> the Unit's brief had been to carry out reprisal attacks following terrorist incidents.<sup>43</sup> As in other pre-Intifada bouts of repression, such as 1982 and 1985's "Iron Fist" crackdowns, Israel's brutal tactics had further radicalized Palestinians.<sup>clii</sup> In keeping with Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin's order to "break [protestors'] hands and legs,"<sup>cliii</sup> the IDF opted to get tough on the Palestinians – literally enforcing a "beating policy" that led to several deaths and permanent disabilities.<sup>cliv</sup>

By January 1988, three divisions of IDF troops were in Palestine, unequipped for crowd or riot control; seizing upon loosened definitions of permissible fire, many IDF soldiers grew trigger-happy.<sup>clv</sup> Borrowing a tactic from Northern Ireland, soldiers began also using rubber bullets, which killed eighty-two civilians in one year. Another Anglo policy, adopted from the British Mandate, was the destruction of houses and sealing off of villages.<sup>clvi</sup> Checkpoints choked off free movement and transport, while their guards frequently humiliated, held up or even beat Palestinians; the only rule of access through them, writes Richard Ben Cramer, is

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<sup>42</sup> Dayan was no dove; an ardent hawk well-known for his eye patch, Dayan was the mastermind of the 1967 War, which captured the Golan Heights, Gaza, the West Bank, and the Sinai. Dayan also had little to say about what to do with the territories, once explaining that he was "waiting for a phone call" from the Arab nations. **Source:** Cramer, Richard Ben. *How Israel Lost: The Four Questions*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004. 94.

<sup>43</sup> In 1953, following a Palestinian raid on Israel, Sharon and Unit 101 razed the West Bank village of Qibya, killing around seventy civilians and prompting international outrage. **Source:** Cramer, Richard Ben. *How Israel Lost: The Four Questions*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004. 97.

that “there are no rules – or no rules that were the same rules yesterday.”<sup>clvii</sup>

Combined, these efforts of collective punishment were designed to break any will of the Palestinians to agitate – violently or not – for political change. Amidst all of this repression, an IDF intelligence officer posted in Gaza observed:

“The hundreds, perhaps thousands of people left in plaster casts by Israeli soldiers will translate into thousands of others who will wish to avenge them: fathers who have seen their sons clubbed, and children who watched in terror as their fathers were clubbed.”<sup>clviii</sup>

The destruction visited upon Northern Ireland and Palestine following their respective uprisings of 1969 and 1987 would radicalize the civilian population towards an unprecedented militancy. Having discredited nonviolent alternatives as ineffectual and done nothing to mitigate the outbursts’ root causes, Unionist and Israeli forces would soon experience the tragic, bloody “blowback” of the cycle of violence they helped spin.

### **People Persons: The IRA and Hamas’s Embryonic Social Networks**

Just as a congressman’s electoral chances depend on his district’s opinions, the level of radicalization and popular support for militarism within the group’s base community is a decisive factor in the genesis of terrorism. As James Piscatori writes, Hamas “must lead but cannot outpace popular sentiment”<sup>clix</sup> within its host communities. This radicalized sentiment, however, does not necessarily translate into a radicalization of behavior, even if there is widespread demand for violence. While there will always be fringe extremists bent on militarism, it is logistically and psychologically difficult for a broad swathe of individuals to foment the planned

killing of fellow human beings. As the IRA “Green Book” training manual states, “It is not an easy thing to take up a gun and go out to kill some person without strong convictions ... convictions which are strong enough to give him confidence to kill someone without hesitation and without regret.”<sup>clx</sup> For this to occur, people must be organized and mobilized by the embryonic core of terrorist groups – preexisting social networks.

If there is one sure pattern to who is radicalized sufficiently to engage in terrorism, it is that of diversity. Terrorists can be charismatic and well-educated, like philosophy professor Abimael Guzman,<sup>44</sup> or lisping and barely literate, like high school dropout Andreas Baader.<sup>45</sup> They can be born wealthy, like construction scion Osama Bin Laden, or humble, like pig farmer and IRA godfather Thomas ‘Slab’ Murphy.<sup>46</sup> In short, these men share few personal characteristics that could be isolated as ‘terrorist’ traits. This variance in personal characteristics dispels the notion that terrorist brutality is something innate; what connects these people to terror is the radicalization they share with others, linked to them through

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<sup>44</sup> Guzman, the leader of Peru’s Maoist Shining Path group, was arrested in 1992 while living above a ballet studio in Lima; he was a longtime aficionado of the art.

<sup>45</sup> After visiting an incarcerated Baader in 1974, philosopher Jean Paul Sartre would privately describe the West German Red Army Faction leader as “incredibly stupid” and “an asshole.”

<sup>46</sup> Murphy’s criminal activities were only vaguely referred to until “Slab’s” 1998 libel suit; a Dublin jury concluded he was both a gangster and a terrorist. As detailed in Toby Harnden’s Bandit Country, through the course of his IRA career Murphy has become one of the wealthiest criminals in Great Britain, and is alleged to have real estate holdings throughout Europe. His farm, which straddles the Irish border at Hackballcross, Co. Armagh, has proven an enduring smuggling station for livestock, cigarettes, gasoline, counterfeit goods and liquor. Bin Laden has presumably had a more unprofitable terror career, although he has made pains to justify drug trafficking as a continuation of jihad against the West.

overlapping social networks. No man is an island, and a look at each of these terrorists reveals a web of social connections that helped mobilize their militancy.<sup>47</sup>

### *Familial Networks: Extremism as Family Heirloom*

As previously mentioned, in the lengthy periods of IRA inactivity following the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921, familial ties between ardently Republican families constituted the hardcore of the Irish nationalist movement – and provided nascent Provisional IRA members with credibility. Such families as the Burnses, Gouldings, Carahers, Murphys, Hannaways, and Adamses were heavily intermarried, as a result of the incarceration of many of their young male members – by the time they were free, the only women who would or could marry them were their comrades’ sisters.<sup>clxi</sup> Gerry Adams was the product of one such “royal” union, between Gerry Adams Sr. and Annie Hannaway – both enthusiastic IRA members.<sup>clxii</sup> The heavily storied lineages of these figures played a key role in giving the breakaway IRA “street cred” among potential supporters, aiding their efficacy in mobilizing violent resistance.

The dense familial networks and clans of Gaza provided a similar mobilizing springboard for Hamas terrorism. Israeli government studies have confirmed this line of thinking, finding that the most common reason for suicide bombings is a radicalizing incident in the bomber’s past – most often involving the mistreatment of both the bomber and his family members. Whether it is a beaten father, a

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<sup>47</sup> Bin Laden’s old university teacher Abdullah Yusuf Azzam provided the young construction scion entry into financing the Afghan Mujahedeen. Murphy was born into an IRA-connected family in a tightly knit community of Republican farmers. Guzman’s colleagues in the Peruvian Communist Party and at San Cristóbal de Huamanga University helped him go underground in the mid-1970s. For Baader, girlfriend Gudrun Ensslin provided the young thug access to West Germany’s radical leftist student movement.

disrespected mother, a slain brother, or mistreatment at a checkpoint, familial considerations can play a large role in mobilizing an individual to act.<sup>clxiii</sup> When others in the family are already behaving violently, the mobilization becomes even simpler. The case of Gaza's "Mother of Martyrs," Mariam Farhat, is such a case in point; a mother of ten, all six of her sons had joined militant groups. Two were killed during or while planning terror attacks, one was imprisoned in Israel, and one had blown his hand off with a grenade.<sup>clxiv</sup> Familial ties, especially brother to brother, appear to be a highly mobilizing relationship towards radicalism in Palestine.

### *Social Networks: Educational, Professional, and Religious Ties*

In both Northern Ireland and Palestine, the Under the 1967-1977 policy of "non-intervention" by Israeli forces into civil society, higher education flourished in Palestine, starting with the opening of the largely secular Bir Zeit University in 1972 and continuing with the founding of Gaza's Islamic University in 1978.<sup>clxv</sup> But by the 1980s, Israel, concerned their "non-intervention" had given Palestinians time to organize a credible opposition to the occupation, began a process of "de-development" in the territories. While this policy was most tangibly embodied in the ruinous agricultural tariffs visited on Palestinian farmers, among the hardest hit were Palestine's college graduates. While college graduates of the 1970s, such as Rantissi and Zahar, had been able to find jobs and carve out a middle class existence, by the 1980s only twenty percent of degree holders had jobs, with many of them badly underemployed.<sup>clxvi</sup> One of the personal networks binding together this underclass of knowledgeable, frustrated Palestinians was that of influential student associations. The Islamist contestation of these unions' elections would provide

many future Hamas members their first taste of politics. Former PM Ismail Haniyeh was a student leader at Gaza's Islamic University – itself a nexus for countless Hamas members' personal connections to the movement – while Khaled Mesha'al was already involved in student political organization in 1971, as a teenager at Kuwait's Abdullah al-Salim Secondary School.<sup>clxvii</sup> This educated underclass would provide the majority of activists for all of the Intifada's political factions – including a budding Hamas.

In the Northern Ireland of the 1960s, there existed a remarkably similar dynamic to that of education in Palestine, where rising expectations of prosperity were dashed on the shoals of institutionalized repression. The post-WWII ascension of British Labour PM Clement Attlee saw a significant shift towards democratic socialism, as evidenced by extensive industrial nationalization and the creation of the National Health Service. But one of Attlee's most radical policies was the opening of college to working class children, by creating an intelligence test called the Eleven Plus that would stream the smartest children into higher education. But even as more and more Northern Irish Catholics received high quality high school and even college educations, the Stormont discrimination machine prevented this schooling from translating into upward mobility.<sup>clxviii</sup> The result was that many intelligent Irish Catholics who had done well in school were forced into substandard jobs, living with their parents and in public housing projects for much of their early adulthood. Such was the fate of many of the IRA's most important members; Gerry Adams worked part-time as a bartender after leaving school, while Martin McGuinness was unemployed until joining the IRA in 1970. In both Palestine and

Northern Ireland, a significantly large network of educated, politically-minded schoolmates were partially radicalized in the face of institutionalized discrimination. Such intelligent young people would provide both Hamas and the IRA high-quality human capital.

Of the civil organizations that formed in this interim, none were as effective in organizing Palestinians as the burgeoning *Ikhwan*, the Gazan offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. Many *Ikhwan* leaders were prominent middle class figures, men who had received a college education in the 1970s and, unlike their successors, parlayed their education into respectable careers. At the hub of these *Ikhwan*-related professional and social networks was Sheikh Yassin's *al-Mjamma' al-Islami* (Islamic Complex or Compound) and *al-Jam'iyyah al-Islam'iyyah* (Islamic Association). Both Khan Yunis-based organizations were founded in the mid-1970s as social welfare organizations, administering to refugees and the urban poor.<sup>clxix</sup> Occupation authorities licensed these organizations in an effort to divide the PLO; Israeli money also flowed indirectly into the organization's coffers.<sup>clxx</sup> According to a U.S. government official, even after Yassin's turn towards militancy, some Likudist politicians bizarrely continued to advocate aid to Hamas - as it would ensure an anti-peace process Palestinian opposition.<sup>clxxi</sup>

The center soon began attracting Islamist professionals. An excellent student, Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi won a college scholarship in 1965, graduating from Egypt's Alexandria University in 1972 with a master's degree in pediatrics.<sup>clxxii</sup> After leaving Egypt in 1976 with a Ph.D, Rantissi, now working at Khan Yunis's Nasser Hospital, joined the *Ikhwan* and helped administrate several Islamic and medical charity

groups.<sup>clxxiii</sup> It was in this capacity Rantissi grew familiar with Sheikh Yassin and his Islamic Compound, helping to coordinate the group's charity works. After several run-ins with Israeli authorities in the early 80s over tax avoidance, Rantissi's clinic was shut down, and in 1986, he was barred from working as a doctor. Upon reestablishing himself as a lecturer at the Compound-linked Islamic University, Rantissi thereafter became deeply involved in Gaza's Islamist movement, and was one of the seven leaders to formally found Hamas in December 1987.

Rantissi was not alone in this process of mobilization through his social and professional networks. Upon graduating in the early 80s with a degree in Islamic Education from Al-Quds Open University, Said Siam began working as a teacher in several UNRWA schools; coordinating with Yassin's organizations over education in Gaza would mark Siam's entry into Yassin's circle.<sup>clxxiv</sup> After joining Hamas in the late 80s as one of its first members, Siam assumed leadership of his local teacher's union during the First Intifada, while leading a Hamas unit tasked with uncovering and executing Israeli spies.<sup>clxxv</sup>

Finally, after a five-year residency at Ain Shams University in Cairo, in 1976 Dr. Mahmoud al-Zahar returned to Gaza, taking a position alongside Rantissi at the newly founded Islamic University's Department of Medicine.<sup>clxxvi</sup> A longtime member of the Palestinian *Ikhwan*, Zahar first gained prominence in Islamic circles when in 1981, as head of the Gaza doctors' professional association, he led a strike over the Israeli imposition of VAT on the Occupied Territories.<sup>clxxvii</sup> Subsequently, along with much of the Islamic University faculty, Zahar was an early member of Hamas following its 1987 foundation.<sup>clxxviii</sup> These men, who would come to



constitute the highest of the upper echelons within Hamas, had been mobilized in behavioral radicalism through the influence of their peers – just as surely as any child throwing stones. The difference was these men would normally have been upstanding middle class citizens; with such enemies ranged against them, Israel should have been more judicious in attempting to stanch the occupation’s radicalizing effects.

### *Preexisting Militant Networks: The Hard-Core At Work*

While the restiveness of 1968-1969 initially spawned largely disorganized violence, preexisting social networks within Northern Ireland’s Catholic community came to constitute the skeleton around which the versatile, long-lasting, and resourceful Provisional IRA formed. While most of the connections that came to mobilize Catholics towards terrorism were of innocuous social networks, the preexisting and ineffectual IRA provided the operational core of the Provisionals. This network is unique from the other mobilizing social webs of Northern Ireland in that its members had already been radicalized sufficiently to engage in subversive, clandestine action against the state. By the late 1960s, the IRA was a seriously schizophrenic organization, a characteristic that belies the internal diversity of the Irish Republican movement. Led by Cathal Goulding, the Dublin-based leadership had taken a hard turn left, completely ignoring the growing sectarianism in Northern Ireland in favor of Stalinist “stages theory”– an “enthusiasm unshared by most of the galaxy.”<sup>clxxix</sup> In December 1969, amidst widespread radicalization over the burgeoning violence of the past two years, opposition to this trend, Northern IRA members broke off and formed a splinter group. Among this splinter group, a

significant sub-network had been that of imprisoned IRA activists; for neither the first nor last time, prison would provide a strategic crucible in which long-term IRA strategy would be hashed out. Ultimately, the Official IRA provided some of the most active initial mobilizers of popular, radical behavior – a formal confederation to complement the more personal ties of Republican families and social associations.

In Palestine, the main model for militancy had been Fatah and the PLO, which by the late eighties was as creaky and rusted as an old Soviet tank. The organizers of Hamas, coming out of the networks of Islamist activists mentioned above, showed caution and judicious thinking in orchestrating the beginnings of terror operations. The “Iron Fist” collective punishment strikes of 1982 and 1985 had been rehearsal for the December 1987 formal establishment of Hamas in response to the First Intifada. In the interim periods of 1982-1985 and 1986-1988, organizers had had time to set up semi-legal clandestine networks capable of integrating newly radicalized activists into clandestine factions.<sup>clxxx</sup> Yassin had actually imported arms in the mid-1980s – which he did not use - in preparation for creating a terror group, to be staffed by the same people who would found Hamas in 1987. While unlike the IRA, this network of would-be terrorists was not out in the open, it did exist – Saleh Shehade, who had met Yassin in Al Majdel prison, knew by October 1987 he would spend the rest of his life as leader of Hamas’s military wing.<sup>clxxxi</sup>

### **The Tide of History**

The third and final factor is one of history: the practical operation of Hamas and the IRA is deeply informed by utopian ideals of nationalism and history - and vice versa. This is a powerfully resonant linkage for the alienated and angry, and

turns individual grievances into something much more dangerous: a cause. While the expressed strategic goal of the IRA was the reunification of Ireland, it was not the primary driving force for the group's popularity; that would be the violent political repression of the Stormont system and British occupation. In 2000, U.K. Deputy Foreign Minister Peter Hain admitted: "[Stormont] was an unsustainable settlement, the Protestant majority ... ruling oppressively in a devolved administration and denying the Catholic minority basic human rights."<sup>clxxxiii</sup> The founders of both the IRA and Hamas merely stoked and directed this minority's inchoate popular rage towards electrifying their fledgling terror groups. Tactical strikes against the perceived representatives of that alienation – soldiers, policemen, judges, politicians, loyalist terrorists, criminals,<sup>48</sup> or merely civilians – served to channel that rage.

As evidenced by the decades of political stagnancy and misrepresentation preceding the Intifada, these acts of violence did not occur in a vacuum. The institutionalized discrimination and statelessness of both the Occupied Territories and the Stormont system had its origins in ethnic cleansing – eight hundred and fifty

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<sup>48</sup> Throughout its existence, both the IRA and Hamas have engaged in the "punishment beatings" or killings of numerous criminals – particularly drug dealers. In the First Intifada, Sheikh Yassin created special squad designated with the job of enforcing Islamic-inspired anti-alcohol, prostitution, and drug policies in the territories. That such repression was widely popular and was eventually scaled back speaks to Hamas's willingness to remain in tune with public opinion – even when confronted over Islamic values. In the months leading up to the 1994 IRA ceasefire, there actually seems to have prompted a slight uptick in IRA violence. They were intent on settling scores and eliminating troublemakers before the ceasefire would preclude the option. Under the cover name "Direct Action Against Drugs," the IRA killed around a dozen major Irish drug lords in the nineties. In the run-up to the 1994 ceasefire, the IRA murdered Dublin's biggest gangster, Martin "The General" Cahill, as well as several prominent, especially-hated loyalists, such as prolific UDA hitmen Raymond Elder and Joe Bratty. This sordid violence speaks to the weakness a total ceasefire places militants in; the killings were largely to settle scores and scare off potential troublemakers through a show of force. **Source:** McKittrick, David, Brian Feeney, Seamus Kelters, and Chris Thornton. *Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles*. London: Mainstream, 1999. 1371-1373.

years ago in Ireland, a century ago in Palestine. In Palestine, this violent privileging of one people over another thereafter manifested itself in expulsion and brutal military occupation, as well as social and economic exploitation. In Northern Ireland, those Irish Catholics left behind were forced to contend with a government that not only practiced, but flaunted their contempt for “Papists.” Such trauma appears to weigh heavily on Hamas members, even today. As high-ranking Hamas member Mahmoud al-Zahar once explained, “our movement fights on because we cannot allow the foundational crime at the core of the Jewish state ... to slip out of the world consciousness, forgotten or negotiated away.”<sup>clxxxiii</sup>

Yet, despite the fundamental injustice of each post-WWI disenfranchisement, violence was not the inevitable apotheosis Irish Catholics and Palestinian grievances. How else to explain why militant revanchism failed to mobilize widespread radical behavior among Palestinians and the Irish before 1987 and 1969, respectively? The IRA had existed in some form since 1905, and the PLO had been operating since the sixties; were radicalization merely the output of anti-colonial rage, wouldn't these groups have sustained high levels of violence for their entire existence? Despite their efforts to frame the conflict as a war of national liberation, only the nationalist hardcore's behavioral radicalization was the result of such ideas of liberty. The nonviolent civil rights movements and political aspirations of minorities in both Northern Ireland and Palestine had to be shunted aside and repressed before a wide swathe of civilians began to sympathize with terrorism.

The ideological achievement of both the IRA and Hamas has been to incorporate this repression of today into a narrative of deep grievance, stretching

back to William of Orange or King Herod. By framing the “Troubles” and both Intifadas as a continuation of this crime that began during the British Mandate or the Norman invasion, the emergent leaders of Hamas and the IRA have successfully imbued their violent ideology with a sense of destiny. When reasonably intelligent people seriously view suicide bombings as a victory for the Palestinian people, there’s no going back.

### **Conclusion: Doomed to Repeat It**

By turning their wars into the last, best chance to liberate their nation, IRA and Hamas leaders A. dehumanized its stated enemies as oppressive colonists, enabling the tenuous link in Cromwell, and B. gave a sense of honor and patriotism to its political violence, glossing over the horrific senselessness of their terror campaigns. If there is an informal principle guiding the content of this thesis, it is that, when it comes to the knotty issues that radicalize people, such as economic and racial discrimination, political repression, and violent suppression, things can always get worse. If militant groups such as Hamas and the PIRA are able to coalesce and prosper, something is already rotten in the state of Denmark. At the robustly argued core of this paper is the ardent belief that once the pernicious and mutually reinforcing cycles of ethnic violence begin spinning, compromise over the ground rules and the political integration of as much of the terror network as possible are the only equitable solutions. There is no tactical solution to this political problem.



## Chapter Three: Dead Draw

### *Inside Hamas, the IRA, and the Futility of Terror*

*"You don't confront people. You isolate and marginalize them and then get rid of them."*

*-Attributed to Gerry Adams, early 1970s<sup>clxxxiv</sup>*

*"First we must deal with the Muslims who speak of a peace process and  
then we will deal with Israel."*

*-The late Sheikh Nizar Rayyan, 2006<sup>clxxxv</sup>*

*"The activists from a few other hardline border areas could see that the growth of Sinn  
Fein was going to mean to end of the IRA in the long run."*

*-Eamon Collins, 1997<sup>clxxxvi</sup>*

*"When Yassin was released, an Israeli journalist [Haaretz reporter Amira Hass] said to me: You as Hamas profited from the attempted assassination of Khaled Meshaal. I told him: We always profit from the mistakes of your leaders."*

*–Slain Hamas leader Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi<sup>clxxxvii</sup>*

## **Introduction: 'Kerrygold'**

**In East London**, at 7:00 p.m. on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 1996, seventeen months into a ceasefire by the Provisional Irish Republican Army that many thought had ended "The Troubles," a one and a half ton bomb exploded near Canary Wharf Tower.<sup>clxxxviii</sup> The blast was foreshadowed by two coded warnings referencing the Irish butter brand Kerrygold, an erstwhile target of British and Unionist boycotts, now employed in a ghastly joke. The explosion, loud enough to be felt a mile away, killed two news vendors, Inam Bashir and John Jeffries, caused £150 million in property damage, and struck at a symbol of Britain's economic revitalization for the second time in a year. Carried out by the South Armagh Brigade, the IRA's deadliest and most clannish unit, and overseen by its enigmatic leader, Thomas 'Slab' Murphy, the bombing followed an extremely tense fifteen months of uneasy peace from the increasingly fractious IRA. But ceasefires had historically spelled trouble for the group's military capabilities, as units grew careless and leaky, arms were captured, and popular sentiment warmed towards the prospect of sustained peace. By early 1996, IRA hardliners, fearful the center of gravity had shifted towards the IRA's political wing, Sinn Fein, swayed the ruling Army Council toward a resumption of violence.<sup>clxxxix</sup> This hawkish faction, who constituted the bulk of the IRA in the North's "Border Counties" and the Republic of Ireland, would constitute the greatest impediment to continued political negotiation.<sup>cxc</sup>

Two key factions had emerged in increasing enmity over the course of the ceasefire. Followers of Sinn Fein leader/high-ranking IRA official Gerry Adams's "Tactical Use of Armed Struggle" strategy viewed a ceasefire as "obliged" in their ongoing strategy of rapprochement with moderate Irish nationalists, such as the SDLP's John Hume in the North and PM Albert Reynolds in the South.<sup>cxci</sup> The thrust had brought several notable successes, the most spectacular being the November 1995 visit of President Bill Clinton to Belfast. Standing together in the city's most pro-IRA neighborhood, the Falls Road, Clinton shook Adams' hand, a moment clandestinely captured by several



photographers (pictured right).<sup>cxcii</sup> But such tiptoeing towards a new consensus in Northern Irish politics was dependent on keeping discontent among rank-and-file IRA members to a minimum.<sup>cxci</sup> These "physical-force" republicans, the triggermen who employed the now-dumped arms to such deadly effect, had been sidelined by the IRA's upper echelons, and were grumbling over their marginalization. Repeatedly assuring these volunteers that the "military option was still viable," that conflict would resume, and that the open display of dissatisfaction would only benefit unionist forces, the IRA had maintained an uneasy internal peace.<sup>cxci</sup>

Adams had been forced to walk a tightrope. The source of his legitimacy within the nationalist community was his unimpeachable reputation as a militant who had directed violence against unionist forces. Publicly, Adams has always maintained in interviews and multiple autobiographies that he was never a member



of the IRA,<sup>cxcv</sup> positing Sinn Fein to have been “often lumped erroneously together” with the IRA.<sup>cxcvi</sup> In truth, he had joined the IRA in the late sixties, following the Provisionals in the 1969 split and rising to the position of Belfast commander. In 1972, Adams made his name masterminding the Four Square Laundry shootings, an IRA strike against three front businesses used by the British Army; the attacks killed five intelligence officers.<sup>cxcvii</sup> The community of generally lower-class Irish nationalists such violence appealed to would not support any peace overtures that smacked of capitulation, and Adams needed such a base from which he could negotiate with British and American leaders. But in order for negotiations to have any chance of success, Adams also had to project an image of accommodation and moderation – an implicitly non-violent persona. Even that fall, as Adams roared to a Belfast crowd that the IRA “haven’t gone away” and that its supporters could still take “the streets,” senior aide Tom Hartley attended a commemoration for Anglo-Irish casualties of World War II. No self-respecting nationalist had ever so recognized Irishmen who had served under British martial auspices; throughout the Troubles, such Catholic members of the security forces were vigorously targeted for assassination.<sup>cxcviii</sup> But with the Docklands bomb, the tightrope the Adams camp was perched upon had snapped.

At the moment the anonymous caller casually warned an *Irish Times* reporter of a “massive bomb beside South Quay station,”<sup>cxcix</sup> the IRA’s internal balance of power once again shifted towards the tactical allure of terrorism. Sinn Fein’s nascent amenability toward compromise and the agonizingly tangible prospect of peace had suffered a major setback. At the age of twenty-seven, the IRA remained a

capable terror group unlikely to disappear – and unable to achieve their strategic goal of Irish reunification. Locked in a military stalemate, Docklands at once shows the adaptability and strength of the IRA, as well as the difficulty of breaking the vicious cycle of conflict. No matter the brilliancy or cunning of IRA attacks, the fact remained – they were locked in a dead draw, and needed to change the game.

### **The Internal IRA And Hamas – And Their Implications**

Hamas and the IRA, in their middle age, look very different from the organizations described in Chapter Two. While both soon emerged as the “MVPs” of their respective conflicts, the story of the IRA following the introduction of direct British rule in 1972 is one of decidedly less passion. In short, while both groups remained capable, deadly, and supported following the years of the most widespread, acute violence, both were subject to several paradoxes. By the mid-‘70s it must have been painfully obvious that though successful terrorist attacks sustained the logistical integrity, mystique and reputation of the IRA, they would never achieve their stated strategic goal: “Brits out.” In addition, the IRA’s biggest recruiting tool remained official overreaction and repression by British and unionist security apparatuses. But as the British tempered this irrationality in the late ‘80s, the IRA began seeing diminishing returns. If the IRA of the late seventies and eighties were a car, mechanically, it was running fine – but with four flat tires, it wasn’t going to accomplish anything beyond idling.

How then to explain the mechanics of this stalemate? To quote British novelist Graham Greene, the IRA had advocated “violence in favour of an ideal”; but with that ideal unattainable, the IRA had left “the violence just going on.” What

factors help to explain this “going on” by the IRA – and what can this tell us about the isolated, post-Gaza War Hamas? Three main factors seem to drive and nourish the militancy of both groups, even in the absence of any reasonable expectation of strategic victory. A refined comprehension of these factors should provide substantial analytical value for understanding how the inexplicable locomotion of terror is sustained. First, the very commission of the struggle between terrorists and counterterrorists tends to exacerbate popular radicalization – the lifeblood of militancy - rather than mitigate it. As democrats, the leaders of both Israel and Great Britain are even more subject to the rigors of popular opinion than those of Hamas and the IRA. Fearful of looking “weak” in the face of terrorism, by entrusting the primary responsibility for counterterrorism to the military, generations of British and Israeli leaders have doomed their people to continued conflict, through overreaction. This is a very difficult, vicious cycle to break, and ultimately requires restraint and a political settlement to stay the dogs of war.

The most crucial factor in explaining the longevity of Hamas and the IRA is that of each group’s internal structure, a unique attribute strikingly similar between the two. As a consensus-based coalition of competing factions, both organizations are uniquely responsive to external and internal opinion – a safety valve on possible fissures that has helped bolster the integrity of their organization. Second, the continued success of terrorist groups depends upon their ability to continue to “deliver” – to sustain their reputation and capabilities as a military force. Tactical “successes,” be they the shooting of a retired policeman, the launching of a rocket at Sderot, or the mortaring of 10 Downing Street, helps with recruitment, boosts

internal morale, and sharpens discipline. This deliverability likely diminishes over time, owing increasing deftness in counterterrorism, but cannot be totally quashed due to the internal structure factor.

This chapter will attempt to show the nature of the “dead draw” that eventually ensnared the IRA, and which Hamas faces today. “Dead Draw” will first show what Hamas and the IRA are *not*, thereby bolstering the argument that these three factors are crucial to the pair’s sustained success. It will also take pains to show why military stalemate is a two-way street, and why the strategic impotence of terror has not imperiled the popularity or abilities of either group. By understanding how the structures and dynamic of conflict can keep violence going, even in the absence of strategic relevance, perhaps we can better understand how to stop it.

### **Apples and Oranges**

As Chapter Two elucidated, both Hamas and the IRA congealed within the crucible of political unrest and instability. This is a common enough origin for extremist groups, as evidenced by the glut of Vietnam-era leftist terror groups formed by students in Western democracies. But unlike those groups, such as France’s Action Directe, the U.S.’s Weather Underground, or Italy’s Red Brigades, Hamas and the IRA survived and prospered past the first few years of conflict. The reason is that while the aforementioned “boutique terrorists” were rigidly ideological fringe groups of marginal popularity even within the far left, Hamas and the IRA emerged from a broadly radicalized populace, with widespread sympathy for their actions. A useful way to begin analyzing these two long-lasting, adaptable

terror groups is to compare them to other deadly but less sustainable terror groups, operating within a democracy. Germany's Marxist Baader-Meinhof group shows us the crucial nature of popular opinion and radicalizing official overreaction to the success of terror groups, while Japan's Aum Shinrikyo doomsday cult shows the importance of a broad-based internal leadership.

Radical Marxist militancy was the most predominant strain of terrorism for much of the seventies, signified by a colorful network of far-leftist groups, spanning the world in a global, anti-imperialist struggle. While many of these militant groups were broad-based, Third World-ist movements, such as Ho Chi Minh's Viet Minh or

Yasser Arafat's PLO, a substantial subset were small, student-led groups operating in wealthy, Western-style democracies. Just as the Weather Underground spawned from the U.S. antiwar movement of the sixties, so the Baader-Meinhof group was distilled from the fringes mainstream student activism. Also known as the "Red Army Faction," the organization (pictured left), led by former journalist Ulrike Meinhof and petty criminal



Andreas Baader, advocated the destruction of West Germany and its replacement with a Marxist state. With informal ties to the East German Stasi and PLO, in late 1977, RAF violence culminated in a series of assassinations and hijackings known as the "German Autumn."<sup>cc</sup>

The Baader-Meinhof group was certainly deadly, and even displayed some

tactical cunning in their kidnapping operations. Further, the organization's targeting of particularly unsympathetic victims, such as former Nazi industrialist Hanns-Martin Schleyer, spoke to their awareness of the importance of popular support. However, the RAF was no IRA or Hamas. The 1977 arrests of the remnants of West Germany's Red Army Faction, and the mysterious prison deaths of Baader and chief lieutenant Gudrun Ensslin, spelled the effective end of the group's "long march through the institutions."<sup>cci</sup> Why was this decapitation successful? Though, like the IRA and Hamas, their stated strategic goal was totally unrealistic, the RAF's crucial weakness was that their efforts enjoyed miniscule public support. Baader's reign of terror shocked the sensibilities of the German public and mobilized popular opinion against the attackers. This immolating backlash spelled a natural end to the group; the aims of both were not just radical, but more importantly, were completely *unpopular*. With no possible expectation of widespread support, given the lack of popular radicalization, the group was smashed.

What of an extremely large terror group, with arguably the most terrifying collection of privately created weapons the world has ever seen? By the mid-nineties, the Japanese doomsday cult known as Aum Shinrikyo was the best armed and best staffed terror group on earth, with its ten thousand core members capable of producing sarin nerve gas and botulin on an industrial scale.<sup>ccii</sup> With over \$1.4 billion in assets and in possession of enough chemical weaponry to kill an estimated 4.2 million people,<sup>cciii</sup> Aum could confidently claim a destructive capability greater than most countries. By the early nineties, cult members had already murdered several people, targeting Aum critics and, in one incident, spraying a neighborhood

with nerve gas. In 1995, Aum guru Shoko Asahara declared that the “weird time had come” for Armageddon, with which Asahara would create a “new and transcendent human world.”<sup>cciv</sup> That March, Aum members released sarin gas on the Tokyo subway system, targeting the heart of the Japanese government, killing twelve and injuring thousands.<sup>ccv</sup>

But the rapid arrest of Asahara (pictured right), and a concomitant series of raids on the group’s infrastructure, smashed the Aum’s military capabilities and defanged the cult. As with the RAF, the rapid demise of the cult followed a high-profile terror attack. But unlike the gang of students around Baader, this terrorist group was alarmingly professionalized, large, and staffed with Japan’s best and brightest scientists. The crucial weakness of Aum, in marked comparison to Hamas and the IRA, is that its internal leadership was entirely dominated by Asahara; once removed from the situation, Aum morphed into a nonviolent religious movement apologetic for its past crimes, with a rump of Asahara fanatics expelled.<sup>ccvi</sup> At the heart of the IRA and Hamas is a leadership structure of factions consenting to make decisions, a diffusion of opinion that at once strengthens organizational integrity and makes Aum-style decapitation a near impossibility. The IRA of the early seventies went through four chiefs of staff in a matter of months, just as Hamas leaders Yassin and Rantissi were killed within twenty-eight days of one another – to no lasting detriment. Further, a consensus-based decision-making structure like those of the above two groups tends to



miligate against the “hardliner/soft-core” splits, like that of after Asahara’s capture.

The counterexamples of the RAF and Aum Shinrikyo serve to further stress the importance of IRA/Hamas structure, as well as their all-consuming concern for placating their base and stoking the passions of potential sympathizers. In short, unlike in Japan and Germany, these factors prevent Hamas and the IRA from being outright eliminated through military means. Their ability to sustain tactical successes and survive depends on their dynamic internal structure and constantly replenished popular support – a popular support that is fed largely by anti-terror actions. This paradox – that due to their internal dynamics, counterterrorism has helped the IRA and Hamas as much as it has wounded it – speaks to the futility of violence on both sides, and the necessity for a game-changing shift of consensus on all sides.

### **Controlled Demolition**

Following the December 2008 lapse of Hamas’s six-month ceasefire with Israel, the leaders of Gaza’s homegrown Islamist terror network reportedly found themselves at a tactical crossroads. Dispatches from Israel Radio and Egypt’s *Al Ahram* indicated that prominent Hamas hawks in Gaza, such as former PA foreign minister Mahmoud al-Zahar and Qassam Brigades leader Ahmed al-Jabari, favored the resumption of a *hudna* over rocket fire – lest the group risk an Israeli military invasion. However, the Damascus-based political leadership of Hamas, led by Khaled Meshaal and Moussa Abu Marzouk, determined otherwise, vetoing nascent Egyptian efforts at salvaging peace.<sup>ccvii</sup> Zahar was reported to have been “furious” at the Damascus-based Political Bureau’s “rash” decision to abandon the six-month



ceasefire, arguing Hamas was not prepared for a possible Israeli incursion.<sup>ccviii</sup> Despite this loss, Zahar respected the decision, turning his attentions towards war preparations.

Inevitably, on December 27<sup>th</sup>, with the disastrous 2006 war against Lebanon fresh in the mind of PM Ehud Olmert, the IAF responded with a devastating surprise air attack on Gaza's police infrastructure. For twenty-two more days, Israeli forces bombarded, then invaded the one hundred and forty square mile canton. The results were grim. Both the IDF and the Palestinian Center for Human Rights tallied the total number of Palestinian casualties at around twelve hundred. But while the IDF argued seven hundred of the dead were militants, the PCHR stated that nine hundred of the dead were civilians, two hundred and eighty of them children.<sup>ccix</sup> Operation Cast Lead achieved neither the destruction of Hamas nor its rocketing capabilities; the war is merely the latest concussion in the vicious cycle of violence that is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This story, of Hamas decision-making in the run-up to the Gaza War, illustrates the most underexamined but fascinating explanation of why the organization has proved to be constantly resilient, even in the face of massive tactical defeats like the war. It also helps to explain the need for political peacemaking, owing the inability of militants to achieve any of their strategic goals through violence alone. Hamas's pre-war actions are indicative of the unique, consensus-based internal decision-making structure the group shares with the IRA. Three characteristics mark these decision-making structures as unique. First, both the IRA and Hamas are the sum of several competing factions, each with different emphases on the organization's

tactical and strategic goals. Second, unlike Aum Shinrikyo, the leadership of both organizations make consensus-based decisions, taking into account the views of the competing, influential factions. Third, when decisions are made that individual factions disagree with, they respect them – largely owing the desire to maintain organizational integrity and because of respect for the leadership.

### **A: A Competing Set of Internal Factions**

In the second chapter, we saw how IRA and Hamas members were culled from a dense web of overlapping social networks, members of which helped mobilize their peers into radical behavior. While it is true that in the maintenance of both organizations, such ties are subsumed into the larger network of the terror group, what is intriguing is the formative role such connections play in the creation of internal factions. As evidenced by the example of the pre-Gaza War Hamas, the existence of and give and take between such internal factions have a significant impact on the strategic decisions. For our purposes, what binds a faction together is a strategic viewpoint that significantly differs from other, non-faction colleagues. Just like the networks from which Hamas and the IRA were formed and sustained, factions are socially-based, and are most frequently regionally-based blocs. Supporters of Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness largely dominated the Belfast and Derry Brigades of the IRA; as such, the most forceful proponents of peacemaking tended to come from Northern Ireland's urban areas.<sup>49</sup>

But these factional fissures are nothing if not complex, reflecting the

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<sup>49</sup> Members of rural, borderland brigades like South Armagh, Tyrone, and Louth skewed more hawkish, and constituted the backbone of the Real IRA.

competing interests at stake within each organization. Factional difference are not solely geographical; an acute factional difference within Hamas exists between stridently, socially conservative Islamic figures like Nizar Rayyan and less caustically religious members, such as Ismail Haniyeh and Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi.<sup>50</sup> But such factions also overlap; both Rayyan and Rantissi figures also fall into Hamas's internal faction of "hawks," as opposed to their relative moderates, such as Haniyeh and (perhaps) the late Sheikh Yassin. Competing internal factions are a systematically underestimated factor in Hamas and the IRA's decision-making, and should be better understood.

*IRA Factions: The "Old-Timers," the "Young Turks," and the "Bandits"*

This Provisional IRA consisted mostly of three broad factions of guerillas, demarcated here largely by the brand and scope of influence they are able to effect within the organization. To complicate matters, though each faction roughly reflects a distinct strategic viewpoint, the strategic question of using solely military or political means sharply demarcates members even within the blocs. While the "Old-Timers" tended to be the most hawkish, the "Young Turks" tended to be the most open to replacing militancy with political means. Finally, the IRA's "Bandits" stood as a crucial swing faction, professional militants sharply torn between the tendencies of the other two camps.

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<sup>50</sup> Rayyan was a flamboyantly radical Muslim, well-versed in *Hadith* (Muhammed's sayings) and extreme in his theology. A religiously-inspired anti-Semite, Rayyan dismissed Yassin's offer for a de facto long-term recognition of Israel, calling the state "an offense against God." While also politically radical and virulently anti-Semitic, Rantissi, while religiously observant, was not particularly theological and generally eschewed religious justification for his acts, preferring bellicose nationalism. **Source:** Goldberg, Jeffrey. "Nizar Rayyan of Hamas on God, Hatred of Jews." *The Atlantic*. 2 Jan. 2009. 2 Jan. 2009 <[http://jeffreyygoldberg.theatlantic.com/archives/2009/01/nizar\\_rayyan\\_of\\_hamas\\_on\\_gods.php](http://jeffreyygoldberg.theatlantic.com/archives/2009/01/nizar_rayyan_of_hamas_on_gods.php)>.

The first faction was that of the heavily Catholic, traditionalist physical force Republicans of yesteryear - the “Old-Timers.” Politically conservative, these men rhapsodized little about politics beyond the simple platform of Irish reunification and “Brits out.” Mostly middle-aged, these were the IRA members who had said the rosary in Irish and prayed for the conversion of the USSR at Republican commemorations.<sup>ccx</sup> This network of old-timers served as crucial mobilizers in the early seventies, giving the nascent Provisionals a stamp of Republican legitimacy with sympathizers and potential recruits.

This group of men had been the volunteers staffing failed IRA efforts since WWII, and had suffered for their commitment through imprisonment, poverty and official mistreatment. For them, the dream of a reunified Ireland was a compelling reason for militancy and sacrifice; such volunteers had spent most of their lives involved in the struggle. These men were largely rural, with many based in the Republic of Ireland;<sup>51</sup> a prominent exception was Belfast commander Billy McKee, a devoutly religious, thoroughly militant man who would later become Gerry Adams’ first internal nemesis. As time wore on, influential traditionalists such as one-time IRA Chief of Staff Ruairí Ó Brádaigh and IRA strategist Dáithí Ó Conaill<sup>52</sup> would become a major obstacle to Sinn Féin’s political expansion. In a testament to the prestige afforded such long-time Republicans, it would be the endorsement by other IRA “Godfathers” of Adams’s political strategy that allowed him to prevail. The support for electoral politics by such unimpeachably committed, widely respected

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<sup>51</sup> In the early years of the Troubles, the upper echelons of the IRA were based in Dublin; this base shifted to Belfast following a major reorganization of the group in 1977 by Gerry Adams.

<sup>52</sup> Even their names give away their conservatism; among IRA members, Gaelicizing one’s name was rare and tended to indicate a strong attachment to fundamentalist, physical force Republicanism.

militants like Belfast Brigade OC<sup>53</sup> Seamus Twomey and former Chief of staff Joe Cahill likely saved the peace process.<sup>54</sup>

The second major network of Provisional IRA activists was that of the “Young Turks,” radicalized in the streets of Belfast and Derry in the late sixties. While not nearly as conservative as their elder peers, this network of young IRA activists



would be instrumental in drawing their peers into actively joining or sympathizing with the organization. Examples of this younger generation included Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams, Deputy 1st Minister<sup>55</sup> Martin McGuinness, former

Quartermaster General<sup>56</sup> Brian “The Dog” Keenan, and hunger strike leaders Bobby Sands and Brendan “The Dark” Hughes (pictured left, with Adams). This network of activists would comprise the most internationally known, politically amenable element of the IRA and would serve as Gerry Adams’s main base of support in shifting the IRA towards electoral politics. Any lasting peace agreement, be it a week-long ceasefire or a final resolution, depends on the compliance of lower-level

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<sup>53</sup> “OC” means “Officer in Command.”

<sup>54</sup> The IRA is unique among terrorist organizations in that its leadership is A. largely uneducated and B. almost exclusively working class. All four of these men were of modest backgrounds; Ó Brádaigh was an Irish language teacher, Ó Conaill a former telephone lineman, Twomey a former bookie and numbers runner, and Cahill a construction foreman – albeit one who had once been sentenced to death for the 1949 murder of an RUC officer. This authenticity aided the IRA’s claims to represent the working Irish. **Source:** Bell, J. Bowyer. The IRA 1968 - 2000: Analysis of a Secret Army. Portland: Frank Cass, 2000. 113-123.

<sup>55</sup> Following the final implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in 2007, a cross-community Assembly at Stormont was reestablished; hoping to avoid association with the post-1920 “Stormont system,” there is no prime minister. Instead, there is a Northern Ireland Executive, consisting of a 1<sup>st</sup> Minister, Deputy First Minister, and various ministerial portfolios

<sup>56</sup> The Quartermaster General is a GHQ position charged with smuggling, hiding and distributing weaponry.

armed militants, and more crucially, on the more hawkish leaders and middle managers. It is a profound irony: those militants with the greatest power to broker peace are also those with the most blood on their hands. Hamas ideologues are often described as “spoilers” for their ability to siphon political oxygen from moderates by carrying out acts of violence. However, the obverse power of this obstructionism is an unparalleled ability to restrain militancy. It is for this reason that the British, Irish and American governments tolerated some ambiguity on Sinn Fein’s part as to their renunciation of violence; in their eyes, only “pragmatic hardliners” could deliver peace.<sup>ccxi</sup> For the rigor of negotiation to bear any fruit, concerned parties, both internal and external of the militant groups, must be constantly aware of this flexibility. It is this role the “Young Turks” played throughout the Troubles – now hawkish, now dovish, Adams and his bloc walked a tightrope between military integrity and peacemaking.

Finally, a third and more amorphous network of IRA activists in the Provisionals was that of the “Bandits”<sup>57</sup> – largely rural and thoroughly deadly activists who inhabited the middle ground between the above two networks. While mostly of the same generation as the “Young Turks,” these operators tended to be more nakedly militant, sympathizing with the physical force doctrine of the “Old-Timers.” Tightly organized and territorial, these “Bandits” came from heavily Catholic areas and prided themselves on the lack of urban sectarianism in their

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<sup>57</sup> This appellation is an adaptation of a famous 1975 comment by then-Northern Ireland Secretary Merlyn Rees. In an emotional statement following the killings of three British soldier, Rees called South Armagh, the center of this network’s activities, a “bandit country” rife with “wholesale gangsterism.” The area’s terrorists hated the name – which stuck. **Source:** Harnden, Toby. Bandit Country: the IRA and South Armagh. London: Coronet Books, 1999. 68-69.

operations; above all, these figures were focused on battling the British, and, to a lesser extent, the RUC.<sup>ccxii</sup> This network was largely based around the border, in counties Tyrone, Fermanagh, Louth, Down and, most memorably, Armagh. Prominent “Bandits” included Chief of Staff Thomas “Slab” Murphy, Quartermaster General and future Real IRA founder Mickey McKevitt, and feared Tyrone gunman Jim “The Executioner” Lynagh.

The major contribution of this network of IRA activists was a tactical one: they were very good at killing British soldiers, UDR reservists, and RUC officers.<sup>58</sup> The majority of the Troubles’ military and police deaths occurred in a one hundred and twenty square mile stretch of borderland. Most of this violence was in South Armagh,<sup>59</sup> where IRA members killed one hundred and twenty-three soldiers (a fifth of all military fatalities) and forty-two police officers during the Troubles.<sup>ccxiii</sup> The most tactically ingenious,<sup>60</sup> consistently deadly and informant-free faction of the IRA, the terror workhorses of the borderland would provide the IRA with a base of constant violence against British and Unionist forces. By being able to maintain a

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<sup>58</sup>A 1975 British Army intelligence report quoted an informant as saying the following of the Armagh Brigade: “If there is ever a big meeting and they are all there and a target is given, then the Crossmaglen boys are on their way to do the job as soon as they get out the door.” **Source:** Harnden, Toby. *Bandit Country: the IRA and South Armagh*. London: Coronet Books, 1999, 11.

<sup>59</sup> A ten-mile radius at the center of South Armagh was the site of 1,158 shootings and 1,255 bomb attacks through the course of the Troubles – a whopping statistic more at home in Baghdad than Western Europe. **Source:** Harnden, Toby. *Bandit Country: the IRA and South Armagh*. London: Coronet Books, 1999. 14.

<sup>60</sup> In official British Army reports, the brutal “Bandits” occasionally elicited grudging admiration, with attacks frequently described as “carefully planned and particularly ruthless and efficiently executed.” Among the feats accomplished by such IRA members: using train tracks to ram an Army outpost with a “train bomb,” killing several soldiers using .50 caliber sniper rifles designed for Gulf War use against Iraqi trucks, importing infrared fuses capable of overcoming British anti-jamming technology, demolishing the RUC crime lab with a 1,000 pound bomb to destroy IRA evidence, assassinating the last Viceroy of India, Lord Louis Mountbatten, using a boat bomb, and orchestrating the smuggling of 150 tons of Libyan arms into Ireland. **Sources:** Harnden, Toby. *Bandit Country: the IRA and South Armagh*. London: Coronet Books, 1999. 21, 81. Moloney, Ed. *A Secret History of the IRA*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2002. 26-27.

steady rate of killings in the region, the “Bandits” constituted the “Armalite” to Gerry Adams’s “ballot box” – a steady source of violent coercion that would help persuade the British to deal with Sinn Fein.

*Hamas Factions: the “Godfathers,” the “Politicos,” and the “Engineers”*

Much like within the IRA, the strategic issue on which Hamas members have been most publicly divided has been on the merits of political integration versus a sustained terror campaign. Like the IRA, the factions of Hamas listed here are largely clustered around the kind of influence they hold over the future of the organization; while the “Engineers” hold the most influence over tactical violence, the “Politicos” and “Godfathers” division cuts within each of these three groupings. With that context in mind, it seems as though Hamas has had three main factions throughout its existence, informing the strategic shifts the organization has made over the years.

The first major internal Hamas faction has been that of the “Godfathers.” These are the predominantly older men who, in middle age, were radicalized throughout the eighties by the activities of occupation forces. Mostly professionals, these were the men described in Chapter Two as heavily influential in academic and professional associations. Such “Godfathers” lend a credibility and gravitas to Hamas’s terrorism that is lacking among younger members and external leaders; these are men who have paid significant costs for their membership in Hamas, losing their livelihoods in pursuit of their beliefs. They are also the men most capable of maintaining internal cohesion over fractious strategic decisions. “Godfathers” like Ahmed Yassin, Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi, and Mahmoud al-Zahar,



while not always in agreement in the political future on Hamas, are a positive unifying force for Hamas, owing the widespread respect many Palestinians feel for the leaders. These are the men with the popularity and credentials necessary to make broad shifts in strategic policy. In the wake of Hamas's first suicide bombing campaign in 1994, Yassin had broached the idea of a *hudna* ceasefire with Israel that would last for a decade,<sup>ccxiv</sup> and in 2004 called for a peace "on the basis of the 1967 borders" that would leave "the rest of the land" to "history."<sup>ccxv</sup>

The second faction is of the "Politicos"; akin to Adams's "Young Turks," they are a younger generation who largely attended college in the eighties without many career prospects after. Most of these individuals entered Hamas through student associations or *Ikhwan* chapters. Prominent "politicos" include Ismail Haniyeh and Khaled Meshaal; though the former appears to be less hawkish and more politically amenable than the other, they both have based their careers on the value of Palestinian political agitation in conjunct with organized violence.

The third and final bloc is that of the "Engineers," who like the "Bandits" in Ireland, serve as the leadership branch that turns strategic decisions into tactical reality. Examples of such militants include the late Saleh Shehade, Ahmed Jabari, Mohammed Deif, and Yahya Ayyash. However, while skillful, these Hamas members have not proven as resilient or adaptable as IRA members in combating Israeli forces. While IRA gunmen and bombmakers proved relentlessly inventive, the combination of much harsher Israeli treatment of Palestine and a relative dearth of smuggled arms and components has left these figure less able to keep up with their quarries.

## **B: Consensus-Based Decision-making**

Even a cursory examination of the internal structures of the IRA and Hamas will reveal the consensus-based decision-making that drives both organizations forward. The fact that both groups operated for most of their existence with a collective leadership representing multiple factions has helped moderate decisions to best fit the demands of their base.

### **The IRA's Internal Structure**

Following an internal reorganization by Gerry Adams of the IRA's traditional, creaky, military-style chain of command, the basic unit of organization became individual cells, or Active Service Units (ASUs). These ASUs, consisting of no more than a half dozen volunteers, were collected into regional Battalions, then Brigades, overseen by a staff of officers.<sup>61</sup> These Brigades are then collected into the Northern or Southern Command, each of which is overseen by its own Officer in Command (OC). In theory, the Army Executive above the two regional commands is selected following an IRA-wide General Army Convention; however, owing the difficulty of having hundreds of terrorists openly convene, such a meeting was only held a handful of times throughout the Troubles.<sup>ccxvi</sup>

In practice, around a dozen prominent IRA commanders, who in turn selected seven among themselves to comprise the Army Council, always dominated the Army Executive.<sup>ccxvii</sup> The Army Council was the IRA's supreme decision-making body,

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<sup>61</sup> The only exception to this reorganization was the feared South Armagh Brigade – as the reorganization was largely designed to guard against informants, South Armagh, a mostly uninfiltrated sector, was allowed to retain their command structure.

headed by a Chief of Staff, and was usually dominated by two or three particularly influential members.<sup>ccxviii</sup> The Army Council, which oversaw day-to-day operations, as well as appoints the General Headquarters Staff, a middle-management echelon. The GHQ is the IRA's technocratic cabinet, with "directors" in charge of various, organization-wide responsibilities, such as finance, publicity, engineering, and internal security.<sup>62</sup>

What is most important to note here is the extraordinary amount of people one must sway in order to take any set course of action. Were a Belfast ASU to plan an attack, they would need the blessing of their Brigade and the Northern Command, the policy of which is shaped by the strategic decisions of the Army Council; in order to have the materiel to pull off the attack, Northern Command must also liase with the GHQ. This structure, as designed by Gerry Adams in 1977, decentralized control over military attacks from individual brigades, whilst allowing every actor to have their voice heard prior to the Army Council or Northern Command decision. Army Council members must make decisions with the lower ranks in mind, or face the wrath of an Army Convention at which they will be ousted. The IRA made war at a round table, not an assembly line, and was strengthen by this "multilateral" approach to operations.

### *Hamas's Internal Structure*

While specific tactical decisions in the Second Intifada have generally been left

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<sup>62</sup> These titles sanitize the real responsibilities of each of these members. Finance director, in addition to raising and distributing funds, was also often tasked with organizing bank robberies or collecting tribute from organized crime figures. "Engineering" really means bomb-making. The "Internal Security staff" was better known as the "Nutting Squad," and was tasked with interrogating, then killing suspected informants. In 2003 it was revealed Freddy Scappaticci, its longtime second-in-command, was himself a British informant.

to individual cell leaders,<sup>63</sup> major strategic decisions regarding the direction of the “controlled revolt” are made by a small core of leaders.<sup>ccxix</sup> From the cell level to the Political Bureau, Hamas has maintained a flexible leadership echelon across several countries, while constantly grooming new generations of leaders to replace the dead or imprisoned.<sup>ccxx</sup> Since around 1989, Hamas has had two leadership structures – that of political and militant leaders in the West Bank/Gaza Strip, “the internal leadership,” and the Damascus-based “Political Bureau,” or “the external leadership. The external leadership was formally established in the late eighties amidst the First Intifada, as a means of preventing Israel from totally disrupting Hamas’s organizational coherence.

Considered more conservative and influential than the internal leadership, the Damascus-based Politburo, led by Khaled Meshaal and Moussa Abu Marzouk, has traditionally enjoyed closer ties to Iran and Syria, and is responsible for much of the group’s fundraising and arms smuggling. Reports indicate that those two countries have played a pivotal role in keeping Hamas hawkish – comfortable and cut off from the realities of occupation, Meshaal can “afford to be uncompromising,” even when his organization can’t.<sup>ccxxi</sup> The Politburo is also linked to the Shura Council, a shadowy Islamic advisory body built from the remnants of the *Ikhwan*.<sup>ccxxii</sup> Like the

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<sup>63</sup> The tactical flexibility of both Hamas and the IRA is a frequently overlooked quality of both groups. Former IRA member Eamon Collins recalled surprising his police interrogators by telling him that his intelligence gathering for the murders of soldiers and police officers was largely done without any specific orders or supervision, and that IRA members could come and go as they pleased. Mishal and Sela further emphasize the encouragement by Hamas’s upper echelons to cell leaders that they take on responsibilities not officially entrusted to them. The tendency to lump together terror group members or to assume a rigid chain of command is a common one, but underestimates the tactical alacrity and pragmatic organization that make both groups so resilient. **Source:** Mishal, Shaul, and Avraham Sela. *The Palestinian Hamas: Vision, Violence, and Coexistence*. 2nd ed. New York: Columbia UP, 2006. 159.

IRA with Sinn Fein, Hamas has tried to convey the impression that the group's political wing is distinct from its military apparatus. This is not quite so, as in truth, Hamas's external and internal political leadership formulates the strategy that the Al Qassam Brigades execute. As Palestinian natives, prominent Brigades figures – Adnan al-Ghoul, Ahmed Jabari, Yahya Ayyash – have tended to assign more influence to their “internal” peers than the exiled leadership.<sup>ccxxiii</sup>

### **C: Cohesive Influence Of Command Structure**

During the height of the Second Intifada, Hamas's two “leadership” structures were largely balanced; but since the assassinations of some of Gaza's most influential leaders, such as Yassin, Rantissi, Said Siam, Saleh Shehade, and Nizar Rayyan, power has tilted increasingly towards Damascus. Part of the reason both the IRA and Hamas have been successful and resilient is its discipline over divisive decisions; the schismatic determination in 1994 not to participate in PA elections never registered in any public dissidence by Hamas members. In the words of DFLP<sup>64</sup> parliamentarian Qais Abdel-Karim: “Hamas now seems to be the only Leninist party we have here. They understand about ‘serving the people.’ And they have strong internal debate – but you never hear about it from the outside: they have excellent internal discipline.”<sup>ccxxiv</sup> While Hamas remains thoroughly able to process internal disagreements, the lack of Gazan influence in the wake of Yassin's death has seen Hamas headed in an increasingly hawkish direction – one that benefits Iran more than Palestine.

Nevertheless, in both Hamas and Northern Ireland, there is enough respect of

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<sup>64</sup> Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a minor, Marxist political party.

the leadership and accommodation of opposing viewpoints that members consider it in their interest to accede to decisions they disagree with. Gerry Adams's skillful handling of the breakdown of such comity, in the wake of Sinn Féin's decision to abandon abstentionism, is the subject of the next chapter – and will serve as a model for how Hamas politicians might accomplish a similar feat of political integration.

### **'Up The Provies!': Sustained Popular Radicalization**

The most obvious reason for the sustained growth of the IRA and Hamas following their foundation is the radicalizing effect antiterror operations has on the militant group's host community. Though the dynamics of popular radicalization were extensively explained in Chapter Two as a key factor in the creation of Hamas and the IRA, the sustainment of this radicalization is crucial to the ability of such organizations' survival. Three key factors of Israel and Britain's longtime anti-terror strategies help to explain why each nation's efforts helped to sustain mass extremism and ensure Hamas and the IRA would remain popular.

First, collective punishment and violent official counterterrorism endangered and killed many civilians, whilst making the groups' host communities feel under siege. By making the military the primary agent to fight the IRA and Hamas, both Britain and Israel neglected the less coercive side of counterterrorism – the “hearts and minds” strategy that attempts to redress the population's perceived grievances. Second, in the middle stages of the conflict, the unwillingness of Israeli and British leaders to acknowledge the political nature of militancy was critical in dissuading potential “politicos” amidst the terrorists' ranks from influencing the group towards nonviolence. Finally, the third factor is an error that took the British decades to

realize, and which the Israelis have still not distinguished: tactical success is not strategic success. In particular, the assassination programs undertaken against both IRA and Hamas members will be examined as a crucial strategic mistake in disrupting the organization's violence.

### *A: Collective Punishment: A Gift To Terrorists*

The costs of such collective repression are apparent, but even an understanding by concerned policymakers and military personnel of “counterterrorism’s” radicalizing effects does not ensure more nuanced strategizing. Democratic leaders have a burden in combating terror that autocracies lack – that is, if politicians are viewed as “weak” or “soft” on radicalism, unable to prevent attacks, they can lose the public’s confidence and support. While this might destabilize dictatorships, in democracies, such unpopularity is much more likely to lead to a power shift through elections. Additionally, in both Northern Ireland and Palestine, the occupation of territory by a foreign army has historically meant that the primary responsibility for enforcing official government policy has fallen to the military. This martial primacy is truer of the IDF than it is of the Royal Army, owing the “Ulsterization”<sup>65</sup> of security forces, as well as the existence of the Unionist-dominated Stormont Legislature in the early years of the Troubles.

Regardless, this combination – of a political leadership military class eager to prove their toughness – has proven a lethal mix in both Israel and the U.K. As both the Troubles and the Intifadas intensified, however, opportunities to show one’s

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<sup>65</sup> “Ulsterization” was the late 1980s adaptation of U.S. General William Westmoreland’s attempts to make native fighters the primary fighting force in the Vietnam War. In Northern Ireland, this came in the form of strengthening the RUC.

“toughness” became scarcer. In both cases, the initial years of the conflict marked the years of greatest tactical success by terror groups, as well as the most brutal repression by the occupying power. But for both terror groups and official opponents, such conflict is subject to the law of diminishing returns. Militants go, as IRA godfather Joe Cahill said, “further underground,” making it harder to distinguish organizational members from civilians. Having burnished their credibility in their initial actions, such groups can also benefit from wider popular legitimacy, with greater sympathy resulting in greater operational flexibility. Terror networks tend to become more operationally efficient a few years into existence than at their outset, increasing their lethality.

The common result of this frustrating inability by governments to cleanly strike terrorist forces is repressive collective punishment of the host community – itself a huge boon to extremism. In Palestine, the most violent instances of Hamas terrorism have been justified in reference to the flashpoints of collective punishment – the building of the separation wall, border closures, air strikes, etcetera. In the West Bank, over one hundred Israeli checkpoints flank the bypass roads that snake through Palestine into settlements, a project that has divided the territory into a collection of small cantons.<sup>ccxxv</sup> In 2006, Israeli authorities began progressively cutting off the Gaza Strip’s electrical supply as punishment for Hamas rocketing; as Israeli national security advisor Dov Weisglass callously put it, Gaza’s citizens were going “on a diet.”<sup>ccxxvi</sup> The ongoing humanitarian crisis of the Palestinians, exacerbated by the recent war, continues to lend credence to the more



radical and bellicose of Arab voices.<sup>66</sup> The blockading of the Gaza Strip, besides interdicting needed humanitarian supplies, has left the social welfare of Hamas one of the Strip's most influential caretakers. Shortly after the conclusion of the war, Hamas began distributing between thirty-five to forty millions dollars to Palestinians affected by the conflict. In allocating twenty-five to fifty-two hundred dollars apiece for damaged or destroyed homes, Hamas is boosting its popularity and image.<sup>ccxxvii</sup> Gaza City's Rafati family is among those allotted to receive fifty-two hundred dollars; self-proclaimed Fatah supporters, who voted for the party in the 2006 Palestinian Legislative Council elections, they now concede that in the future, "they will support anyone who helps them rebuild their home and their lives."<sup>ccxxviii</sup>

And of course, for Hamas, that is the purpose of terrorism – to have Israel push the masses towards radicalism. The IRA's planned "Tet Offensive" of the early 1980s, in which volunteers would launch massive, simultaneous surprise attacks using one hundred and fifty tons of smuggled Libyan arms, was ambitious in scale but modest in objectives. While some of the effort's more hawkish planners hoped to make entire swathes of Northern Ireland untouchable for British troops, the Army Council's main objective in launching the offensive was to pressure PM Thatcher to reintroduce the internment of terror suspects without trial.<sup>ccxxix</sup>

Collective punishment doesn't benefit civilians or the authorities; it only destroys

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<sup>66</sup> In fact, conditions have grown so bad in Gaza City due to a lack of electricity that some ten thousand Palestinians in Gaza are in the path of a Hurricane Katrina-type levee break; the only difference is this levee is holding back 2.5 million cubic meters of raw sewage. The blockade has also left Gazans severely malnourished, with many eating grass. Black market sales of opiate painkillers are also on the rise, another indicator of Gaza's misery.

**Source:** Hass, Amira. "The Sewage Is About To Hit The Fan In Gaza." *Haaretz*. 25 Dec. 2008. 25 Dec. 2008. Ingber Win, Hanna. "Gazans Resort To Eating Grass And Taking Painkillers." *Huffington Post*. 14 Dec. 2008. 14 Dec. 2008 <[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2008/12/14/gazans-turn-to-painkiller\\_n\\_150862.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2008/12/14/gazans-turn-to-painkiller_n_150862.html)>.

the rule of law and bolsters militant forces.

### *B. The Refusal to Recognize Terrorism's Political Nature*

Analyzing the pathology of individual terrorists – and treating their *raison d'être* as a psychological problem rather than a potentially legitimate grievance – is not just wrong. It is dangerous. Just as the term “War on Terror” significantly simplifies the origins of terror, treating the grievances of terrorists as inherently illegitimate or insane constitutes a hindrance to those seeking to prevent its barbarous consequences. It is not *just* a cruel amorality that in 1985 caused Patrick Magee to plant a bomb in room 285 of Brighton’s Grand Hotel. Magee, a future PhD student (pictured below) who had grown up in England, nearly succeeded in killing British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in an attack that killed five during the



Conservative Party’s yearly conference.<sup>ccxxx</sup> Nor was it congenital blood lust that caused twenty-five year old Abdel Basset Odeh to don women’s clothes and detonate a suicide bomb in 2002.<sup>ccxxxi</sup> Odeh, a soft-spoken Palestinian grocer who had tried to emigrate to the United States, attacked a packed Netanya hotel on Passover, ending a ceasefire, killing thirty and wounding one hundred and forty-four. Many of the victims were elderly and alone, some of them Holocaust survivors.<sup>ccxxxii ccxxxiii</sup>

One can point to two public relations disasters for Great Britain that incontrovertibly extended and intensified the Troubles. The first was 1972’s Bloody Sunday massacre of thirteen unarmed Derry Catholics, an instance of collective punishment gone awry that caused youths to flock to the IRA; in 1987 the son of one

of the victims died when an IRA bomb he was transporting prematurely detonated.<sup>ccxxxiv</sup> The second was Prime Minister and self-described “emotional Unionist”<sup>ccxxxv</sup> Margaret Thatcher’s hard-line stance in response to the IRA hunger strikes of 1981. Declaring “there [to be] no such thing as political murder, political bombing or political violence,”<sup>ccxxxvi</sup> Thatcher refused to negotiate over the prisoners’ demands that they be allowed to wear civilian clothes. IRA prisoners had, in the past, been allowed to wear such clothes, as they were “political prisoners”; Thatcher rescinded the allotment.

Though her firm stance may have earned her political plaudits from her conservative base, her decision to let ten hunger strikers die was not just appallingly callous. It was a strategic nightmare. The IRA/Sinn Féin propaganda blitzkrieg that followed the deaths of the ten was evidence of just *how* intensely political the conflict was. Dead hunger striker Bobby Sands became the next Gandhi, winning a Westminster seat from his deathbed and invigorating Sinn Féin with a new electoral strategy – one that would later culminate in the political participation of Republicans in a new Stormont Assembly. Thatcher’s skepticism over political reconciliation, later culminating in her 1982 dismissal of NI Secretary of State James Prior’s modest, Good Friday-style peace plan, was completely wrong-headed. Thatcher’s viewpoint is mirrored today in Israeli hawks who argue there “is no Palestinian partner” for peace; their unwillingness to agree even that the conflict is political in nature, and not merely the product of criminality, is perhaps the most unnecessary of the radicalizing postures both Britain and Israel have taken in their conflicts.

### C. The Confusion Of Tactical With Strategic Success

A striking example of a solution to the military stalemate that entirely ignores the political motivations for terror is the assassination programs undertaken by British and Israeli forces against IRA members and Palestinian militants. Even in focusing the scope of military operations to specifically kill militants, both the British and Israeli militaries made grievous, inevitable errors, proving that even when tactically successful, such operations' utility were limited, and more often further radicalized civilians. By steadily sacrificing political capital in favor of short-term but tangible tactical successes, leaders in both countries endangered the long-term strategic security of their co-nationalists – a classic example of “blowback.” While often tactically successful, such operations undermine the claims to democratic principles that both Israel and the U.K. espouse, inflame public opinion, kill civilians, and do nothing to deal with the underlying problems that drive the conflict. Just as surely as terrorism has a radicalizing effect on the targeted population, so such “targeted killings” further radicalize the host population.

On January 5, 1996, hiding in a nondescript Gaza Strip apartment, Hamas leader Yahya Ayyash (pictured right), the most wanted bombmaker in all of Palestine, answered his cell phone to take a call from his father.<sup>ccxxxvii</sup> Ayyash (pictured right), a West Bank native and former chemistry student, had earned the nom de guerre of “Al-Muhandis,” or “The Engineer,” for his role as the “mastermind behind terror attacks” that had



killed sixty since 1992.<sup>ccxxxviii</sup> As one of the founders of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam

Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, Ayyash had earned his reputation as the father of suicide bombing, particularly following the ultraconservative Dr. Baruch Goldstein's 1994 massacre of twenty-nine Palestinians in Hebron.<sup>ccxxxix</sup> Ayyash had since been responsible for channeling al-Qassam Brigades' ferocious political opposition to the Oslo Process into violent action, making his death or incarceration "the highest priority for the Israeli secret service."<sup>ccxl</sup> However, as enthusiasm for the Oslo Process remained high among the weary Palestinians, the pursued Ayyash had been laying low. Palestinians remained cautiously optimistic over the prospect of a two-state solution, a tempting incentive towards a purely political struggle. As Ayyash asked his father how he was doing, an Israeli spotter aircraft flying overhead sent a radio signal to the phone, detonating an estimated 50 grams of high-grade explosives packed into the phone and shearing off part of his head, killing him instantly.<sup>ccxli</sup>

For Israel, the slaying was a stunning tactical success. But strategically, it was miserably timed. By the New Year, Hamas had been uneasily cooling its heels. Significant internal disagreements divided Hamas over whether to participate in PA legislative elections. Relative moderates and non-militants, like a then-unknown Ismail Haniyeh, signaled possible interest in electoral participation – a notion fiercely resisted by Hamas' external leadership and hardliners.<sup>ccxlii</sup> Ultimately, in December '95, Arafat had negotiated an agreement that Hamas would not take part in elections and would also not embarrass the PA by calling for a boycott. Good news for Fatah, the agreement also implicitly suggested Hamas would cease terror attacks, so long as the prospects for elections remained viable. But with the

killing, Arafat and other PA candidates were forced to abandon campaigning and focus on restraining militants, as a fragile two-week old truce, or *tahdi'ah*, with Hamas imploded.<sup>ccxliii</sup> The popularity of Ayyash, whose chameleon-like evasion had made him a folk hero, further forced PA candidates to lavish praise on the slain bombmaker. Seeking to retain their own credibility, these politicians bolstered a fading Hamas' standing.<sup>ccxliv</sup>

The queasy peace did not hold, and was quickly met by a series of other "tactical achievements." In February, less than two months after Ayyash's death, Hamas executed four suicide attacks within Israel in a nine day period, killing sixty-one people. The attackers struck deep in Israel, in Jerusalem, Ashkelon, and Tel Aviv, the last of which targeted a mall packed with children dressed for Purim.<sup>ccxlv</sup> While these bombings similarly may have been tactically successful, they disgusted the international community and drew a stinging Israeli response, as 60,000 Palestinians working on West Bank settlements were essentially laid off.<sup>ccxlv</sup> Finally, that May, a discontented Israeli electorate swept Benjamin Netanyahu, the hard-line Likud leader who had excoriated the Rabin-Peres peace program, into office.<sup>ccxlvii</sup>

The execution of "The Engineer" is an example of a tactic that has long been used by Israel: "targeted assassination." Israel has had plenty of tactical triumphs of this sort. In 1967, while head of the IDF's Southern Command, General Ariel Sharon had formed an assassination unit known as "Rimon"<sup>67</sup> tasked with arranging for or carrying out the murders of Gaza's suspected troublemakers.<sup>ccxlviii</sup> At the start of the First Intifada, amid accusations that Arafat's second-in-command Khalil "Abu Jihad"

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<sup>67</sup> In Hebrew, "Rimon" means pomegranate – the IDF slang term for a grenade.

al-Wazir had organized the bombing of an Israeli mall, an IDF commando team stormed his Tunis villa, slaying several guards and killing al-Wazir in front of his family. The effort, overseen by Deputy Chief of Staff Ehud Barak from an “eye in the sky” Boeing 707, marked the most public yet of Israel’s assassination missions.<sup>ccxlix</sup>

However, like suicide bombings, these targeted assassinations would be perfected in the Second Intifada; the list of successful missions is long, taking out a number of prominent “Godfathers” and “Engineers”. In 2002, Hamas co-founder and Qassam Brigades leader Saleh Shehade, responsible for the deaths of over one hundred Israelis,<sup>ccl</sup> was killed in a helicopter attack. His successor, Mohammed Deif, responsible for killing at least sixty-one people in suicide attacks,<sup>ccli</sup> has been attacked five times. Deif has lost an eye and suffered a serious spinal injury possibly leaving him wheelchair-bound and/or a quadruple amputee.<sup>cclii</sup> Security forces killed his deputy, Adnan “The Mechanic” al-Ghoul, in 2004, striking his car with two missiles on Gaza City’s Jaffa Street; the car was packed with al-Ghoul’s own explosives.<sup>ccliii</sup> In Spring 2004, as PM Ariel Sharon prepared for the Israeli disengagement from Gaza, the IDF declared open season on the Hamas leadership.<sup>ccliv</sup> In March 2004, an IAF strike finally succeeded in killing Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, who was hit at 5:30 A.M. coming from morning prayers.<sup>cclv</sup> His successor as supreme leader, Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi, had once stated, “If by Apache [attack helicopter] or by cardiac arrest, I prefer Apache.” Rantissi received his preference only twenty-five days after the March slaying of Yassin.<sup>cclvi</sup>

What’s the downside? Successful tactical strikes against the most odious of terrorists seem permissible in the context of a war; the U.S. maintains such a

program today in Pakistan. What strategic downside exists? First, as the death of Ayyash bloodily showed, his killing immediately sparked retaliation in the form of a barbaric campaign of suicide bombings. For nearly every major “targeted killing,” there has been a self-defeating reaction that empowered Palestinian hawks. The October 2001 assassination of Israeli Tourism Minister Revaham Ze’evi by PFLP gunmen came in revenge for the August 2000 killing of PFLP leader Abu Ali Mustafa; Likud Minister Dan Meridor admitted Ze’evi was “the victim of our mistakes” in “attacking major leaders” of the Palestinian groups.<sup>cclvii</sup> The successful 2002 assassination of Saleh Shehade killed fourteen civilians and terminated a Hamas ceasefire. The killing of Fatah militant Raed Karmi, coming amidst a period of calm in Israel, prompted the worst violence of the Second Intifada, including the Netanya Passover suicide bombing. The attempted killing of Rantissi and the building of the separation wall in 2003 provoked two devastating Hamas suicide bombings. The 2004 killings of Arafat and Rantissi sparked a massive wave of anger in Gaza at the Palestinian Authority, as crowds blamed Arafat and security chief Muhammed Dahlan for allowing the killings to happen.<sup>cclviii</sup> Finally, in 2006, an air strike on a Hamas meeting killed seven children and wounded Qassam Brigades leader Mohammed Deif badly, prompting enraged crowds to descend on an IDF outpost.<sup>cclix</sup>

These attacks constitute strategic failures, doing nothing to alter the fundamental mathematics of the conflict. Indeed, efforts to destroy organizations like the PLO and Hamas have proven not only fruitless, but counter-productive. It is worth noting that once Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness were identified in the late 1980s as burgeoning “partners for peace,” the RUC and British Army did



everything in their power to protect them.<sup>cclx</sup> Israel has never shown such far-sighted caution. The IDF's slaying of Abu Jihad in 1988 removed one of the only Fatah members who could have challenged Arafat's Oslo negotiations; whether that would have been for better or for worse is a separate matter. What is important is that from the 1980s on, Arafat's was the only voice that mattered in Fatah – which was good for no one but Arafat.<sup>cclxi</sup> The death of Ahmed Yassin may much be seen the same way some day, owing his reverent status among Hamas members and his subtle amenability to political compromise. According to Dr. Zvi Sela, a psychologist and former senior Israeli police officer who met with the imprisoned sheikh twice a week for most of the nineties, Yassin was acutely cognizant of Israel's continued existence, and seemed far more reasonable than Arafat about what peace would require.<sup>cclxii</sup> The loss of Yassin and rise of Meshaal in his place has tilted Hamas away from such accommodation – and towards Syria and Iran.

Each of these attempts assassination attempts further radicalized average Palestinians, especially considering the civilian casualties - or, "collateral damage" - of these attacks. The image of a group of Palestinian children casually helping Red Crescent workers gather up bits of flesh following the Israeli car bombing of a West Bank Hamas leader speaks volumes to the desensitizing nature of such violence.<sup>cclxiii</sup> But even more importantly, like Margaret Thatcher's unwillingness to concede the IRA political status, the "targeted killings" don't really work. The disastrous effect such killings have had time and time again on ceasefire efforts outweighs any perceived tactical benefits. When Ayyash was killed, Shehade replaced him; when Shehade was killed, he was replaced by Deif and al-Ghoul; when they were taken

out, Jabari replaced them. Without a political solution to break the strategic logjam, assassination will not reduce the ranks of Palestinians ready to commit political violence against Israel.<sup>cclxiv</sup>

### **Conclusion: We Deliver**

The third and final factor for why Hamas and the IRA are able to survive is simple: so long as the discourse of conflict is that of bullets and bombs, the organizations that deliver such violence prosper. This principle holds just as true for Mossad assassinations as it does for Hamas terrorism, which can only serve to engender fiercer conflict against their strategic interest. Hamas's rocket fire has effectively helped radicalize vast swathes of the Israeli electorate, propelling the far-right, racist Yisrael Beitineu party into government. Left on the path of militancy, since 2006 Hamas has, in the words of Rashid Khalidi, "lurched from disaster to disaster," unable since the assassinations of the Gaza leadership to "break free of the clutches of its external backers."<sup>cclxv</sup> Terror attacks on Israeli civilians have done nothing to advance the goal of Palestinian statehood,<sup>cclxvi</sup> merely hardening the sentiment that Palestinians should languish in statelessness. This is no strategy, just a solution for sustained misery. The question of how a terrorist organization and an aggrieved state can reverse this sad tomorrow, when brutality has become the default mode of problem-solving, is the subject of the final chapter.



## Chapter Four: Endgame

### *Shifts of Consensus, the United States, and the Political Integration of Hamas and the IRA*

*There is no such thing as winning in this new kind of war ... When we feel the enemy is getting strong, we must [strike] hard and fast at key targets, with viciousness, as the enemy would do to us. Only then can we acquire, not peace, but sustained periods of relative calm."*

*–Israeli counterterrorism advisor Ariel Siegelman<sup>cclxvii</sup>*

*"[The IRA] corrupted thousands of people by making them ambivalent towards violence...Ironically, when I was in the IRA I felt that Gerry Adams was working to 'sell out' physical-force republicanism. Indeed, I expressed my views vociferously to my comrades at the time. I realize now that Adams saw a long time before I that the armed struggle was taking nationalists nowhere."*

*–Former IRA member Eamon Collins<sup>cclxviii</sup>*

*"We ruled out mass extermination and mass evacuation, and that left us, if you want, with mass accommodation."*

*–Former UVF leader Gusty Spence<sup>cclxix</sup>*

*"We should not assume that time is our friend."*

*–Former Clinton Mideast advisor Rob Malley<sup>cclxx</sup>*

### Clipping A Hawk's Wings

Jim Lynagh belonged to a special class of IRA member: though he dabbled in Sinn Fein electioneering, his first love remained killing people.<sup>68</sup> Elected as a local councilor in his hometown of Monaghan, Lynagh commuted across the border for his second job, as the "top assassin" of the East Tyrone IRA Brigade.<sup>cclxxi</sup> An ardent



gunman who had beaten a Dublin murder rap in 1980, Lynagh (pictured left) was, in the words of one colleague, "a hard-line republican" regarded by Sinn Fein as "a bit too wild for them."<sup>cclxxii</sup> He was also virulently opposed to Gerry Adams and Sinn Fein's increasing involvement in politics,

particularly its 1986 dropping of abstentionism. Recognizing that Sinn Fein had been gathering momentum ever since the deaths of ten IRA and INLA hunger strikers,<sup>69</sup> Lynagh was afraid Adams would lead the IRA towards submitting to the

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<sup>68</sup> Lynagh was alleged to have been the mastermind of the 1981 Tynan Abbey attack in Co. Armagh. The abbey had been the home for eight generations of a prominent unionist family, the Stronges; by 1981, it was home to Sir Norman Stronge, former Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, and his son James, a former Stormont MP. Lynagh's eleven-man team killed both and destroyed the ancient mansion in a fire. Designed to bring a halt to a series of assassinations targeting prominent Catholics, the attack spoke of Lynagh's organizational skill, tactical flair and utter cold-bloodedness. **Source:** *Moloney, Ed. A Secret History of the IRA*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2002. 320.

<sup>69</sup> The Irish National Liberation Army was an offshoot of the IRA led by Dominic "Mad Dog" McGlinchey, who was, if it can be believed, expelled from the IRA for being too violent. The INLA, while nominally Marxist, was a thuggish gang mostly engaged in drug dealing and feuds with the Official IRA. A notable exception to this gangsterism was the INLA's hunger strike participation, as well as their 1979 and 1997 assassinations of Conservative MP Airey Neave and Loyalist Volunteer Force leader Billy "King Rat" Wright. **Source:** *McKittrick, David, Brian Feeney, Seamus Kelters, and Chris Thornton*.

political control of Stormont and Westminster. Lynagh's reasoning over the future of IRA terrorism was more clear-headed than most of his militant colleagues. A hardcore militarist who was obsessed with the military theory of Mao Zedong, Lynagh was painfully aware that killing a police officer or soldier each week would never force out the British.<sup>cclxxiii</sup> As a colleague remembered it, Lynagh wanted

"either total war or no war at all, to force the British out of their bases and make Northern Ireland ungovernable ... the enemy would not allow you to survive in his bosom. Would Castro have survived if he had been in Havana rather than the mountains?"<sup>cclxxiv</sup>

Thus it was that by the late eighties, Jim "The Executioner" Lynagh, the man who had vociferously denounced the "Armalite and Ballot Box" strategy at the 1986 Army Convention, could agree with Gerry Adams on at least one thing: the IRA was trapped in a military stalemate. But while Adams's strategic solution was the cessation of conflict through political integration of the IRA, Lynagh's solution was much more traditional: an Irish "Tet Offensive," spearheaded by a guerilla "flying column"<sup>70</sup> led by Lynagh.<sup>cclxxv</sup> Following Mao's example at Yan'an, Lynagh wished to use a large, clandestine guerilla force to create no-go rural areas for the British – thereby gradually emancipating Northern Ireland. Lynagh and his Tyrone peers, who had trained in Libya and constituted a technically adept, fearsome set of operators, saw their request turned down. IRA Chief of Staff Kevin McKenna

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*Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles.* London: Mainstream, 1999. 779-780, 1416-1420.

<sup>70</sup> The "flying column" was a type of IRA unit used extensively and effectively in 1919-1921 Anglo-Irish War, particularly in County Cork, hometown of Michael Collins and Column leader Tom Barry. The flying columns consisted of twenty to thirty men, living off the land or with clandestine support, keeping on a constant move through the countryside. The *raison d'être* of this type of guerilla force was that as the members would never break camp, there could be no means for infiltration or ability for informants to convey information to their handlers.

dismissed their idea of a roaming thirty-man death squad with its own rural base as absurd – a response Lynagh did not take well.

In the spring of 1987, having already approached the INLA, Lynagh convened a clandestine meeting at to orchestrate a hard-liner breakaway from the IRA. Lynagh also dispatched colleague Padraig McKearney to Dublin, sending out feelers for dissent and material support among the IRA's GHQ.<sup>cclxxvi</sup> Lynagh's plotting constituted a major breach of IRA discipline, one that could get him expelled or worse – but by then, “The Executioner” was committed to bloodily derailing Sinn Fein's push forward. He had a head start. With the hesitant support of the IRA's Northern Command, in the mid-1980s Lynagh had begun a Maoist-inspired campaign of terror in Tyrone. The modus operandi for each attack was the same: by targeting the county's most isolated, rural police and military outposts, and terrorizing any natives that did contract work at these bases, Lynagh hoped to remove whole swathes of countryside from British influence. Lynagh's men had been consistent: by the spring of 1987, they had mortared two UDR bases and destroyed two RUC stations, as well as killed several contractors.<sup>cclxxvii</sup>

In a planned May 1987 attack on a Loughall, Co. Armagh RUC station, Lynagh hoped to score a repeat of his 1986 attack at The Birches, County Armagh, a picturesque farming village. In that ingenious attack, Lynagh's men had used a hijacked excavator to tear down the station's fences and knock down a wall – leaving a massive bomb in the machine's digger bucket.<sup>cclxxviii</sup> On the evening of May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1987, Lynagh, McKearney, Tyrone OC Patrick Kelly, and five IRA triggermen, travelling in a Toyota Hiace scout van and the hijacked digger, attacked. While two

terrorists raked the building's façade with AK-47 fire, the excavator successfully made it through the station's fencing, ramming into the building.<sup>cclxxix</sup> Under the cover of their comrades, the three IRA members set the fuse and piled back into the van just as the bomb went off.<sup>cclxxx</sup>

And then - a surprise. Fusillade after fusillade of expert machine gun fire - at least six hundred total shots - demolished the van and its inhabitants. The IRA attackers, pinned in by their seatbelts, were killed almost instantly, each member shot dozens of times in the head and chest.<sup>cclxxxi</sup> Out of nowhere, six squadrons of Special Air Service commandos, thirty-six in all, had popped up in the surrounding fields, pulverizing the squad in a brilliantly executed ambush.<sup>cclxxxii</sup> While the operation's RUC officers and SAS soldiers returned to Mahon Road barracks for some well-earned champagne,<sup>cclxxxiii</sup> RUC Chief Constable Sir John Hermon convened a press conference to discuss the killings. Calling the squad's deaths "a risk they've got to take" and stressing that the IRA had fired first, Hermon explained that the RUC had turned to the SAS because of fears over Lynagh's "level of fire power."<sup>cclxxxiv</sup>

But one question Hermon would not answer was how the RUC and SAS had gleamed the high-quality intelligence pointing them to the exact time and place of the attack, such that they could launch the most successful anti-IRA ambush in all of the Troubles. In fact, the deaths of the "Loughall Martyrs" were part of a late 1980s trend that would claim a string of Lynagh's hard-line allies. Oddly, every key conspirator in Lynagh's breakaway plot - Liam Ryan, Michael Ryan, Seamus McElwaine, Kieran Fleming, Antoin MacGiolla Bhríde, and Dessie Grew - was dead

by 1991, with all of them (save Liam Ryan<sup>71</sup>) killed in SAS ambushes.<sup>cclxxxv</sup> Following the Loughall incident, IRA deaths in Tyrone actually increased fivefold, with twenty-eight volunteers slain in the five years following the attack<sup>cclxxxvi</sup> – an unbelievable toll, considering only two hundred and ninety-three IRA members died in the course of the Troubles.<sup>cclxxxvii</sup> At the time, Sinn Fein had been pursuing rapprochement with politician John Hume and his moderate nationalist SDLP, a strategy that had drawn the ire of IRA hawks. The IRA of the late eighties was at serious risk of suffering another hardliner split, only three years after Ruairí Ó Brádaigh and Dáithí Ó Conaill founded the Continuity IRA, tempting some of its most experienced and lethal militants. But suddenly, the agitators were all dead. Was there a high-level informant, helping mastermind the elimination of anti-Sinn Fein IRA members? If so, who was it?

A likely suspect would be exposed nearly two decades later. In 2002, Sinn Fein was in the process of negotiating the decommissioning of IRA weapons, while attempting to claim their place in the Good Friday-created Northern Ireland Assembly. In a development that forced the suspension of the Assembly, Denis Donaldson, a former IRA heavyweight and head of the Stormont Sinn Fein office, was arrested on charges of spying on Unionist political parties for the IRA. After three years and a protracted legal fight, in 2005 all charges were mysteriously dropped against Donaldson – who took to the airwaves with a mindboggling

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<sup>71</sup> Liam Ryan, the former OC of the New York City IRA and Brigade Intelligence Officer for Tyrone at the time of the Loughall ambush, was shot dead at his pub in 1989 by UVF hitmen. Subsequent developments have revealed that a British Army counterintelligence squad known as the Force Research Unit may have aided in the killing. **Source:** *McKittrick, David, Brian Feeney, Seamus Kelters, and Chris Thornton. Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles. London: Mainstream, 1999. 1186.*



confession. Flanked by Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, Donaldson, who had been the third most powerful Belfast IRA figure in the late 1980s, admitted under klieg lights that he had been a British spy for two decades. Apologizing to his “former comrades,” Donaldson stated:

“I was recruited in the 1980s after compromising myself during a vulnerable time in my life. Since then, I have worked for British intelligence and the [Police] Special Branch. Over that period I was paid money... I deeply regret my activities with British intelligence and Special Branch.”<sup>cclxxxviii</sup>

Forced into exile, Donaldson moved to a remote cottage in Co. Donegal – where, in 2006, unknown gunmen murdered him. Gardai<sup>72</sup> investigators have indicated that they are “eighty percent sure” that his killers “were close to Lynagh.” Donaldson evidently was compromised by the time of the Loughall ambush and as an influential Northern Command officer, likely knew of the operation; Tyrone OC Patrick Kelly had even been ordered to participate in the attack, an IRA official revealed, “to represent the interests of Northern Command and McKenna.”<sup>cclxxxix</sup> If Donaldson had in fact betrayed Lynagh – or any of the other slain hawks – he had provided the peace process a major boon. The saga of the “Loughall Martyrs” and their likely executioner speaks to the problem of politically integrating terrorist groups: what is to be done with the unreformable? How can politically amenable militants and moderate politicians break the bloody stalemate of war - whilst marginalizing the influence of its most bellicose advocates? What shifts of consensus can bring peace to an aggrieved people?

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<sup>72</sup>The Irish Republic’s police.

## **The Path of Least Resistance**

The fundamental opinion of this thesis is that the deadliest and most popular commissioners of such carnage, such as Hamas, cannot be defeated through solely military means. Ending Hamas violence means substantially and candidly addressing the grievances of the community that spawned it, and that requires a just and equitable settlement of the conflict. The terror network that emerged in 1987 as the Palestinian Resistance Movement has its origins in a complex social network of student unions, neighborhoods, religious associations, professional guilds, prison populations, and familial ties – not a draft board or a boot camp. Thus it is that Hamas, a consensus-based, politically adept Islamist network devoted to the national ambitions of Palestine, must be viewed as an enemy to be deradicalized in parliament, not merely defeated on the battlefield. The political integration of Hamas, rather than solely its military elimination, must be the strategic goals of all interested parties – Israeli, Palestinian, and American.

A central conceit of this paper is that the IRA and Hamas cannot be “crushed.” Intrinsically reliant on widespread radicalization and midwifed into existence by popular grievance, both groups will remain deadly and active as long as they remain relevant to the grievances of a population. As terror groups, their formation was less the product of an existing ideology than opportunism. Only by providing new, political opportunities can Israel have any chance of weaning Hamas away from sustained terror – just as Britain needed to reach out to the IRA. Three factors were crucial in reshaping the IRA of the Troubles into the Sinn Féin of the Northern Ireland Assembly. First, as evidenced by the obstreperous opposition of Lynagh’s

bloc to the Sinn Fein political strategy, terrorist “politicos” must marginalize hardliners within the terror organization for reconciliation to have any chance of success. Either through co-option or elimination, Hamas members who see the futility of continued military conflict must follow Gerry Adams’s example – and chart a future for Hamas that does not include its hawks.

But the gradual loss of political influence by the IRA’s most radical members did not ensure peace – though the Adams-McGuinness leadership was, by the early eighties, committed to the outlines of peace, they were still heavily involved in the commission of violence. Ultimately, the factor that would be crucial towards breaking this logjam was a credible outside negotiator – the United States. The evenhanded, low-key, and principled diplomacy of President Clinton’s envoy, former Senator George Mitchell, was a crucial, stabilizing influence on the Sinn Fein project. In his fairness and willingness to exclude Sinn Fein as a punishment for IRA violence, Mitchell also soothed the concerns of Unionists, building credibility on both sides. I can think of no better person to break the ice with Palestinian militants while tempering Israeli objectives than the man himself – Obama’s Mideast envoy, Senator George Mitchell.

The third factor is a deceptively simple one. The solution in both Northern Ireland and Palestine is political, not military. Though not *ideal*, the political integration of Hamas is the best way of ending the Mideast’s bloody stalemate. Many of its leaders have shown a willingness to enter politics and implicitly recognize the state of Israel. Provided that Hamas’s politicians remain credible representatives of their movement – and their followers have generally supported political

organization – the hardline that refuses to go along will not be able to derail the process. Those militants that do resist political integration can then be marginalized to the fringes, legally prosecuted or, circumstances permitting, eliminated – just like eight IRA men were on a fateful spring evening.

### **So Long, Farewell, Auf Wiedersehen, Good-Bye**

The deaths of the “Loughall Martyrs” and Lynagh’s band of merry men remains a mysterious blight on the otherwise rosy path Gerry Adams trod to peace. The cold truth, though, is that the deaths of the aforementioned parties really did make a huge difference for those IRA members who saw the futility of future conflict. Unlike many of the Irish Republicans that had come before him – Michael Collins, Cathal Goulding – Gerry Adams managed to keep the IRA intact while drastically shifting the internal consensus over what strategic goals were to be pursued. In doing so, he naturally engendered a great deal of enmity from the IRA’s more hawkish elements. Three factors seemed to aid Adams in marginalizing the effect of these individuals. The first was the support of IRA “old-timers,” the “Godfathers” with the credibility to sway the IRA rank-and-file to support a shift in strategic consensus towards the pacification of the armed struggle. Men like Joe Cahill, a revered figure in the IRA, or Brian Gillen, once dubbed by a British general “the most dangerous man in the United Kingdom,” are not going to have their credentials questioned.

Second, a great deal of the credit has to go towards Adams’s cunning. He successfully defeated three major challenges to his leadership, all by disaffected hardline Republicans: Belfast IRA commander Ivor Bell in the early eighties, as Sinn Fein began contesting seats; Ruairí Ó Brádaigh and IRA strategist Dáithí Ó Conaill, in

1986 when Sinn Fein dropped abstentionism; and in 1998, when Mickey McKevitt formed the Real IRA in protest of the Good Friday Agreement. With the possible exception of the last example, in each case Adams saw the split coming, and focused his efforts not on preventing it – but on forcing IRA members to privately affirm their allegiances early on.<sup>73</sup> By choking any support off from these members well ahead of time, Adams used the lifeblood of terror groups – popular support – to deprive his enemies of sustainability.

The third factor is simple. By the 1990s, people were sick of the violence. The fatigue that had set in, especially following the disastrous 1987 Enniskillen bombing, turned into rage with the 1998 Omagh bombing. Carried out by the hard-core Real IRA, the attack was the worst atrocity of the Troubles, killing twenty-nine people – including a woman pregnant with twins. The universal disgust over the crime cemented a truth that had been evident since the Real IRA broke off: Adams was home free. The IRA had passed the point of no return, and kept going. The hardliners were DOA. This strategy of marginalization requires patience and a solid personal base of support; only Palestinians with real bridge appeal, like Marwan Barghouti and possibly Ismail Haniyeh, might be able to replicate this success against the increasingly self-destructive Khaled Meshaal.

### **Pax Americana**

The 9/11 attacks were a wake-up call for America to the power of politically

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<sup>73</sup> One imagines he might have been accompanied in these meetings by Terence “Cleaky” Clarke, Adams’s stoic late bodyguard who redefined intimidating. Clarke has long been considered the lead suspect in the 1988 murders of two British Army corporals who were dragged out of a car and shot dead – live on television.

motivated individuals operating in organized terror networks. In contemplating the American role in the Mideast and Irish peace processes, a few obvious truths must be considered. Just like the 9/11 hijackers, Hamas and IRA militants did not spring forth fully radicalized at birth, ready to kill. Nor did they require the backing of a government to operate; the vast majority of long-lasting terror groups emerge and coalesce with no such support. In short, people tend not to undertake terrorism, with its myriad risks and moral gravity, without a strongly held belief in the importance of their actions. Likewise, sustainable terror networks do not coalesce and prosper merely because they provide a haven for violent sociopaths; in fact, such a psychic appetite for destruction is usually a liability for terror groups.<sup>74</sup> While terrorist groups can provide for the psychic fulfillment of such criminally-inclined individuals, such a characterization does not explain why apparently well-educated, well-adjusted, mentally balanced people can become the backbones of terror networks.

Such a prelude on the dynamics of radicalization may seem irrelevant to the issue of Irish and Palestinian peacemaking. But the fact is that while President Clinton's brokerage in the Troubles recognized these thorny realities of radicalism, U.S. policy towards Palestine has largely been unrealistic about the metrics of successful negotiation. U.S. policy has focused little on the underlying causes of widespread Palestinian extremism, zeroing in on the national level – rather than at

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<sup>74</sup> Criminologists and psychologists now prefer to identify “psychopaths” as individuals afflicted by antisocial personality disorder (ASPD); psychologist and former CIA agent Marc Sageman identifies late Al Qaeda in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi as having displayed the symptoms of ASPD. Sageman argues that such individuals “are so self-centered they have no consideration for others in the organization” – an analysis that rings true, considering Zarqawi's pointless, barbaric, and unpopular jihadist violence in Iraq. **Source:** Sageman, Marc. *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks In The Twenty-First Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania P, 2008. 63.

the individual or community-wide strata. Starting with the Madrid process, U.S. efforts in the Mideast have generally conformed to the Israeli “two track” strategy – of separating the Arab-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli peace processes. As a result, since 1967 Israel has been able to realize the strategic goal of a separate peace with Jordan and Egypt – with no contingency that Israel fulfill their responsibility<sup>75</sup> to withdraw from the conquered territories.<sup>ccxc</sup>

Northern Ireland provides a good model for what talks should look like. Great Britain began backchannel negotiations with the IRA in the late 1980s over clinching a ceasefire, fully aware that the organization had not stopped committing violence or made any dramatic gestures towards doing so. Thatcher’s Secretary for Northern Ireland, Peter Brooke, set two conditions for the communications: one, that the IRA would engage in good faith in a ceasefire, and two, that Sinn Fein would demonstrate through elections that it had a mandate for its policies.<sup>ccxc</sup> A January 2009 report indicated President Obama is considering a similarly discreet overture to Hamas.<sup>ccxcii</sup> There is no reason for Obama not to engage in such low-key communications; it is difficult to see what advantage this might give Hamas while they remain checkmated by the IDF.

But communication is not enough. Throughout much of the early 1990s, British-IRA communication frequently devolved into mutual recrimination over

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<sup>75</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, passed in the immediate aftermath of the 1967 War, called on Israel to withdraw to the pre-1967 “Green Line” border with the Palestinian territories. Implicit to the Resolution was the desire to halt settlement activity in the captured territory, especially East Jerusalem; settlement activity continues to constitute a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention. In the 1980s President Ronald Reagan unilaterally abrogated this cornerstone of US Mideast policy, blandly and inexplicably declaring the settlements to be “not illegal.” **Source:** Aruri, Naseer H. *Dishonest Broker: The U.S. Role in Israel and Palestine*. Cambridge: South End P, 2003. 130.

action and reaction. In truth, this morass merely reflected the larger military stalemate at work, one neither party could surmount. In these conditions, the United States entered as an honest broker to help resolve the differences, sitting down without preconditions to any party that agreed to a shared set of good faith principles. Parties would be allowed to negotiate so long as they were committed to:

1. Democratic and “peaceful means of resolving political issues”;
2. The total disarmament of paramilitaries;
3. Agreement that disarmament be verifiable to an independent commission;
4. Renounce the use of force to influence negotiations;
5. Agree to and respect any agreement signed
6. Take action to stop punishment beatings/killings.<sup>ccxciii</sup>

The benefit of this fairly simple framework for peace was that it allowed Mitchell to exclude parties that had breached the terms – as with Sinn Fein in the aftermath of the 1996 IRA Docklands bomb – while allowing for as open and representative a process as possible. The primary problem of both the Oslo and Annapolis processes is that they excluded Hamas – thereby consigning the political leanings of half of Palestinian voters to the dust bin.<sup>ccxciv</sup> As former Mossad director Ephraim Halevy put it, “Hamas constitutes about a fifth of Palestinian society ... so anyone who thinks it’s possible to ignore such a central element of Palestinian society is simply mistaken ... I think in the end there will be now way around Hamas being a partner in the [PA].”<sup>ccxcv</sup> By creating an elastic negotiating framework in which inevitable violations of the principles could be sanctioned but corrected, Mitchell allowed for the representative inclusion of parties while retaining the ability to exclude malcontents.

This enforcement mechanism allowed the negotiators to get down to brass



tacks, steamrolling many of the logistical objections that normally consume negotiations. With this inclusive Explicitly mentioned in the “Mitchell Principles” is the issue of consent; so long as a majority of Northern Ireland wishes to remain in the U.K., it will. The UUP’s demands of disarmament before talks, or of Sinn Fein’s demand that they not have to agree to disarmament, were both ignored, with Sinn Fein initially shut out of the talks. Knowing that disarmament without *any* tangible victories would be a complete non-starter for the IRA, Mitchell was satisfied by its pledge to disarm – and mindful that he could cut out Sinn Fein if those arms were used again. This caterwauling began to die down once the parties realized that Mitchell was the only game in town – and that he would be tough on all parties that wanted to be in the room.

This pragmatic balance does not ensure success. But too often, such common sense has been lacking from American Mideast peace efforts. The fact is, as the most influential terror group in Palestine and as a political party that has demonstrated a large base of support, Hamas will need to be dealt with for any peace talks to be successful. Further, it is breathtaking to believe that though Hamas would likely desire to be involved in talks, its leaders would do so after completely demobilizing, disarming, and recognizing Israel,<sup>ccxcvi</sup> as PM Netanyahu cynically demanded they do. In an April 2008 op-ed published in the *Washington Post*, Mahmoud al-Zahar proposed that a similar “no-conditions” format be used for negotiations between Hamas and the international community.<sup>ccxcvii</sup> The international community should call his bluff – it is not at all clear that Hamas is cohesively in favor of such a path.

A full dismantling of Hamas’s military apparatus seems impossible without a

Palestinian consensus on the two-state solution and the political integration of Hamas.<sup>ccxcviii</sup> As Hamas co-founder Rantissi dryly put it, “we differ with the PLO” on its status as the “sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.”<sup>ccxcix</sup> Hamas has already earned its place at the table – but if it wants to sit down, it needs to show the kind of ceasefire discipline it has been able to muster in the past. In short, America needs to recognize the reality that Hamas is not going away. Unfortunately, several factors that aided in the acceptance of Sinn Fein as a legitimate political party are lacking for the Palestinians. They are not, after all, an important swing vote in America; American Jews, who are perceived to be pro-Israel by most pollsters, are. As a result, U.S. politicians who wish to play it safe only have to take a modestly pro-Israel tack. In addition, a very strong pro-Israel, Likudist lobby, of groups like AIPAC and the ADL, has exerted tremendous pressure on congressmen to not step too far out of line – and have pumped money into races against those that don’t listen. But since the election of Obama, and the rise of dovish Israeli special interest groups, like J Street, America is in position to reclaim its place as a fair and just peacemaker.

### **Move On Up**

In September 2008, U.S.-based think tank the RAND Corporation, self-described arbiters of “the most complex and consequential problems facing our society,” published a report analyzing six hundred and forty-eight terrorist groups active since 1968. The projects stated aim: to systemically determine why “terrorist groups usually end.”<sup>ccc</sup> From subjects as varied as the Black Panthers and the PKK, from figures as sundry as Nelson Mandela and Muammar Ghadaffi, the report found

that such groups usually disappear for two major reasons. The less common explanation of the two is that law enforcement agencies kill or arrest key members of the network, decapitating the organization and robbing it of its deadly, intellectual impetus.<sup>ccci</sup> The report cites the decline of such organizations as Aum Shinrikyo, Peru's Shining Path and Turkey's Kurdistan Worker's Party as evidence of the damaging effect such counterterrorism can have on terror capabilities.<sup>ccci</sup> But the far more commonly detected leading cause for why terror groups end is not one of force. In fact, this strategy ideally strives to *avoid* harming prominent leaders of the terror group in question, and likely involves the eventual payment of a government salary to former guerillas and gunman.<sup>ccci</sup>

According to the RAND report, the leading cause for the disappearance of terror networks is the integration of organization members into a democratic political system.<sup>ccci</sup> This "transition to the political process" was thus deemed the most "common way in which terrorist groups ended (43 percent)," <sup>ccci</sup> with military force having "rarely been the primary reason"<sup>ccci</sup> for the group's collapse. But as has been the case with the political prominence of Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement in the Palestinian Authority, such integration does not necessarily confer legitimacy, nor end a violent conflict. Without representation from a broad crosssection of the host community, it is difficult for a nation to substantively redress the grievances that radicalized the groups' members and sympathizers. Popular support is the oxygen with which versatile, durable, well-organized terrorist groupings are able to sustain violent militancy against a perceived enemy. In this, terror networks are inherently political, as bound to the popular sentiment of their base as any

campaigning politician. Like political parties, the strongest and most sustainable terror groups are those most attuned to the perceived needs of their political base. In exchange for the perceived “constituent services,” which often include social, economic and religious welfare programs, sympathizers provide an informal network of support for militant activists.

The notion of legalizing or even abetting the political success of parties sympathetic to the IRA or Hamas is anathema to many people, most poignantly those victimized by the violence both organizations sow. An article of proven faith within the right wing of British and Israeli politics is of the inefficacy of attempting to engage terror networks that violently target civilians. Such efforts, even by stalwart military men like Yitzhak Rabin, have been angrily compared to Munich-style appeasement by a significant portion of Israel’s conservative base – a member of which would murder the prime minister in 1995. Tough-talking rhetoric of the kind aired by Livni, Barak, and Netanyahu during the 2008-2009 Gaza War, or by Tories like Thatcher and Major during Sinn Fein’s formative years, commonly appeals towards the need to uncompromisingly “crush” terrorism.

But what such politicians overlook, and what the Adams-McGuinness and Yassin-Haniyeh leaderships seemed to understand, was the ultimate inefficacy of armed conflict in removing the underlying causes of terror. Though IRA and Hamas violence had made Britain and Israel notice them, it would require political negotiation and compromise to make any further gains. Much like IRA with Sinn Fein, Hamas militants have agonized over electoral participation. In the run-up to the PA elections of 1994, Hamas was torn over wanting to maintain their power

amidst the rise of PA institutions – whilst not being regarded as Oslo collaborators.<sup>cccvi</sup> Rational internal debate followed, with a remarkable (leaked) internal document lucidly explaining how the Hamas leadership had come to boycott the elections. Phrased non-ideologically, the memo could just as easily have come from DCCC or NRCC<sup>76</sup> as Hamas. Without any Islamic phrasing or language, and no anti-Semitic delegitimizing of Israel, the memo comprehensively analyzes what “is the most appropriate position for the movement?”<sup>cccviii</sup> Hamas was down to business, not posturing – and betrayed in its clear-eyed justification for the strategic decision a pragmatism most pundits would never ascribe the “Islamic Resistance.” That is the Hamas – the one that lucidly examines their political options and works peacefully “to preserve the movement’s achievements”<sup>cccix</sup> – that one would like to see every day. How best can the world incentivize that behavior?

As Hamas’s and Fatah’s combined approval ratings in 2004 (the height of the Second Intifada) equaled only fifty percent of Palestinians,<sup>ccc</sup> it is unlikely either party will benefit from even more extreme platforms. Rather, were Hamas integrated into a stable political system, they might be electorally incentivized to moderate their positions.<sup>cccxi</sup> This has certainly been true of Sinn Fein. It seemed inconceivable three years ago that with Sinn Fein in power, the IRA would scrap its weapons. It has, and no longer exists today. It was unimaginable two years ago that ex-IRA man Martin McGuinness and fiery anti-“Papist” Ian Paisley would exchange words, much less work together. Three years hence, the pair have forged a working relationship at the Stormont Assembly that developed so harmoniously, they earned

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<sup>76</sup> The electoral committees for Democratic and Republican congressional races.

the nickname “the Chuckle Brothers.” It was unimaginable even a year ago that were the tragic to occur, and dissident Republicans murdered a soldier or police office, Sinn Fein would use forceful language against the murderer, or urge citizens to help the police.

That is exactly what Adams and McGuinness said, in such uncompromising terms it earned them an Easter Sunday warning from a splinter group, the Real IRA, to beware of assassination. These men, who once would have applauded such an act, stood firm on Easter to call the March 2009 killers of two soldiers and a police officer what they are: murderers. From an Easter Uprising to an Easter calm, the IRA had come full circle.



Conclusion:  
Through the Looking Glass  
*Peace in Northern Ireland,*  
*Stalemate and Statelessness in Palestine:*  
*Wither the Peace Process*

*"If the day comes when the two-state solution collapses, and we face a South African-style struggle for equal voting rights (also for the Palestinians in the territories), then, as soon as that happens, the State of Israel is finished... The Jewish organizations, which were our power base in America, will be the first to come out against us, because they will say they cannot support a state that does not support democracy and equal voting rights for all its residents."*

*-Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, November 29, 2007<sup>cccxi</sup>*

*"If we want to safeguard Israel's character as a Jewish and Zionist state, there is no other solution [than] consensual [separation]... The reason for the conflict is not territory, not occupation, not settlers or settlements, rather friction between the two peoples and the two religions. Everywhere, the world over, no matter if it's the former Yugoslavia or the Caucasus region in Russia, or Northern Ireland, wherever there are two peoples and two religions, there is friction... [Israel must make] exchanges of populations and territory, in order to create the most homogenously Jewish state... Minorities are the biggest problem in the world."*

*–Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman February 10, 2009<sup>cccxi</sup>*

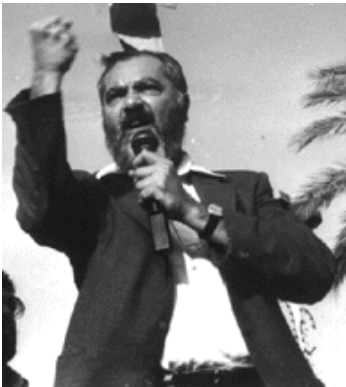
### **Hurry Up, Please – It's Time**

The election of Barack Obama as president of the United States marks the greatest opportunity since the first Bush Administration to shape the course of Mideast peacemaking. Many pundits have dismissed the chances for peace in the region, citing the fragmentation of Palestinian politics and the hawkish, far right conservative make-up of PM Benjamin Netanyahu's government. It doesn't really matter, because right now the Palestinian-Israeli conflict *must* be addressed. As with Michael Collins, arriving in London in 1921, what is "ideal" is not on the menu; the fact is, without diplomatic engagement from the international community, Palestinians and Israelis will continue to die, the noxious smog of action and reaction choking off any chance for peace. One overarching aim of this thesis has been to show how the lessons of the Northern Irish peace process can uniquely inform our understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Above all, Northern Ireland teaches the ultimate futility of solving a political problem through military means. The same lesson, and many others discussed below, hold true for the Holy Land.

### **Lesson One: When the radical becomes the banal, extremism prospers**



The success of radical movements may stem less from the achievement of their stated objectives than in their making “extremist” views mainstream, and in turning their “radical” figures into “establishment” ones. Sadly, this is becoming increasingly as true for extremist Israeli politicians as it has been for Hamas radicals. For decades, it seems as though the strategic policy of Israeli leaders has been to sustain Palestinian statelessness whilst bolstering Israeli supremacy; thus it is that PM Golda Meir, who



once called the Jewish people’s existence “the supreme morality,”<sup>cccxiv</sup> could seriously claim that “there is no such thing as Palestine in history.”<sup>cccv</sup> Almost five million aggrieved Palestinians would disagree - and yet, in the most Israeli recent election, this chauvinist line of

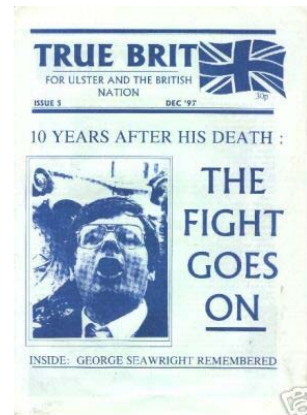
thinking was solidly part of the mainstream. Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman (pictured right) is an unabashed racist, in the vein of Jabotinsky and slain Moledet leader Revaham Ze’evi.<sup>77</sup> A demagogue whose campaign was based around illegal “loyalty oaths” for Israel’s roughly 1.5 million Arab citizens,<sup>cccvi</sup> Lieberman implied throughout the 2009 campaign he would revoke the citizenship of Israelis not

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<sup>77</sup> Ze’evi was a former general who, as head of the far-right Moledet (Homeland) Party, advocated the forced transfer of Palestinians on “air conditioned buses.” A former Tourism Minister, he resigned from Ariel Sharon’s cabinet in October 2001 alongside Lieberman, to protest redeploying the IDF from Hebron. The next day, PFLP gunmen seeking to avenge the August killing of leader Abu Ali Mustafa assassinated Ze’evi in Jerusalem’s Hyatt Hotel. **Source:** *Enderlin, Charles. The Lost Years: Radical Islam, Intifada, And Wars In The Middle East 2001 - 2006.* Trans. Suzanne Verderber. New York: Other P, 2007. 103-105.

considered loyal enough – and saw his party, Yisrael Beiteneu,<sup>78</sup> win seventeen Knesset seats, two more than Labor.<sup>cccxvii</sup> This political extremism was once grounds for disqualification – as in 1988, when the late Rabbi Meir Kahane's<sup>79</sup> (pictured left) Kach Party was banned for racial incitement. Yet now, Lieberman, a former Kach organizer, has been tasked with the foreign policy of Israel, made kingmaker in a coalition that includes the major parties of Likud and Labor – even as the Egyptian Foreign Minister refuses to speak with him.<sup>cccxviii</sup>

Never, even under the worst Protestant chauvinism in Northern Ireland, was such radicalism officially sanctioned. Such extremism certainly *existed* in political circles – former Democratic Unionist Party councilor and fierce bigot George Seawright<sup>80</sup> (pictured right) is strikingly similar in several respects to Lieberman. Unlike Lieberman, however, Seawright's fiery rhetoric – such as calling for the incineration of Catholic priests – resulted in the official withdrawal of support from the DUP.<sup>cccix</sup> When the Israeli Foreign Minister can casually declare that “minorities are the biggest problem in the world,” something has gone horribly wrong in a nation



<sup>78</sup> Yisrael Beitenu (Israel is Our Home) was founded in 1999 by former Kach and Likud member Lieberman “as a national movement with the clear vision to follow in the brave path of Zev Jabotinsky.” **Source:** “*Bringing the Zionist Dream to Life.*” *Yisrael Beytenu English Language Site*. 17 Apr. 2009 <<http://www.yisraelbeytenu.com/#bringing>>.

<sup>79</sup> Kahane, founder of the militant Jewish Defense League and Kach, was a Brooklyn-born rabbi who advocated the forced expulsion of Arabs from all of Palestine. In 1990 El-Sayyid Nosair – an associate of the Al Qaeda-linked militants who bombed the World Trade Center in 1993 – assassinated him in Manhattan.

<sup>80</sup> Seawright was shot and killed in 1987 by a small Republican splinter group. It was revealed after his death that at some point in his career, he had joined the UVF. **Source:** McKittrick, David, Brian Feeney, Seamus Kelters, and Chris Thornton. *Lost Lives: The Stories of the Men, Women and Children Who Died as a Result of the Northern Ireland Troubles*. London: Mainstream, 1999. 1101-1102.

built from the ashes of the worst genocide in history.<sup>ccccx</sup> This “mainstreaming” of truly extremist opinion – opinion as radical as that of Hamas – will constitute as major impediment to peace in the region. As Northern Ireland shows, only a meeting of mutual interests – a shift of consensus towards a mutually agreeable political compromise – can induce the terrorists within Hamas towards peace. By legitimizing the extreme viewpoints of leaders like Lieberman, and plotting to cut the West Bank in half with settlements,<sup>ccccxi</sup> PM Netanyahu and Defense Minister Barak are strangling the two-state solution.

***Lesson Two: The basic solution has been the same all along: satisfaction of some of the Palestinians’ basic political demands in exchange for a cessation of violence.***

As shown in Chapter Two, the process of popular radicalization is a long one. In both Palestine and Northern Ireland, the widespread sympathizing with, or participation in, extremist violence was a direct result of political inequity. With no state of their own, the responsibility for addressing the political grievances and needs of Catholics and Palestinians fell to Unionists and Israel. But instead of allowing the fair airing of these concerns in a representative format, political elites from both Stormont and Jerusalem institutionalized the second-class status of Catholics and Palestinians. This lack of political accommodation denied both of these already aggrieved communities any safety valve for their frustrated aspirations. Once non-violent solutions were discredited, the seeds for radicalization were planted.

This process indicates the centrality of political accommodation to both conflicts. The sad truth is that had Catholics and Palestinians been granted political accommodation in the form of separate governing institutions, or even been treated a bit better by the authorities, the violence would have been less intense, or even non-existent. Today, one fears the government of Benjamin Netanyahu – who has pointedly avoided committing to a two-state solution – is determined to further delegitimize the remnants of influence the Palestinian Authority has over its people, thereby giving aggrieved Palestinians even fewer options to express their dissatisfaction peacefully. Such a strategy will strengthen Hamas's hawks and further quiet any politically amenable Islamist leaders that exist. The hard-line policies of Margaret Thatcher's government, particularly in her permitting ten imprisoned hunger strikers to die, largely revived the IRA's militant fortunes - even as it was apparent it was trapped in a military stalemate it could not win. Why would Netanyahu's hard-line policies not drive a similar spike in militancy?

**Lesson Three: Be careful what you wish for.**

PM Netanyahu, Foreign Minister Lieberman, and Defense Minister Barak think they scored a big victory with the Gaza War (December 2008 – January 2009). They may believe that the fact that they could hurt and embarrass Hamas justifies one thousand, two hundred and eighty-four Palestinians and thirteen Israeli lives.<sup>cccxxii</sup> In fact, the war in Gaza may set a dangerous precedent and give Israelis a sense of false comfort. If there is anything the histories of Northern Ireland and Palestine tell us, it is this: things can always get worse. So long as the politically radicalizing statelessness and illegal treatment of Palestinians continue, the root of

the problem will remain securely underground, ready to grow again – no matter how many times the plant is crushed aboveground. The problem isn't going anywhere, and can always get worse.

Hamas has shown itself to be roughly as rational an actor as the IRA, responding to incentives and constraints whilst attempting to manage competing strategic viewpoints within the organization. Hamas leaders, including Ahmed Yassin and Moussa Abu Marzouk, have repeatedly floated the idea of a *hudna* – a long-term ceasefire with Israel that would serve as de facto recognition of its right to exist alongside a Palestinian state.<sup>cccxxiii</sup> Given the organization's sophisticated public relations apparatus, skillful political organization, effective electioneering during the 2006 elections, and authenticity in the eyes of many Palestinians, a politically integrated Hamas could be a useful, if not warm, ally in combating terror. But Israel has shown no interest in seeing a strong Palestinian state with Hamas competing within it. The nearly universal 2006 dismissal of Hamas's electoral victory, and subsequent efforts to illegally overturn it, may have delegitimized the electoral strategy for a generation of Palestinians. In addition, if Hamas ever were to be a partner in peace, it would need to be both coherent organizationally and legitimate; unfortunately, the Israeli assassination program has removed many of the influential figures that could have ensured that coherence and legitimacy.

Hamas's base of popularity will probably remain unaffected by its loss during the Gaza War, both because of its rhetoric and its social programs. Ironically however, its military failure in several respects could be detrimental to Israel. If Hamas cannot "deliver" the violent retribution many Palestinians are no doubt

thirsting for, they'll turn to who can, and that means more extreme, less politically amenable players. Hamas is actually not the *worst* enemy Israel could have; it has never attacked outside of Israel, such as Hezbollah's early nineties' attacks on two Argentinean Jewish centers; it has never had any affiliation with Al Qaeda, unlike Islamist groups operating in Lebanese refugee camps; and it has not launched a successful attack inside Israel in several years (though its capacity to do so has also been diminished by successful Israeli counterterror measures).

Anecdotal reports have indicated defections from Hamas to Islamic Jihad - the reason some attacks in the past have been labeled as joint operations, as with the June 2006 kidnapping of Gilad Shalit. As Hamas parliamentarian Mahmoud Ramahi put it, "They refuse to sit with us. But they should know: *if they make us fail, they won't find anyone else at all to talk with.*"<sup>cccxxiv</sup> In stark contrast to Hamas, Islamic Jihad has shown *no* political amenability, having never shown any inclination for political organization. Rather, Islamic Jihad has a "deep, Koran-based hatred and contempt for Jews," blaming Israelis in the crudest anti-Semitic terms for "subversive" Palestinian behavior, like drug use or homosexuality.<sup>cccxxv</sup> Much like how Israel's efforts to eliminate the PLO left it having to deal with the more virulent Hamas, there may come a day when Israeli leaders miss the relative simplicity of dealing with Meshaal and Haniyeh. Such a course might have been that of Northern Ireland, had Gerry Adams lost his battle for influence to the extremist, unmovable forces of the Real IRA.

***Lesson Four: There is no free lunch for Hamas – its leaders need to make major sacrifices, too.***

As suggested above, Israel should not overestimate the advantages of divide and rule, as well as repressive policies that systematically undermine Hamas. But Hamasniks should not overestimate the merits of maintaining unity in their ranks. After all, peace only came to Northern Ireland after a two-decade effort by the Adams's "Young Turks" to co-opt or marginalize anti-political integration hawks. The fact is, as in Northern Ireland, violence has allowed Hamas to secure a position of major influence – but it will not take it beyond there. There is absolutely no danger of Hamas "driving Israel into the sea" when it has been reduced to building their rockets from scrounged copper plumbing. The markedly more extreme leadership of Khaled Meshaal – who remains comfortably ensconced in his Damascus villa – is of little relevance to the average Palestinian. Meshaal and the Political Bureau has offered no compelling strategy for achieving their stated strategic goals, or of accomplishing something as pressing as lifting the Israeli blockade on Gaza.

The pragmatic leaders of Hamas in Gaza – Haniyeh and Zahar – are at constant risk of assassination. If they wish to change this stalemate into something that goes beyond an unending bloodbath that has claimed two of Zahar's sons and wounded Haniyeh's boy, they must let go of Meshaal. They have the popular legitimacy to do it, and at this point, good reason to do so. But given Damascus's control over Iranian and Syrian largesse flowing into the territories, this course of action will require incentives. Sequencing of this political engagement is critical, as is orchestrating the activities of Hamas's players. But the possible cultivation of none other than Gerry Adams as a back channel for Hamas might be just the sort of

guidance the Gaza leadership needs – Tony Blair himself vouched for Adams’s entry into the territory in April 2009.<sup>cccxxvi</sup> Haniyeh should start taking lessons from Adams on outfoxing Damascus, whilst engaging Fatah via Egyptian mediators. One way to show a seriousness about political engagement: release the captured soldier Gilad Shalit, held without independent medical treatment for over a thousand days.

**Lesson Five: Only militants have the credibility to lead militants into peace.**

There is a common Israeli political saying, that “only doves can make war and only hawks can make peace.” The implication is that the credentials of a stalwart military man such as Yitzhak Rabin or Ehud Barak enables him to stifle opposition towards compromise coming from the hawkish flank. The same principle holds true for terrorists. Among his accomplishments, Gerry Adams succeeded where no pacifist Nationalist politician could: he convinced most of the IRA that he would never sell them out, and that political settlement as brokered by Sinn Fein represented the best attainable victory.

Today, I can think of only one Palestinian up to the manful task of reconciling Hamas and Fatah, and coaxing the political integration of Hamas: the diminutive, deceptively jovial Marwan Barghouti – a convicted murderer of five and self-described “regular guy from the Palestinian street,”<sup>cccxxvii</sup> who may be Palestine’s best hope for peace. Barghouti carries prestige and popularity as a “bridge figure,” capable of bringing together Palestinians as a people, not factions. Within Palestinian politics, he occupies a unique berth. Since Yasser Arafat’s death in 2004,



Fatah has been riven by a divide between the “Old Guard” and the “Young Guard”; Arafat, in his tightly controlled dispensation of money and ideological plasticity, was capable of bridging this gap, albeit corruptly. The “Old Guard” left behind is largely men of Arafat’s generation, lifelong PLO organizers who operated abroad for most of their careers before returning to Palestine after Oslo. Moderate, older politicians like the unpopular PA President Mahmoud Abbas most prominently symbolize these “Tunisians”. Less acceptable to the West has been the “Young Guard” of more militant, terror-linked<sup>81</sup> Palestinians.

But today, Barghouti has proven popular enough to bridge this divide, with Abbas repeatedly calling for his release – despite the fact that Barghouti is the most likely person to beat Abu Mazen in a presidential election. Some neo-conservatives have offered up former Preventive Security chief Muhammed Dahlan as a more respectable, pro-Western bridge figure. This ignores the fact that he is bitterly loathed by Hamas; in the minds of many Palestinians, Dahlan is merely a PA smuggler and racketeer who plotted a disastrous 2007 military coup against the Fatah-Hamas unity government. But Barghouti is respected by Hamas, and has cultivated good relations with their imprisoned members. And yes, like the Adams/McGuinness leadership, he has blood on his hands – as Barghouti puts it, he is “not a terrorist, but neither am I a pacifist.”<sup>cccxxviii</sup> This is a characteristic that would lend him credibility in negotiating the political reintegration of Hamas. With widespread respect across the political spectrum, Barghouti seems one of the last

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<sup>81</sup> In the course of the Second Intifada, the Tanzim, the Al Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigade, and the Popular Resistance Committees have constituted the cutting edge of Fatah militancy. Barghouti, who has been linked to all three, has substantial influence among its mostly younger members (in their twenties and thirties).

leaders capable of making a deal that would not totally delegitimize the Palestinians – the fundamental error of Oslo. The critical importance of individuals whose credibility cuts across internal divisions should not be underestimated.

**Lesson Six: A political system founded on an ideal of cultural homogeneity is unsustainable when minorities are mobilized under the reality of disenfranchisement.**

Theodor Herzl, the father of Zionism, stressed the importance of national identity and service, rather than religion, as binding Jews together. Founded after the Holocaust, Israel served as the realization of this national goal. But the Israel of today is a far cry from the liberal, socialist, secular state men like Yitzhak Rabin and David Ben-Gurion fought to create. In contravention of numerous international laws and countless UN resolutions, Israel continues to occupy illegally the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, engaging in daily human rights violations that fly in the face of the ideals it claims to represent. Something has gone awfully wrong in the state of Israel.

Throughout its history, Israel has grappled with the tensions between two contradictory visions of the Jewish homeland. The first developed out of “the dream” - a tolerant, liberal society built by Jews, a people painfully sensitive to the slings and arrows of violent prejudice. The second reflects reality –the price for the establishment of a *purely* Jewish homeland in the Mideast has been, to quote Ze’ev Jabotinsky, “a collision here between two truths”: that of Zionists and that of

Palestinians. To Jabotinsky, the “backwards” Arab’s “instinctive patriotism is just as pure and noble as our own; it cannot be bought, it can only be curbed by... *force majeure*.”<sup>cccxxix</sup> The uncomfortable marriage of two truths – that of Zionism’s enfranchising hopes and their oppressive corollaries – is reminiscent of that which governed the Northern Ireland of Unionism. As “Ulster’s” landed gentry discovered in 1969, the desire to sustain a “Protestant state for a Protestant people” could not be maintained in a country where Catholics comprised thirty-five percent of the population.<sup>cccxxx</sup> Perhaps the most pressing and profound lesson to draw from the example of Northern Ireland is that so long as official Israeli policy is to ignore the Palestinian population’s political aspirations, the roots of terror will remain snugly planted in Mideast sand.

***Lesson Seven: Strategic thinking is more important than tactical successes – and it requires sacrifice.***

Finally, both Israel and Hamas must consider the strategic implications of continuing on their current tactical path of action and reaction. Israel either will have to give up democracy to sustain its control over Palestinians, or resign itself to risky and costly political compromises with Palestinians. Assassinating every other militant that pops up or bombing the odd pizza restaurant will do nothing but inflate the sum of misery in the world. Individuals – those who make tactical decisions – need to think beyond the knee jerk calculus of violence. They must make decisions that balance the need for immediate peace with a lasting one. The Northern Ireland of today is the democratic beacon it is because, in the face of a state of nature, individuals – Adams, Hume, Trimble, Spence, Irvine, Major,

McGuinness, etc – jumped back from the abyss instead of in to the volcano. It can happen in Palestine. It can happen in Israel.

## Appendix A: Important Figures In Palestinian Nationalism



Arafat, Yasser: B. 1929, Cairo. D. 2004, Paris. AKA Abu Amar.

The founder of *Fatah* political party in 1959, longtime Chairman of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and President of the Palestinian Authority 1996 – 2004, Arafat has had – for better or worse – the greatest impact of any Palestinian nationalist on the direction of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Born in 1929 Cairo to a successful Gaza merchant, Arafat claimed to have been born into a wing of the Husseini family, a clan of historically powerful and prominent Palestinian notables.<sup>cccxxxi</sup> After studying civil engineering in Cairo, in 1959 Arafat established the Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah), and in the early sixties oversaw a series of commando raids into Israel. Autocratic Arab leaders, particularly Egypt's Nasser, were perturbed by these loose cannons, worried they would spark a war with Israel. In 1964, in an attempt to co-opt the nascent Palestinian nationalist movement, Nasser engineered the creation of the PLO.<sup>cccxxxi</sup> By 1969, Arafat and Fatah had seized control of all of the PLO's major institutions, thereafter using the organization to launch attacks against Israel from Jordan.<sup>cccxxxi</sup> In September 1970, fed up with the aggressive skyjackings of the PLO's George Habash-led PFLP, Jordan's King Hussein violently expelled the PLO to Lebanon, an event thereafter known as "Black September." From their new base in Lebanon, Arafat oversaw the transformation of the PLO into a Palestinian "government in exile," providing social services whilst reaching out to the international community; this culminated in Arafat's 1974 address to the UN General Assembly.<sup>cccxxxi</sup> In June 1982, Israeli PM Menachem Begin invaded Lebanon, hoping to destroy the PLO's presence there as prelude to a takeover of the West Bank. From there, Arafat bounced to Tunisia, where in the early nineties he began communicating with Israel through two Norwegian academics. This backchannel eventually bloomed into serious negotiations involving the United States, and in 1993, Arafat signed the Oslo Accord with Israeli PM Yitzhak Rabin. While Arafat got what he wanted – a Palestinian Authority in which he and his Fatah loyalists would have total control – Hamas rejected the deal and the PA as Arafat selling out Palestine for his own sake. Throughout his tenure as the elected PA president, Arafat was the nexus of a corrupt

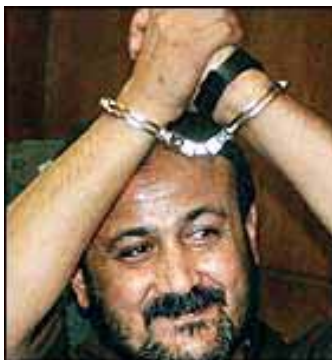


group of crude, flashy PA racketeers known as “The Tunisians.” In 2000, Arafat participated in the failed Camp David summit on final status negotiations for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; the talks collapsed amidst PM Ehud Barak’s intransigence and Arafat’s self-interest. Following that, PM Ariel Sharon successfully painted him as an organizer of terror, leading to his abandonment by the international community. He died of a mysterious blood disease in Paris; many have speculated it was due to an Israeli poison similar to that which enarly killed Khaled Meshaal.<sup>cccxxxv</sup>



**Ayyash, Yahya: B. 1966, Rafat, West Bank. D. 1996, Rafah, Gaza. AKA “The Engineer.”**

One of the founders of the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, and a former chemistry student at Ramallah’s Bir Zeit University, Ayyash earned the nom de guerre of “Al-Muhandis,” or “The Engineer,” for his role as an early proponent of suicide bombing.<sup>cccxxxvi</sup> The brutal mastermind of terror attacks that killed sixty Israelis between 1992 and 1996,<sup>cccxxxvii</sup> Ayyash earned an almost mythic reputation among Palestinians as an escape artist and master of disguise, prompting PM Rabin to remark to the Knesset, “I am afraid he may be sitting between us here.”<sup>cccxxxviii</sup> Following the ultraconservative Dr. Baruch Goldstein’s 1994 massacre of twenty-nine Palestinians in Hebron, Ayyash led Hamas’ response with a wave of suicide bombings that rocked Israel.<sup>cccxxxix</sup> Shin Bet’s assassination in 01/06 of Ayyash was personally approved by PM Shimon Peres; Ayyash was slain after Hamas member and Israeli mole Kamal Hammad swapped his cell phone for an explosive-laden one.<sup>cccxl cccxli</sup> The death prompted a wave of suicide bombings in 02/06; Ayyash’s technical designs are still used today by Hamas.



**Barghouti, Marwan: B. 1959, Ramallah, West Bank.**

The former secretary general of Fatah and its armed wing, Tanzim, Barghouti is the unofficial leader of Fatah’s “Young Guard,” and the alleged founder of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades, a coalition of Fatah militant groups.<sup>cccxl</sup> A graduate of Bir Zeit University and a prominent and charismatic organizer during the First Intifada, Barghouti was expelled in 1987 to Jordan, from which he returned under the terms of the Oslo agreement in 1994. Barghouti was elected a member of the PLC in 1996.<sup>cccxl</sup> In 2000, Barghouti allegedly became the commander of Fatah’s secular version of Hamas’s Izzedine al-Qassam Brigades, the al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigade. Developed following an October 2000 paramilitary parade in Nablus, Barghouti would play in important role in developing the organization’s tactical abilities.<sup>cccxliv</sup> Arrested in 2002, he was convicted of five counts of murder in 2004 and was sentenced to several life terms.<sup>cccxlv</sup> He is serving his sentence at Hasharon Prison, Tel Aviv.<sup>cccxlvi</sup> In 12/05, Barghouti founded *al-Mustaqbal* (The Future), a political party, with the intention of challenge Fatah’s “old guard” and cronyist elite. The split came following Pres. Abbas’ refusal to place Barghouti at the top of Fatah’s parliamentary list for the 01/06 PLC elections. Despite eventual reconsolidation of the two parties, the fissure contributed to Hamas’ victory. Abbas has since asked Olmert to release Barghouti as a good will gesture.<sup>cccxlvii</sup> Barghouti remains friendly and influential with key Hamas figures, many of whom he has served time with, and the group has formally demanded his release in exchange for Gilad Shalit; Hamas head Khaled Mesha’al said in 2007 Hamas had “put his name on the top of the list” of

prisoners in their demands relayed to PM Olmert.<sup>cccxlvi</sup> Learned English and Hebrew in prison, where he is an avid reader of biographies, such as of Bill Clinton, Margaret Thatcher, and Ariel Sharon.<sup>cccxlxi</sup> Barghouti is frequently mentioned as a successor to Mahmoud Abbas, distinguishing himself from Abu Mazen during the Gaza War by largely supporting Hamas's violent combat.



**Deif, Mohammed: B. 1960, Khan Younis, Gaza. AKA Abu Khalid.**

A shadowy figure about whom little is known, Deif is believed to be the current "chief of staff" of Hamas' military wing, the Izzedine Al Qassam Brigades. There is debate over how long he has held the position; Deif likely ascended to the job either in 01/96, upon the slaying of Yahya Ayyash by the Shin Bet,<sup>cccl</sup> or in 06/02, to replace Saleh Shehade. Before joining Hamas, Deif evidently dabbled in acting as a member of the first Islamic theatrical group in Khan Younis, in which he specialized in light, Stan Laurel-esque comedic roles.<sup>cccli</sup> Eventually becoming a key member of the Qassam Brigades' engineering squad, it was Deif and aides Hassan

Saleme and Adnan al-Ghoul who organized and directed a wave of suicide bombings in Israel in 02/96 – shortly after the end of a forty-day mourning period for Ayyash<sup>ccclii</sup> – which killed sixty-one people.<sup>cccliii</sup> Israeli security forces have attempted to kill him five times, using helicopter-borne missile strikes in 2001 and 2002; Deif was wounded each time, losing an eye and several bodyguards. In 2006, an air strike on a Hamas meeting killed seven children and wounded Deif badly.<sup>cccliv</sup> Deif is believed to have suffered a serious spinal injury in that attack, possibly leaving him wheelchair-bound and/or a quadruple amputee.<sup>ccclv</sup> Deif released video messages in 2005 and 2007, but it is unclear whether he remains the head of the al Qassam Brigades since his injury; the likely replacement, Ahmed Ja'abri, was nearly killed in the recent Gaza War.<sup>ccclvi</sup>



**al-Ghoul, Adnan: B. 1962, Al Migraha, Gaza City. D. 2004, Gaza City. AKA "Father of the Weapons Industry," "The Mechanic," Abu Bilal.**

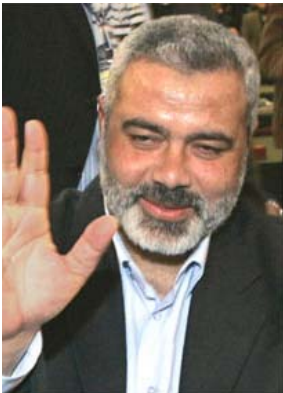
A close friend of Yehya Ayyash, al-Ghoul became prominent in the late 80s and early 90s as the Qassam Brigades' deputy chief, in which he served as a prodigious arms smuggler and as one of Hamas' most important weapons manufacturers. A longtime member of the Gazan Muslim Brotherhood, al-Ghoul established himself early on as a guerilla leader, orchestrating the assassinations of Shin Bet officer Victor Rijwan and IDF Military Police chief Ron Tal in Gaza, in December 1987. Wanted by Israeli security forces for the murders, al-Ghoul spent several years in exile, in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Iran, gaining extensive expertise in explosives.

Returning in 1994, al-Ghoul was appointed head of weapons for the al-Qassam Brigades, forming a partnership with Ayyash and Mohammed Deif; Deif and al-Ghoul directed February 1996's retaliatory suicide bombings following Ayyash's slaying. Al-Ghoul's weapons team produced the core of Hamas' arsenal in the late 90s; the squad's Yassin RPG launchers and al-Qassam rockets remain in active use. Following the signing of the Oslo Accords, Israeli security forces unsuccessfully attempted to kill al-Ghoul three times, in 1998, 2001 and 2003, killing two of his sons and badly injuring him with poison. Security forces finally killed him in 2004, striking his car with two missiles on Gaza City's Jaffa Street; the car was packed with al-Ghoul's own explosives.<sup>ccclvii</sup>



**Dr. Habash, George: B. 1926, Lydda (now Lod). D. 2008, Amman. AKA al-Hakim ("The Doctor").**

Born into a wealthy, Greek Orthodox Christian family in 1926, Habash's early social status largely dissipated when his kin was expelled from Lydda during the '48 war.<sup>ccclviii</sup> A refugee, Habash studied medicine at the American University in Beirut, graduating first in his class in 1951 and becoming a pediatrician.<sup>ccclix</sup> Habash, by then a committed Marxist, had also organized the Kawmyun al-Arab (Arab Nationalist Party) in 1949, a pan-Arab, Nasserist refugee movement co-founded with Wadie Haddad; the group helped destabilize Lebanese politics, culminating in the Lebanese Civil War in 1975.<sup>ccclx</sup> Habash formed his own militant group in the mid-60s, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), with a manifesto of forming a Marxist state in liberated Palestine. The group, which became a branch of the PLO, grew more militant in the late 60s, launching the first Palestinian attacks against Israeli interests abroad, particularly through skyjackings and mass shootings. The 1969 destruction of several hijacked planes in the Jordanian desert prompted King Hussein to violently expel the PLO from the country, a bloody incident known as "Black September."



**Haniyeh, Ismail: B. 1963, al-Shati Camp, Gaza City.**

In January 2006, the little-known PLC legislator Haniyeh emerged overnight as a figure of global importance, when he was appointed Prime Minister of the PA following Hamas' surprise PLC victory. Born in Gaza City's Beach Camp, Haniyeh is a longtime Hamas member who came of age during the First Intifada while a student leader at Gaza's Islamic University. Imprisoned during the First Intifada, Haniyeh was among the 416 Islamists expelled to a barren area of Southern Lebanon.<sup>ccclxi</sup> Upon his return, he became dean of the Hamas-linked Islamic University. Following his appointment as Prime Minister, Haniyeh, a charismatic, bantam-weight father of thirteen who is viewed as a Hamas moderate (he has never been linked to terror operations), became ensnared in Hamas-Fatah

clashes.<sup>ccclxii</sup> In 2007, an incident at the Gaza-Egypt Rafah border crossing, in which Haniyeh's bodyguard was killed and his son wounded, sparked intense clashes with Fatah. The border guards are a component of the Presidential Guard – a PA security apparatus which was being trained by U.S. General Keith Dayton to launch a coup against Hamas in Gaza. Catching the drop on them, Hamas violently expelled Fatah from the Strip, prompting the collapse of the unity government and Haniyeh's

dismissal as prime minister.<sup>ccclxiii</sup>

**Marzouk, Moussa Abu: B. 1951, Rafah, Gaza.**



The former head of Hamas' political bureau and a crucial figure in the group's structural reorganization in the early 90s, Marzouk was demoted to chief deputy following his 1995 FBI arrest at New York City's JFK Airport. A rare Hamas militant – he had a soft spot for America, having lived in the D.C. metro area for a number of years – Marzouk, against the advice of fellow Hamas leaders, attempted to return in 1995; he was detained upon touchdown in New York. Once deported, Marzouk set up shop in Damascus as Khaled Meshaal's top deputy, and has generally come to be known as his most prominent loyalist.



**al-Masri, Mushir: B. 1976, Beit Lahia, Gaza.**

A prominent spokesman for Hamas, particularly in the Western press, al-Masri is a graduate and lecturer at the Islamic University and a member of the PLC.<sup>ccclxiv</sup> In 2007, he was one of two dozen Hamas members to have been allowed to reenter Gaza following the Hamas takeover; passage was obtained in exchange for the handover of a wanted Al Qaeda militant. Al-Masri was alleged to have been involved in cross-border currency



smuggling, a major priority for Hamas since 2006 and the start of an Israeli blockade.<sup>ccclxv</sup> Al-Masri, a member of one of Gaza's most prominent clans, has been a particularly prominent spokesman during the 2008-2009 Gaza War. In January 2009, al-Masri blasted suggestions by Quartet envoy Tony Blair of "bringing Hamas into [the peace] process," calling them "utterly foolish and useless" and "a return to the same obstacles erected by the West."<sup>ccclxvi</sup>



**Mesha'al, Khaled: B. 1956, Silwad, West Bank.**

Though he has not set foot in Palestine in decades, Mesha'al remains Hamas' most influential figure in the international arena, as the head of its Political Bureau and presumably, since the 2004 death of Ahmed Yassin, its supreme leader. Born in 1956 in a small village near Ramallah, Mesha'al and his family fled to Kuwait in 1967, upon Israel's invasion of the West Bank. In Kuwait, the teenage Mesha'al studied at the prestigious Abdullah al-Salim Secondary School, where he joined the Muslim Brotherhood in 1971.<sup>ccclxvii</sup> After founding an organization called the List of the Islamic Right and graduating from Kuwait University in 1978 with a degree in physics, Mesha'al became a teacher, remaining involved in Islamist political circles. Mesha'al became increasingly involved with Hamas in late 80s, leading the group's "Kuwait contingent" of Palestinian

expatriates. Following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Mesha'al relocated to Jordan, where he took over Amman's Hamas bureau and became responsible for the group's international fundraising. Mesha'al developed contacts with the governments of Iran and Syria working in this context, while funneling millions towards Hamas' social and military programs in the occupied territories.<sup>ccclxviii</sup> In this time frame, Moussa Abu Marzouk reorganized the Hamas political bureau, with the protective aim of shifting leadership structures outside of the West Bank and Gaza, enhancing Mesha'al's status. In 1997, members of a Mossad *Kidon* assassination unit, traveling with Canadian passports, successfully poisoned Mesha'al in a daylight attack outside his Amman office, but were captured by a Hamas bodyguard. King Hussein, infuriated at the attempt, repatriated the Mossad hit men only after Israel had released twenty to forty Palestinian prisoners, including Sheikh Yassin, and provided an antidote to save Mesha'al.<sup>ccclxix</sup> After being jailed and ejected from Jordan in 1999, Mesha'al reestablished Hamas headquarters in Damascus, where he remains today.<sup>ccclxx</sup> Following a parliamentary deadlock over Hamas's January 2006 PLC victory, Meshaal and Ismail Haniyeh represented the organization at a Saudi-mediated conference in Mecca; Meshaal is pictured right in Mecca, at prayer with Abu Mazen and Haniyeh (out of view). The resulting agreement, the Mecca Accord, would collapse following a June 2007 coup attempt by Fatah elements led by Mohammed Dahlan, and a counter-coup by Hamas that would expel Fatah from Gaza. Mesha'al is considered to be among Hamas' hawks, and has publicly disagreed with Hamas' Gazan leadership over ceasefires and mediation with Fatah – indicating an important, possible fissure within the group between Hamas' external and internal leadership.



**Dr. al-Rantissi, Abdel Aziz: B. 1947, Yubna (now Yavne). D. 2004, Gaza City. AKA Abu Mohammed.**

A surgeon who became a Muslim Brotherhood member while studying medicine in Egypt, Rantissi would blossom into one of Hamas's most influential, popular, and extreme members, as an ardent advocate of



attacks on Israeli civilians.<sup>ccclxxi</sup> Rantissi grew up in dire poverty as a refugee in Gaza's Khan Younis UNRWA camp; One of twelve children, Rantissi was forced to support his family from the age of nine, becoming the main breadwinner following his father's death in 1963.<sup>ccclxxii</sup> An excellent student, Rantissi won a college scholarship in 1965, graduating from Egypt's Alexandria University in 1972 with a master's degree in pediatrics.<sup>ccclxxiii</sup> Back in Gaza, Rantissi became first known for treating poor Bedouin tribes free of charge.<sup>ccclxxiv</sup> After returning to Egypt and leaving in 1976 with a Ph.D, Rantissi, now working at Khan Younis's Nasser Hospital, joined the Palestinian *Ikhwan* (Muslim Brotherhood) and helped administrate several Islamic and medical charity groups.<sup>ccclxxv</sup> It was in this capacity Rantissi grew familiar with Sheikh Yassin and his Islamic Compound, helping to coordinate the group's charity works. After several run-ins with Israeli authorities in the early 80s over tax avoidance, Rantissi's clinic was shut down, and in 1986, he was barred from working as a doctor. Upon reestablishing himself as a lecturer at Islamic University, Rantissi thereafter became deeply involved in Gaza's Islamist movement, and was one of the seven leaders to formally found Hamas in 12/87. A key spokesman for the group, as well as a firebrand, Rantissi was arrested several times in the late 80s; in 1992, he was among the 416 Islamists expelled to a barren area of Southern Lebanon.<sup>ccclxxvi</sup> A decent English speaker, Rantissi emerged as the group's main spokesman in the international press, publicizing the group's decision to stay at Marj al-Zuhur in a bid to embarrass the Israelis. The incident ultimately proved a blessing in disguise for Hamas, marking the first opportunity for its internal and external leaderships to interact, strategize, coordinate fundraising, and train in combat techniques. The episode also marked Hamas' first extended contact with Hezbollah, which came to the group's physical aid in the uninhabited Lebanese hinterland.<sup>ccclxxvii</sup> Following his repatriation in 1993, Rantissi emerged as the most prominent Hamas hawk in castigating Arafat's "shameless sell-out" with Oslo,<sup>ccclxxviii</sup> as well as accusing Fatah of the murder of a Hamas bombmaker;<sup>ccclxxix</sup> Rantissi was arrested several times throughout the 90s by PA security forces. With the outbreak of the Second Intifada, Rantissi's tough-talking hawkishness found a new outlet, as Rantissi became a key decision-maker in the application of violence. In June 2003, shortly after the Aqaba Conference, Rantissi was nearly killed by an Israeli Hellfire missile; a Hamas suicide bomber attacked in Jerusalem the following day, prompting a ceasefire.<sup>ccclxxx</sup> Though he was repeatedly warned by family friend Muhammed Dahlan of the inadequacy of his personal security against the threat of assassination,<sup>ccclxxxi</sup> Rantissi never used safehouses and took few personal precautions. He once stated, "It's death whether by killing or by cancer. Nothing will change. If by Apache [helicopter] or by cardiac arrest, I prefer Apache." Rantissi received his preference twenty-five days into his term as Gaza Hamas leader, following the March 2004 slaying of Sheikh Yassin.<sup>ccclxxxii</sup> The two are pictured above, photo courtesy Al-Jazeera.co.uk.



**Rayyan, Nizar: B. 1962, Jabiliya, Gaza. D. 2009, Jabiliya, Gaza.**

One of Hamas' top five leaders in Gaza, the popular and proudly militant Rayyan was a rare cleric among Hamas' mostly professional upper echelons, and was considered by many to be a successor to Ahmed Yassin. Allegedly entrusted with much of Hamas' "wet work," including the capture and detention of Gilad Shalit, the evictions and slayings of Fatah loyalists in June 2007, and the intimidation and taming of several of Gaza's powerful clans in the takeover's wake, Rayyan constituted an important, internal coercive cudgel to complement Hamas' social and political programs. Externally, Rayyan seems to have inherited much of the late Saleh Shehadeh's brief, masterminding 2004's Ashdod port attack, which

killed ten Israelis, and in 2001, planning a suicide bombing committed by his own son. Along with Said Siam, Rayyan was one of the highest-ranked Hamas members to die in the 2008-2009 Gaza War; he remained in his house, along with his four wives and many children, even after being warned by the IDF of imminent destruction.



**Shehadeh, Saleh: B. 1953, Gaza City. D. 2002, Gaza City.**

Considered to have been one of Hamas' most hardline and hawkish leaders, Shehadeh was a charter member of the group and the longtime leader of Hamas' military wing, the Qassam Brigades; the IDF holds Shehadeh's stewardship of that branch responsible for the deaths of over one hundred Israelis.<sup>ccclxxxiii</sup> Shehadeh, who had met Sheikh Yassin in the 1980s while imprisoned together, was hired as an Islamic University professor after his release. In October 1987, Yassin met with Saleh Shehadeh to discuss the foundation of a new Islamic resistance movement – one with an armed wing. On December 8<sup>th</sup>, a group of prominent Islamist activists – all engineers, doctors or teachers – quietly convened in Gaza City. As Yassin would later recall, “During this meeting we agreed to call the movement Hamas, an acronym for the Islamic Resistance Movement... each one of us would be responsible for the areas in which we lived. I was to be the head.”<sup>ccclxxxiv</sup> In 2002, after two unsuccessful attempts to kill him, the IAF dropped a one-ton bomb on his Gaza City home, successfully killing Shehadeh – along with fourteen other people (nine of them children), as well as wounding fifty.<sup>ccclxxxv</sup>



**al-Shiqaqi, Fathi: B. 1951, Gaza City. D. 1995, Malta.**

A doctor by training, Shiqaqi was a long-time member of the Palestinian *Ikhwan* who in the early 1980s founded Islamic Jihad, arguably the first effective Islamic terror group to emerge in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Since its inception, Islamic Jihad has a “deep, Koran-based hatred and contempt for Jews,” becoming the first group to advocate suicide attacks with Islamic justification and blaming Israelis in the crudest anti-Semitic terms for “subversive” Palestinian behavior, like drug use or homosexuality.<sup>ccclxxxvi</sup> In 1995, motorcycle gunmen shot Shiqaqi to death outside his Malta hotel; the killing has generally been attributed to the Mossad (Israeli CIA). Interestingly, Shiqaqi's brother Khalil is the internationally respected director of the Nablus-based Center for Palestinian Research and Studies (CPRS), the best polling agency for Palestinian opinions.



**Siam, Said: B. 1959, al-Shati Camp, Gaza City. D. 2009, Jabiliya, Gaza City.**

One of the top three leaders of Hamas in Gaza and the Interior Minister in its government,<sup>ccclxxxvii</sup> Siam was the main contact point between Hamas' military and political branches, as well as a feared, radical and deadly enforcer of Hamas' control of the Strip.<sup>ccclxxxviii</sup> Born in Gaza City's Beach Camp, Siam's family fled in 1948 from al-Jura, the hometown of Hamas founder Ahmed Yassin; Yassin and Siam would grow close after the former's 1997 release from prison. Upon graduating in the early 80s with a degree in Islamic Education from Al-Quds Open University, Siam began working as a teacher in several UNRWA schools, a job he would maintain until 2003 despite his extensive involvement with Hamas.<sup>ccclxxxix</sup> After joining Hamas in the late 80s as one of its first members, Siam assumed leadership of his local teacher's union during the First

Intifada, while leading a Hamas unit tasked with uncovering and executing Israeli spies.<sup>cccxc</sup> Arrested four times in three years by Israeli authorities, in 1992 Siam was one of four hundred and fifteen Islamist activists deported to Marj al-Zuhar, Lebanon, from which he returned in 1995.<sup>cccxi</sup> Considered a hawk in the group, Said was well known as a salty Islamic traditionalist, who in addition to preaching part-time, “often insisted women cover their hair...before entering his office.” An internal player who enjoyed close relations with the external leadership, Siam was appointed Hamas’ chief foreign negotiator in 2003, a capacity in which he developed close links with Iranian officials.<sup>cccxcii</sup> In 2004, after the killings of Yassin and Rantissi, Siam was appointed to Hamas’ collective leadership in Gaza, along with Zahar and Haniyeh. After being elected to the PLC in 2006 with the most votes of any candidate,<sup>cccxciii</sup> Siam was appointed Interior Minister, a job in which he came to oversee three of the PA’s five security services, including the police and navy, and was tasked with coordinating security with Israel. Weakened by the boycott of the Hamas-led government, Siam formed the thirteen thousand member Executive Force in 2006 as a private police force, particularly for activity against Fatah. A trusted confidante and friend of leaders Zahar and Haniyeh, Said was entrusted, along with Nizar Rayyan, in overseeing the killing and expulsion of Fatah loyalists during the June 2007 counter-coup.<sup>cccxciv</sup> A feared and hated figure among Fatah loyalists, Siam’s Executive Force was credited by many Gazans with reducing lawlessness and expelling corrupt Fatah loyalists, but was also cited by many as an increasingly abusive and coercive apparatus that employed torture.<sup>cccxcv</sup> In September 2007, Siam led an Executive Force sortie into Gaza City’s Shuja’iya neighborhood to crack down on the pro-Fatah Hillis clan, sparking four days of clashes that left many dead.<sup>cccxcvi</sup> Siam repeated the tactic in 2008, causing other Gaza clansmen to flee into Israel.<sup>cccxcvii</sup> On January 16, 2009, a joint Shin Bet-IDF operation succeeded in killing Siam while at his brother’s house in Gaza City; the attack also resulted in the killing of his brother, Iyad, his brother’s family,<sup>cccxcviii</sup> military lieutenant Mahmoud Watfa, and Salah Abu Shrahk, the head of the Hamas general security service.<sup>cccxcix</sup>



**al-Wazir, Khalil: B. 1935, Ramleh (now Ramla). D. 1988. Tunis, Tunisia. AKA Abu Jihad.**

The cunning and charismatic organizer of much of Fatah’s terror operations and Arafat’s chief lieutenant over the territories, al-Wazir, better known as Abu Jihad, would also carry the dubious distinction of being one of Israel’s earliest high-profile “targeted assassinations.” Born in 1935 in Ramleh, al-Wazir’s family was made refugees in 1948, fleeing to the camps of Gaza. After receiving Egyptian military training and befriending Yasser Arafat in the early 50s, the pair co-founded the ‘Movement for the Liberation of Palestine,’ or Fatah, a militant organization devoted to launching sabotage attacks against Israel.<sup>cd</sup> A one-time Islamist, al-Wazir recruited largely from Gaza’s Muslim Brotherhood, disappointed by a lack of Islamic militancy. A crucial figure in much of Fatah’s organization, al-Wazir was instrumental in cultivating the group’s international ties, cultivating contacts with the Chinese, North Korean, North Vietnamese, Jordanian, Syrian, and Saudi Arabian governments, as well as establishing its first office abroad (in Algiers, 1963) and founding its official newspaper, *Filastinuna*.<sup>cdi</sup> Following Fatah’s takeover of the PLO in 1967, al-Wazir became the group’s key military leader, a capacity in which he was responsible for coordinating ultimately fruitless efforts to resist the PLO’s 1970 “Black September” expulsion from Jordan. Al-Wazir thereafter relocated to Beirut, from which he was expelled in 1982. The massive failure of the PLO in facing the Israeli invasion, and the relative success of indigenous Shi’ite militias, allegedly led to a shift of thinking for al-Wazir towards supporting grassroots Palestinian resistance;<sup>cdii</sup> nevertheless, the start of the First Intifada caught both al-Wazir and Arafat off-guard.<sup>cdiii</sup> Following the outbreak, and amid accusations that al-Wazir had organized the bombing of an Israeli mall, an IDF commando team stormed his Tunis villa, slaying several guards and killing al-Wazir in front of his family. The effort, overseen by Deputy Chief of Staff Ehud Barak from an “eye in the sky” Boeing 707, marked the most public yet of Israel’s assassination missions.<sup>cdiv</sup> The mission, with its air-based component, would serve as the most obvious tactical precursor to Israel’s “targeted



assassinations.” Strategically, the slaying, which deprived Fatah of one of its most effective and powerful leaders, served as antecedent towards the picking off of mid and upper-level Hamas and Fatah commanders during the Second Intifada.



**Sheikh Yassin, Ahmed: B. 1937, al-Jura (near Ashkelon). D. 2004, Gaza City.**

The eminence grise for the entire Hamas movement, Sheikh Yassin, the widely respected but coolly calculating founder of Hamas, remains its most emblematic figure, a commanding authority whose absence has been sorely missed by Hamas. Born in 1937 in a village near what is now Ashkelon, Yassin was crippled at a young age in a wrestling accident; his disability left him generally difficult to understand, with a thin reedy voice. A teacher in his middle age, Yassin was also a prominent Gaza Islamist in the *Ikhwan*. At the hub of these *Ikhwan*-related professional and social networks was Sheikh Yassin's *al-Mjamma' al-Islami* (Islamic Complex or Compound) and *al-Jam'iyyah al-Islamiyyah* (Islamic Association). Both Khan Younis-based organizations were founded in the mid-1970s as social welfare organizations, administering to refugees and the urban poor.<sup>cdv</sup> Occupation authorities licensed these organizations in an effort to divide the PLO; Israeli money also flowed indirectly into the organization's coffers.<sup>cdvi</sup> According to a U.S. government official, even after Yassin's turn towards militancy, some Likudist politicians bizarrely continued to advocate aid to Hamas - as it would ensure an anti-peace process Palestinian opposition.<sup>cdvii</sup> The center soon began attracting Islamist professionals. Yassin was arrested and jailed in 1984 for importing arms, which, IDF officials noted with curiosity, were not used.<sup>cdviii</sup> In 1987, In October 1987, Yassin met with Saleh Shehadeh, another Islamic University professor, to discuss the foundation of a new Islamic resistance movement – one with an armed wing. On December 8<sup>th</sup>, a group of prominent Islamist activists – all engineers, doctors or teachers - quietly convened in Gaza City. As Yassin would later recall, “During this meeting we agreed to call the movement Hamas, an acronym for the Islamic Resistance Movement... each one of us would be responsible for the areas in which we lived. I was to be the head.”<sup>cdix</sup> Though Yassin would later claim that Hamas had orchestrated the start of the Intifada,<sup>cdx</sup> the fact was that the newly incorporated organization successfully “piggybacked” off of the Intifada's popular rage. As Yassin's deputy, school headmaster Abdul Fattah Dokhan witnessed first-hand this reliance on the Intifada's popular support: “We used to wait for such opportunities in order to step-up our conflict with the enemy, encouraged by a larger consensual support.”<sup>cdxi</sup> The organizers of Hamas knew, in their wait for the right moment, that effectiveness would only come after a communal radicalization. In 1993 Yassin was imprisoned on murder charges. . In 1997, members of a Mossad *Kidon* assassination unit, traveling with Canadian passports, successfully poisoned Mesha'al in a daylight attack outside his Amman office, but were captured by a Hamas bodyguard. King Hussein, infuriated at the attempt, repatriated the Mossad hit men only after Israel had released twenty to forty Palestinian prisoners, including Sheikh Yassin, and provided an antidote to save Mesha'al.<sup>cdxii</sup> Following his release, Yassin became the most prominent possible leader of Hamas's political integration. In the wake of Hamas's first suicide bombing campaign in 1994, Yassin had broached the idea of a *hudna* ceasefire with Israel that would last for a decade,<sup>cdxiii</sup> and in 2004 called for a peace



“on the basis of the 1967 borders” that would leave “the rest of the land” to “history.”<sup>cdxiv</sup> It was not to be; in March 2004, in preparation for Israel’s planned withdrawal from Gaza, an Israeli helicopter assassinated Yassin, coming out of 5:30 a.m. services at his neighborhood mosque.<sup>cdxv</sup> The remnants of his wheelchair are pictured above.



**Dr. al-Zahar, Mahmoud: B. 1945, Zeitoun, Gaza City.**

One of Hamas’s longest-standing senior members, Zahar, a former surgeon, is one of Hamas’s top three ruling members in Gaza, the former foreign minister of the Fatah-Hamas government, and a militant leader with a hawkish reputation. Born in 1945 to a Palestinian father and Egyptian mother, Zahar spent most of his early years in Egypt, graduating from Cairo’s Ain Shams University in 1971 with a medical degree. After a five-year residency at Ain Shams, Zahar returned to Gaza, taking a position alongside Abdel Aziz al-Rantissi at the newly founded Islamic University’s Department of Medicine.<sup>cdxvi</sup> A longtime member of the Palestinian *Ikhwan*, the Gazan offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, Zahar first gained prominence in Islamic circles when in 1981, as head of the Gaza doctors’ professional association, he led a strike over the Israeli imposition of VAT on the Occupied Territories.<sup>cdxvii</sup> Subsequently, along with much of the Islamic University faculty, Zahar was an early member of Hamas following its 1987 foundation.<sup>cdxviii</sup> Following Ahmed Yassin’s 1989 arrest on charges relating to the kidnapping and slaying of an IDF soldier,<sup>cdxix</sup> and his subsequent conviction for ordering the murders of suspected informers, Zahar and Rantissi ascended to Hamas’s top slot in a collective leadership arrangement. In 1990, Zahar also became Hamas’s backchannel emissary to Yasser Arafat and the PLO. In 1992, Zahar was among four hundred and fifteen Palestinian Islamists dumped by Israel at Marj al-Zahur, Lebanon;<sup>cdxx</sup> the surgeon became a prominent figure on international news channels during his year there.<sup>cdxxi</sup> Following his return to Gaza and the beginning of the Oslo implementation, Zahar remained a prominent Hamas spokesman, particularly in dealing with the ascendancy of Fatah. Rejecting PA demands in 1995 that Hamas halt violence, Zahar argued, “We must calculate the benefit and cost of [violence]...If we can fulfill our goals without violence, we will do so. Violence is a means, not a goal.”<sup>cdxxii</sup> Zahar remained an ardent opponent of participating in the May 1996 PA elections,<sup>cdxxiii</sup> and clashed repeatedly with Palestinian security forces loyal to Fatah, at one point spending seven months in jail.<sup>cdxxiv</sup> In May 1996, following the arrests of hundreds of Hamas members, the PA pressured Zahar into publicly saying suicide operations were “a mistake”; in response, Political Bureau head Khaled Meshaal instructed spokesman Ibrahim Ghosheh to state that Zahar spoke under duress, prompting Ghosheh’s arrest by the PA.<sup>cdxxv</sup> Following the start of the Second Intifada, Zahar’s charisma and fiery style gained new adherents, even as Hamas agreed to a *tahdi’ah*, or truce in the summer of 2003. Israel breached the truce in August, killing Hamas member Ismail Abu Shannab, before targeting both Sheikh Yassin and Zahar in separate attacks in September. Though both were unsuccessful, the second attack leveled Zahar’s home, permanently paralyzing his wife, injuring Zahar and his daughter, and killing his twenty-five year old son Khaled and a bodyguard. Following the attack, Zahar urged Palestinians to resume violence.<sup>cdxxvi</sup> Following the 2004 killings of Yassin and Rantissi, Zahar began rule in a triumvirate with Ismail Haniyeh and Said Siam, growing instrumental in negotiating Hamas’s 2005 ceasefire and integrating into the PA political system. Following Hamas’s January 2006 PLC victory, Zahar was appointed Foreign Minister in its government; despite his title, Khaled Meshaal, in firm control of the Qassam Brigades and the Political Bureau, remained the final word on any political decisions. Continually targeted despite his title, Zahar helped negotiate the



national unity government with Fatah in early 2007.<sup>cdxxvii</sup> In January 2008, Zahar's second son was killed in an IDF incursion; Zahar is pictured at mourning above<sup>cdxxviii</sup> April 2008, following Hamas's takeover of Gaza, Zahar published an op-ed in the *Washington Post* proposing negotiations "without any preconditions," save that Israel first withdraw to the Green Line.<sup>cdxxix</sup> Zahar is likely now one of Hamas's top two in Gaza, along with close ally Ismail Haniyeh, in the wake of Interior Minister Said Siam's death during the Gaza War. A January 2009 *Al-Ahram* article reported Zahar to have been "furious" at the Damascus-based Political Bureau's "rash" decision to abandon the six-month ceasefire, arguing Hamas was not prepared for a possible Israeli incursion.<sup>cdxxx</sup>



**Zubeidi, Zakaria: B. 1976, Jenin, West Bank.**

A former stage actor radicalized by a coming of age during the First Intifada, Zubeidi distinguished himself during the Second Intifada as the cunning, brutal Martyrs' Brigades lieutenant who helped transform Jenin into "Suicide Bomb City." Amazingly, though Zubeidi was widely feared as one of Fatah's most deadly gunmen and orchestrators of terror, in the early 2000s, under an amnesty program offered by Israel, Zubeidi left terror to return to his acting roots.<sup>cdxxxi</sup>

## **Appendix B: Glossary**

### **Political System**

**Stormont** – Refers to the Northern Irish Assembly, in operation between 1921 and 1972 and intermittently until after the Good Friday Agreement. Once unionist-dominated, the British imposition of direct rule kept Northern Ireland firmly tied to Britain. The Good Friday Agreement restored the Assembly, and after several suspensions, it has operated efficiently since 2007.

**Democratic Unionist Party** – Socially conservative, fiercely anti-republican, ultra-unionist political party founded in 1971 by the fiery Presbyterian Reverend Ian Paisley. Draws largely from working class Protestants. Ideologically tied to the Christian Right in America; Paisley has an honorary doctorate from the anti-Catholic Bob Jones University. Though the party was vigorously opposed to the Good Friday Agreement, it did win seats in 1998's Northern Irish Legislature. Paisley's decision to reenter the NLA with Sinn Féin in 2007 was a remarkable turnaround. Now led by Peter Robinson, who has worked well with SF's Martin McGuinness.

**Ulster Unionist Party** – The product of a split within the long-serving Unionist Party, the UUP was formed in the late sixties by conservatives concerned with PM Terence O'Neill's moderate, pro-Catholic reforms. A more moderately conservative, if more bourgeois, Unionist party than the DUP, the UUP was instrumental in both the creation and collapse of the 1974 Sunningdale power-sharing compromise. Though the UUP later opposed the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985, under David Trimble, the party took a more moderate tack in the nineties, remaining quiet on the Downing Street Declaration. The UUP was instrumental in crafting the Good Friday Agreement, despite the mutual hatred between it and Sinn Féin. Trimble and the SDLP's John Hume won the Nobel Peace Prize for their work. In 2004 the party suffered a major split, with its conservative wing defecting to the DUP. Trimble, who was quickly sacked, is now involved in attempts to establish the British Conservative Party in Northern Ireland.

**Progressive Unionist Party** – A small unionist party with close ties to the UVF terror group. Holds one seat in the NLA; at once the most leftist and blatantly militant of the unionist parties. Largely the legacy of David Ervine and Augustus "Gusty" Spence, both one-time UVF convicts turned peacemakers.

**Social Democratic and Labor Party** – A democratic socialist party formed as a coalition of civil rights campaigners in 1970, under the leadership of John Hume

from the late seventies on, the SDLP came to be seen as the main nonviolent Irish nationalist party in the North. Hume, who held a Westminster seat he refused to take, reached out to Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams in 1988, urging an end to terror. Hume was instrumental in the multiparty talks of 1996 and the 1998 Good Friday Agreement; like the UUP, it has since lost electoral ground to its more extreme co-religionists.

**Alliance Party** – A primarily middle class party that split from within the Unionist Party that had long ruled Northern Ireland; initially aligned with moderately reforming PM O'Neill. It has been a minor but enduring party since then.

**Sinn Fein** – This political party, which in Gaelic means “We Ourselves,” dates back to 1905; in the aftermath of the 1916 Easter Rising, with which the group was not involved, Sinn Fein grew increasingly associated with militancy. The current incarnation, also known as Provisional Sinn Fein, was founded in 1970 as the political wing of the newly formed Provisional IRA. Starting with the 1981 election of IRA prisoner Bobby Sands to Westminster (in the midst of a fatal hunger strike), Sinn Fein began enjoying sustained electoral successes, culminating in Gerry Adams's 1983 election as MP for West Belfast. This success helped prompt the Anglo-Irish rapprochement of 1985, and in 1986 SF made the decisive move towards abandoning abstentionism in a prospective Northern Ireland legislature – precipitating the split of the Continuity IRA/SF from the movement.

**Republican Sinn Fein** – Political wing of Continuity IRA, which split from the IRA in 1986. Led by Ruairí Ó Bradaigh, it rejects Adams's Sinn Fein as sellouts.

**32-County Sovereignty Movement** – The political wing of the Real IRA, as militant if not more so than Republican Sinn Fein. Formerly led by Bernadette Sands McKevitt, the sister of dead hunger striker Bobby Sands and husband of convicted Real IRA leader Mickey McKevitt. Wields almost no influence, listed as a Foreign Terror Organization by the U.S. State Dept.

## **Militant Groups**

### **THE IRA:**

**Official IRA** – Marxist remainder of IRA following the December 1969 split of the Provisionals; poorly led and wracked with splits, it never posed a substantial threat after the mid-70s.

**Provisional IRA** – The longest-lasting and most deadly of the groups; usually the organization associated with the acronym “IRA” today. Formed in 1969 by aggrieved IRA members, it would pose an enormous terrorist threat as a cunning and brutal organization. Decisions are made by a seven member **Army Council**, itself chosen by the **General Headquarters Staff**, the middle management of the IRA; major



strategic decisions, as well as the composition of the GHQ, are made at an annual GHQ Convention, or **Ard Fheis**. For all intents and purposes, the IRA appears to no longer exist, following the successful decade-long implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

**Real IRA** – Founded in 1998 by disgruntled IRA members, frustrated by the pro-peace tendencies of Adams’s “Young Turks.” Led by former Quartermaster Mickey McKevitt, the organization drew membership largely from the rural midlands, centered around Co. Louth. The RIRA committed the worst atrocity of the Troubles, the Omagh bombing, in 1998, hastily calling a ceasefire thereafter. McKevitt is serving a twenty year prison sentence for his membership.

### **UNIONISTS:**

**The Ulster Defense Association** – Founded in 1971 from several unionist vigilante groups, the UDA could boast of up to 40,000 working class members at the height of its popularity in the mid-70s. The most common terror tactic of UDA members was murdering random Catholics; for most of its existence, it has also functioned as an organized crime group.

**The Ulster Volunteer Force** – Taking the name of a pre-World War I paramilitary force, the UVF was formed in 1966 and is generally credited with the first casualties of the Troubles. Led by ex-British soldier Gusty Spence, the UVF was violently opposed to the reformist policies of PM Terence O’Neill; a less mafia-like and more effectively violent organization than the UDA, Spence, after serving a lengthy murder sentence, would be instrumental to securing a 1994 ceasefire and in encouraging the growth of a political wing, the PUP.

## **Strategy and Ideology**

**Abstentionism** – Refers to Irish Republican strategy of contesting elections without any intent of taking the seat, should the candidate prevail. The strategy allowed for the publicity and political organization of electoral politics to bloom within the Republican community, without any acknowledgement of the 1921 partition’s legitimacy.

**“Ballot Box and Armalite” Strategy** – Coined by IRA propagandist Danny Morrison, the term refers to the simultaneous contesting of political elections and commission of terrorism as a two-pronged means of applying pressure.

**Loyalism** – While sometimes used interchangeably with the term “Unionism,” loyalism usually implies an extremist, militant strain of Protestant political thought.

While loyalists ardently support the sustained union of Northern Ireland and Great Britain, the term tends to imply a more acute cultural chauvinism, as well as violence; the UDA and UVF are two examples of loyalist organizations.

**“Tactical Use of Arms”/ “Totally Unarmed” Strategy** – TUAS, an acronym seen titling an internal Sinn Féin policy paper written some time in the early nineties, referred to the formal use of the “Ballot Box and Armalite” strategy. Indicative of the tightrope walked by Gerry Adams, the acronym was alternatively read as standing for either the former, more bellicose term, or for the more accommodating latter formulation.

**Republicanism/ Irish nationalism** – While the former refers to the desire for the reunification of Ireland, the latter refers to outspoken advocacy on behalf of the Irish people.

**Unionism** – Refers to ideology of desiring a sustained union between Great Britain and Northern Ireland; almost exclusively espoused by Irish Protestants.

**Ulsterization** – Like Vietnamization, constituted the handover of control from the British Army to the Royal Ulster Constabulary and Ulster Defence Regiment.

**“Acceptable Level of Violence”**– Originally a gaffe uttered by PM Ted Heath’s NI Secretary Reginald Maudling, the term referred to decades of British policy in seeking to manage violence without fundamentally altering the underlying political system.

**1921 *Dail*** – The only elected parliament with members across all thirty-two Irish counties, for decades this body was recognized by the IRA as the only legitimate government of the Irish people.

### **Violence and Conflict**

**Armalite** – Semiautomatic, American-made rifle that acquired a fearsome reputation among IRA members as a “cop-killing” weapon. Originally smuggled into Ireland in the early 1970s by the New York-based arms dealer George Harrison, the Armalite has been commemorated in countless Republican songs and murals.

**Bloody Sunday** – On January 30, 1972, British paratroopers deployed to Derry for internal security duty during a civil rights march shot twenty-seven unarmed Catholics, five in the back, killing thirteen. The incident radicalized broad swathes of the Catholic community and resulted in a groundswell of support for the IRA.

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