

# Tactics and Participation in the First Intifada

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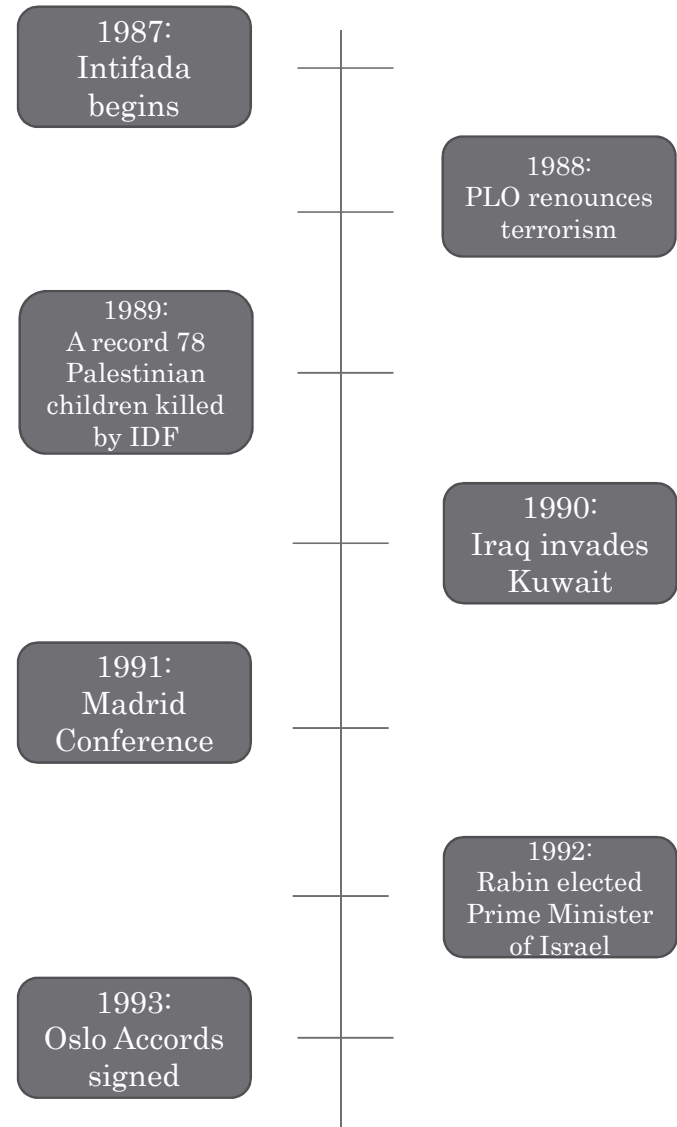
# Background

- Israel was founded in 1948, which Palestinians refer to as “Al Nakba,” or “The Catastrophe”
- As a result of the Six Day War in 1967, Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip
- By the 1980s occupation was becoming more and more unbearable
  - Israeli settlements
  - Iron Fist policy



# The First Intifada

- 1987-1993
- On December 9<sup>th</sup>, 1987 an Israeli vehicle collided with and killed several Palestinians in the Gaza Strip
- Protests erupted in Gaza and then in the West Bank within days
- Resulted in a sustained intifada, or uprising
- Largely non-violent
  - “the stone uprising”



# Research Question

Given the tactics of the first intifada, how did this affect the recruitment of regular participants' and their experiences of participation?

# Relevance

- Understanding why people join social movements
- Understanding how tactics play a role in encouraging people to participate and maintain participation
- A basis for future comparison of the second intifada
- Provides clues as to how people might participate in a third intifada, which there have been rumors about due to increasing tensions between Palestine and Israel

# Methodology

- Interviews
  - Over the phone
  - Between 16-30 years old
- Primary data found in books
  - on-the-ground observations and interviews

# Findings

- Spontaneity

“The intifada was not planned...It spread like a wildfire.”

“The people heard what happened and there were demonstrations...And it lasted. The intifada exploded.”

# Findings

- Sense of duty

“Defending the country was payment to go down this path.”

“The reason was just that I was a Palestinian under occupation. It was a natural thing for us.”

“I participated because this is my country, my town, my people.”



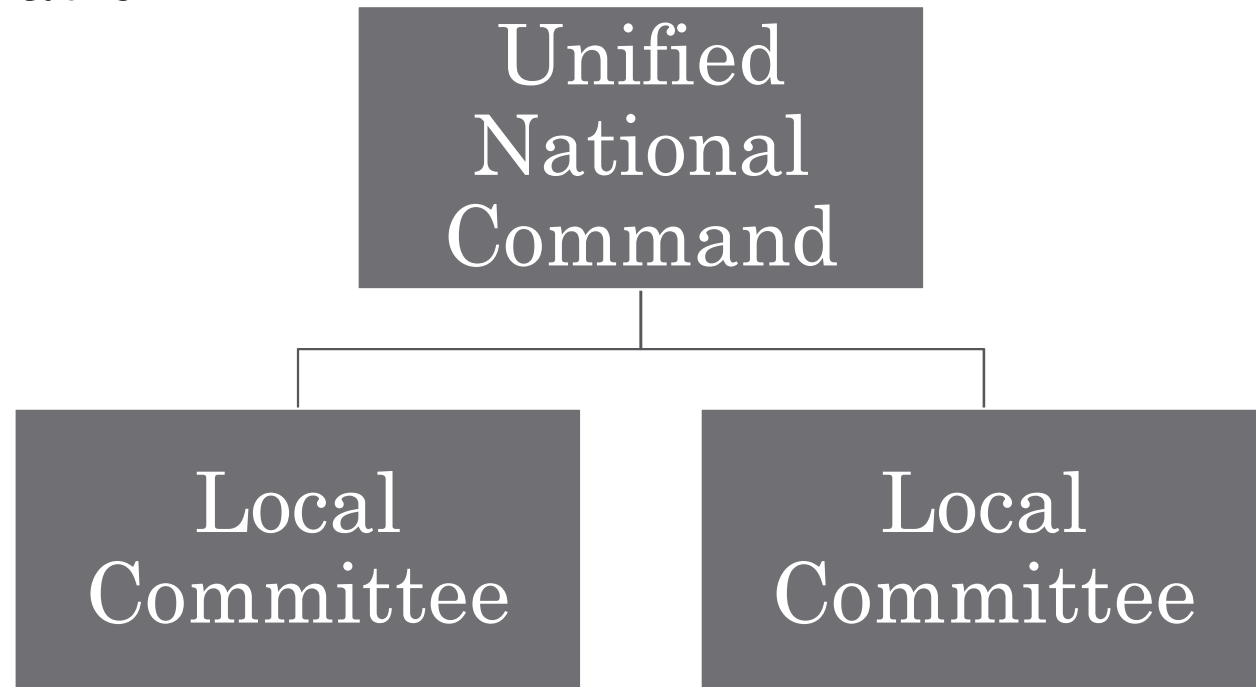
# Findings

- Inclusive tactics
  - Strikes
  - Boycotts
  - Stone-throwing
  - Barricades
  - Flags



# Findings

- Organization



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## LEAFLET NO. 11

*Communiqué—communiqué—communiqué*

*No voice will overcome the voice of the uprising  
No voice will overcome the voice of the Palestinian people—  
the people of the PLO*

Communiqué No. 11

Issued by the Palestine Liberation Organization/  
The United National Command of the Uprising

Land Day Proclamation

Let us mark Land Day as an occasion  
to escalate the Palestinian national struggle

O masses of our struggling people! Your ongoing response and your precious sacrifice for your homeland is daily paving the way toward the independent state. Daily the masses of the stone and the Molotov cocktail evince their national will. The occupation stands with hands bound in the face of the heroes who are making history toward the liberation of their people and is bewildered in the face of the flaming uprising that burns the occupiers and their henchmen. Now Rabin, the shedder of blood, imposes economic punishments and starvation on our masses and imposes curfew on our masses in the Gaza Strip, trying, in vain, to generate a split between our masses in the West Bank and our valiant people in the heroic Gaza Strip. This policy attests to and underscores the occupation's abject failure and political distress as a result of the uprising. The masses of the uprising will continue to defy—today, tomorrow, and every day—all the

# Findings

- Networks

“You see your friends and neighbors all participating and everyone participates from there.”

“You just participated. Everyone was out. You’re seeing everyone in the streets, you can’t be the one to stay home and do nothing and hide.”

“Your participation depended on your surroundings and relationships.”

# Findings

- Sense of hope

“The first intifada was full of hope and resistance and wanting to achieve something.”

“What was beautiful about the intifada was that the people came hand in hand. Everyone...helped each other and worried about each other. We were unified.”

“Everyone stood with one another. The Palestinian people are amazing that way.”

# Conclusions

- Tactics made participation accessible
  - “Not everyone was courageous enough to throw stones but everyone was good enough to face soldiers and do what they had to do.”
- Because participation was accessible to everyone, this contributed to feelings of unity and hope
- Tactics that make participation accessible and perceptions of accessibility are crucial to a successful social movement
  - Need to investigate a little more as to how the intifada died down to better support this last point

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