

The Palestinian Liberation Organisation: the Politics of Transition from Liberation Movement to National Authority

by Nigel Craig Parsons

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Faculty of Economic and Social Studies

Department of Government

Manchester, August 1998

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an account of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation's (PLO's) transition from liberation movement to national authority. The process is assessed within a framework of analysis based on the historical-structural approach to transition and the transition approach to democratisation. The analysis illustrates how structural constraints precluded the possibility of success through armed struggle, obliging the PLO to rely on diplomatic means instead. Entry into a meaningful diplomatic process is shown to have required the acquisition of seven key criteria of government-in-waiting status: an authoritative leadership, a bureaucracy, a subordinate armed force, an accepted territory, an acceptable national project, international recognition, and an orientation congruent with the international balance of power. Within this framework, institutional change is characterised as the product of purposive elite agency, operating in the context of determinant structural constraints, moving towards an institutional solution to the problem of Palestinian self-determination, realised through diplomatic means.

Following the diplomatic breakthrough of the Declaration of Principles (DoP) in Oslo in 1993, the PLO embarked on the process of state-building. The framework of transition initiated in Oslo, and the state-building process that has occurred within it, reflect the ongoing impact of Israeli colonial rule over the occupied territories. The analysis illustrates how Israeli settler-colonialism prompted structural changes in Palestinian society that culminated in the intifada and rendered society itself a structural constraint on the PLO leadership. The Oslo process is identified as a means of re-securing the authoritative leadership of the diaspora-based elite, precluding the formation of a cohesive alternative leadership from the occupied territories but only within a framework of transition which perpetuates Palestinian dependency on the Israeli economy.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) is said to constitute a politico-administrative modification of Israeli colonial rule, predicated on the perpetuation of Palestinian economic dependency but managed by a reconstituted Palestinian elite. Based on the results of fieldwork, this elite is seen to be composed of the returnee PLO leadership and allied local agents, primarily the traditional notable class and the indigenous bourgeoisie. Research into the institutional content of transition illustrates the transformation of the PLO's bureaucracy and armed forces into the civil apparatus and security services of the PNA. Institutional expansion is also shown to have co-opted local intifada activists into the security services, whilst a sufficient number of middle-class professionals and technocrats have been recruited into the bureaucracy. The terms of the framework of transition, and the construction of the institutional and social bases of the autonomy project within it, are said to constitute an example of elite-led institutional adaptation operating within determinant structural constraints. The thesis concludes that the fulfilment of the PLO's mandate, including the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, is unlikely within the framework of transition established by the Oslo process.

DECLARATION

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Dedicated to my parents, Ernest and Jillian Parsons

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I should like to thank Dr David Pool for his patient support and assistance in the supervision of this thesis. I am also deeply indebted to Professor Paul Cammack for his encouragement and readiness to share his time and expertise.

My thanks also go to Dr Ali Jarbawi of Bir Zeit University in the West Bank for his helpful suggestions during the course of my fieldwork. I also owe a great debt to Husni Zu'arab for his invaluable help in arranging interviews, and to the many Palestinian interviewees who found time within busy schedules to share their experience and insights which have so shaped the content of this thesis.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the many friends who proved supportive and helpful during my time in Palestine, in particular Salim Dawani, Shakir al-Aklaik, Khalil Sharif, Edward Jenkinson, and my wonderful land-lady, Wadad Qassis. I must also acknowledge the forbearance of my friends in Manchester and Birmingham as I completed this thesis.

I should also like to acknowledge the financial assistance of the Economic and Social Research Council for my scholarship and fieldwork allowance.

Finally, I am deeply indebted to my parents, without whose support and encouragement this thesis would not have been written. My gratitude defies expression.

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The names of new PNA institutions are transliterated according to the system of the International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies (IJMES) and rendered in italics (e.g. *al-Amn al-'Amm*). Other institutions are spelt as they generally appear in English (e.g. Bir Zeit University). Personal names in Arabic are transliterated either in accordance with the IJMES system but without diacritical marks or an apostrophe for an initial *ayn* (e.g. Yasir Arafat, Haydar Abd al-Shafi, Nabil Sha'ath), or as they generally appear in English (e.g. Saeb Erekat), the aim being to make the individuals concerned readily identifiable to the reader.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALF	Arab Liberation Front
ANC	African National Congress
ANM	Arab National Movement
BSO	Black September Organisation
CEC	Central Election Commission
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPRS	Centre for Palestine Research and Studies
DERG	Officers' Committee
DFLP	Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine
DoP	Declaration of Principles
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EU	European Union
FATAH	Palestinian National Liberation Movement
FIDA	Palestinian Democratic Union
FLN	National Liberation Front
FRELIMO	Front for the Liberation of Mozambique
GUPS	General Union of Palestinian Students
HAMAS	Islamic Resistance Movement
IDF	Israel Defence Force
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPCRI	Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information
JMCC	Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre
LNM	Lebanese National Movement
MAS	Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NGC	National Guidance Committee
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NWO	New World Order
PBC	Palestine Broadcasting Company
PBS	Palestinian Bureau of Statistics
PCP	Palestinian Communist Party
PECDAR	Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction
PFLP	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
PFLP-GC	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Command
PLA	Palestine Liberation Army
PLF	Palestine Liberation Forces
	Palestine Liberation Front
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organisation
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PNC	Palestine National Council
PNF	Palestine National Front
	Palestine National Fund
PNLA	Palestine National Liberation Army
PPP	Palestinian People's Party
PPSF	Palestine Popular Struggle Front

SADF	South African Defence Force
SAMED	Palestine Martyrs' Sons Work Society
SLA	South Lebanese Army
SWAPO	South West African People's Organisation
UN	United Nations Organisation
UNITA	National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola
UNLU	Unified National Leadership of the Uprising
UNRWA	United Nation's Relief and Works Agency
US	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Introduction

This thesis explores the politics of transition from liberation movement to governing body, in this case the transition of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation to the semi-autonomous Palestinian National Authority (PNA).¹ Studies of the PLO have barely addressed the politics of transition, principally due to the recent nature of the process. In the context of the signing of the Declaration of Principles (DoP) and the ongoing frustration of the PLO's campaign to establish a Palestinian state, this issue retains an acute topical pertinence.

The transition process will be explained within a framework of analysis based on theoretical approaches to two interrelated global processes; the political transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes and economic transition from state-managed to free-market economies. As my thesis will demonstrate, theoretical approaches to democratisation provide an abundant source of ideas and approaches that can be readily adapted to address the PLO's own transition from liberation movement to national authority.

The analysis begins by employing the historical-structural approach in order to identify the major structural constraints with which the PLO has been obliged to interact and which have formed the context within which the transition process has unfolded. The analysis of structural context is then complemented by the transition approach which places the emphasis on the role of political elites, thus facilitating an assessment of the contribution of human agency² within this specific structural context. Within this framework, institutional change is seen as the product of purposive elite leadership operating in the context of determinant structural constraints, moving in the direction of an institutional solution to the problem of Palestinian self-determination, realised through diplomatic means. This combination of historical-structural and transition approaches

forms a framework within which the analytical narrative can track the evolution of the PLO, as an institution, adapting to local, regional and international structures.

If one views the course of the PLO's armed struggle dispassionately, the structural constraints impinging on the liberation campaign clearly suggest that the PLO began from a position of such intrinsic weakness that success through armed struggle was never viable, requiring as it would a dramatic and radical shift in the balance of power within the Middle East. If we accept the impossibility of liberating Palestine through armed struggle, the question to be addressed becomes: how might the PLO leadership hope to enter a diplomatic process capable of realising more limited results? Entry into such a diplomatic process required international recognition of the PLO amongst the society of nation-states as a prospective government that would behave *as* a government and act according to the 'rules of the game'. The framework of analysis outlined below elucidates the attributes of quasi-statehood which the PLO needed to acquire before it could successfully present itself as a government-in-waiting and enter a diplomatic process on that basis. The structural approach sheds light on why this was necessary, whilst the transition approach illuminates the scope and limits of Palestinian agency within this specific structural context.

Within this framework, Table 1 serves as a heuristic device (or simplified analytical model), which describes the transition process. This device serves a dual purpose: firstly, it delineates the essential criteria required by the PLO to enter a diplomatic process and summarises progress in this direction at selected points in time; secondly, the same criteria allow us to assess the outcome of the transition process and to gauge the PLO's progress towards the realisation of a Palestinian state through the Oslo process. The outcome of the process is thus measured in terms of the institutional product that has emerged from it, i.e., the highly proscribed, semi-autonomous institutional arrangements which constitute the PNA. This outcome is explained by the leadership's strategy of aiming for an institutional solution through diplomatic means (i.e., falling in-

line with prevailing structural constraints), rather than through the successful pursuit of armed struggle (i.e., successfully defying them, which proved impossible). As the final column of Table 1 makes clear, the PLO has been only partially successful in fulfilling the criteria which were required to achieve statehood, an outcome that reflects the structural constraints impinging on the PLO leadership as human agents.

TABLE 1. Transition from Liberation Movement to National Authority, 1964-96.

	1964	1974	1988
Authoritative Leadership	No: PLO just established but lacking legitimacy. Fatah, ANM, Communist Party etc all outside the framework of the PLO & in competition with each other.	Partial: Fatah now inside PLO & Arafat is Chairman. Factional relations mostly institutionalised PNF in West Bank declared allegiance to PLO despite leftist orientation.	Partial: Arafat & Fatah firmly in control of PLO but challenge arising during Intifada from WB & G indigenous nationalist leadership & Islamist groups - Hamas & Islamic Jihad.
Bureaucracy	Emerging: result of the creation of the PLO in 1964. Fatah is still a marginal guerrilla group.	Yes: Fatah inherits PLO institutions after 5th PNC. Bureaucratic expansion to meet new requirements in Beirut.	Yes: but exiled in Tunis.
Subordinate Armed Force	No: PLA established as conventional military force of PLO, but Fatah launched own armed struggle independently.	Partial: Arafat in charge of PLO & PLA, factional co-ordination within PLO but military commands retain independence.	Partial: enhanced within PLO after Fatah & PLA merged in '83 to est. PNLAs. Other PILO factions now marginal in this respect. But, WB & G - nationalist factions retain some indep & Islamist groups o/s PLO.
Accepted Territory	No: Jordan has competing claim to West Bank. PLO calling for total liberation of Mandate Palestine & liquidation of Israel.	Emerging: Two-state solution implied after 12th PNC. Rejected by Israel & Jordan	Partial: Jordan dropped claim to WB & PLO accepted 242 at 19th PNC. But rejected by Israel & unresolved with US.
Acceptable National Project	No: Committed to armed struggle & political ideas vague & conflictual	Emerging: 'Phased Plan' & 'PNA' adopted by 12th PNC for WB & G but contentious within PLO & rejected by Israel.	Partial: Pal'n state in WB & G accepted by 19th PNC but Israel continues to reject role for the PLO.
International recognition	No: PLO has only limited recognition at the Arab level & in dispute with Jordan.	Emerging: Arab League recognises PLO as sole, legitimate representative of Pal'n people at Rabat & UNGA grant of observer status.	Partial: Gains of 74 consolidated with embassy network & 19th PNC opens way for dialogue with US, but legitimacy still rejected by Israel.
Orientation Congruent with the International Balance of Power	No: PLO and Fatah positions based on nationalist revolutionary agenda.	No: US rejection of PLO as agent for USSR in M/E. Kissinger soon to commit US to no dialogue with PLO.	Emerging: but US-PLO dialogue short-lived.

TABLE 1. Transition from Liberation Movement to National Authority, 1964-96.

	1993	1996
Authoritative Leadership	Partial: Enhanced by DoP - opportunity for PLO leadership to assert authority within & from semi-autonomous enclaves.	Yes: PLO recast as PNA & legitimised through elections to Legislative Council.
Bureaucracy	Yes: can now be recast as institutional backbone of PNA within WB & G.	Yes: PLO institutions & personnel re-consolidated as institutions of PNA & expanded through recruitment amongst indigenous pop'n.
Subordinate Armed Force	Partial: Enhanced by DoP - redeployment to WB & G opens path to assert control over indigenous nationalist forces & to co-opt & coerce Islamist groups with Palestinian police.	Yes: PNLA & indigenous national-list forces merged in Pal'n police, + some recruitment amongst Islamists. But Islamist groups retain indep structure & conduct unauthorised operations.
Accepted Territory	Partial: Enhanced by DoP - agreement on semi-autonomous enclaves in G & Jericho.	Partial: PNA control established in expanded semi-autonomous enclaves but extent of expansion & E. Jerusalem still contested.
Acceptable National Project	Partial: Enhanced by DoP - PNA accepted by Pal's & int'l society as 1st step to statehood, but Israel retains own interpretation.	Partial: as in '93.
International Recognition	Partial: Enhanced by Oslo & DoP leading to Israeli recognition of PLO as legitimate leadership of Palestinian people.	Partial: PLO recognised as representative of Palestinian people, but not as the sovereign government of a state.
Orientation Congruent with the International Balance of Power	Yes: PLO now admitted into intl society but not as government of nation state. Collapse of USSR leaves no alternative sponsor.	Yes: unchanged since '93.

Framework of Analysis: Structure, Agency and Transition

In general terms, the central question posed here is: why did this liberation movement follow this particular trajectory during this period? In specific terms, the question can be broken down and reformulated to read: why did the PLO find it necessary, and how did it set about, acquiring the attributes of a government-in-waiting and moving towards access to a diplomatic process between 1964 and 1993 (the Oslo Accords), and what has been the political outcome (essentially the institutional consequences) of the diplomatic process initiated in Oslo up to 1996? Viewed from this perspective, the PLO's trajectory during this period is interpreted as part of an ongoing transition process involving political developments moving in the direction of an internationally acceptable institutional solution to the problem of Palestinian self-determination.

An explanation of the transition process, based on the historical-structural and transition approaches, suggests that the PLO followed this trajectory because structural constraints rendered a diplomatically realised institutional solution the only available option. At the same time, these structural factors presented a number of serious obstacles working to block the PLO's entry into a diplomatic process, effectively rendering the diplomatic option a very difficult project to realise. Furthermore, the adoption of diplomatic means implied political and territorial compromise, a contentious issue within the PLO which served to complicate the leadership's position. The struggle to maintain national unity whilst also seeking to enter a meaningful diplomatic process derived from the nature of the PLO as a complex organisation³ and raises the nature of the institution's input into the transition process, a point to which I shall return later. Once placed in its historical-structural context, the scope for human agency on the part of the political elite can be seen to narrow down to the acquisition of several key characteristics of government-in-waiting status. The framework of analysis outlined below expands upon the historical-structural and transition approaches, and then moves on to detail the key characteristics which the PLO has sought to acquire as it moved along this trajectory.

Our framework of analysis begins with the historical-structural approach - a logical place to start if we accept the impossibility of assessing elite behaviour prior to establishing the constraints within which the actors in question were operating. Within the structural approach, the analytical spotlight falls upon "long-term processes of historical change. Unlike the transition approach ... processes are explained not by the agency of political elites but primarily by *changing structures of power.*"⁴ As applied in Potter's account of democratisation, the structural approach is defined as "emphasizing changing structures of power favourable to democratization."⁵ We are concerned with a similar question, the structural approach to which was summarised earlier as 'emphasising changing structures of power favourable to the realisation of an institutional solution to the problem of Palestinian self-determination'. The role of human agency on the part of the nationalist elite operating within these structural constraints will subsequently be elucidated by the transition approach.

The purpose of using the structural approach is to illustrate the ways in which structures of power have shaped the options available to the nationalist elite represented by the PLO leadership. These structures of power, and the interrelationships between them, can be divided into political, economic and social structures, operating on different levels, that evolve over time, "provid[ing] constraints and opportunities that drive political elites and others along a historical trajectory."⁶ The impossibility of realising Palestinian statehood through armed struggle, together with the immense obstacles in the way of a diplomatic solution, underlines the salience of looking to structural factors to account for the PLO's trajectory.

In Potter's view, the two most significant contributors to the structural approach to democratic transitions have been Barrington Moore and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Both provide useful questions and targets for investigation which can be adapted to our case study. Moore's Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the

Making of the Modern World,⁷ assessed the contrasting political evolution of several states by examining the shifting relationships between four distinct components of the national polity; three socio-economic or class groups and the state apparatus. Developments in the relationships between these four components accounted for the political outcome of the transition process - in Moore's analysis either a democratic, partially-democratic, or a non-democratic outcome. The structures of power which Moore chose as his objects of analysis, class groups and the state, can be analysed to illustrate the significance of socio-economic change within the Palestinian polity as well as institutional developments within the PLO and their bearing on the trajectory of the liberation movement.

In Capitalist Development and Democracy,⁸ Rueschemeyer employs and enhances Moore's structural approach in a comparative analysis of democratisation. In Rueschemeyer's view, the factor determining the outcome of the transition process is the balance of power between different class groups. However, Rueshemeyer departs from Moore by introducing structural factors beyond the national level, including international and transnational relationships. On the international level, Rueshemeyer analyses the role of international conflict and war in determining political outcomes. For instance, transition in a democratic direction can be enhanced through the military defeat of a non-democratic regime or the mass mobilisation of society behind the war effort. Equally, a prolonged conflict can serve to bolster the role of the military within society, preventing a democratic transition from occurring altogether. These issues raise interesting points for our case-study: for instance, what has been the role of the regional states-system and the balance of power in determining the trajectory of the PLO, what are the implications of the PLO's historic commitment to armed struggle, and to what extent did the mobilisation of Palestinian society realised during the intifada prompt an institutional solution to the Palestine problem? The causes and consequences of the intifada brings us to another issue raised by Rueschemeyer, the role of transnational economic relations and their impact on class formation. In the Palestinian case, this requires us to consider the impact of Israeli

settler-colonialism in the West Bank and Gaza, the dependent economic relationship between the occupied territories and Israel, and its impact on class formation and hence the structural context of the PLO.

Within the context of the historical-structural approach, the role of elite leadership and human agency can be assessed by using the transition approach. Potter defines the transition approach as emphasizing "*political processes* and *elite initiatives and choices* that account for moves from authoritarian rule to liberal democracy."⁹ As with the structural approach, Potter's definition has been adapted for our purposes to read, 'political processes and elite initiatives and choices that account for the shift from liberation movement espousing armed struggle to quasi-state apparatus pursuing diplomatic means in order to realise an institutional solution to the problem of Palestinian self-determination'.

The transition approach to democracy, which Potter associates primarily with the work of Dankwart Rustow,¹⁰ is essentially a historical approach to transition describing a 'route' followed during the transition process, with three distinct phases along the way. As illustrated in Table 1, the PLO's transition from a liberation movement committed to armed struggle to a quasi-state apparatus with many of the essential accoutrements of government-in-waiting has also been marked by stages, albeit with some of the stages more easily defined than others.

Rustow's notion of a transitional route can be usefully transposed and applied to our case study. The route to democracy does not fit mechanically with the PLO's route to a diplomatically-realised institutional solution, but the conceptualisation of transition as a historical process with stages driven by elite agency has interesting and illuminating implications for our study of the PLO. However, we need to remain cognisant of the fact that structural constraints determine the parameters of agency; in other words, transition theory serves a useful purpose, providing we bear in mind the fact that "actors make

choices but not in circumstances of their own choosing.¹¹ Employing the transition approach, we can move on to assess the decisions of the PLO leadership as agents driving a historical process - in this case the adoption of diplomatic means and the acquisition of the attributes of a government-in-waiting that would allow it to enter a meaningful diplomatic process and realise an institutional solution.

Rustow's model of transition begins with a single background condition, *national unity*, followed by three phases constituting the transitional route; the *preparatory phase*, the *decision phase* & the *habituation phase*. Each phase of the democratisation process is readily adaptable to the PLO's transition towards a diplomatic-institutional solution. Rustow defined his background condition of national unity as "simply mean[ing] that the vast majority of citizens ... must have no doubt or mental reservations as to which political community they belong to."¹² An assessment of Palestinian national unity in 1964 requires some caution due to the number of overlapping or alternative identities that complicated the equation (for instance, the competing identities and agendas of Pan-Arabism, Nasirism, political Islam and, in the West Bank, the Hashemite regime's promotion of Jordanian identity, might all be interpreted as detracting from Palestinian national unity). However, this caveat notwithstanding, a sufficient sense of Palestinian identity can be said to have obtained insofar as a substantial body of people shared a sense of Palestinian identity and held an agreed perception of the contours of Palestinian society. Furthermore, that sense of identity had an institutional history.

According to Ann Mosely Lesch, a distinct Palestinian national identity can be dated back to the 1930s, first emerging as a response to the British Mandate and increased Zionist immigration and culminating in the general strike of 1936 and the full scale revolt against the Mandatory power from 1937 to 1939.¹³ In 1948 Palestinian national identity manifested itself in the Arab Higher Committee's unsuccessful call for the establishment a Palestinian government.¹⁴ The Arab League duly recognised Palestinian identity and

established the (albeit ineffectual) All Palestine Government in Gaza (eventually replaced by the PLO between 1963-64).¹⁵ In the wake of the 1948 disaster (*al-Nakbah*), the Palestinian communities in the diaspora gave rise to a series of distinctly Palestinian institutions from the late 1950s onwards. In Palestinians in the Arab World: Institution Building and the Search for a State, Laurie Brand has documented the institution building process and pointed to the economic and political marginality of the Palestinian refugees within the host Arab states as contributing to the maintenance of a distinct Palestinian identity. Brand went on to interpret the establishment of the PLO as the *culmination* of a process of national *re-emergence* which subsequently asserted "exclusivity of allegiance through expanding existing popular organizations, like workers and student groups, and through establishing new ones."¹⁶ From this perspective, the "reorganisation and mobilisation of the Palestinians" associated with the establishment of the PLO did not emerge from a "political and organisational void,"¹⁷ but rather marked a new stage of a process that was already underway. With this in mind, we can say that an adequate sense of Palestinian national unity (a combination of national identity and sense of political community) preceded the establishment of the PLO in 1964. That identity would be shaped, institutionalised and enhanced by the PLO, not least of all by the pursuit of armed struggle (given the impossibility of liberating Palestine by military means, armed struggle can be interpreted primarily as a means of mobilising Palestinian society and realising national unity behind the leadership of the PLO). Within our framework of analysis the important point to make is that, in terms of Rustow's model, the necessary background condition of national unity may have been incomplete, but it can be said to have existed in a *sufficient* sense as of 1964.

With the background condition of national unity established, the first phase of the transitional route is the preparatory phase, within which Rustow cast political elites as agents operating in the context of social conflict. This consideration is also applicable to the PLO's transition on two levels - both within the PLO as an institution (those in favour

of adopting diplomatic procedures versus those favouring continued armed struggle) and in relations between the nationalist leadership in exile and Palestinian society in the West Bank and Gaza. (Indeed, as we shall see in detail in chapter two, the conclusion of the Oslo Accords might be interpreted as the leadership's means of resolving the increasingly unstable relationship between itself and different sections of Palestinian society within the occupied territories, just as Rustow conceived of democratisation as a compromise between conflicting sections of other national polities.) The preparatory phase of the democratic transition process is said to conclude with "a deliberate decision on the part of political leaders to accept the existence of diversity in unity and, to that end, to institutionalise some crucial aspect of democratic procedure."¹⁸ As we shall see below, the PLO's preparatory phase (preparation for adopting diplomatic means), might be said to have concluded - and the decision phase to have opened - with the decision to adopt and employ diplomatic means during the 12th Palestine National Council (PNC) meeting in 1974.

Rustow's second phase, the decision phase, represents a "historical moment when the parties to the inconclusive political struggle decide to compromise and adopt democratic rules ..."¹⁹ In the PLO's case, this can be adapted to assess the decision to try to resolve a serious international conflict by procedural rather than military means, with the goal of establishing a measure of self-rule within Palestinian territory. Such a project could only be realised through dialogue with the international community: the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was an international problem requiring the PLO to enter mainstream international society and accept the rules by which diplomacy was conducted. Moreover, the ambition to enter a diplomatic process required the nationalist elite to adopt the characteristics of a quasi-state apparatus. In each case, the important point to emphasise is that the adoption of these rules, procedures and the institutional adaptation which accompanied them, involves a "conscious decision at least on the part of the top political leadership."²⁰

The final phase is the "second transition or *habituation* phase,"²¹ during which the rules agreed to in the decision phase become entrenched and procedures consolidated. Rustow's observation that "[a] distasteful decision, once made, is likely to seem more palatable as one is forced to live with it,"²² brings to mind the reluctant shift within the PLO towards agreement on a diplomatic agenda. In this respect, the PLO can be considered as still not habituated to the diplomatic procedures of international society as of 1974, but to have advanced significantly in this direction by the time of the 19th PNC in 1988. The more recent institutional adaptation of the PLO through the creation of the PNA - facilitated solely by the diplomacy of the Oslo process - underlines the extent to which the PLO (or more specifically the PLO-mainstream, represented by Arafat's Fatah faction,²³ associated independents and certain minor factions), had become habituated to diplomacy by 1993. The explanation of the outcome of the PLO's diplomacy, and political processes underlying to the creation and consolidation of the PNA, will extend Rustow's focus on elite agency, relating the approach to the seven criteria for transition detailed in Table 1.

The transition approach's focus on elite agency also raises the role of elites in creating and moulding institutions, and, in turn, their distinctive institutional input into the transition process. The PLO leadership's decision to adopt diplomatic means had far-reaching consequences for the institutional character of the PLO, contributing to the establishment of a quasi-state apparatus which included an array of ministerial portfolios and a diplomatic service. In this respect, the PLO as an institution can be seen as the product of purposive elite leadership, adapting the institution to meet the needs of the transition process, the direction of which had been determined by structural constraints. However, the institution itself has inevitably assumed an active role and causal significance in its own right.

According to Remmer, "important theoretical insights have been achieved by placing questions of institutional incentives and constraints at the center of the study of regime change and consolidation."²⁴ Based on the assumption that structural factors have been a determining factor on the PLO's trajectory, the PLO as an institution might be viewed as an "intervening variable rather than as the appropriate point of theoretical departure."²⁵ In effect, we can assess the PLO's 'institutional' input into the transition process as a 'meso-level' variable, constituted in the diaspora, reflecting the conditions and interests of Palestinian society on the outside, acquiring an institutional momentum and set of vested interests of its own, whilst also having to take into account socio-economic changes within the Palestinian polity on the one hand, and regional and international power structures on the other.

From this perspective, the PLO can be recognised as an institution mediating between Palestinian society and the regional and international states-systems. Remmer has highlighted the importance of taking into account the interaction between structural and institutional factors. Referring to the rise of institutional approaches since the 1980s, Remmer concluded:

"The revival of interest in institutions has tended to pull analysts back to the national level of analysis. Variable patterns of linkage with the international system, which were successfully highlighted by more sophisticated versions of dependency theory, are downplayed in favor of the organization of domestic interests and institutions. As emphasized by Barbara Stallings, 'Ironically, just as international variables became especially important in the 1980s, they disappeared as the key factor from theories of development'.²⁶

Just as international variables have played a major role in patterns of economic development and democratisation, they have had a major bearing on the trajectory of the PLO. Moreover, in addition to forming the constraints impinging on the nationalist elite they have, by extension, also shaped the institutional character of the PLO itself. It follows that an institutional focus on the PLO should be set appropriately in international context.

The relationship between the historical-structural context and the institutional character of the PLO are complex and deeply intertwined. Perhaps the most obvious consequence (deriving from the regional balance of power) has been the exclusion of the PLO from the territory of Palestine, forcing the institution to operate and develop in the diaspora.

"The lack of a sovereign territorial base mean[t] that the fate of Palestinian efforts toward political mobilisation and national-building [were], to a far greater degree than those of state actors, inextricably tied, not only to developments in one or two countries, but to conflicts and contradictions throughout the region as a whole."²⁷

The relationship between the structural context and institutional character of the PLO has been accentuated by the nature of the Arab states-system and the factional nature of the PLO as a complex organisation. Competing Arab regimes have periodically been ready to intervene in PLO policy-making through the sponsorship of proxies within the national movement, for instance through the Syrian-sponsored al-Sa'iqa and the Iraqi-sponsored Arab Liberation Front (ALF). This situation constrained the leadership's ability to take bold steps, primarily through the concern to maintain national unity,

"[i]n the face of constant intervention by one Arab state or another. This gave rise to the politics of consensus and the lowest common denominator rather than majority rule, since the outvoted group could seek external support and threaten the PLO's claim to be the sole legitimate representative of all the Palestinians."²⁸

The adoption of armed struggle as a means of mobilising support for this diaspora-based leadership has also generated political consequences of its own. As Sayigh put it:

"The nature of the Palestinian leadership and its politics ... were overwhelmingly shaped - to the effective exclusion of social and economic factors - by the fact that the bulk of the PLO's combat strength, civilian membership, and 'governing' institutions were based in exile, as was at least half of the Palestinian population. The fact that the Palestinian leadership based its legitimacy on its role in the armed struggle against Israel encouraged the tendency toward populist politics and authoritarian control."²⁹

The influence of the regional system, firstly on the strategic position of the PLO and by extension on the structure and internal politics of the institution, highlights again the influence of international structural factors in setting the parameters of elite decision-making. Equally, certain key characteristics of the institution can be seen to derive from the early history of the national movement, underlining the need to trace the process back to the establishment of the PLO. The exercise is not a case of reading history backwards, but rather a means of conceptualising the trajectory of the PLO through the identification of salient developments with a bearing on the outcome of the transition process.

In summary, the framework of analysis outlined above aims to assess the PLO's transition from liberation movement to national authority by adapting a combination of the historical-structural and transition approaches to democratisation and applying them to the PLO's own unique transition process. The historical-structural approach draws our attention to structural factors - national, regional and international - that form the context of politics and set the parameters or limits within which human agents - in this case the PLO leadership - have had to operate. The transitional approach completes the framework by providing a historical route-map of the transition process within which the role of human agency, operating within the context of social conflict, can be assessed and decisions on the part of the nationalist leadership explained. In the PLO's case, the route in question entails the acquisition of the attributes of government-in-waiting between 1964 and 1993. If we accept the assumption that historical-structural factors rendered diplomacy the only viable option (whilst also having a major bearing on the difficult transition in this direction), the PLO's progress up to 1993 can be gauged in terms of the acquisition of several key attributes of government-in-waiting status, criteria that would in effect make it an acceptable candidate for admission into international society. Progress between 1993 and 1996 can be assessed by how successfully these attributes were converted from government-in-waiting status into government status *per se*, leading us to an assessment of the institutional character of the PNA. The character of the PNA (i.e., the institutional

outcome of the transition process) is introduced briefly towards the end of chapter one, and then systematically expanded upon throughout the thesis.

The final step in completing our framework of analysis is the identification of the key characteristics which would enable the PLO to enter a diplomatic process. These characteristics are:

- authoritative leadership
- a bureaucracy
- a subordinate armed force
- an accepted territory for the realisation of self-determination
- a coherent and broadly accepted national project
- international recognition of the authoritative leadership
- an orientation congruent with the international balance of power

Whilst avoiding a prolonged discussion about the nature of the state, I shall begin by listing the essential attributes of quasi-statehood which the PLO had to accumulate along its transitional route. In Weber's much-cited definition, "a state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory."³⁰ We shall return to the problem of territory below, but it suffices to say here that, as Buzan noted, based on a Weberian separation of state from society, the concept of state effectively becomes the institutions of 'central government'³¹ or, in Migdal's words:

"an organization composed of numerous agencies led and coordinated by the state's leadership (executive authority) that has the ability or authority to make and implement the binding rules for all the people as well as the parameters of rule making for other social organizations in a given territory, using force if necessary to have its way."³²

This brief definition highlights the first three criteria sought and accumulated by the PLO along its transitional route: leadership or executive authority, which I have interpreted as

authoritative leadership, plus the 'agencies' it leads and co-ordinates in order to formulate and implement national policy, listed in Table 1 as a *bureaucracy* and *subordinate armed force*.

The fourth criterion is an *accepted territory*. One of the defining characteristics of a state is an accepted territory within which the state apparatus can exercise its sovereign authority. Moreover, a defining feature of the Palestinian campaign for self-determination has been the lack of, and struggle to secure, such a territory, and a continuing debate both within and beyond the Palestinian polity over how extensive that territory ought to be. In this respect I use the term accepted territory to mean accepted both within the Palestinian polity and accepted by the principal actors with whom the PLO has had to interact.

As Table 1 makes clear, the precise territorial boundaries of the territory within which the PLO/PNA will eventually come to exercise authority remain open to question. Nevertheless, the fact that at least *some* territory has been identified and accepted as an arena within which the PLO is openly allowed to assert *some* authority forms a minimum requirement for the attainment of statehood. Furthermore, the extent to which that territorial base is permitted to expand serves as a useful index against which to gauge the progress made towards the realisation of a Palestinian state - the declared aim of the transition process.

The fifth criterion is an *acceptable national project*, a point which is closely linked to, yet conceptually distinct from, an accepted territory. Whereas a territorial foundation is a defining characteristic of any state, the Palestinians' need for a national project arose solely from the absence of such a state and represents a necessary component of the campaign to realise one: without a well-defined, acceptable and hence negotiable national project, entry into the diplomatic process would remain barred, due to both a lack of

sufficient internal consensus and external credibility. Again, as with the issue of territory, I apply the term 'accepted' to both the Palestinians and to external actors.

The final two criteria are *international recognition* and an *orientation congruent with the international balance of power*. By international recognition I mean recognition of the PLO by the society of nation-states as the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people, together with recognition - at least as a negotiable programme - of the legitimacy of the PLO's national project. However, as Table 1 makes clear, wide-spread international recognition of the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people was not enough in itself to gain entry into a meaningful diplomatic process. Indeed, a major characteristic of the PLO's trajectory has been its prolonged inability to transform diplomatic success into meaningful or substantive negotiations.

This diplomatic frustration leads us to the seventh criterion, an *orientation congruent with the international balance of power*. This was required due to the nature of the regional and international systems; the structure of power at the regional and international levels, dominated as they have been by Israel and the US respectively, required a willingness to deal with these two powers on their own terms and to undertake to abide by the rules of the game or risk remaining stranded in the diplomatic wilderness.

Miller has illustrated this point well:

"Unlike Israel, the Palestinian national movement never developed reliable great power support. It is the Arab states that fill PLO coffers, facilitate delivery of most of its Soviet and Eastern bloc military equipment, house the majority of its constituents, and plead its case in world capitals and international forums."³³

Table 1 suggests how the values and orientation of the leadership have evolved over time, as well as illustrating the processes of institutional change which have accompanied it. Chapter one introduces the major structural factors which have set the context of the

transition process, and then applies the framework outlined above to the PLO's trajectory from 1964-1996, thus putting some flesh on the conceptual skeleton outlined in Table 1.

Methodology

The methodological approaches employed during research were guided by the framework of analysis detailed above. For material on the social, political and historical background of the PLO and the occupied territories, the extant literature provides a more than adequate resource-base of secondary sources in the English language. Secondary material has been drawn from a wide range of texts, including books, articles, documents and source materials found in the appropriate journals and detailed in the footnotes and bibliography.

Material on recent developments was by definition more difficult to acquire, obliging me at times to rely on interviews and contemporary press sources. A number of interviews were conducted during fieldwork in the occupied territories between February 1995 and February 1996, generating a substantial amount of primary material acquired according to the thematic organisation of the thesis. These interviews have served as a major source of data for the later chapters of the thesis.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a number of delegates to the Madrid Conference and the Washington negotiations. These interviews provided objective material on the structure, issues and progress of the negotiations, as well as generating valuable insights into the issue of authoritative leadership. These primary sources served to confirm the analysis raised in the preceding framework and are explored at length in chapter two.

Interviews also provided a major source of material on the institutions and personnel of the PNA. In addition, research into the institutional content of transition

established a pool of data which served as a useful index of the social content of the process. Meetings with a number of senior personnel provided objective data on the profile of the PNA bureaucracy and security services. This data included certain fixed characteristics that were unlikely to be prejudiced by the perspectives of interviewees, such as the institutional structure of the PNA, and the identity and factional affiliation of key personnel. The findings are detailed in chapter four. Interview material also formed a crucial source of data on the modalities, personnel and results of the primary elections conducted within Fatah prior to the elections for the Legislative Council. The details were checked and confirmed by reference to contemporary press sources when available. This material is reproduced in chapter five.

Cognisant of the problems of oral history (such as personal agendas, problems of recollection, and the fluidity of politics during this transitional period) I have sought to verify the information gleaned from all of these interviews by cross-checking with other informed sources, both written and verbal, wherever possible, and have striven to reflect objectively on the interpretation of events presented by interviewees. The same caveat applies to the use of material from the available press sources, as will become apparent in the text.

FOOTNOTES

¹The distinction between national authority and government is important, not least of all because transition to government implies the realisation of statehood, a result which is far from certain in the case in question.

²By 'human agency' I mean the 'will' to act on the part of individuals or a collective of individuals. According to Hay's summary of the structure-agency debate, the notion of human agency implies an actor (or intentional agent), located in a specific structural context which defines the constraints and opportunities for action open to that agent. Displays of human agency are taken to be "the product of intentional action informed by some 'knowledge' of the structures that define the setting for that action..."

Furthermore, "[w]hen oriented to a specific task, intention or motivation yields *strategy*... [which essentially means] the selection of objectives and the search for the most appropriate means to achieve those objectives within a particular context at a particular moment in time ... Agency, then, is the product of *strategy* and *intention*."

Colin Hay, 'Structure and Agency', in David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (Ed's), Theory and Methods in Political Science, (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1995), pp.189-206.

³The PLO is a complex organisation, essentially an 'umbrella' composed of a coalition of movements or political factions which constitute institutions within a broader institutional framework. Members of most of the factions have a seat on the PLO's 'cabinet', the Executive Committee, the intermediary Central Council, and the Palestinian 'legislature', the Palestine National Council (PNC). For further details, see Appendices 1-3, pp. 319-324. The formal institutional structure of the PLO is explained in Sami Musallam, The Palestine Liberation Organization: Its Function and Structure, (Brattleboro, Vermont: Amana Books, 1990).

⁴David Potter, David Goldblatt, Margaret Kiloh and Paul Lewis (Ed's), Democratisation, (Cambridge: Polity Press, in association with the Open University, 1997), p.18.

⁵*Ibid.*, p.10.

⁶*Ibid.*, pp.18-19.

⁷Barrington Moore, Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Lord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), cited in Potter *et.al.*, *Ibid.*, p.19.

⁸Dietrich Rueschemeyer, E. Stephens and J. Stephens, Capitalist Development and Democracy, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), cited in Potter *et.al.*, *Ibid.*, p.20.

⁹Potter *et.al.*, *Ibid.*, p.10.

¹⁰Dankwart Rustow, 'Transitions to Democracy: Towards a Dynamic Model', Comparative Politics, Vol.2., (April 1970), pp.337-363.

¹¹G.L. Munck, 'Democratic Transitions in Comparative Perspective', Comparative Politics, Vol.26, No.3, pp.355-375, cited in Potter *et.al.*, *Ibid.*, p.23.

¹²Rustow, *op.cit.*, p.350.

¹³On the formative early development of Palestinian nationalism, Lesch draws particular attention to the general strike of 1936 and the revolt against the mandatory power from 1937-39. William Quandt, Fuad Jabber and Ann Mosely Lesch, The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism, (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1973). Rashid Khalidi argues that this national identity can be traced back somewhat further: "The eventual defeat of Ottomanism during World War One combined with the assertiveness of the Zionist movement and the start of the British Mandate in Palestine produced a sense of historic crisis amongst most politically conscious, literate, and urban Palestinians". Khalidi concludes that these transformations were so intense and profound that in a relatively short space of time (1917-23), a distinct Palestinian national identity took hold." Rashid Khalidi, Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness, (New York: Colombia University Press, 1997), p.149, reviewed by Nubar Housepian in Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.27, No.1, (Autumn 1997), pp.96-97.

¹⁴The AHC's call for the establishment of a Palestinian government was thwarted by the ambition of King Abdallah of Transjordan. In December 1948 Abdallah and Great Britain jointly sponsored the Jericho Conference to decide the future of the West Bank. The Palestinian delegation was composed of pro-Jordanian notables such as the Nashashibis, Dajanis and Tuqans who opted for incorporation into the Hashemite kingdom in order to break the power of their political rivals, the Mufti and the Husayni family of Jerusalem. The West Bank was duly annexed in 1950, and Palestinians granted Jordanian citizenship in 1954. Abdallah was assassinated by a Palestinian on 20 July 1951. For further details of the Jericho Conference, see Pamela Ann Smith, Palestine and the Palestinians 1876-1983, (London: Groom Helm, 1984), pp.89-91.

¹⁵The All Palestine Government was led by Ahmad Hilmi until his death in 1963, whereafter Palestinian representation at the Arab League was assumed by Ahmad Shuqayri, shortly to become the first chairman of the PLO. Moshe Shemesh, The Palestinian Entity 1959-1974: Arab Politics and the PLO, (Second Edition), (London: Frank Cass, 1996), pp.32-33.

¹⁶Laurie Brand, Palestinians in the Arab World: Institution Building and the Search for a State, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), p.4.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p.13.

¹⁸Rustow, *op.cit.*, p.355.

¹⁹Potter *et.al.*, *op.cit.*, p.14.

²⁰Rustow, *op.cit.*, p.356.

²¹Potter *et.al.*, *op.cit.*, p.14.

²²Rustow, *op.cit.*, p.358.

²³Arafat is chairman of Fatah, the hegemonic faction of the PLO. The name is derived from the reversed Arabic acronym of the 'Palestinian National Liberation Movement'. The PLO's structure and constituent factions are detailed in chapter one. Further details can be found in Appendix 3.

²⁴Karen L. Remmer, 'Theoretical Decay and Theoretical Divergence: The Resurgence of Institutional Analysis', World Politics, Vol.50, No.1, (October 1997), p.50.

²⁵*Ibid.*, p.54.

²⁶*Ibid.*, p.51.

²⁷Brand, *op.cit.*, p.6.

²⁸Yezid Sayigh, 'Armed Struggle and State Formation', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.26, No.4., (Summer 1997), p.23.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p.23.

³⁰Max Weber, From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, translated and edited with an introduction by H.H.Gerth and C.Wright-Mills (Eds), (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1948), p.48.

³¹Barry Buzan, People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era (2nd Ed), (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), p.59.

³²Joel S.Migdal Strong States and Weak Societies: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), in Buzan, *Ibid.*, p.59.

³³Aaron David Miller, The Washington Papers (No.99): The PLO and the Politics of Survival, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983), p.66.

Chapter One

Transition towards an Institutional Solution: The PLO's Trajectory from 1964 to 1996

The aim of this chapter is to place contemporary developments in context by providing a condensed overview of the major factors determining the trajectory of the PLO from its inception in 1964 up to 1996. As noted in the introduction, the chapter employs the historical-structural approach to transition and adapts the transition approach to democratisation, in order to explain the background to the PLO's transformation from liberation movement to national authority. The exercise accounts for the trajectory of the PLO through its relationship with national, regional and international structures which have formed the context within which the PLO has had to operate and which have set the parameters for elite decision-making.

Transition in Structural Context

The structural factors under consideration are: socio-economic or class change within Palestinian society, the regional balance of power between Israel and the relevant Arab states, the nature of the Arab states-system, and the international environment conditioned by the Cold War and more recently by the NWO, effectively a euphemism for the political hegemony of the US. Within this context we can assess the institutional evolution of the PLO into a quasi-state apparatus, and the institution's role in the transition process. My analysis will now provide a brief introduction of these structural factors, all of which are elaborated further during the analytical-narrative assessment of the transition process.

The relationship between the PLO and Palestinian society has been akin to a state-society relationship, albeit one in which the term 'state' is heavily qualified (see Table 1).

In this respect, Palestinian society can be said to have formed a key component of the structural context impinging on the trajectory of the PLO and hence upon the transition towards an institutional solution. Within our framework of analysis, the aspects of Palestinian society which are of interest are those which have formed structural constraints or opportunities for the PLO leadership as agents within this transition process. With this in mind (and for the sake of brevity), I have refrained from attempting a comprehensive class profile of the national movement and its full social context (expanded in due course throughout the sections that follow). Instead, my analysis simply aims to highlight the more politically salient classes in the diaspora and the occupied territories and the relationship between the PLO in exile and Palestinian society in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (i.e., the social context of the PLO's trajectory and the transition towards a diplomatic solution).

One of the striking features of the Palestinian national movement is that it has been led from the outside. With this in mind, it is helpful to outline some of the features of the diaspora communities that helped shape the social and political composition of the national movement. The outcome of the fighting between 1947 and 1949¹ created a large refugee population (estimated by the UN at 726,000 people)² with a mixed socio-economic profile, spread across the Middle East but principally in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon and later in the Arab oil-states of the Gulf.³ Following this large-scale social, economic and political dislocation, a fresh national consciousness first emerged amongst the refugee communities who subsequently established the political factions and guerrilla groups, Fatah amongst them.⁴ Once established, and particularly after the guerrilla's capture of the apparatus of the PLO, this national movement found fertile ground for recruitment amongst the large refugee populations, thousands of whom were recruited into the PLO and its constituent factions as political and military cadres and bureaucrats.⁵

Within the national movement, Fatah's rise to political hegemony was achieved in part by its ability to attract a cross-class coalition of recruits ranging from the wealthiest Palestinian capitalists in the diaspora⁶ to the poorest former-peasant inhabitants of the refugee camps. In between these two extremes there emerged a substantial middle-class, composed of what Smith has termed a 'new bourgeoisie' (those Palestinians that managed to transfer "sufficient capital from Palestine to start new businesses"⁷ - particularly to Lebanon and the Gulf oil states), and professionals such as teachers, doctors and lawyers. The Palestinian community in Kuwait is instructive in this regard as Fatah was established in Kuwait and dominated political organisation within the community there.

Brand has divided the Palestinian community in Kuwait⁸ into four categories: firstly, a minority of very wealthy individuals; secondly, the middle and upper classes including "many professionals (journalists, engineers, doctors, lawyers, and teachers), among them large numbers of the politically aware and nationally conscious;"⁹ thirdly, lower and middle class skilled workers; and fourthly, former peasant-farmers employed as unskilled and semi-skilled workers. The community had steadily expanded as the needs of the Kuwaiti government coincided with the availability of Palestinian labour:

"Kuwait's drive to develop its nascent state structure and economy coincided with the expulsion from Palestine of both an educated class that in effect constituted a 'ready made' bureaucracy and a largely peasant class that, through loss of lands, was transformed into a large pool of unskilled or semi-skilled labor."¹⁰

In terms of the character of the national movement, the point to underline is that the bulk of the Palestinian professional and bourgeois classes found Fatah's social conservatism a more attractive option than the radical social revolutionary platform of the pseudo-Marxist-Leninist groups such as the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and the DFLP (Democratic Front). According to Smith

"the majority confined their support to those organisations within the Palestine Liberation Organisation (mainly Fatah) which eschewed

involvement in the internal affairs of the other Arab states and concentrated solely on the liberation of Palestine...¹¹

Fatah's co-option of the middle classes assisted in the subordination of the semi-class-based Leftist factions and contributed to the formation of what might be loosely termed a 'nationalist elite'; a combination of the Fatah leadership (increasingly focused around Arafat by the late 1980s), and the military and bureaucratic apparatus of the PLO (under the political hegemony of Fatah - maintained through the extended use of patronage), supported by the Palestinian bourgeois and professional classes in the diaspora who provided the PLO (and especially Fatah) with financial support. Thus the politically salient groups in the diaspora can be crudely characterised as: firstly, the political elite (in particular the steadily more hegemonic Fatah faction led by Arafat); secondly, the cadres that staffed the bureaucracy and military apparatus (a 'nationalist bourgeoisie', constituting the institutional expression of Palestinian nationalism in the diaspora); thirdly, the Palestinian bourgeois and professional classes; and fourthly, the bulk of the poorer refugee camp population (who ultimately found themselves bereft of political influence and effectively abandoned during the eventual transition to national authority).

The aspects of class formation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip which are of interest are also those which have provided constraints and opportunities for elite decision-making on the part of the PLO leadership. The first group of interest are the notables, the large land-owning families that mediated Jordanian control over the West Bank between 1948-67 (as we shall see, the Jordanian regime continued to court them into the 1980s).¹² Following the Israeli occupation, this group initially performed the same role until Israeli policies undermined the basis of their political authority. Sahliyeh's analysis of West Bank elite's, *In Search of Leadership: West Bank Politics Since 1967*, attributed the decline of the pro-Jordanian elite to the opening of the Israeli labour market to Palestinian labour (which could offer higher wages) and consequent labour shortages in the West Bank's agricultural and industrial sectors.¹³ As a result, the elite's traditional resources of capital

and land were less influential, whilst their capacity to dispense state-patronage disappeared along with their sponsor in Amman. Sahliyah also observed that it was simply not feasible to dispense "material benefits and political rewards"¹⁴ from the Israeli regime, essentially because Israel was willing to offer very little.

In Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution, Glenn Robinson follows a similar line, attributing the notable's decline to

"the by-product of three structural changes that occurred under Israeli rule: the virtual elimination of the Palestinian peasantry, land confiscation, and the establishment of a Palestinian university system."¹⁵

The issue of land-confiscation¹⁶ and the virtual annihilation of the peasantry raises perhaps the major determinant of West Bank class-formation since 1967, the distortion of the process by Israeli settler-colonialism. The nature of Israel as a settler-colonial state has been forcefully argued by Maxime Rodinson. In Israel: A Colonial Settler-State (written *prior* to the occupation of Gaza and the West Bank), Rodinson cites a useful definition:

"One can speak of colonization when there is, and by the very fact that there is, occupation with domination; when there is, and by the very fact that there is, emigration with legislation.' The Jews attracted to Zionism emigrated to Palestine, and then they dominated it. They occupied it in deed and then adopted legislation to justify this occupation by law."¹⁷

Although Rodinson applied this definition to the state of Israel in its pre-1967 borders, it seems to me to fit the current situation in the occupied territories quite adequately.

Adel Samara's Industrialisation in the West Bank: A Marxist Socio-Economic Analysis, draws attention to the distortion of Palestinian class formation in the West Bank which resulted from the imposition of this settler-colonial regime; both Palestinian labour and capital have been obliged to work for the colonial power, for instance as migrant labourers and sub-contracting businesses. In Samara's analysis, the PLO's inability to establish a national authority capable of directing development left political power in the hands of the occupier, leaving the West Bank and Gaza Strip as 'dependent' territories

(unable to control their surplus accumulation), and hence possessing a weak national-economic basis for national self-assertion.¹⁸ The deliberate de-development of the Palestinian infrastructure and economy (a policy documented in the extensive list of Israeli military orders clearly designed to meet the exclusive needs of the occupier's 'core' economy),¹⁹ alienated all the major classes of Palestinian society. From 1967 then, Israeli settler-colonialism formed the context for social development in the occupied territories. As we shall see, one of the crucial features of the autonomy project realised in Oslo was a pivotal role for the diaspora-based elite, in alliance with landowners and merchants, in what amounts to a new means of perpetuating the neo-colonial economic order established by the occupation. The PNA will be shown to constitute a politico-administrative modification of this arrangement, managed by a reconstituted Palestinian elite.

The decline of the notable class was matched by the rise of what Sahliyeh terms 'the pro-PLO urban elite'. This group were responsible for launching two local initiatives, the Palestine National Front (PNF) in 1973, and later the National Guidance Committee (NGC). Through the PNF: "They meant to secure a policy-making role for the West Bank urban elite in the PLO and have some influence on its political orientation."²⁰ The PNF was committed to a diplomatic solution and sought to encourage the PLO in this direction. This group became especially prominent after the municipal elections in 1976, which (much to Israel's surprise), returned a majority of pro-PLO candidates to office. I shall return to this issue during our assessment of the PLO's authoritative leadership in 1974.

This shift in the local elite forms a major aspect of Robinson's analysis. Writing over a decade later than Sahliyeh, Robinson argues that the new social forces came to constitute a 'counterelite', composed of individuals from non-notable class backgrounds whose social advancement owed much to the expansion of the university education system during the 1970s and 1980s:

"new Palestinian social classes - principally villagers and refugee camp residents from middle-and lower-income groups - not only experienced university student life for the first time but also came to dominate it. As a result of the changing class character of the Palestinian student population, the student movement was radicalised."²¹

Equally important was the character of the education they received. As a Palestinian analyst observed during the 1970s (the period in question), "the social structures, values [and] national feelings ... of any society are influenced by the education system." In the case of the Palestinian universities, this education departed from the general pattern of transmitting accepted values: "Its objective is to prepare the younger generation for accepting and implementing new ideas and change."²²

Robinson asserts that class changes in the character of the student movement (replete with its new agenda) lent it an 'ideological imperative', leading to the expansion of grassroots organisations, specifically designed to confront the occupation *and* the notable class. To summarise a lengthy argument, they gradually came to constitute a semi-autonomous indigenous leadership (much of which became focused in the multiplicity of Palestinian NGOs - detailed further in chapter two) which, whilst continually espousing their loyalty to the PLO leadership in exile, also represented a potential challenge to the authoritative leadership of Tunis. In effect, we can say that structural developments by the early 1990s meant that the diaspora-based political elite *had* to enter a diplomatic process and realise a compromise solution quickly if they were to retain their leading position within the Palestinian polity. The Oslo channel provided for such a compromise, within which the political elite in the diaspora retained their leadership position, bolstered by the institutional apparatus of the PLO, itself transformed via the Oslo process from liberation movement in exile to national authority governing the semi-autonomous areas of Palestine. Moreover, the diaspora-based elite found willing local partners in the Oslo project, principally amongst the Palestinian bourgeoisie and notable class in the occupied territories. "Thus the interests of the inflated PLO bureaucracy coincided with those of

wealthy Palestinians on the local scene, who could see in autonomy a way to preserve their standing.²³ I shall return to this important issue during the discussion of the political and economic aspects of the DoP, and during our analysis of the empirical institutional content of the autonomy project detailed in chapters four and five.

Structural constraints on the regional level can be divided into the balance of power between the PLO and Israel, and the PLO's relationship with the Arab states. Without dwelling on the history of the PLO's armed struggle, it is a matter of fact that the balance of power both between Israel and the Arab states, and between Israel and the PLO in particular, has emphatically and decisively favoured Israel. The benefits of entrenched state-power, such as an established territory and an institutional-military capacity to mobilise men and resources, together with substantial western assistance (derived in no small part from the colonial character of the state),²⁴ has allowed Israel to easily defeat the PLO and to defeat and then restrain the front-line Arab states.

The PLO's relationship with the Arab states has been altogether more complex and all the more salient given the movement's inability to establish an independent territorial base inside Palestine. Rashid Khalidi has pointed to the unusual nature of the Palestinian polity as one people living in contrasting circumstances, under several different and often hostile regimes, and subject to regular competitions for loyalty between the PLO and the regimes themselves.²⁵ Moreover, the fact that the PLO itself was forced to operate on the territory of other sovereign states had complicated consequences of its own.

"The need to establish secure sanctuaries brought the Palestinian guerrillas into conflict with the Arab governments concerned and invited punitive Israeli reprisals, increasing the burden on civilian populations and national economies. Opposition to the presence of these sanctuaries from government quarters or communities prompted the guerrillas to seek protection through developing their military capabilities, invoking the help of external allies and building alliances with local parties and social forces. Their intervention in domestic politics inevitably exacerbated latent tensions in the host society and fuelled civil strife."²⁶

The Arab states have also had to contend with their own legacies of colonialism and state-building in a volatile region,²⁷ and have frequently been in competition with one another, as well as with the PLO, over representation of the Palestinians.²⁸ The relevant Arab states in question are primarily those in the front-line with Israel, i.e., Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt. They might also be divided into the states with radical regimes such as Egypt under Nasir, Syria, and Iraq, and the conservative, pro-western states such as Jordan and Lebanon, together with the oil-based regimes in the Gulf, dependent upon the West in general and the US in particular as a market for oil exports and supplies of military hardware.

The relationship between the region and the international system has also had a substantial bearing on the PLO's trajectory. The strategic significance of the region, derived to no small extent from its oil deposits, has drawn both superpowers into the equation. The USA has demonstrated a consistent determination to protect the pro-western Arab regimes - particularly those sitting on its precious oil supplies²⁹ - whilst at the same time remaining committed to the defence of Israel, both as useful regional enforcer³⁰ and as a source of votes from the domestic Jewish lobby.³¹ At the same time, the US demonstrated a consistent reluctance to deal with PLO, due in large-part to the PLO's refusal to renounce violence and to recognise Israel, but also out of a fear that an independent Palestinian state would be anything other than pro-western in the Cold War context.³² The role of the USSR has been more ambiguous, offering limited material and diplomatic support whilst generally giving priority to relations with the pro-Soviet Arab states.³³

With the structural context of transition outlined above, the remainder of the chapter applies our framework of analysis as detailed in Table 1. The specific years highlighted by Table 1 have been selected for their value as 'turning points' in the transition process, i.e., as years within which we can identify major developments of particular

significance in the course of the PLO's transitional route. Due to the uneven nature of developments concerning each criterion, the analysis in each section necessarily favours certain developments over others, depending upon their overall significance for the transition process. Important developments unfolding between the years in question are covered within the accompanying analytical sections, as are certain process-related antecedents of the major developments in question. In this respect, the years highlighted by Table 1 represent 'temporal snapshots' of the PLO's trajectory, designed to illustrate relevant developments, rather than to provide a comprehensive account of an extremely complicated historical process. The years 1964, 1974 and 1988 receive greater attention than 1993 and 1996, as the latter are covered at length during the following chapters of the thesis.

1964

I have selected 1964 as a starting-point for two reasons: firstly, 1964 was the year that witnessed the establishment of the PLO;³⁴ and secondly, the very last day of this year saw Fatah officially launch its armed struggle against Israel.³⁵ The important point to make is that the PLO was established *independently* of the guerrilla groups, and Fatah launched its armed struggle *independently* of the PLO. The existence of the PLO, the 'official' Palestinian leadership approved by the Arab states, was accompanied by the emergence of Fatah and the other guerrilla groups who maintained leadership aspirations of their own. In other words, an effective authoritative leadership - the first criterion identified by Table 1 as a requisite for entry into a diplomatic process - did not exist at this point.

The establishment of an authoritative leadership over the national movement was vital because in lending the movement institutional coherence, it provided a readily identifiable leadership both within the national polity and as a reference point for potential interlocutors. In the case of the Palestinian national movement, this has been a two-fold

process, involving firstly the ascension of Arafat and Fatah within the PLO, and secondly the consolidation of the PLO's leadership within the Palestinian polity. The essential point to make here is that, in 1964, Palestinian politics remained in an embryonic state, with Fatah and the other political-guerrilla factions remaining marginal and operating outside of the framework of the PLO, whilst the PLO itself was newly established and had only just begun to accrue legitimacy.

Prior to the guerrilla group's assumption of control, the PLO's early patrons amongst the Arab states, and Egypt's President Nasir in particular, had conceived of it as *their* organisation. The PLO was supposed to contain the Palestinians by offering a vocal and institutional outlet, characterised by Seale as "a sort of corral in which Palestinians could charge about harmlessly letting off steam."³⁶ The Arab regimes were struggling with their own problems of state-building and internal legitimacy, not to mention a vulnerability to Israeli reprisals, and had no intention of granting the PLO autonomy or allowing it to wage a serious armed struggle.

In the meantime, Fatah (established prior to the PLO during the late 1950's in Kuwait), drew inspiration from National Liberation Front's (FLN) success in driving the French from Algeria. As Gowers and Walker noted: "the FLN's triumph in Algeria in a war led both from inside and outside the country by an organisation relying principally on its own resources could serve as a useful model."³⁷ However, prior to the 1967 war, Fatah remained a marginal group, overshadowed since 1964 by the Arab states-sponsored PLO. Despite launching its first operation on 31 December 1964,³⁸ (1 January 1965 was subsequently canonised as the birth of the 'Palestinian Revolution'),³⁹ Fatah would remain marginal until the propaganda coup of the battle of al-Karamah in March 1968.⁴⁰ Similarly, the ANM and other Palestinian political groups - the Palestinian Communist Party (PCP) amongst them - remained outside of the framework of the PLO (the latter eventually took a seat on the Executive Committee in 1987).

Despite the lack of an authoritative leadership, the decision to create the PLO did have important consequences for the institutional content of the national movement, leading to the establishment of certain institutions and procedures which would provide a solid foundation for the future quasi-state apparatus. Under the chairmanship of Ahmad Shuqayri, the Arab states-sponsored PLO established its basic institutional components, including the Palestinian National Charter, a cabinet in the Executive Committee, a type of legislature in the Palestine National Council (PNC), a functioning bureaucracy, diplomatic ties with Arab states, and the regular armed forces in the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), all of which would later be inherited by Fatah and the other guerrilla groups. Despite the lack of an authoritative leadership over the disparate factions, by 1964 the PLO had started to realise a measure of institutional coherence with the establishment of the second and third criteria listed in Table 1, a bureaucracy to administer the national movement and an armed force subordinate to the leadership (albeit a leadership that did not extend to the guerrilla groups and which was about to change hands in dramatic circumstances).

The fourth and fifth criteria required by the PLO were an accepted territory and an accepted national project to accompany it. In 1964, neither the PLO nor the guerrilla groups operating outside it were ready to consider anything other than the total liberation of Mandate Palestine, precluding the possibility of territorial compromise. Prior to the disastrous outcome of the 1967 war, the PLO and most Palestinians still looked to the Arab states for liberation and expressed some confidence in their capacity to bring it about. Similarly for Fatah, misplaced analogies with contemporary national movements and revolutions such as Vietnam and Cuba inspired a wild optimism in the capacity to instigate and wage a prolonged guerrilla war of national liberation. In this context, plans for a territorial solution acceptable to the Palestinians were only conceived of as involving the destruction of Israel, an outcome totally at odds with the orientation of international society, including both the USA and the USSR. Closer to home, the vexed question of

Jordan's claim on the West Bank would remain unresolved until 1988.⁴¹ The status of an acceptable national project requires little elaboration at this point as it was intrinsically linked to the question of land: the only national project acceptable to the Palestinians required the liquidation of Israel, a project beyond the Arab states capacity to deliver and diametrically opposed to the wishes of the majority of the members of international society.

The sixth and seventh criteria are international recognition and an orientation congruent with the international balance of power. The Arab states which sponsored the PLO gave it their blessing (some more readily than others),⁴² although wider international recognition would take time to fully develop⁴³ and even then remained problematic with regard to the competing claim of the Hashemite regime in Jordan. As a movement committed to the destruction of Israel, there were clearly no opportunities for meaningful dialogue in this context. Similarly, the PLO's verbal commitment to the destruction of Israel and the guerrillas plans for revolutionary warfare lent them a distinctly anti-western orientation during this period. Although this factor was less significant during the Cold War due to the alternative of Soviet support, diplomatic recognition by the USSR was still to be achieved and would never offset the value of the US' close relationship with (and hence capacity to influence) Israel.

In summary, as of 1964, the nascent Palestinian national movement lacked most of the key attributes which the structural context required they possess. There was no authoritative leadership: the PLO had been established independently of Fatah and other political-guerrilla factions who continued to contest its authority and operate independently of it. There was no prospect of territorial compromise and hence no realistic national project to present to potential interlocutors. Moreover, the West Bank remained under Jordanian control, placing the guerrillas on a collision course with the regime in Amman. The PLO was still not a major player within international society and retained a

distinctly anti-western character. On the positive side, the establishment of the PLO did produce an embryonic bureaucracy and a regular military force in the PLA, and the PLO did enjoy a measure of recognition amongst the Arab states. Rustow's background condition of national unity - present in a sufficient sense - could now be consolidated and given further institutional expression by the apparatus of the PLO. By 1974, the profile of the national movement would have advanced considerably.

1974

The major significance of 1974 derives from the steps taken by the PLO leadership towards the realisation of a diplomatic solution. The developments in question include the adoption of an implicit two-state solution by the 12th PNC (reflecting the increased salience of the occupied territories), the recognition by the Arab states of the PLO as the 'sole legitimate representative' of the Palestinian people, Arafat's address to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), and the expansion of the PLO's diplomatic service to meet these new requirements, a development which accompanied a general tendency towards institutional expansion following the PLO's relocation to Beirut. Other significant developments unfolding between 1964 and 1974 will be included in this section.

Sameer Abraham has characterised the period from 1967-1973 as "the formative years of revolutionary growth."⁴⁴ In terms of authoritative leadership, the major development during this period was the guerrilla groups entry into the framework of the PLO and Arafat's assumption of the chairmanship. Fatah's entry into the PLO arose from a historic opportunity arising from two related consequences of the June 1967 'Six-Day' War: the military failure of the Arab states and the humiliation of the incumbent leadership of the PLO with whom they were associated. The Arab states' military failure transformed the situation facing the resistance,⁴⁵ whereafter Fatah's conception of a Palestinian-led armed struggle and self-reliance appeared justified. In this respect, the initial opening for the establishment of a centralised authority within the national movement can be attributed to

structural factors: the structure of power within the regional system favoured Israel, Israel won the war, and the vacuum generated by the Arab states' defeat opened a window of opportunity for the Fatah leadership. The PLO's eventual readiness to grant Arafat the chairmanship and to restructure the organisation around the guerrilla groups made the eventual decision to enter the framework of the PLO relatively uncomplicated.

The Fatah guerrillas had been propelled to the forefront of Arab popular consciousness by the successful defence of al-Karamah in March 1968. Following al-Karamah, the popularity of the guerrillas, combined with the impotence of the incumbent PLO leadership, lent the guerrilla groups, with Fatah principal amongst them, a momentum which quickly led to their take-over of the PLO. Arafat was officially elected chairman of the Executive Committee by the PNC during its 5th session on 3 February 1969.⁴⁶ From this point forward, Arafat and Fatah could begin the process of consolidating their authoritative leadership within the PLO.

The establishment of an authoritative leadership around Arafat had been facilitated in no small part by Fatah's pursuit of armed struggle. This principle now became an article of faith, and the PLO Charter was amended accordingly.⁴⁷ Just as armed struggle helped open the door to the PLO, an ongoing commitment to this principle would now serve as a valuable means of mobilising Palestinian society around Arafat and the PLO.⁴⁸ In the wake of the severe national dislocation caused by the creation of Israel, the commitment to armed struggle served to re-constitute a sense of national identity. (In the view of one of the PLO officials I interviewed, Nizar Amr, the battle to confirm Palestinian existence succeeded at the 1974 Arab Summit in Rabat, and armed struggle had delivered it).⁴⁹ Together with Fatah's emphasis on Palestinian self-reliance (as opposed to the previously popular Pan-Arabism), the guerrillas' assumption of authority might be said to have enhanced Rustow's background condition of national unity. The armed struggle may have

never threatened to liberate Palestine, but it did enable the new PLO leadership to mobilise Palestinian consciousness around a dynamic concept.⁵⁰

Despite assuming the PLO chairmanship, Arafat's ascent as the head of Fatah did not automatically translate into uncontested authority; the nature of the PLO as a complex organisation and the fractious character of the different composite factions made this no easy task. Both the PLA and the Leftist factions would present challenges. In February 1970, General Yahya of the PLA had branded Arafat an "ignorant dictator"⁵¹ and called for all forces to unite under the PLA. He ultimately backed down, and Arafat would subsequently try to tame the PLA by having himself appointed commander by the 7th PNC later in the year.⁵² The PFLP would also present a challenge, establishing the Rejection Front with three smaller factions only months after the 12th PNC, and withdrawing their representative (not for the last time) from the PLO's Executive Committee.⁵³

In addition to the use of armed struggle, Fatah's bid to establish an authoritative leadership within the PLO was greatly assisted by the movement's nationalist but non-ideological character. As noted above, the rejection of an explicitly secular and social-revolutionary agenda allowed Fatah to recruit across class divisions and to appeal to both secular and pious Palestinians. In this regard, Fatah might be said to have formed a coalition in its own right, constituting a front within the larger front of the PLO. As Robinson pointed out: "Its rhetoric aside, Fatah was constituted in large part by nonrevolutionary elements ... [it was] basically a conservative movement which reflected the traditional clan politics of Palestinian society."⁵⁴ Moreover, Fatah's social conservatism, generally non-ideological outlook, and official policy of non-interference in the policies of the Arab states, allowed for some meeting of minds between Arafat and the regimes around him.⁵⁵ This enabled Fatah to benefit from the patronage of conservative Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Gulf States, rendering Arafat the central source of finance for the PLO bureaucracy and armed forces through his unprecedented control over the

purse-strings. In addition, Fatah had at times been able to pursue good relations with radical regimes such as the FLN in Algeria, and Syria similarly rendered Fatah significant support prior to Asad's assumption of power in 1970.⁵⁶ This broad based level of support was automatically denied the leftist PFLP and DFLP, whose opposition to so many Arab regimes made them anything but welcome in many Arab capitals.⁵⁷ Fatah's breadth of support greatly assisted in the subordination of the Leftist factions with their explicitly secular and class-based analysis.⁵⁸

In addition to the establishment of an authoritative leadership *within* the PLO, the PLO needed to establish *its* authoritative leadership within Palestinian society. The struggle for control in Jordan between the PLO and the Hashemite regime from September 1970 (Black September) to July 1971, illustrated just how difficult this might be. During the fighting, differing levels of commitment, largely determined by the structural class-profile of Palestinian society, worked to the advantage of the regime. Just as some of the Palestinian ruling families had undermined the resistance during the Mandate, so economic concerns and social privilege once again prevented the resistance from receiving the unequivocal support of their own people. Brand has recorded how Western economic support for the Hashemite regime - derived from a shared hostility to anti-status quo Arab nationalism and Palestinian irredentism (and illustrative of the interaction between international structures and the region), allowed the regime to construct a substantial public sector which served as a valuable state-patronage network:

"The huge amounts of Western financial assistance awarded since the late 1950s had enabled the bureaucracy nearly to quadruple in size. The government had gradually become the principal employer in the country, and the technocratic class that had developed had a vested interest in preserving its position and extending its power base. Potential supporters were wooed with jobs and grants."⁵⁹

Similarly, Smith has noted that during Black September, some wealthier Palestinians, in particular "landowners, merchants and sections of the prosperous middle-class actively or passively supported the King's actions against the Palestinian resistance movements."⁶⁰

Following the PLO's relocation to Lebanon, a demonstrable inability to liberate Palestine through military means and the corresponding emergence of a diplomatically realised two-state solution lent the West Bank and Gaza constituency a far greater significance. The emergence of these constituencies as the most important component of a future Palestinian state prompted the development of institutional ties between the occupied territories and the PLO in the diaspora. In the West Bank, the PNF⁶¹ declared its allegiance to the PLO in a statement issued in December 1973.⁶² PNF members were subsequently allocated three seats on the Executive Committee by the 12th PNC.⁶³

"The endorsement of the PNF by the [PNC] in 1973 marked the beginning of a joint political effort between the PLO leadership outside and the political forces in the Occupied Territories. More important, however, it represented the first response by the Palestinian leadership to an initiative originating in the Occupied Territories."⁶⁴

The PNF can be identified as an indigenous leadership group subordinated to the nationalist leadership in the diaspora. Officially, Israeli repression ensured the demise of the PNF, the last official statement of which was issued on 3 March 1977, calling for Palestinian participation in a proposed Geneva conference aimed at a diplomatic solution.⁶⁵ However, Sahliyeh poses the question: was the PNF the PLO's representative in the West Bank or was it a potential rival? If allowed to operate freely, the PNF may have come to constitute "a forceful representative of the interests of West Bank Palestinians."⁶⁶ Sahliyeh attributes the PNF's decline to the exiled leadership's hostility; local Fatah representatives, following instructions from the diaspora, accused the PNF of being dominated by Communists and allowed it to collapse.

The urban elite re-emerged amongst the nationalist mayors elected in the municipal elections of 1976. In the absence of any other political structure, the municipalities became "the highest political post in the West Bank."⁶⁷ Their rise to prominence illustrates the structural change within West Bank society identified by Robinson; the breakdown of notable authority and the ascent of the new nationalist elite.

"Members of the nationalist elite who came to the fore as a result of these elections were younger, better educated, and more ideological than their status notable counterparts. Two-thirds of the elected councilors were under fifty, while 10 percent were younger than thirty, compared to 40 percent and 3 percent, respectively, in the 1972 municipal elections. In addition, 28 percent of those elected had a university education, while only 10 percent of those elected in the 1972 elections did. Moreover, 40 percent of the new council members and one-third of the new mayors were openly nationalistic or leftist, while the 1972 results were 20 percent and 8 percent, respectively."⁶⁸

The NGC (established in 1978, declared illegal in March 1982), again mobilised and gave expression to pro-PLO and pro-diplomatic voices within the occupied territories, this time in response to the Camp David Accords. However, as with the PNF, the NGC fell victim to inter-factional conflict. In an echo of the struggle over the PNF, Fatah (both inside and in exile) were opposed to the substantial presence of the leftist factions and their opposition to a dialogue with Jordan or the US. The Executive Committee eventually determined that the PNF's political programme "contradicted that of the PLO and reflected the political stance of the hard-line factions."⁶⁹ The important point to make regarding these three developments is that they represented leadership local initiatives, reflecting structural changes, that were all effectively subordinated to the authoritative leadership in the diaspora. As we shall see, the subordination of the indigenous urban nationalists would be echoed later in the national project initiated in Oslo.

Movement towards an authoritative leadership within the PLO had important consequences for our second and third criteria, the bureaucracy and the subordinate armed force. Fatah's take-over of the PLO enabled them to secure an iron grip on the bureaucratic institutions of the PLO and begin the establishment of a co-ordinated, if not subordinated, armed force.

"At one stroke Fateh came to control not only the administrative and financial network of the PLO but also the Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA with regular units numbering approximately 12,000 men) and the Palestinian Liberation Forces (guerrilla units drawn from the PLA), which formed part of the PLO. Simultaneously, Fateh enjoyed the official

recognition and representation that the PLO had enjoyed since its founding in 1964 ..."70

It was control of this established institution and its network of contacts and supporters which would enable Arafat to lead the PLO's diplomatic initiatives only five years later.

As Fatah consolidated its grip on the PLO, so the PLO consolidated its presence amongst the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. Following relocation to Beirut, the bureaucratic apparatus was expanded to meet the new conditions facing the Palestinians in Lebanon. The presence of some 300,000 Palestinian refugees provided a friendly constituency and readily mobilised population,⁷¹ and the inbuilt limitations of the Lebanese state apparatus granted the PLO the necessary space in which to rebuild and operate; in a short space of time, the PLO established control of territory (labelled 'Fatahland'), stretching from West Beirut down to the south Lebanese border with Israel.⁷²

No longer able to take the military initiative, the PLO set about diversifying its operations, further expanding the institutional apparatus into areas of social services and developing a substantial diplomatic service.⁷³ Employment and welfare services for Palestinian refugees were provided by the Palestine Martyrs' Sons Work Society (SAMED),⁷⁴ headed by Ahmad Qrai' (Abu Ala, now the PNA's Minister of Economics). The Palestinian Red Crescent Society built much-needed hospitals and provided substantial medical care.⁷⁵ The Palestinian Research Centre collected documents on Palestine, conducted significant research and published the journal 'Palestinian Affairs'.⁷⁶ As Mussalam observed, an array of complementary institutions, complete with ministerial portfolios for members of the Executive Committee, began to lend the PLO the trappings of a genuine state apparatus in-waiting.⁷⁷ The new-found focus on diplomacy produced a global network of some 90 Palestinian embassies established by the Political Department, currently headed by Farouq al-Qaddoumi, a long-standing member of the Fatah Central Committee.⁷⁸ Senior embassy staff were usually drawn from the leadership of the General

Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS), the Fatah union established by Arafat himself, from amongst cadres already resident in the country in question.⁷⁹

This impressive range of institutions raised the PLO's profile whilst providing much-needed services for the guerrillas and civilian refugees. However, institutional expansion had consequences of its own,⁸⁰ not least of all because vast sums of money were required on a regular basis in order to maintain it.⁸¹ The effects of this expansion and bureaucratisation were threefold. Firstly, through his central position in Fatah and Fatah's dominance within the PLO, Arafat had personal control of PLO finances enabling him to establish an awesome patronage network amongst the military cadres and civilian bureaucrats whose loyalty ran directly to him.⁸² Secondly, the bulk of the PLO's budget went directly to Fatah from donors such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, while this substantial institutional expansion only served to increase the PLO's reliance on conservative Arab states. Thirdly, bureaucratic expansion generated a substantial nationalist elite within the PLO which would eventually re-secure its position within the Palestinian polity through the Oslo process and the transition to national authority.⁸³ (The role of the institution in determining the course and outcome of the Oslo process is expanded upon in chapters two and four).

Major developments unfolded during 1974 which concern our fourth and fifth criteria, an accepted territory and an acceptable national project. The evolution of PLO policy in both respects can be attributed to structural factors; firstly, an ongoing inability to overcome Israel militarily (as was graphically illustrated by the disappearance of the Arab states-led military option after the 1973 October War),⁸⁴ and secondly, the need to accommodate a more politically mobilised constituency in the occupied territories with an increasingly well-educated and middle-class leadership, just as the West Bank and Gaza Strip emerged as the likely territorial basis for a future Palestinian state.

The result of the 12th PNC in June 1974 committed the PLO to a ten point plan otherwise known as the 'phased-plan,' point two of which included provision for "a people's national, independent and fighting authority on every part of Palestinian land that is liberated."⁸⁵ (The political initiative in this regard was left to the DFLP, the first faction to openly propose a compromise solution at the 12th PNC). This represented the first time that the PLO had openly allowed itself to conceive of an intermediate goal along the path to liberation. Equally significant was point four of the plan, the first time an official resolution of the PLO had made explicit reference to the establishment of a state. Despite the ambiguous language, for those with ears to hear it there was no doubt that this alluded to a Palestinian state alongside Israel.⁸⁶ The decisions of the 12th PNC marked the emergence of both an accepted territorial basis for the proposed Palestinian state, and a national project to accompany it. The objections of the Rejection Front notwithstanding, a two-state solution and a national authority were now PLO policy.

These developments were accompanied by a rapid improvement in the PLO's international status. In October 1974 the Arab Summit in Rabat partially resolved the dispute between the PLO and Jordan over representation of the Palestinians: although a measure of ambiguity remained, the PLO was granted the status of 'sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people'.⁸⁷ In November of the same year Arafat was invited to address the UN General Assembly (UNGA), a gigantic leap in international legitimacy resulting in two further gains: firstly, the PLO was granted observer status at sessions of the General Assembly and, secondly, resolution 3236 explicitly recognised the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.⁸⁸ The PLO had now taken significant strides towards fulfilling two more criteria for a successful transition towards government-in-waiting status.

The PLO's adoption of diplomacy can be said to represent the 'decision phase' identified by Rustow within the democratic transition process. To recall Rustow's

previously-cited phrase, democracy is "acquired by a process of conscious decision at least on the part of the top political leadership."⁸⁹ In the case of the PLO, the decisions leading to Arafat's UN address represent a series of elite initiatives culminating in the adoption of diplomatic rules and procedures. Similarly, the adaptation of the PLO's institutional content as a result of these initiatives was carried out deliberately by actors adapting to structural constraints. In Rustow's words: "What matters at the decision stage is not what values the leaders hold dear in the abstract, but what concrete steps they are willing to take."⁹⁰ The PLO leadership had plainly taken concrete steps at the expense of abstract ideals. The next task was to secure a consensus within the PLO regarding the adoption of diplomatic and procedural means. Unfortunately, international structural factors would continue to deny the leadership the opportunity to capitalise on these diplomatic gains, rendering an internal consensus all the more difficult to realise.

As noted earlier, this burst of diplomatic activity (with its inherent threat of compromise), led the PFLP to suspend its membership of the Executive Committee and the establishment, together with three smaller factions,⁹¹ of the Rejection Front. In reality they would have little to worry about for some time. As Gresh observed, between 1974 and 1977, in spite of all of these developments, the PLO was given no viable diplomatic option with committed US support.⁹² The PLO's diplomatic success was prevented from translating into concrete negotiated agreements by a combination of Israeli intransigence and the US preoccupation with the supposed Cold War threat which a Palestinian state was imagined to represent.⁹³ US policy had already undermined the PLO during the Black September crisis; firstly, the Nixon administration reputedly used the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to stiffen Husayn's resolve.⁹⁴ Regular CIA payments to the King were reputedly suspended until he undertook to act decisively; once US policy had been implemented and the resistance liquidated, payments were resumed.⁹⁵ A second influence, noted above, was the 'Nixon Doctrine' the essence of which

"envisioned reliance on regional surrogate powers to enforce respect for the status quo and defend American interests. In the Middle East this was fulfilled by Iran in the Gulf and Israel in the Fertile Crescent."⁹⁶

From this point forth, Israel was elevated to the status of strategic asset for the US following Kissinger's success in using Israel to deter the Syrian incursion into Jordan during the 1970 crisis.⁹⁷ This use of dependent, pro-western regional allies was consistent with the role played by Ethiopia under Haile Selassie in the Horn of Africa and the South African apartheid regime in southern Africa. In the Middle East, US policy dovetailed neatly with the Israeli strategy of aligning with non-Arab states on the periphery of the region such as Iran, Turkey and Ethiopia.

In summary, the view from 1974 in terms of our transitional model is one of mixed results. Significant progress had been made through the elite-driven adoption of procedural means and institutional adaptation, both of which closed the gap between the PLO and its structural context. However, the leadership's capacity to capitalise on these results was frustrated by the hostile orientation of Israel and the US, the dominant players within the regional and international systems. A centralised leadership was coalescing within the PLO, whilst the PLO had secured its place as the recognised authoritative leadership of the Palestinian people. The bureaucratic and military apparatus were expanding and diversifying, lending the institution the hallmarks of a government-in-waiting. The implicit recognition of a two-state solution opened the possibility of a territorial settlement alongside Israel, and, at least within a majority of the PLO, the call for a national authority on any part of Palestine proved an acceptable, if vague, national project. Finally, the PLO's international status had risen immeasurably, and the leadership's readiness to 'play by the rules of the game' had been clearly indicated. However, both Israel and the US chose to ignore the PLO's moderation and leap in status, determined instead to deny it a meaningful diplomatic dialogue and, if possible, to marginalise the institution.

1988

The PLO's shift towards a diplomatic solution reached something of a watershed this year when the 19th PNC explicitly accepted UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions 242 and 338 and openly called for a two-state solution alongside Israel. Jordan's renunciation of claims to the West Bank, the decisions of the 19th PNC, and the brief US-PLO dialogue form the major developments of interest here and mostly concern the last four criteria in Table 1. However, prior to that, analysis of the situation in 1988 requires that we take the intifada and its antecedents into account, together with the implications for the authoritative leadership of the PLO in exile.

As noted above, in the years preceding the intifada the PLO's campaign to assert its authoritative leadership over the West Bank and Gaza had taken place in the context of a three-way competition for influence between the PLO, Jordan and Israel. Whilst Israeli policies served to undermine the mediating role of the traditional notable class, both the PLO and Jordan had sought to secure local loyalties through the disbursement of funds via the Joint Committee.⁹⁸ The PLO leadership exercised its powers of patronage through the provision of funds for institution-building, including research groups, unions and newspapers, as fronts for the promotion of the nationalist agenda. A second aspect of the institution-building process involved an inter-factional competition for influence within the national movement. As Cobban noted, the 'inside-based' PCP had an established tradition of promoting mass organisations which preceded the 1967 occupation. The Communists were joined by the other Leftist factions towards the end of the 1970s, and finally by Fatah during the early 1980s. Following the withdrawal from Beirut, Fatah began the construction of an institutional front accompanied by the construction of a network of activists which would form the basis of their role in the intifada.⁹⁹

The Fatah leadership owed much in this respect to the efforts of Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), operating from Amman until 1986, in the period following the PLO's eviction

from Beirut.¹⁰⁰ From his position as chief of Fatah's military wing, al-Wazir set himself the task of creating a network of activists within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. His reputedly extraordinary organisational capacity lent him a degree of personal control over the activists which would form the foundation of Fatah's role in, and the PLO's direction of, the intifada.¹⁰¹ The personalised nature of al-Wazir's control meant that his death dealt the network in the occupied territories (known as the 'Western Sector' (*al-Qita' al-Gharbi*), a serious blow.¹⁰² However, the durability of the intifada underlined the extent to which local leadership capabilities had developed whilst also lending the PLO in Tunis a priceless weight in the diplomatic arena.¹⁰³

The scale and durability of the intifada can be attributed to both the widely-felt consequences of the Israeli settler-colonial administration over the occupied territories, and to the direction the uprising received from the indigenous nationalist leadership. Ziad Abu Amr attributed the root causes of the uprising to "twenty years of Israeli occupation and Israeli policies aimed at undermining the material and national existence of the Palestinians in their own land." He specifically identified land confiscation, "an aggressive settlement policy," repressive measures and human rights violations which "[u]nlike classical patterns of colonialism ... failed to win the sympathy or support of any meaningful sector of the occupied population."¹⁰⁴ Indeed, as noted earlier, Israel's policy of land confiscation directly alienated and undermined the large land-owning notable class which might otherwise have mediated colonial control, returning us to the major structural changes in Palestinian society identified by Robinson. Not only did structural changes undermine the authority of the notable class, they also generated a new, university-educated non-notable elite which was ready and able to lead the national mobilisation of society. In Robinson's pithy summary,

"the revolutionary process was directly linked to the structural changes which preceded it. In this case, structural changes had weakened an old elite and brought a counterelite to the fore. This new elite mobilised and transformed society in order to better confront the occupation."¹⁰⁵

Despite the PLO's investment in institution and network building, the spontaneous onset of the uprising presented a double challenge to the authority of the Tunis-based leadership; firstly from the indigenous nationalist leadership, and secondly from the non-PLO Islamic factions, Hamas (formed by the Muslim Brotherhood as a *response* to the intifada)¹⁰⁶ and Islamic Jihad. In order to meet this challenge, the PLO leadership drew upon its well-established networks of activists within the territories to establish the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising (UNLU, *al-qiyada al-muwahhada*),¹⁰⁷ a series of locally organised co-ordinating committees that institutionalised co-operation between the four leading nationalist factions of the PLO.¹⁰⁸ The PLO's capacity to realise this co-ordination was partly facilitated by the reunification of the leading nationalist factions which occurred during the 18th PNC (April 1987), ending the Syrian-sponsored split between Fatah and the Left. The end of this damaging split bolstered Arafat's authoritative leadership within the PLO and restored the credibility of the PLO within wider Palestinian society.¹⁰⁹

Abu Amr summarised PLO-UNLU co-ordination thus:

"Shortly after the outbreak of the intifada, the PLO's factions outside began coordination with their organizations inside instructing them to fully coordinate with each other ... the PLO's leadership outside played a principal role in deciding and coordinating the format of the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising ... In addition, the deportation by Israeli occupation authorities of national leaders from the occupied territories who joined the PLO leadership and institutions outside ... contributed in creating a uniformity of the political national outlook between the 'exterior' and the 'interior'..."¹¹⁰

This model of operational unity has also been stressed by Cobban, who pointed to Tunis' role in providing the leaflets (*banayat*) and radio broadcasts that helped direct the intifada's progress.¹¹¹ Jarbawi expounded a similar view; "the UNLU sees itself as the local political and activist arm of the PLO. UNLU communiqués illustrate tight co-ordination between the inside and outside, and show absolute support for the PLO abroad."¹¹² Robinson presents a rather different view, asserting that the character of the UNLU changed

dramatically from March 1990, whereafter senior political figures such as Faysal Husayni replaced the lower-level grass-roots leadership drawn from the camps and the popular committees that had previously held the reigns and, significantly, eluded the full authority of Tunis. From this point forth, "Tunis was finally able to control decision-making at the top level of the Intifada and to ensure that such decisions more accurately reflected its own thinking."¹¹³ Robinson's more nuanced interpretation of the UNLU, consistent with his focus on the structural changes behind the intifada, underlines the salience of viewing the PLO's trajectory from a structure-agency perspective. Structural changes within the occupied territories generated a potential threat to the PLO-Tunis which, as agents, they sought to subordinate in defence of their leadership position.

In summary, in terms of our framework of analysis, we can say that the intifada had mixed consequences for the PLO's authoritative leadership. Structural changes underway since the 1970s facilitated the uprising through the generation of an indigenous nationalist counterelite which presented a potential threat to the PLO-Tunis. On the other hand, the widespread mobilisation of society behind the PLO's agenda lent the Tunis-based leadership a fresh legitimacy in international society; indeed, the threat of wider instability finally prompted a reappraisal of US policy towards the PLO. In this respect, the intifada supplied the PLO with a renewed weight in diplomatic circles which had been sorely lacking since the withdrawal from Beirut. At the same time, the uprising also lent the West Bank and Gaza a new weight within PLO decision-making, a development which would soon be reflected in the decisions of the 19th PNC, and which can also be said to have further habituated the PLO to diplomatic means.

With regard to our second and third criteria, developments within the bureaucracy require little elaboration, other than to note that it remained functional but exiled 2000 kilometres away in Tunis. However, in between the PLO's eviction from Beirut in 1982 and the onset of the intifada towards the end of 1987, two important developments took

place within the PLO's armed forces which cross over into the issue of authoritative leadership. The first involved a rebellion against Arafat *within* Fatah, the second a reorganisation of PLO military forces which enhanced the position of Arafat and Fatah within the PLO, and which is now reflected in the nature of the security apparatus of the PNA (explored in chapter four).

In the aftermath of the withdrawal from Beirut, a serious challenge arose to Arafat's leadership *within* Fatah.¹¹⁴ In January 1983, dissidents led by Colonel Mohammad Said Musa Maragha (Abu Musa), launched a bitter attack on Arafat during a session of the Fatah Revolutionary Council.¹¹⁵ Shortly thereafter this became a full-scale military rebellion with Syrian support, aimed at wresting control of Fatah from Arafat's hands. Arafat returned to Lebanon to confront the rebels before being forced to retreat a second time, this time from the port of Tripoli under Syrian artillery fire. Without dwelling on the details, Arafat eventually marginalised the Syrian-backed rebels and re-established control of Fatah. Nevertheless, the incident demonstrated the susceptibility of Arafat's authoritative leadership within the PLO to interference from the Arab states.

During the same period, Fatah consolidated its position within the PLO by securing effective control over the remainder of the military apparatus. In 1983 the Fatah Military Committee¹¹⁶ decided to merge its forces, as did the PFLP and the DFLP, with the PLA to form the Palestinian National Liberation Army (PNLA)¹¹⁷ (the Damascus-based factions revoked their decision in 1984, almost certainly under Syrian pressure).¹¹⁸ This development was recounted during an interview with Major General Abd al-Razaq al-Majjaydah, current commander of the PNA's Public Security apparatus in the Gaza Strip. As if to underline the point, al-Majjaydah himself had begun his career as PLA officer, prior to joining Fatah and (although he did not mention this himself), apparently winning a seat on the Revolutionary Council. Significantly, al-Majjaydah also asserted that guerrilla groups outside the PNLA subsequently withered away, leaving Fatah in generally

undisputed control of PLO military forces, a major step towards the creation of a subordinate armed force - at least in the diaspora.¹¹⁹

The intifada complicated matters in this regard through the proliferation of local armed elements in the occupied territories. Two indigenous armed groups emerged claiming allegiance to Fatah; the Black Panthers (*al-Fahd al-Aswad*) in the West Bank, and the Fatah Hawks (*Suqor Fatah*), in the Gaza Strip. Both were nominally subordinate to Tunis, and yet both retained an element of independence and readiness to defy the leadership in exile.¹²⁰ The PFLP also retained its own military wing in the territories, the Red Eagles (*al-Suqour al-Ahmar*). Moreover, both Hamas (the military-wing of Hamas is known as the *Izz al-Din al-Qassim* brigades) and Islamic Jihad organised military operations to confront the occupation, both of which were organised beyond the orbit of the PLO (I shall return to these groups, and Arafat's means of dealing with them, in the chapters addressing developments under the PNA). In this respect, by 1988 the PLO's progress towards a subordinate armed force can be said to have advanced significantly in the diaspora, but to have been complicated in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As we shall see in later chapters, the Oslo process would give Arafat the opportunity to subordinate these groups, together with the indigenous nationalist leadership, through a combination of cooption and coercion following the redeployment to Palestine.

Concerning our fourth criterion, 1988 saw the PLO take a major stride towards establishing an acceptable territorial basis for the proposed Palestinian state - an unanticipated bonus given that only the year before, during the November 1987 Arab Summit in Amman, King Husayn had relegated Palestine to the bottom of the Summit's agenda. Preoccupied with the Iran-Iraq War and still smarting over Arafat's withdrawal from the Amman initiative,¹²¹ this most politically astute of Arab leaders seemingly allowed his personal feelings to cloud his judgement: "Jordan's attempts, wilful or otherwise, to downgrade the PLO in full view of a large and politically aware Palestinian

television audience in the West Bank and Gaza backfired.¹²² The explicit demotion of the Palestine issue and the attempt to marginalise the PLO leadership was duly noted by a restive population, contributing to the outbreak of the intifada.¹²³

Less than one year later, Husayn's response to the intifada's forceful demonstration of solidarity with the PLO, and the concomitant rejection of Hashemite pretensions to represent the Palestinians, prompted Husayn to renounce Jordanian claims to the West Bank on 31 July 1988. He also took practical steps to underline the point,

"dissolv[ing] the Jordanian parliament which had West Bank representation, and cancell[ing] Jordan's West Bank development scheme. The Palestine National Council said that it would take over the responsibilities, and early in August Jordan stopped paying the salaries of 21,000 Arab school teachers and civil servants on the West Bank."¹²⁴

Husayn's surprise move challenged the PLO leadership to take the initiative, prompting the hasty elaboration of an acceptable national project with ramifications for PLO's international status and orientation.

The links between these three criteria had been clear for some time. In 1975 US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger had sought to preclude the possibility of a Palestinian state and a role for the PLO with his infamous commitment to Israel, "prohibit[ing] the United States from negotiating with and recognising the PLO, until the PLO accepted UN[SC] Resolutions 242 and 338 and recognised the right to exist of the state of Israel."¹²⁵ The conclusion of the Camp David Accords three years later again saw both US and Israeli policy explicitly rule out a Palestinian state and a role for the PLO in a political settlement.¹²⁶ The outcome of the 19th PNC would allow the PLO leadership to formulate an acceptable (in the sense of 'negotiable') national project which met the requirements of the US, moving the organisation into a more pro-western orientation and improving its international status accordingly.

The PNC was convened in its 19th session in Algiers during November 1988,¹²⁷ the upshot of which was the proclamation of "the establishment of the state of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital, in the terms of the United Nation's resolution of November 1947 which had partitioned Palestine."¹²⁸ Despite this initiative, the Israeli government continued to ignore the PLO and Palestinian claims to a state. On the other hand, US policy was seriously wrong-footed; how were they to respond when they had always looked for a solution involving Jordan? US Secretary of State George Schultz denied Arafat a visa for the US, in response to which Arafat addressed the UNGA in a special session convened in Geneva. By the end of proceedings, Arafat had uttered the words required of him by US foreign policy,¹²⁹ explicitly accepting resolutions 242 and 338, recognising Israel's right to exist and renouncing terrorism. As a result, the US Ambassador to Tunisia, Robert Pelletreau, was authorised to open a dialogue with the PLO.¹³⁰

In terms of our framework of analysis, the PLO's 1988 initiative can be interpreted as an elite-driven process designed to align the organisation more closely with its structural context: the national project ratified by the 19th PNC met the demands of the mainstream nationalist constituency in the occupied territories and (eventually) produced the reward of a dialogue with the US. This apparent breakthrough can be usefully contrasted to the failure of three diplomatic initiatives formulated earlier in the decade: the Fahd or Fez Plan, the Reagan Plan and the Amman Agreement. Each represented an attempt to formulate an acceptable Palestinian national project - the first two by external actors, the latter a joint project by Arafat and King Husayn - and each failed for want of the right alignment of Palestinian, regional and international factors.

The first project was proposed by King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, and later resurfaced at the Arab Summit in Fez in August 1981.¹³¹ It contained the following key provisions:

"an Israeli withdrawal from all Arab lands occupied in 1967; the establishment, after a short transition period under UN auspices, of a

Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza; and, in the controversial Clause 7, 'that all states in the region should be able to live in peace'."¹³²

The plan failed at its initial outing due to Syrian opposition and Asad's boycott of the 1981 Arab Summit. Moreover, despite Arafat's tacit approval, Fatah did not officially endorse it, depriving the Plan of an Arab consensus even before it reached Israel and the US. The Fahd Plan resurfaced in September 1982, this time at the reconvened Arab Summit in Fez where it was renamed the Fez Plan. Despite a favourable response, this time from both the PLO and Syria, it once again came to nothing as Israel and the US ignored it. Israel remained doggedly opposed to any plan involving a role for the PLO and a prospective Palestinian state, and in the context of such instability in the region (the revolutionary regime in Iran, the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, and the Iran-Iraq War), the US took a similar view, preferring to rely instead on conservative and pro-western Jordan in any solution, as embodied in the Reagan Plan.

The Reagan Plan emerged almost alongside the Fez Plan in September 1982.¹³³ Reagan called for further Israeli withdrawal from territories occupied in 1967 and the establishment of a Palestinian entity linked to Jordan, whilst clearly ruling-out the option of a Palestinian state. The PLO appeared ready to test US intentions, probing for room for manoeuvre. Khalil al-Wazir had tried to take a positive view, declaring: "Without an active and broad political move to bolster the role of the loaded rifle, we will end up in a vacuum."¹³⁴ Nevertheless, despite the Fatah leadership's apparent flexibility, the Reagan Plan hit the brick wall of Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin. In the event, the Reagan Plan suited neither the PLO nor Israel, and underlined the difficulty of formulating a national project which could close the gap between actors with such fundamentally different conceptions of what constituted an 'acceptable' national project.

The Husayn-Arafat talks produced the Amman Agreement of February 1985,¹³⁵ the essence of which suggested "Palestinian self-determination within the framework of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation."¹³⁶ This proposal, much closer to the shared

preferences of the Israeli Labor Party and the US, formally broke down over Arafat's reluctance to accept resolutions 242 and 338 without first securing US recognition of the Palestinian's right to self-determination.¹³⁷ In reality, Arafat's retreat from the Amman Agreement was prompted in large part by opposition from within the PLO (within Fatah, the PFLP and the DFLP, all with Syrian support), not least of all over the issue of representation. In al-Wazir's words: "Nobody will negotiate on our behalf or share our representation ... There is no compromise on this whatsoever."¹³⁸ (this issue would be debated with an altogether different outcome prior to the Madrid conference, discussed in chapter two).

The failure of the Amman Agreement demonstrated just how complicated progress towards a diplomatic solution could be: a political initiative on the part of the leadership could not ignore the need to maintain internal 'unity' within a complex organisation; moreover, the nature of the PLO can be said to have rendered it 'politically porous' - it was always ready to absorb external influences - in this case Syrian. In this instance, transition towards the realisation of an acceptable national project gave way to the need to maintain internal cohesion within the institution. In contrast, the 1988 initiative saw the disparate factions close ranks in response to the challenge - and demands - of the intifada. In other words, by 1988 the interests of the institution *required* the formulation of an acceptable national project if the PLO were to retain its authoritative leadership in the Palestinian polity. As a consequence, the PLO leadership retained the loyalty of their most important constituency and were rewarded with the US-PLO dialogue.

When it emerged, the US-PLO dialogue represented an important diplomatic channel, long-coveted by Arafat and long-denied him by US and Israeli policy. The dialogue was opened by President Reagan on 14 December 1988, and closed by President Bush on 20 July 1990.¹³⁹ Despite the apparent breakthrough, the diplomatic results of the dialogue were minimal and talks were formally discontinued following an abortive

operation against Israel by a minor PLO faction.¹⁴⁰ However, in terms of our transitional model, the fact that the dialogue happened at all underlines the PLO's movement towards an orientation congruent with the international balance of power.

Summarising developments by 1988, we can say that Arafat and Fatah had further consolidated their authoritative leadership in the diaspora; Arafat had weathered the Syrian-backed challenge to his authority within Fatah, and Fatah had consolidated its control over the PLO's military-wing with the formation of the PNLA. In the occupied territories, structural changes had generated a fresh nationalist elite, ready and able to lead the intifada, a challenge which the PLO leadership met through the institutionalisation of the intifada via the UNLU and the eventual subordination of the UNLU leadership to Tunis. The co-ordination of PLO groups via the UNLU also helped to contain the threat of the Islamic groups operating outside the framework of the PLO. The PLO possessed both a substantial bureaucracy and a subordinate armed force in the diaspora, yet both remained in a rather unproductive exile. Jordan's renunciation of claims to the West Bank allowed for substantial progress towards an accepted territory. The results of the 19th PNC and the PLO's acceptance of resolutions 242 and 338 matched this opportunity with an acceptable national project, the results of which appeared to underline the rewards of habituation to diplomatic procedure. The PLO leadership's 1988 initiative realigned the institution with its structural context, firstly as a response to changes within the occupied territories, and secondly towards an orientation congruent with the international balance of power. However, these positive developments were offset by Israel's persistent unwillingness to negotiate with the PLO.

By way of an 'epilogue' to this section, we need to note the PLO's dramatic *volte face* regarding its international orientation following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990. This might be interpreted as one last attempt to defy the international structural context within which the PLO was embedded whilst remaining closely aligned to

its national constituency. Characterised in the Western media as pro-Iraq, Matter has noted that PLO policy was actually so confused and unclear it simply left plenty of room for misinterpretation.¹⁴¹ Unfortunately, the lack of a clear condemnation of the invasion or an unambiguous call for Iraqi withdrawal left the PLO diplomatically isolated from mainstream international opinion.

Domestically, Arafat was paying attention to his key constituency - the Palestinians in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jordan - amongst whom support for Saddam's contrived policy (linking Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait to Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories) was substantial. Equally, Arafat had one eye on his Islamists competitors in Palestine, together with the radicals within Fatah and the rest of the PLO. In addition, Arafat had been engaged in a strategic alliance with Iraq, as a result of which the PLO is said to have received \$48 million annually.¹⁴² Finally, despair over the failure of the 1988 initiative and the breakdown of US-PLO dialogue reinforced the logic of Arafat's position.

The costs of failing to clearly condemn the invasion hit the PLO on three levels: internally, the organisation appeared to totter on the brink of insolvency.¹⁴³ The PLO's treasury, the Palestine National Fund (PNF, *al-sunduq al-qawmi*), lost the 5 per cent tax levied from the estimated 350,000 Palestinians residing in Kuwait. The same Palestinian community was reduced to around 30,000 individuals, resulting in a collective loss of an estimated \$8 billion in Palestinian income and assets and the loss of vital revenue repatriated to the West Bank and Gaza.¹⁴⁴ Key Arab states - including traditional wealthy supporters in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia - were alienated from the PLO, and the weight of Arab consensus in the international arena, so painfully constructed over two decades, disappeared overnight. Moreover, this rapid turnabout in international orientation lost the PLO much goodwill and credibility in the West and saw them duly punished with exclusion from the Madrid Conference.

The Madrid Conference and the Oslo channel are dealt with in detail in the following chapter. The remainder of this chapter provides a brief profile of the PLO's standing in regard to our framework of analysis and the seven criteria for transition as of 1993 and 1996. The themes and issues introduced here are elucidated in greater detail in the later chapters of the thesis.

1993

With the signing of the DoP between the Israeli government and the PLO in September 1993, the PLO completed its transition to government-in-waiting status and became directly and openly engaged in a diplomatic process aimed at realising an institutional solution to the problem of Palestinian self-determination. From this point forth, the nature of the transition process was fundamentally different: with the liberation movement now accepted as a legitimate government-in-waiting, the aim of the process shifted from the acquisition of key attributes necessary to attain that status, to the conversion of those attributes into government status *per se*. My analysis will now summarise the PLO's standing with regard to the seven criteria highlighted by Table 1, as of the signing of the DoP.

Turning to our first criterion, the authoritative leadership of the PLO in exile was both clarified and enhanced by the DoP. Within the PLO, Arafat and Fatah consolidated their grip on the institution through the secret Oslo channel, marginalising the rival Leftist factions from PLO decision-making and co-opting the remainder (such as the Palestinian Democratic Union or FIDA faction) to Fatah's *fait accompli*. In relation to the occupied territories, Israel's recognition of Arafat's authority granted the leadership a renewed legitimacy, resolving the problematic relationship with the Palestinian delegation to Washington (examined in chapter two). Moreover, the Oslo process would facilitate the

PLO's redeployment to the West Bank and Gaza, allowing them to subordinate both the indigenous nationalist leadership and the non-PLO Islamic groups.

The consolidation of the diaspora leadership's authority was underpinned by the DoP's provisions for the return and transformation of PLO institutions (see chapters three and four). The Tunis-based bureaucracy was destined to become the institutional backbone of the PNA across the West Bank and Gaza. In addition, recruitment from amongst the indigenous population into the ministerial apparatus would secure valuable local support for the autonomy project. Similarly, the opportunity to redeploy the PLO's armed forces to the occupied territories resolved another obstacle in the way of the creation of a subordinate armed force: redeployment opened the way to assert control over the military-wings of the indigenous nationalist factions, the majority of whom would be recruited into PNA's diverse security apparatus. The Oslo process also granted the PLO the opportunity to return and deal directly with the military-wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Furthermore, the provisions for an executive authority and later an elected council facilitated the incorporation of local allies (principally the notable class and the indigenous bourgeoisie) into the new national project.

The DoP marked a quantum leap in terms of our fourth criterion, an accepted territory. For all the much cited (and well-grounded) criticism over the size of the territory involved, from the PLO's perspective, the DoP finally demarcated *some* territory within which the institution could legitimately assert a measure of authority. The fact that this authority was both heavily proscribed and confined to the semi-autonomous enclaves in the Gaza Strip and Jericho area was of secondary importance.

Intrinsically linked to this development were advances with the PLO's national project. The provisions of the DoP facilitated the establishment of the PNA - a project accepted (with reservations) by the majority of the Palestinian population in the occupied

territories at the time¹⁴⁵ and which, crucially, also received international society's stamp of approval. Unfortunately, as we shall see in chapter three, the terms of the agreement that constituted the project were sufficiently vague as to remain widely open to interpretation and postponed discussions over particularly sensitive issues (such as the status of Jerusalem and illegal Israeli settlements), for 'final status' negotiations. The PLO's interpretation naturally placed emphasis on the PNA as a necessary step along the path to full statehood with Jerusalem as the Palestinian capital; in contrast, the Israeli interpretation suggested that the final outcome might be something altogether less substantial.

Finally, the DoP marked significant progress in terms of our sixth and seventh criteria. The agreement provided an explicit recognition of the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, underscored in practice by the realisation of a diplomatic dialogue with the Israeli government. Israel's legitimisation of the PLO was followed by a leap in the international recognition accorded by international society (in particular by the West), including the US. The DoP failed to legitimise Palestinian claims to statehood, but it did legitimise the PLO as the authoritative leadership of the national movement. In this respect, the advances in international recognition derived from the Oslo process can be said to have enhanced the authoritative leadership of the PLO, but to have done rather less to legitimise Palestinian claims to statehood, the declared aim of the PLO's national project. With regard to the PLO's international orientation, the advances gained in terms of status derived in large part from a decisive shift towards a pro-western disposition. In the context of the NWO and US hegemony in the region, the DoP can be said to have firmly re-aligned the PLO into a position consistent with the prevailing regional and international structures of power. Throughout the course of the Oslo process, the major sponsors of the PLO would now be Israel, the US and the EU.

1996

The conclusion to this chapter entails an assessment of the outcome of the transition process as of 1996 (the end-point of our analysis), measured according to the criteria established by Table 1. By 1996, the authoritative leadership of the PLO had undergone a substantial evolution, as a result of which the authority of Arafat and the returnees had been further consolidated. Through the Oslo process, decision-making within the PLO had substantially narrowed down to involve mainly Arafat and Fatah, supported by some of the minor PLO factions and loyal 'independents'. In the meantime, authoritative leadership within the PNA had been achieved by a combination of co-option and coercion, enhanced and legitimised by the elections for the Legislative Council and the PNA Presidency (duly won by Fatah and Arafat respectively), in January 1996. Within the terms of the Oslo process, the PNA headed by Arafat now formed a legally constituted governing authority within the semi-autonomous zones of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with a solid institutional and social basis for governance.

This authoritative leadership was supported (and enforced) by the substantial bureaucratic and security apparatus of the PNA. PLO institutions and personnel were imported from Tunis (and elsewhere) to form the backbone of the administrative and coercive apparatus of the PNA. Both were bolstered through a process of institutional adaptation and expansion which allowed for the large-scale recruitment of personnel from amongst the indigenous population. This process also reduced the resources available to the 'non-state' NGO community and facilitated the incorporation of the technocratic and professional middle-class into the autonomy project. The PNA quickly established a disparate and pervasive subordinate armed force, composed of returnee PNLA soldiers combined with indigenous armed elements such as the Black Panthers and the Fatah Hawks (see chapter four). The PLO's combat forces from the diaspora were thus merged with local nationalist fighters to form the PNA's security apparatus, all of which were firmly subordinate to the authoritative leadership of Arafat. However, despite the

recruitment of individual Islamist supporters into the new apparatus, both Islamic Jihad and the military-wing of Hamas remained outside the PNA. Moreover, military operations against Israeli targets continued to question the PNA's authority within the occupied territories and undermined the PNA's relationship with Israel.

With regard to an accepted territory, the PNA had made additional but limited progress since 1993, assuming a measure of practical authority within the autonomous zones and expanding the boundaries of PNA jurisdiction following the IDF's second redeployment in late 1995. In the West Bank, the semi-autonomous Jericho enclave had been expanded to include the major urban centres, but only as part of a complicated arrangement that divided West Bank territory into three separate categories. Furthermore, Israeli settlements remained intact in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and the status of East Jerusalem had still to be negotiated. Within the confines of these territorial and legal restrictions, the acceptable national project of the PNA was now an accomplished institutional fact. Within the occupied territories the wave of popular support that originally greeted the announcement of the DoP fluctuated, with the period following the IDF redeployment in late 1995 and the elections of 1996 marking a high-point of approval. An opinion poll taken on election (20 January 1996) day found that 50% continued to support the DoP, 16% opposed it and 33% both supported and opposed it at the same time. Significantly, Fatah (the faction at the heart of the process), retained a "solid majority of support with 57 percent of voters identifying themselves as Fateh supporters."¹⁴⁶ The high turnout for the elections - 73.5 percent in the Gaza Strip and 86.77 percent in the West Bank (discussed more thoroughly in chapter five), served as an index of the legitimacy of the national project within the occupied territories. Finally, the autonomy project continued to receive the support of the international community and the official (if reluctant) endorsement of the new Likud administration (from May 1996) in Israel.

Little had changed with our last two criteria since 1993: the PLO continued to enjoy international recognition as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the PNA constituted a legal governing authority recognised within international society. However, international recognition did not extend to the Palestinian's right to full self-determination, nor to the PNA's right to evolve into the government of a sovereign state. Unfortunately, in the post-Cold War context, the Palestinian leadership had nowhere else to turn for sponsorship and so retained its pro-western orientation. The economic support of the western states (the US and the EU principal amongst them), constituted a financial life-support machine without which the PNA would cease to function.

By way of conclusion, two main points can be drawn to explain the outcome of the transition process described above. Firstly, the institutions of autonomy embodied by the PNA continued to fall well short of attaining the characteristics of full statehood. This outcome can be attributed to the determinant structural constraints impinging on the PLO-PNA leadership and which were reflected in the terms of transition established by the agreements that constitute the Oslo process. Secondly, *within* the negotiated (and structurally determined) confines of the PNA, the agency of the leadership retained a measure of independence, expressed in the internal composition of the institutions of autonomy. In other words, the institutional adaptation of the PLO was an agency-driven process operating in the context of determinant structural constraints. The practical institutional consequences that emerged are as follows: firstly, the autonomy project was governed by the imported bureaucracy and armed forces of the PLO (with Fatah cadres from the diaspora at their core), transformed into the bureaucratic and security apparatus of the PNA and maintained through a patronage network centred on Arafat; secondly, local elements and potential opposition were co-opted through a policy of wide-scale recruitment and coerced through the substantial security apparatus constructed after redeployment; thirdly, following the elections in January 1996, the autonomy project was legitimised through the establishment of the Legislative Council, itself shaped by the PLO

leadership to exploit internal social structures and manipulated to enhance the authoritative leadership of Arafat and the returnees (see chapter five). In summary, structural factors determined the external profile of the PNA, while the internal characteristics were shaped in large part by the agency of the PLO-PNA leadership. The following chapter applies our framework to explain the shift from Washington to Oslo and the direct negotiations between the PLO and the Israeli government that opened the way for the transition to national authority.

FOOTNOTES

¹The UN partition plan was passed on 29/11/47, whereafter Arab attacks on Zionist targets began immediately. Arab Liberation Army volunteers entered Palestine in January 1948, to be joined by the regular Arab armies of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt following the end of British administration and the declaration of the creation of the state of Israel on 15/05/48. For the text of the partition plan, see The Middle East and North Africa 1998, (London: Europa Publications, 1997), pp.106-107. For a basic historical account of events during this period, see Ritchie Ovendale, The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Wars, (Second Edition), (London: Longman Group UK Ltd, 1992), pp.103-144.

²United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, Report of the UN Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East, document A/AC.25/6, (1952) p.18 cited in Facts and Figures about Palestinians, Information Paper No1, (Washington: The Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine, 1993), p.13. UNGA Resolution 194 (11 December 1948), stated that "refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practical date, and that compensation should be paid in full for the property of those choosing not to return..." For extracts of the text, see The Middle East and North Africa 1998, *op.cit.*, p.107.

³Brand noted that "variation in both refugee and population figures is endemic to the study of Palestinians." However, through combining a number of authoritative sources (including United Nations: Report of the Economic Survey Mission of the Middle East (1949) and the Palestinian Statistical Abstract for 1983 (Damascus: Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, 1984), Brand reached the following estimates:

	1949	1975	1982
Israel	133,000	436,100	574,000
West Bank (org)	440,000	785,400	871,600
(ref)	280,000		
Gaza Strip (org)	88,520	390,300	476,300
(ref)	190,000		
Lebanon	100,000	288,000	492,240
Syria	75,000	183,000	229,868
Egypt	7,000	39,000	35,436
Iraq	4,000	35,000	21,284
East Bank	70,000	644,000	1,189,600
Kuwait		194,000	308,177
Saudi Arabia		59,000	147,549
Rest of the Gulf		29,000	64,037
Libya		10,000	23,759
U.S.		28,000	108,045
Other states			143,780
Other Arab states			52,683

Totals	1,387,520	3,121,000	4,739,158
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See, Brand, Palestinians in the Arab World, pp.8-9, 150-151 and 254-255.

By the 1990s, the Palestinian population was distributed as follows:

West Bank	1,744,368	(projected by 1997)
Gaza Strip	969,368	(projected by 1997)
Israel	730,000	(as of 1991)
Jordan	1,824,179	(as of 1991)
Lebanon	331,757	(as of 1991)
Syria	301,744	(as of 1991)
Other Arab states	445,195	(as of 1991)
Rest of the world	450,000	(as of 1991)

These statistics are based on United Nation's Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) figures published by the following sources: Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA) PASSIA Diary 1996, (Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1996), p.199, and Facts and Figures about the Palestinians: Information Paper No.1 *op.cit.*, p.4. Two helpful discussions of the Palestinian polity are provided by Rashid Khalidi, 'The PLO as Representative of the Palestinian People' in Augustus Richard Norton and Martin H. Greenberg (Ed's), The International Relations of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), pp.58-73, and 'Policymaking within the Palestinian Polity,' in Judith Kipper and Harold Saunders, The Middle East in Global Perspective, (Boulder: West View, 1991), pp.59-81.

⁴Fatah was established in the late 1950s in Kuwait. The ANM merged with two smaller factions to form the PFLP in 1967. Splits in 1969 led to the creation of the PDFLP (renamed the DFLP in 1974), and the PFLP-General Command. For further details see Appendix 3.

⁵For an examination of the transformation of the Palestinian refugee communities see Rosemary Sayigh, Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries, (London: Zed Press, 1979).

⁶According to Adel Samara, in 1990 the support of wealthier Palestinian businessmen in the diaspora for the Fatah leadership were represented in the *al-Taawoun* group. Adel Samara, Industrialisation in the West Bank: A Marxist Socio-Economic Analysis, (Jerusalem: Al-Mashriq Publications for Economic and Development Studies, 1992), p.37.

⁷Smith, *op.cit.*, p.115.

⁸Obviously Brand's study was conducted prior to the large-scale expulsion of Palestinians that followed the second Gulf War. The reasons behind the expulsions are discussed later in the chapter.

⁹Brand, *op.cit.*, p.117.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p.107.

¹¹Smith, *op.cit.*, p.116. One such example of a particularly wealthy and influential Palestinian cited by Smith is Abdul Muhsin al-Qattan, who made his fortune in Kuwait and was elected President of the PNC, "partly as a result of his substantial support for Fatah since the late 1950s." *Ibid.*, p.127. For figures on the Palestinian community in Kuwait see footnote #34. All Palestinian residents in Kuwait were formally obliged to contribute to the PLO's budget through the 5% 'liberation tax'.

¹²The 1977 Arab Summit in Baghdad established a 'Joint Committee', administered by the PLO and Jordan, for the disbursement of funds in the occupied territories. The fund was intended to provide for Palestinian 'steadfastness' (*sumud*) in the wake of the Camp David Accords and the expansion of Israeli settlements under the Likud government. According to Samara, Jordan attempted to bolster the position of the notable class through the provision of funds for investment in agriculture, aimed at securing the support of the large land-owning families such as the Masris and the Tuqans in Nablus. Similarly, the West Bank merchant-bourgeoisie were given incentives to cooperate with Jordan through trade arrangements. Samara, *Ibid.*

¹³In 1977, "28 percent of the West Bank work force and 35 percent of Gaza's were employed in Israel ... The inflow of migrant workers' wages amounted to 25-28 percent of the territories' GNP over the years 1974-1976. Sara Graham-Brown, 'The Changing Society of the West Bank' in Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 8, No., 1, (Summer 1979), p.149.

¹⁴Emile Sahliyeh, In Search of Leadership: West Bank Politics Since 1967, (Washington DC: The Brookings Institute, 1988), p.43.

¹⁵Glenn E. Robinson, Building a Palestinian State: The Incomplete Revolution, (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1997), p.14.

¹⁶For a summary and profile of Israeli settlement activities by the mid-late 1970s, including the date of foundation, location, type and economic base, see Ann Moseley Lesch, 'Research Material: Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Territories 1967-1977' in Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.7, No.1, (Autumn 1977), pp.26-39 and Vol.8, No.1, (Autumn 1978), pp.100-119. For details of settlement expansion up to and after the initiation of the Oslo process (based on Israeli sources), see chapter three, section on 'The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip'.

¹⁷Rene Maunier cited in Maxime Rodinson, Israel: A Colonial Settler State?, (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973), p.92.

¹⁸Samara, *op.cit.*, pp.5-18. Samara expands these themes throughout his book: for a useful historical survey of external control over the West Bank economy see chapter 2, pp.69-125.

¹⁹The most pertinent military orders are discussed in the following publication: Jerusalem Media and Communications Center (JMCC), Israeli Obstacles to Economic Development

in the Occupied Territories (Second Edition), (Jerusalem: JMCC, 1994).

²⁰Sahliyeh, *op.cit.*, p.52.

²¹Robinson, *op.cit.*, p.36.

²²Muhsin D. Yusuf, 'The Potential Impact of Palestinian Education on a Palestinian State', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.8, No.4, (Spring 1979), p.70.

²³The Committees for Democratic Action, Gaza and Jericho First: A New Phase in the Struggle of the Palestinian People, (Jerusalem: Hanitzotz A-Sharara Publishing House, 1994). p.33.

²⁴This point was made by Rodinson when he observed: "To be aware of the colonial character of the State of Israel is to begin to make clear why the pressure of events does so much to thrust Israel into the camp of the Western powers." Rodinson, *op.cit.*, p.94. We can point to the practical relationship between Israeli immigrants and their 'mother countries' in the West, and the US in particular. For an examination of this relationship at work, see the Evan M.Wilson, Decision on Palestine: How the US came to Recognise Israel, (Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1977).

²⁵Khalidi, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-73.

²⁶Sayigh, *op.cit.*, p.22.

²⁷Roger Owen, State Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East, (London: Routledge, 1992).

²⁸For an interesting approach to PLO-Arab state relations, see Mohamed E. Selim, 'The Foreign Policy of the PLO', in B. Korany and A.E.H. Dessouki, The Foreign Policies of the Arab States: The Challenge of Change, (Boulder: Westview, 1991), pp. 260-309. Selim employs a data set collated by the 'Conflict and Peace Data Bank', aggregating international 'events' in which the PLO was an actor between 1964 and 1978. Each event was characterised as either co-operative or conflictual. To summarise a complicated set of data, Selim calculated that almost 75% of the PLO's foreign policy actions involved conflict rather than co-operation, with PLO-Arab states interactions averaging at almost 60% conflictual. Certain PLO-Arab states 'dyads' were naturally more active than others, with the PLO-Jordan dyad being the most active - and almost 85% conflictual. For further historical information, see Shemesh, *op.cit.*

²⁹Proven published oil reserves (extracts, in '000 million barrels) as of 1997 were as follows:

Middle East and North Africa	Reserves	Years of production at 1996 levels
Saudi Arabia	261.5	83.4
Kuwait	96.5	
Neutral zone	5.0	

Iran	93.0	69.1
Iraq	112.0	
UAE-Abu Dhabi	92.2	
Libya	29.5	56.4
Regional Total	723.9	
OPEC Total	788.6	
USA	29.8	
ex-USSR	65.5	

For full details, see 'Oil in the Middle East and North Africa - General Survey', The Middle East and North Africa 1998, *op.cit.*, pp.166-167.

³⁰Israel emerged as an important strategic asset after the intervention against Syria during the 1970 Black September crisis. Israel's position was also enhanced under the Nixon Doctrine which aimed to reduce the *direct* role of the US in the Third World whilst placing a greater emphasis on empowering the US's regional allies.

³¹For an even-handed account of Jewish-American political influence, see Seymour Hersch, The Samson Option: Israel, America and the Bomb, (London: Faber and Faber, 1991). Hersch also recommends Edward Tivnan, The Lobby, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987). Also see Ghassan Bishara, 'Israeli Power in the US Senate', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.10, No.1, (Autumn 1980), pp.58-79 and Nancy Jo Johnson, 'The Zionist Organizational Structure', *Ibid.*, pp. 80-93. For a profile of influential Jews in the Clinton administration, see 'The Jews Who Run Clinton's Cabinet' translated by Israel Shahak from *Ma'ariv* (Tel Aviv, 02/09/94), in Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.24, No.2, (Winter 1995), pp.148-150.

³²Selim calculated that PLO-US interactions were almost 75% conflictual. Selim, 'The Foreign Policy of the PLO', *op.cit.*, p.290.

³³On the PLO's relationship with the USSR, Selim found interactions within the PLO-Soviet dyad to be 87% positive, with 80% of the interactions initiated by the PLO. *Ibid.*, pp.292-293. For a further discussion of PLO-Soviet relations, see John C. Reppert, 'The Soviets and the PLO' in Augustus Richard Norton and Martin H. Greenberg (Ed's), The International Relations of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1989), pp.109-137, and Galia Golan, 'The Soviet Union and the PLO' in Gabriel Ben Dor (Ed.), The Palestinians and the Middle East Conflict, (Tel Aviv: Turtledove Publishing, 1976), pp.229-278 and Moscow and the Middle East, (London: Pinter Publishers, 1992), pp.10-46.

³⁴Fatah sent seven representatives to participate in the 1st PNC which established the PLO, yet chose not to join any of the PLO's institutions. During the meeting, "two Fatah leaders, Khalid al-Hasan and Hani al-Qaddumi, rejected Shuqayri's offer to join the PLO EC." Shemesh, *op.cit.*, p.48.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p.55.

³⁶Patrick Seale, Asad of Syria: the Struggle for the Middle East, (London: I. B. Taurus, 1988), p.121.

³⁷Andrew Gowers and Tony Walker, Behind the Myth: Yasser Arafat and the Palestinian Revolution, (London: W.H. Allen, 1990), p.36. Inspired by the FLN's triumph, Fatah adopted the Algerian model of self-liberation, 'theoretically' underpinned by the work of Franz Fanon in his influential book, The Wretched of the Earth.

³⁸Cobban records that preparation for the launch of Fatah's armed campaign had been underway "at least since December 1962, when a heavyweight delegation of Fatah leaders including Arafat, Wazir and Farouq Qaddoumi had travelled to Algiers at the invitation of President Ahmed Ben Bella, hero of the newly victorious FLN." Helena Cobban, The Palestinian Liberation Organisation: People, Power and Politics, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 31. The first operation was launched under the pseudonym *al-'Asifa*.

³⁹The operation was no great success. Cobban records that every member of the first unit was arrested in Gaza before they could even embark on the mission, whilst the second operation ended with the first Fatah martyr being shot dead by a Jordanian soldier. The first Fatah casualty following the launch of the 'revolution' was Ahmad Musa. His colleague, Mahmoud Hijazi, was captured by the Israelis. *Ibid.*, p.33, Gowers and Walker, *op.cit.*, p.45.

⁴⁰On the night of 21 March 1968 the IDF crossed into the East Bank to liquidate a fedayeen base in the refugee town of al-Karamah. Contrary to the logic of guerrilla warfare, the 400-strong fedayeen force chose to stand their ground and inflicted 28 fatalities on the Israeli unit, thanks in large part to the intervention of the Jordanian army. The fedayeen lost 98 men in the battle and the role of the Jordanian army was neatly glossed over in the ensuing propaganda, but such details were beside the point. News of the battle thrilled the Arab world and catapulted the fedayeen to the forefront of Arab popular consciousness. Casualty figures are taken from Gowers and Walker, *op. cit.*, p.61. Cobban gives the slightly different figures of 300 fedayeen suffering 120 casualties at the hands of 15,000 Israeli troops. Cobban, *op. cit.*, p.42. The officer in command of Jordanian forces was General Haditha. For a more extensive account of the battle and the events that preceded it see John Cooley, Green March, Black September: the Story of the Palestinian Arabs, (London: Frank Cass, 1973), and Cobban, The PLO, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-41. Cobban also makes the point that Karameh rather fortuitously means honour (or dignity) in Arabic, *Ibid.*, p.42. A number of shops bearing the name *al-Karamah* can still be found in Palestine, including shops in East Jerusalem.

⁴¹For an examination of Jordan's position on the establishment and early development of the PLO up to 1967, see Shemesh, *op.cit.*, pp.44-47 and pp.67-80. A useful summary of PLO-Jordanian relations up to 1987 can be found in R.D. McLaurin, 'The PLO and the Arab Fertile Crescent', in Norton and Greenberg, *op.cit.*, pp.22-31.

⁴²See Shemesh, *op.cit.*, pp.40-80.

⁴³The idea of creating a Palestinian entity was adopted by the 1st Arab Summit meeting in Cairo in late 1963. The 1st PNC was held in Jerusalem in May 1964, and the 22 states composing the Arab League recognised the PLO as the spokesman of the Palestinians during the 2nd Arab Summit (also held in Cairo) during September 1964. McLaurin in Norton and Greenberg, *op.cit.*, p.23. The People's Republic of China was one of the first non-Arab states to accord the PLO diplomatic status. See Raphael Israeli, 'The People's Republic of China and the PLO: From Honeymoon to Conjugal Routine', in Norton and Greenberg (Ed's), *op.cit.*, p.141.

⁴⁴Sameer Abraham, 'The Development and Transformation of the Palestine National Movement', in Naseer Aruri (Ed.), Occupation: Israel over Palestine (2nd Edition), (Belmont, Mass: Association of Arab-American Graduates, 1989), p.619.

⁴⁵To cite Abraham once more, "governmental collapse was so complete in Jordan that the movement no longer found it necessary to operate clandestinely." Abraham, *Ibid.*, p.628. Moreover, from the perspective of armed struggle, the collapse of all institutional power in Jordan and the Israeli army's vulnerability along the new border with the River Jordan, presented the guerrillas with an outstanding opportunity. Far from being deterred by the Arab states' defeat, Arafat understood the opportunity for what it was and successfully persuaded the rest of the Fatah leadership to resume raids against Israel. Cobban writes that the Fatah leadership met in Damascus firstly on 12 June and again on 20 August, whereupon they decided to resume operations by the end of that month, Cobban, The PLO, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.

⁴⁶Nasir's original choice as chairman, Ahmad al-Shuqayri, was replaced in December 1967 by Yahya Hammouda, who continued to hold the reins (more or less on the guerrillas behalf), until Arafat took over. Gowers and Walker, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-69.

⁴⁷Article 9 of the Charter is quite unequivocal:

"Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine and is therefore a strategy and not tactics. The Palestinian Arab people affirms its absolute resolution and abiding determination to pursue the armed struggle and to march forward toward the popular revolution, to liberate its homeland and return to it..."

Extracts in Cobban, The PLO, *op. cit.*, pp.267-268. Articles 7,8,9,10,15,21,26 and 30 also make explicit reference to armed struggle as the means of achieving national liberation. The 1968 version of the Charter was only revoked under Israeli pressure in April 1996, The Guardian, (Manchester), 25 April 1996.

⁴⁸Despite the inauspicious beginning and negligible military impact on Israel, Fatah's operations even prior to al-Karamah did have an important psychological impact on Israel and duly amongst Palestinians. From this point forth, additional guerrilla operations were launched sporadically from Syria, Jordan and Lebanon, contributing to the increased tensions which led to the Six Day War in June 1967. The contribution of these early Fatah operations to the tensions preceding the Six Day War is acknowledged by Benjamin

Netanyahu, A Place amongst the Nations: Israel and the World, (New York: Bantam Books, 1993), pp.198-199.

⁴⁹Interviews with Col. Nizar Amr, Gaza, 5-7 February 1996. Nizar Amr was the PLO's first Ambassador to Iran after the Islamic Revolution, served as "National Security Advisor to the PLO, as head of the Unit for Informational Analysis and Evaluation, and head of the Israeli Studies Department at the PLO Planning Centre. (Also) ... a member of the Palestinian negotiating teams to the bilateral and multilateral talks on arms control and regional security, the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Security Committee, and the conference of Arab interior ministers." (this profile is from a photocopy of an unspecified article provided by Col. Amr. He was also involved in negotiations with the US in Tunis together with Salah Khalaf, is a member of Force 17 and close to Nasir Yusef, Pinhas Inbari, The Palestinians between Statehood and Terrorism, (Brighton: Sussex University Press, 1996), pp 201-202. (Amr's office in Gaza is just down the corridor from Nasir Yusef's). Following the establishment of the PNA, he was given a military rank and appointed Director of the Department of Planning, Organisation and Studies for PNA Public Security.

⁵⁰This conception of armed-struggle as a means for popular mobilisation was readily confirmed during an interview with Colonel Nizar Amr: in his view, the real aim of the armed struggle was to confirm the existence of the Palestinian people and of the PLO as their representative. Attacking Israel was the only way to confirm that existence and to this end the PLO employed slogans and symbols at odds with the real aim of the military campaign. When interviewed, he admitted to never believing in armed struggle as a means of liberating Palestine. Referring to the analogy with Vietnam where the resistance liberated the land village by village and town by town, he acknowledged that these ideas held an appeal but accepted that reality in Palestine was at odds with this model.

⁵¹Bard O'Neill, Armed Struggle in Palestine: A Political-Military Analysis, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1978), p.9.

⁵²According to McLaurin, "the Syrian-supported commander refused to recognise the decision. The change was finally effected on paper, but in reality 'Uthman Haddad, who was very close to the Syrian minister of defence, retained most of his power and, as a result of a face-saving compromise, was later renamed to the position of chief of staff.' McLaurin, 'The Arab Fertile Crescent' in Norton and Greenberg (Ed's), *op.cit.*, p.18. For more information on the PLA, see Sara Bar-Haim, 'The Palestine Liberation Army: Stooge or Actor', in Ben Dor, (Ed), *op.cit.*, pp.173-192.

⁵³The PFLP announced its withdrawal from the Executive Committee on 26 September 1974 and subsequently established the Front of Palestinian Forces Rejecting Surrenderist Solutions'. The three smaller factions that joined them were the PFLP-GC, the ALF and the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF). Cobban, *op.cit.*, p.62 and footnote no.16, p.279.

⁵⁴Robinson, *op.cit.*, p.13.

⁵⁵The policy of non-interference is optimistically enshrined in the 1968 Covenant. Article 27 reads; "The Palestinian Liberation Organisation will cooperate with all Arab states, each according to its capacities, and will maintain neutrality in their mutual relations in the

light of, and on the basis of, the requirements of the battle of liberation, *and will not interfere in the internal affairs of any Arab state.*" Italics added, Cobban, The PLO, *op. cit.*, p.268.

⁵⁶According to McLaurin, Syria initially viewed Fatah rather as Egypt saw the PLO, i.e., *their* Palestinian movement. McLaurin, 'The Arab Fertile Crescent', in Norton and Greenberg (Ed's), *op.cit.*, p.14.

⁵⁷The PFLP's emphasis on broadening the conflict inevitably alienated them from a number of Arab regimes. The policy is made clear in a political pamphlet from 1969: "To confine the Palestinian revolution within the limits of the Palestinian people would mean failure, if we remember the nature of the enemy which we are facing." The enemy in question was Zionism, perceived of as an offshoot of imperialism, which the Palestinians could never hope to successfully challenge alone. The PFLP summarised its position thus:

"In our struggle for the liberation of Palestine, we face primarily world imperialism, our battle is directed against it, against Israel which acts as its base and against the reactionary forces which are allied to it." [However, victory was possible with]: "the mobilisation and concentration of all forces of revolution in the Arab countries in general and the Arab regions surrounding Israel in particular."

PFLP, A Strategy for the Liberation of Palestine, (Amman: PFLP Information Department, 1969), pp.45-46.

⁵⁸ For instance:

"The material of the Palestinian revolution, its mainstay and its basic forces are the workers and peasants. These classes form the majority of the Palestinian people and physically fill all camps, villages and poor urban districts. Here lie the forces of revolution...the forces of change. Here we find real preparation for long years of fighting. Here are the particular daily living conditions which drive people to fight and die because the difference between death and life under such conditions is not much."

Ibid., p.25.

⁵⁹Brand, *op.cit.*, p.171.

⁶⁰Smith, *op. cit.*, pp.179-180.

⁶¹Dakkak prefers to call this the Palestinian Patriotic Front (PPF), translating wataniyah as 'patriotic' rather than 'national'. I have stuck with PNF to avoid confusion as this is the appellation generally used to describe the body in most texts. Ibrahim Dakkak, 'Back to Square One: a Study in the Re-emergence of the Palestinian Identity in the West Bank 1967-1980,' in Alexander Scholch, (Ed.), Palestinians over the Green Line: Studies in Relations between Palestinians on both Sides of the 1949 Armistice Line since 1967, (London: Ithaca Press, 1983), footnote No. 47, p.95. A helpful account of the PNF and the

NGC, and the evolution of links between the PLO leadership in the diaspora and the Palestinian leadership in the West Bank can be found in Sahliyeh, *op.cit.*

⁶²On 12 December 1973 the PNF issued a statement which called for, "the solidarity of all sincere sons of our people under the banner of the PLO." Dakkak, *op. cit.*, p.77.

⁶³The three representatives of the PNF were Abd al-Jawad Salah, Walid Kamhawi and Abd al-Mohsin Abu Mayzar. Alain Gresh, The PLO, the Struggle Within: Towards an Independent Palestinian State, (London: Zed Books, 1983), p.170.

⁶⁴Lisa Taraki, 'The Development of Political Consciousness Among Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, 1967-1987' in Jamal R. Nassar and Roger Heacock (Ed's), Intifada: Palestine at the Crossroads, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1991), p.58.

⁶⁵Dakkak, *op.cit.*, pp.77-78.

⁶⁶Sahliyeh, *op.cit.*, p.62.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p.63.

⁶⁸Robinson, *op.cit.*, p.12.

⁶⁹Sahliyeh, *op.cit.*, p.81.

⁷⁰The Institute for Palestine Studies, Monograph Series No.25: Palestinian Guerrillas: Their Credibility and Effectiveness, (Beirut: The Institute for Palestine Studies. First published by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, 1970), pp. 32-33.

⁷¹Smith cites the 1980 Statistical Abstract published by the PLO which estimated the Palestinian population in Lebanon to have reached 347,000 by this point. Smith, *op.cit.*, p.113.

⁷²For an analysis of the weakness of the Lebanese state apparatus and the delicate balance of power within the country, see Michael Hudson, The Precarious Republic: Political Modernisation in Lebanon, (New York: Random House, 1968), and 'The Problems of Authoritative Power in Lebanese Politics: Why Consociationalism Failed', in Nadim Shehadeh and Dana Mills (Ed's), Lebanon: A History of Conflict and Consensus, (London: Centre for Lebanese Studies in Association with I.B.Taurus, 1988). Other useful references are W.R.Goria, Sovereignty and Leadership in Lebanon 1943-1976, (London: Ithaca Press, 1985) and Michael Johnson, Class and Client in Beirut: The Sunni Muslim Community and the Lebanese State 1840-1985, (London: Ithaca, 1986).

⁷³This period has been characterised by Abraham as: "the period of quasi-state development." Abraham, *op. cit.*, p.636. For a list of the PLO's diplomatic missions as of the early 1980s, see Norton and Greenberg (Ed's), *op.cit.*, 'Appendix: List of PLO Offices Abroad by the early 1980s', pp.209-212.

⁷⁴SAMED was originally established in Jordan, and then relocated to Lebanon after the PLO's expulsion between 1970-71. SAMED provided jobs for an estimated 5,000 Palestinians who were otherwise prevented from gainful employment by discriminatory Lebanese employment laws. Selim, 'The Foreign Policy of the PLO', in Korany and Dessouky, *op.cit.*, p.269. Further details on SAMED can be found in Musallam, *op. cit.*, pp.46-49.

⁷⁵On the establishment of the PRCS, see Brand, *op.cit.*, p.39. For further details see Mussallam, *op.cit.*, pp.37-42.

⁷⁶Cheryl Rubenberg, The Palestinian Liberation Movement: its Institutional Infrastructure, (Belmont, Mass: The Institute of Arab Studies Inc., 1983), p.35.

⁷⁷Full details on the array of PLO institutions can be found in Rubenberg, *ibid.*, and Musallam, *op. cit.*

⁷⁸See footnote #95. Zagorin estimated in 1989 that the PLO's diplomatic missions cost around \$10 million per annum. In addition; "\$52 million is allocated to a fund for disabled Palestinian fighters; \$18 million for Palestinian universities and scholarships; \$20 million for the Palestinian Red Crescent ... and some \$46 million for a variety of other activities." Adam Zagorin, 'Auditing the PLO', in Norton and Greenberg (Ed's), *op.cit.*, pp. 197-198.

⁷⁹Interview with Samir Sinjilawi, Fatah Youth Organisation activist in Ramallah, 27 January 1996.

⁸⁰Further information on the bureaucratisation of the PLO can be found in two articles by Jamil Hilal: 'PLO Institutions: the Challenge Ahead,' Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 23, No.1, (Autumn 1993), pp. 46-60, and 'The PLO: Crisis in Legitimacy', Race and Class, Vol. 37, No. 2, (October-December 1995), pp. 9-11.

⁸¹The state of PLO finances remains a murky business about which accurate figures are hard to find. Zagorin (1989) noted that the cash reserve of the PNF was 'probably' around \$1.5 million, with an annual income of \$125-\$150 million, including \$87 million from Saudi Arabia and \$10-15 million from the 'liberation tax' paid by Palestinians, particularly those resident in the Gulf. The PNLA (14,000 strong), was estimated to require \$87 million annually. Soldiers salaries were around \$200 monthly, rising to between \$360 and \$1,150 for officers. Zagorin, *op. cit.*, pp.196-205

⁸²Not surprisingly, Arafat's personal control of Fatah finances is highly secretive. Zagorin suggests that Fatah's assets are probably larger than the PNF: "Responsible estimates of the size [of] the Fatah fund run as high as 7 billion to 8 billion dollars, although a lower figure may be more realistic. Managed by a small group of loyal employees, the Fatah account also receives contributions from Arab governments..." *Ibid.*, p.199. For an insider's perspective on PLO budget allocations, see the interview with PPP representative to the Executive Committee, Sulayman al-Najjab, in chapter four, 'Power and Decision-Making in the PLO: Precedents for the PNA'.

⁸³Zagorin estimated the PLO bureaucracy numbered "at least five thousand, including

accountants, secretaries, drivers, bureaucrats, and others, whose wages are divided into at least eight pay grades. At the top, Arafat and other senior officials determine high policy - for which they are paid about \$900 per month plus a cost of living allowance." *Ibid.*, p.199.

⁸⁴The burden of maintaining a state of war with Israel was reflected by the fact that by 1973, Egypt's military budget accounted for 25% of GNP, up from 13% in 1969. This has been estimated to have been the highest in the world: Israeli military spending accounted for some 20% of GNP, compared with around 7-8% for the US. These figures, and a thorough account of Egyptian and Syrian motives for launching the war, were compiled by The Insight Team of the Sunday Times, The Yom Kippur War, (London: Andre Deutsch, 1975). Another good account of the war is given by Seale, *op. cit.*, pp.185-225.

⁸⁵Gresh, *op.cit.*, p.168.

⁸⁶The best general account of the debate and the ensuing initiative is provided by Gresh, *ibid.*, pp. 156-175.

⁸⁷William Quandt, Decade of Decisions: American Policy toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1967-1976, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p.257.

⁸⁸UNGA 3236. For the full text see PASSIA Diary 1996, *op.cit.* These developments in the UNGA represented a rarely favourable comparison with the contemporary liberation movement of SWAPO in Namibia. In 1976 the General Assembly: "gave its support to the armed struggle, and [also] accorded SWAPO observer status." David Sogget, Namibia: The Violent Heritage, (London: Rex Collins, 1986), p.177. UN General Assembly Resolution 31/146, passed on 20/12/76 granted SWAPO the status of "sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people." Peter H. Katjavivi, A History of Resistance in Namibia, (London: James Curram Ltd., 1988), p.100.

⁸⁹Rustow, *op.cit.*, p.356.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, p.357.

⁹¹The Rejection Front included the PFLP, the PFLP-GC, the ALF and the PPSF.

⁹²Gresh, *op. cit.*, p.170.

⁹³Quandt, Reflections on American-Palestinian Dialogue, (Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1994), p.4.

⁹⁴Quandt provides further details of the US response, including the mobilisation of the 82nd Airborne Division, the deployment of transport planes and fighters to Turkey, and the deployment of the Sixth Fleet. Quandt, Decade of Decisions, *op.cit.*, pp.105-127.

⁹⁵David Yallop, To the Ends of the Earth: the Hunt for the Jackal, (London: Corgi Books, 1994), p.47. "King Hussein had been a CIA asset since 1957... Since that time he had been paid three hundred and fifty million dollars every year by the CIA. In return the King provided intelligence information, allowed American intelligence agencies to operate freely in Jordan and distributed part of his twice-yearly payments from the agency to

Jordanian government officials who also furnished intelligence information and co-operated with the CIA In July 1970 the second part of that year's CIA payment was withheld" The King was told by the US Ambassador that, "Your Majesty, you should know that the United States only backs the winning horse." Yallop's account is based on material received from the Washington Post journalist Bob Woodward, published in The Secret Wars of the CIA, (details not supplied in the text).

⁹⁶Adel Safty, From Camp David to the Gulf, (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1992), pp.180-181.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, p.219.

⁹⁸The Joint Committee was established in 1978 at the 9th Arab Summit meeting in Baghdad as part of an overall initiative to bolster the front-line states following the Camp David Accords. It was jointly managed by the PLO and Jordan to promote Palestinian steadfastness in the wake of the Camp David agreement. Jordan terminated the committee following the failure of the Amman agreement, and closed a number of PLO offices in Amman during 1986. According to Cobban, "\$800 million was earmarked for Jordan, \$250 million for the PLO, and \$150 million to bolster the resistance of the population of the occupied territories." Cobban, *op.cit.*, pp.101-102. For the pertinent statement of the Arab League meeting issued on 27 March 1979, see The Middle East and North Africa 1998, *op.cit.*, p.114.

⁹⁹See Helena Cobban, 'The PLO and the *Intifada*', The Middle East Journal, Vol.44, No2, Spring 1990, pp.216-219.

¹⁰⁰Concerning the PLO's eviction from Beirut, the Likud victory in the 1977 Israeli election foreshadowed attempts to annihilate the PLO and generate an alternative Palestinian leadership in the West Bank and Gaza willing to settle for autonomy as envisaged by Camp David. The invasion of 1982 and the siege of West Beirut, all of which passed with no intervention on part of the Arab states, tacit US support and ineffectual Soviet disapproval, underlined the hostile alignment of structural factors against the PLO. Jansen provides some useful details. For instance, Ariel Sharon, Israeli Defence Minister in the Likud government during the invasion of Lebanon, declared: "the PLO must cease to exist." At the outset of the invasion, Israel's declared goals were threefold: the establishment of a 25 mile security zone in south Lebanon; destruction of the PLO's military infrastructure; and the elimination of the PLO's political apparatus. However;

"when the PLO showed no sign of vanishing ... the Israelis began asking for the removal of PLO fighters and their headquarters from Beirut; then for their removal from all of Lebanon, along with Syrian troops in Beirut; then for the removal of all PLO personnel, military and non-military, from Lebanon; and likewise the removal of all Syrian forces from Lebanon... All of these expanded Israeli goals were shared, publicly, by the Reagan administration, according to statements made by Reagan himself, by Alexander Haig when Secretary of State and by the White House and State Department spokesmen on several occasions."

Michael Jansen, The Battle of Beirut: Why Israel Invaded Lebanon, (London, Zed Press, 1982), p.11.

Brezhnev reluctantly left management of the crisis in US hands. "Primarily, the Soviet Union was anxious to protect its investment in the Syrian regime of President Hafez al-Assad, by preventing the Israelis from provoking the Syrian army into full-scale hostilities." *Ibid.*, p. 89. For a collection of essays on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, see Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.11, No.4, (Summer and Autumn 1982).

¹⁰¹Khalil al-Wazir's personal control of the Western Sector was repeatedly emphasised in interviews with activists conducted during fieldwork. For example: Interviews with Marwan Barghouthi, former head of Bir Zeit University Student Council and prisoner, deported during the intifada, member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council and General Secretary of the Fatah Higher Committee in the West Bank, Legislative Council member for Ramallah, Ramallah, 3 and 10 February 1996. Interview with Johar Sayigh, Fatah operative in the Western Sector and former prisoner, now employed in the Governorate of Ramallah, Bir Zeit, 23 January 1996. Interviews with Diab Allouh, Fatah cadre released in the 1985 prisoner exchange, editor of al-Karamah (Fatah weekly publication), head of the Media and Culture Department of the Fatah Higher Committee and Higher Committee member, Gaza, 24 and 26 October 1995, and 5 February 1996. Also see Cobban, '*Intifada*', *op. cit.*, p.218.

¹⁰²Al-Wazir was assassinated in Tunis by Israeli commandos on 14 April 1988.

¹⁰³For more on this aspect of the intifada, see Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari, Intifada: the Story of the Palestinian Uprising that Changed the Middle East Equation, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989) and Rex Brynen, Echoes of the Intifada: Regional Repercussions of the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict, (Boulder: Westview Press Inc., 1991).

¹⁰⁴Ziad Abu Amr, The Intifada: Causes and Factors of Continuity, (Second Edition), (Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1994), p.10.

¹⁰⁵Robinson, *op.cit.*, p.xi.

¹⁰⁶On Hamas and the intifada, see Ziad Abu Amr, Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza, (Bloomington and Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp.63-89.

¹⁰⁷The operational connections between the intifada leadership in the occupied territories and the PLO leadership in Tunis is explored by Cobban, '*Intifada*', *op. cit.* Cobban emphasised the unitary nature of the relationship between the 'internal' and 'external' wings, in sharp contrast to Israel and Jordan, both of which are characterised as 'outside actors.'

¹⁰⁸The vital leadership role of PLO cadres in the organisation and leadership of the intifada is explored by Hillel Frisch, 'The Palestinian Movement in the Territories,' Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 29, No. 2, (April 1993), pp. 254-274. Frisch includes details of the role played by cadres released through the 1985 prisoner-exchange between the PFLP-GC and Israel.

¹⁰⁹The 18th PNC met in Algiers 20-24 April 1987. For an interpretation of the significance of the meeting, see Faruq al-Qaddumi (member of the PLO Executive Committee and Fatah Central Committee), 'Assessing the Eighteenth PNC', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.22, No.2, (Winter 1987), pp.3-14.

¹¹⁰Abu Amr, Intifada, *op.cit.*, p.26.

¹¹¹Cobban, 'Intifada', *op.cit.*, pp.209-211.

¹¹²Ali Jarbawi, 'Palestinian Elites in the Occupied Territories' in Nassar and Heacock (Ed's), *op.cit.*, p.288.

¹¹³Robinson, *op.cit.*, p.99.

¹¹⁴For further details see Gresh. *op.cit.*, pp.239-240. The principle plank of Abu Musa's challenge arose from Fatah's indifferent military performance outside Beirut and the subsequent promotion of officers who reputedly failed in the face of the enemy. The accusation was made that Arafat used these promotions to bolster his position within Fatah. There does appear to be some truth in this. Most notably, Major General Haj Ismail Jabr, now the PLO's senior commander of Palestinian forces in the West Bank, is widely acknowledged amongst West Bank Palestinians as having 'retreated' in the face of the enemy during the unsuccessful attempt to confront the IDF as a conventional army. Haj Ismail's reputed court martial was frequently recounted to the author by West Bank Palestinians. Cobban also notes his being subjected to an internal enquiry following the invasion, Cobban, The PLO, *op. cit.*, p.121. Edward Said seems to have this incident in mind when he speaks of a senior officer in the PNA having previously been court martialled for desertion and cowardice in Edward Said, Peace and its Discontents: Gaza-Jericho 1993-1995, (London: Vintage, 1995), p.xxvii.

¹¹⁵Gowers and Walker, *op. cit.*, p.226. "The dissident leadership ... coalesced around four men: Nimir Saleh and Ahmed Kadri, a fellow Fatah Central Committee member, and Colonels Mohammed Said Musa Maragha and Khaled al-Amleh. Of the four, Said Musa or Abu Musa as he was known to his colleagues, emerged as the spokesman." Also see Gresh, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-239, for a useful account of the Fatah rebellion. Yezid Sayigh reports that the rebellion was facilitated by the election of three rebel leaders to the Fatah Central Committee in 1980 under Syrian pressure, and assisted by the assassination of Sa'd Sayel, the PLO Chief-of Staff, almost certainly with Syrian complicity in September 1982. Sayigh also records how Arafat genuinely sought to end the split by offering to meet many rebel demands, including "a purge of officers accused of negligence in the 1982 war, reinstatement of the rebels, reorganisation of the military command, drawing up of an approved budget, and restoring Saleh and fellow rebel Samih Abu Kweik to the Central Committee." Yezid Sayigh, 'Struggle within, Struggle without: the Transformation of PLO Politics since 1982,' International Affairs, Vol. 65, No.2, (Spring 1989), pp. 247-271. Zagorin notes that at least 25 personnel from the PNF's finance department joined the rebels in Damascus. "Since many of the organizations financial records were maintained in the Syrian capital, payments to mainstream elements were being blocked." This threat to the patronage network underlines the seriousness of the rebellion. Zagorin, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

¹¹⁶Interview with staff at the Fatah Higher Committee offices, Gaza, 25 October 1995.

¹¹⁷The merger of the various PLO military forces into the PNLA is detailed in Mussalam, *op. cit.*, p.30.

¹¹⁸Interview with Major General Abd al-Razaq al-Majaydah, Commander of Public Security, Gaza, 25 October 1995. Al-Majaydah was a career PLA officer who crossed the Suez Canal with the Egyptian Army in 1973. In interview he maintained that he himself was not a member of Fatah, although staff at the Higher Committee offices in Gaza confirmed that he was a member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council.

¹¹⁹The consolidation of Arafat's position within Fatah and Fatah's position within the PLO has been explored in detail by Sayigh, 'Struggle within, Struggle without'. Sayigh suggests that the resolutions of the 19th PNC "underscored the shift from consensus to majority politics, ending the traditional veto power held by smaller guerrilla groups over central decision-making." *Op cit.*, p. 255.

¹²⁰A more detailed discussion of the Black Panthers and the Fatah Hawks is conducted in chapter four under the section on 'Preventive Security'.

¹²¹Negotiations between King Husayn and Arafat which produced the Amman Agreement of 11 February 1985. This proposal suggested: "Palestinian self-determination within the framework of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation," much closer to the shared preferences of the Israeli Labor Party and the US. Even so, the talks finally broke down over Arafat's understandable reluctance to accept resolutions 242 and 338 without first securing US recognition of the Palestinian's right to self-determination. Ovendale, *op.cit.*, p.249. For the text of the agreement see The Middle East and North Africa 1998, *op.cit.*, p.117.

¹²²*Ibid.*, p.267.

¹²³Walid Khalidi takes issue with the prevalent interpretation of the Amman Summit as a deliberate snub to the PLO: "The West has misinterpreted the significance of the Amman Summit's preoccupation with the Iran-Iraq war and the green light it gave for the resumption of relations with Egypt. This summit was a special session, summoned specifically to address the Gulf War." Walid Khalidi, Palestine Reborn, (London: I.B.Tauris, 1992), p.138.

¹²⁴Ovendale, *op. cit.*, p.257.

¹²⁵Quandt, 'American-Palestinian Dialogue', *op.cit.*, pp.3-4. Quandt suggests that "Kissinger himself made this commitment without thinking that it would tie the hands of the United States in any serious way, because the wording said only that negotiations and recognition were out of the question. But it did not prevent contact and communications of other sorts..." p.4. Also see William Quandt, Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967, (Washington: The Brookings Institute and Berkley: University of California Press, 1993), p.368. For the text of UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338, see The Middle East and North Africa 1998, *op.cit.*, pp.107-109.

¹²⁶Extracts of the text of the Camp David accords can be found in 'Special Documents - The Camp David Agreements for the Middle East' in Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.8, No.2, (Winter 1979), pp.204-214. The full versions of the framework and the agreements can be found in The Middle East and North Africa, *op.cit.*, pp.111-114.

¹²⁷See Rashid Khalidi, 'The Resolutions of the 19th Palestine National Council,' Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 19, No.2, pp. 29-42.

¹²⁸*Ibid.*, p.258. For the full text of the 'Declaration of Independence of the State of Palestine' issued by the 19th PNC, see The Middle East and North Africa 1998, *op.cit.*, pp.117-120.

¹²⁹For a discussion of US conditions for opening a dialogue with the PLO, see Quandt, 'American-Palestinian Dialogue', *op. cit.*

¹³⁰According to Inbari, the real significance of the dialogue rested on its intended impact within Fatah and, through Fatah, within the rest of the PLO. Inbari has asserted (with convincing evidence), that US aims never involved bringing the US and the PLO closer together, but were designed instead to engineer a sea change *within* the PLO. The target of US policy was Salah Khalaf, undisputed number two to Arafat following the assassination of al-Wazir and widely considered to be in favour of a diplomatic solution. Khalaf's conciliatory approach was eventually expressed in print in an article published by a leading American political journal. Whether US intentions actually went as far as seeking to replace Arafat with Khalaf cannot be ascertained, but there is some evidence that Arafat was alarmed by the prospect. Pinhas Inbari, The Palestinians between Statehood and Terrorism, (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1996), p.109.

¹³¹For the main points of the Fahd and Fez Plans, see 'Documents and Source Material - The Final Statement of the 12th Arab Summit, September 9 1982' in Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.12, No.2, (Winter 1983), pp.202-203, or The Middle East and North Africa 1998, *op.cit.*, pp.116-117.

¹³²Cobban, The PLO, *op. cit.*, p.113.

¹³³For the text of the Reagan Plan, see 'Documents and Source Materials - Middle East Peace Proposal of President Ronald Reagan (excerpts), September 1 1982' in Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.11, No.4, (Summer and Autumn, 1982).

¹³⁴Cobban, The PLO, *op.cit.*, p.131.

¹³⁵Further details of these diplomatic initiatives can be found in Emile F. Sahliyeh, The PLO after the Lebanon War, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986). A succinct account of PLO decision-making during this period is provided by Allon Groth, The PLO's Road to Peace: Process of Decision-Making, RUSI Whitehall Paper Series 1995, (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1995), pp.15-22.

¹³⁶Ovendale, *op. cit.*, p.249. For further details of the Husayn-Arafat talks see Gowers and

Walker, *op. cit.*, chapter 14.

¹³⁷According to Rubin, senior Fatah member Hani al-Hasan pointed out that "in speaking of UN resolutions...the Jordan-PLO agreement 'means including 150 of them' and was designed to avoid endorsing 242." Barry Rubin, Revolution until Victory: The Politics and History of the PLO, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), p.72.

¹³⁸*Ibid*, p.71.

¹³⁹For further reading on the US-PLO dialogue see Mohamed Rabie, 'The U.S.-PLO Dialogue: the Swedish Connection,' Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 19, No. 4, (Summer 1992), pp.54-66, William Quandt, 'The U.S. and Palestine,' in Palestinian Statehood, (Washington, D.C. The Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine, 1994), pp.45-48, and W. Khalidi, *op. cit.*, pp.141-171.

¹⁴⁰The 'Netzanim' of operation of May 1990 was the work of the PLF, a tiny PLO faction, led at the time by Abul Abbas, who subsequently resigned his seat on the Executive Committee over the affair. The PLF was also responsible for hijacking the cruise ship Achille Lauro on 7 October 1985, seemingly on Syrian orders in order to abort the UK-PLO dialogue then being promoted by Margaret Thatcher. See David Yallop, *op. cit.*, pp. 286-287.

¹⁴¹The first official PLO statement was issued on 19 August, outlining a policy which Mattar summarised in four key points: a call for a mediating role for the PLO between Iraq and Kuwait; an Arab solution to the crisis; rejection of foreign intervention; and support for the Iraqi linkage of withdrawal from Kuwait with Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza. Philip Mattar, 'The PLO and the Gulf Crisis,' The Middle East Journal, No.48, (Winter 1994), pp.31-46.

¹⁴²"According to the PLO, its annual support had consisted of \$72 million from Saudi Arabia, \$48 million from Iraq, and \$2 million from Kuwait. These figures do not include the PLO 'tax' on Palestinians in Kuwait, which was estimated at \$50 million annually, nor gulf grants to the occupied territories, nor Palestinian remittances." *Ibid.*, p.44.

¹⁴³Groth makes an important point on this matter: "Although the Gulf crisis greatly reduced the flow of external contributions to the PLO's accounts, there is reason for caution when evaluating the exact effect this had on the PLO's balance of payments and policy pursued ... Only Arafat knew the exact financial situation and apparently refused to share that information. Two opposite scenarios thus emerge: one, the PLO was indeed bankrupt and signed the Oslo DOP because it promised a way out of the crisis or, two, Arafat exaggerated the financial crisis in order to adjust the PLO's institutional structure and patronage networks to the new circumstances of the coming autonomy i.e. only spend money where it would give direct political benefits." Groth, *op. cit.*, p.39.

¹⁴⁴Mattar, *op. cit.*, p.42.

¹⁴⁵Extracts of a poll conducted by the Center for Palestine Research and Studies (CPRS) in October 1994 are detailed below (emphasis added). The survey did not ask directly

whether respondents supported or opposed the DoP and the PNA, but the answers to several questions suggested that a majority either supported or at least 'accepted' the PLO's national project.

2. With regard to the negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians, one year after the signing of the Declaration of Principles (Oslo Agreement),

		West Bank & Gaza	West Bank	Gaza
(a)	My support for the Israeli-PLO negotiations has increased	23.3%	24.0%	22.3%
(b)	My support for the Israeli-PLO negotiations has decreased	17.2%	15.0%	20.5%
(c)	My support has not changed and I am still opposed to the negotiations	20.1%	17.7%	23.7%
(d)	My position has not changed and I am still supportive of the negotiations	28.5%	30.3%	25.7%
(e)	I don't know	10.9%	13.0%	7.8%

3. With regard to the performance of the Palestinian National Authority, four months after its establishment,

		West Bank & Gaza	West Bank	Gaza
(a)	I am satisfied with it	30.9%	30.0%	32.1%
(b)	I am not satisfied with it	21.2%	17.6%	26.5%
(c)	It is too early to judge it	40.8%	42.7%	38.0%

(d) I have no opinion	7.1%	9.7%	3.4%
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5. Do you support the continuing resort of some Palestinian factions to armed operations against Israeli targets in Gaza and Jericho?

		West Bank <u>& Gaza</u>	West Bank	Gaza
(a) Yes		32.7%	28.6%	38.8%
(b) No		55.7%	59.2%	50.6%
(c) No opinion		11.6%	12.2%	10.6%

Reproduced in 'Documents and Source Material', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.24, No.2, (Winter 1995), pp.147-148.

¹⁴⁶CPRS Election-Day Exit Poll Results, (Nablus: CPRS, 1996). "350 fieldworkers distributed 2775 questionnaires at 148 polling stations throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip."

Chapter Two

Authoritative Leadership and the Palestinian National Project: Diplomacy in Madrid, Washington and Oslo

This chapter accounts for the PLO's trajectory between the opening of the Madrid Conference (October 1991) and the conclusion of the DoP in Oslo (August 1993), the final stages of the transition towards a diplomatically realised institutional solution to the problem of Palestinian self-determination. Consistent with our framework of analysis, the PLO's trajectory will be explained in terms of its historical-structural context and the role of elite agency.

The prelude to the Madrid Conference found the PLO-Tunis in a highly unfavourable structural context. The changes in the social structure of the occupied territories (introduced in chapter one) facilitated the marginalisation of the diaspora-based PLO through the generation of a capable (but not homogenous) indigenous national leadership that was ready and able to form a proxy delegation to negotiate on the PLO's behalf. On the regional level, the outcome of the second Gulf War saw the comprehensive defeat of the PLO's 'ally' in Iraq and the estrangement of the PLO from the mainstream Arab-states, including major long-term sponsors in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. In Israel, the Shamir administration's restraint in not responding to Iraqi missile attacks further strengthened the hand of a government fiercely determined to avoid negotiations with the PLO. On the international level, the political hegemony of the US in the context of the NWO found the PLO bereft of an alternative great-power sponsor and consequently vulnerable to the promotion of alternative interlocutors from the occupied territories. In summary, regional and international structures were both working to marginalise the PLO-Tunis, a problem facilitated and compounded by the availability of alternative interlocutors, themselves a product of structural changes within the occupied territories.

This unfavourable structural context placed severe restrictions on the scope for agency on the part of the nationalist elite in Tunis; marginalised by regional and international structures and pressurised by changes within the social structure of the occupied territories, they were obliged to remain committed to diplomatic procedure. However, in this instance, this meant accepting the unfavourable terms of the Madrid Conference and allowing an indigenous proxy delegation to negotiate on their behalf. Within this context, the role of elite agency revolved around two of the criteria identified by our framework of analysis as requisites for a successful transition; an authoritative leadership and a national project. I shall argue that the outcome of the secret Oslo negotiations was a result of the nationalist elite in Tunis subordinating the Palestinian national project (as pursued in Washington) to the imperative of maintaining their own leadership position within the Palestinian polity. The Oslo channel offered the PLO-Tunis the opportunity to rescue their leadership position by negotiating their own national project which, crucially, included a role for PLO institutions and personnel in the diaspora. In so doing, the nationalist elite precluded the possibility that indigenous forces represented in the delegation might form a cohesive alternative leadership with their own national project that excluded the diaspora-based leadership.

This interpretation of the Oslo channel gains further support if we recall Remmer's concern with 'questions of institutional incentives and constraints'. As noted in the previous chapter, the outlook for the PLO as an institution was bleak, its condition described by political marginalisation and financial crisis. Whilst it is impossible to measure the precise causal significance of this in driving the elite along their trajectory, we can say that the political and economic crisis which gripped the institution clearly did not serve to bolster any determination to stand firm in negotiations and support the delegation in Washington. Rather, it would seem that the state of the institution encouraged the leadership to reach a rapidly negotiated, compromise national project that restored their own authoritative leadership and generated new and much-needed sources of finance. Moreover, a deal

reached directly between the PLO-Tunis and the Israeli government deprived the delegation of any kudos they might otherwise have derived from delivering a diplomatic breakthrough to the PLO, thus reducing the political salience of delegation members and their respective constituencies in the formation of the PNA and perpetuating the authoritative leadership of the diaspora-based nationalist elite within the institutions of the autonomy project.

To support the arguments outlined above, the main body of the chapter is divided into two sections, the first covering the Madrid Conference and Washington negotiations, the second the secret Oslo channel. The first section covers the following: firstly, the national, regional and international structural context of the PLO prior to Madrid; secondly, the conditions for Palestinian participation in Madrid (which reflected that structural context); thirdly, the composition of the Palestinian delegation; and fourthly, the nature of relations between the delegation and Tunis. Drawing largely on primary material from fieldwork, my analysis will demonstrate that the Palestinian delegation from the occupied territories had not come to represent a cohesive alternative leadership. With this point established, the second section accounts for the emergence of the secret Oslo channel as a means of precluding the possibility of an alternative leadership by rapidly re-establishing the authoritative leadership of Tunis. The Oslo channel facilitated this through the provision of direct bi-lateral negotiations between the PLO and Israel, allowing Arafat to employ close confidants from the diaspora-based Fatah leadership (in marked contrast to the model of negotiating through the delegation)¹ and allowing for rapid progress in a pressing situation. The outcome of the Oslo channel met the needs of the diaspora-based nationalist elite, producing an internationally acceptable national project which restored their authoritative leadership and provided for a negotiated transition from liberation movement to national authority. Moreover, the project negotiated in Oslo included a central role for PLO institutions and left PLO personnel firmly in charge of the process.

The Madrid Conference and Washington Negotiations

The Madrid Conference in Structural Context: National, Regional and International Constraints

Within the Palestinian polity, the PLO leadership faced three interrelated crises affecting its authoritative leadership in the aftermath of the second Gulf War: firstly, in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the indigenous nationalist leadership constituted a PLO 'inside' with resources of their own; secondly, the PLO's secular nationalism faced a serious challenge from the consistent levels of support expressed for the political Islam of Hamas and Islamic Jihad; and thirdly, in the diaspora, the Tunis-based institutions (the PLO's bureaucracy and subordinate armed force) faced an apparently serious threat of insolvency arising from the multiple financial costs of the second Gulf War.² The financial crisis in Tunis also reduced the flow of funds to the nationalist network in the occupied territories,³ adding to the potential threat from the indigenous leadership, while Hamas continued to play a prominent role with its own provision of social welfare services.⁴ The faltering of the intifada, which by this time had degenerated into a choreographed stand-off with the IDF, also served to undermine the salience of the PLO as a party to a solution.

With the Tunis leadership at the nadir of its fortunes and obliged to accept a proxy delegation in Madrid, the challenge of the indigenous nationalist leadership became especially pertinent. A number of key delegation members were drawn from what might be termed the institutions of 'civil society,' including the vibrant NGO community which had flourished in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. With this in mind, it is helpful to expand a little on the background to Palestinian civil society and the internal structural changes introduced in chapter one.

Institutions that might be considered components of a civil society have a history which pre-dates either the state of Israel or the PLO. However, for the sake of brevity, the analysis here deals solely with the period during which the PLO has taken an interest.⁵ The

PLO leadership had been cognisant of the need to promote political struggle in the occupied territories from the early 1970's. As noted earlier, this was part of a three-way struggle for political influence between the PLO, the Israeli occupation and the Hashemite regime in Amman. As early as 1972, the 10th PNC had called for activists to mobilise the Palestinian masses in trade unions.⁶ The establishment of the PNF in August 1973, and in particular its adoption of the PLO Charter, then provided a "framework for the national movement in the occupied territories."⁷ The difficulties besetting the armed struggle, together with the increasing reliance on diplomacy, meant that by the time of the 12th PNC in 1974, the PLO leadership attached far greater significance to the West Bank and Gaza Strip as the potential territorial base for a Palestinian state. The PLO factions began to organise more seriously within the occupied territories, transplanting the symbols and vocabulary of the PLO from the diaspora to Palestine. One of the means by which they did this was the cultivation and support of Palestinian NGOs, an initiative first taken by the PCP (not represented on the PLO Executive Committee until 1987), the only faction led from inside the territories. By 1982, as we saw in chapter one, the loss of Beirut and the one remaining front with Israel had lent the occupied territories an even greater weight within PLO strategy. The campaign of institution building had thus been underway for some time when the intifada began in December 1987.

The PLO factions operated a rough division of labour, divided between what Hiltermann calls the 'military-political wing' and 'social-political wing' of each faction.⁸ The military-political wing organised resistance operations, while the social-political wing provided services that would otherwise be provided by the state. The NGOs filled the space arising from the absence of a state structure, mobilising the population behind the nationalist agenda in the process. Hiltermann quotes Eqbal Ahmed who observed that a revolutionary guerrilla movement "concentrates on outadministering, not on outfighting the enemy." The aim, says Ahmed, is not "simply to inflict military losses on the enemy," which is usually "vastly superior" in military terms, but to destroy the legitimacy of its

government and to establish a rival regime through the creation of "parallel hierarchies."⁹ This amounts to a 'shadow government' which the Palestinians established to some extent during the intifada.

The NGOs developed to cover several sectoral interests, including the agricultural and medical relief committees, the trade union movement, the women's movement, human rights groups and research institutions. However, the struggle for influence in the occupied territories of which the NGOs were part took place between the competing PLO factions as much as between the PLO and the competing regimes in Israel and Jordan. By the late 1970s, this internal rivalry led to an intense struggle for control now referred to as the 'war of the institutions'. The struggle was particularly intense within the union movement. In an effort to break the initial hegemony of the secular left within the NGO community (represented by PCP, the PFLP and the DFLP), Fatah deployed its substantial financial resources to establish what might be called 'parallel-parallel' institutions of its own.

"Throughout the 1980s, when the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Committee for the Steadfastness of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Homeland - a distributive organization established in 1979 that was funded by members of the Arab League and controlled by the PLO (principally Fatah) in conjunction with Jordan - funneled money into the occupied territories, Fatah organizations were always the most well funded, sometimes to the total exclusion of others."¹⁰

Illustrative of the factional impact on the NGO sector, the union movement split in 1981. The original General Federation of Trade Unions established by the leftist factions remained in Nablus, while Fatah established its own federation, with precisely the same name, in Ramallah.¹¹

The impact of factionalism on the trade unions was replicated within all of the other sectors of the NGO community. For instance, the PCP established the Union of Medical Relief Committees in 1982, and the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees in 1983, building on "the extant voluntary work committees."¹² Initiatives such as these did

not go unnoticed by other factions keen to maximise popular grass-roots support. The PFLP, the DFLP, and lastly Fatah each established parallel institutions for health, agriculture, labour, and women, until, by the mid-1980s, "there were five women's committees, four health committees, at least two agricultural committees and two competing labour union federations."¹³

The eruption of the intifada in December 1987 may have been a spontaneous event, but the established factional organisational structure allowed Tunis to coordinate and eventually direct it, principally through the UNLU. With a solid institutional structure providing services and promoting the nationalist agenda in the absence of the PLO leadership, the NGO institutions carved-out a leading role for themselves within the occupied territories. In each case then, the factional NGOs have performed a factional function, a nationalist function, and finally a service function. By the time of the Madrid Conference, the personnel who staffed and led these NGOs constituted an educated, capable and politically active indigenous national leadership with their own institutional powerbase. As we shall see, the favourable response from this community to the overtures of the US administration obliged the PLO-Tunis to sanction participation in the Madrid Conference. The indigenous elite's representation in the delegation will be expanded upon shortly. In the meantime, the important point to make is that they constituted another structural constraint on the scope for agency on the part of the nationalist elite, contributing to the momentum for entry into the diplomatic process. However, as my analysis will demonstrate, the delegation (as representatives of their constituencies), did not constitute a coherent or cohesive alternative leadership to the nationalist elite in the diaspora, and their potential to do so was pre-empted by the diaspora-based elite's pursuit of the Oslo channel.

The period immediately prior to Madrid found the PLO similarly constrained on the regional level; the ill-fated alliance with Iraq served to isolate it from mainstream

Arab-state opinion,¹⁴ shattering 20 years of consensus over the PLO's authoritative leadership of the Palestinian people and severely reducing the diplomatic authority of Tunis. All the major Arab states agreed to attend the Madrid Conference without insisting that the PLO represent the Palestinian people.¹⁵ Beyond the Arab states, the PLO's political isolation from Israel was nothing new, yet it remained the most serious and enduring obstacle to a diplomatically-realised institutional solution that included a role for the diaspora-based nationalist elite. Besides leaving the PLO in the diplomatic wilderness, the Likud government exacerbated anxieties by continuing to expand Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This process reached alarming proportions with the accelerated immigration of Jews from the USSR. Demographic change in favour of Israel and the Likud's settlement drive raised the very real possibility of Palestinian land shrinking to the extent that it would disappear altogether as the meaningful territorial basis for a prospective state.¹⁶ Were the situation to continue unchecked, the identification of an 'accepted territory' for the national project might become a moot point. In this context, it is important to outline the position of the Israeli government for two reasons: firstly, Israeli obduracy constituted a fundamental aspect of the structural context within which the PLO had to operate; and secondly, Israeli influence over Palestinian participation in the Madrid Conference directly reflected that structural context and deliberately aimed to undermine the authoritative leadership of the Tunis-based elite.

Successive Israeli governments of both hues had always proclaimed their abiding determination never to negotiate with the PLO. Alternative solutions envisaged by the senior political parties were essentially twofold: on the right, the Likud preferred to try and generate a collaborationist Palestinian leadership in the West Bank and Gaza, willing and able to implement Camp David-style autonomy under Israeli sovereignty,¹⁷ on the left, the Labor Party retained a traditional preference for a negotiated settlement involving King Husayn. The Likud view remained the more salient in the period immediately prior to Madrid, firstly because Labor were badly wrong-footed by Husayn's severance of ties with

the West Bank in 1988¹⁸ and, secondly, because Likud held the Premiership from 1986 until June 1992.¹⁹

The initiation of the US-PLO dialogue in 1988 had not been well-received by the Likud. In order to counter this development before it generated an unwelcome momentum of its own, Likud Foreign Minister Moshe Arens prepared his own 'initiative', the principal plank of which involved "holding elections amongst the Palestinian population for representatives with whom we would negotiate." Arens' proposals became known as the 'Shamir Plan', evolving during April and May 1989 into a '20 point initiative'.²⁰ The essence of the plan entailed generating the coveted alternative-collaborationist Palestinian leadership in the West Bank and Gaza, willing to implement Israeli-sponsored autonomy. Arens expressed his reasoning succinctly:

"If we did not want to deal with the PLO - and in my opinion it would constitute a grave mistake to do so - then it was up to us to find interlocutors among the Palestinians in the territories."²¹

Presented in Washington by Shamir in April 1989, this idea remained central to Israeli policy, despite objections from ultra-right elements in the Likud-led coalition, up to the elections of June 1992. During the negotiations over Madrid, Arens (Defence Minister from June 1990 - June 1992), continued to resist the idea of a delegation, maintaining that elections better served Israeli interests:

"[T]he most important thing, to my mind, was that we deal with the Palestinian Arabs in the territories by holding municipal elections ... the obvious alternative to elections would be a non-elected Palestinian delegation, raising the issue of PLO representation ..."²²

As for a delegation 'raising the issue of PLO representation', Arens' analysis proved more-or-less correct. The Israeli-US restrictions on the Palestinian delegation appeared adequate in principle, yet in reality the PLO-Tunis could and would subvert them. The Palestinian delegations to Madrid and Washington represented important constituencies 'inside', yet they were effectively managed by the PLO-Tunis. This was obviously different

from direct PLO recognition and participation in an international conference, but it still effectively emptied the restrictions of much of their intended meaning. It is important to outline these conditions to understand how they were supposed to work and, more importantly, to see how the PLO leadership in Tunis systematically overcame them. This point needs to be established because it questions the assertion that the Palestinian delegation either began as, or evolved into, a viable alternative leadership to the PLO. We shall return to this point shortly.

On the international level, the circumstances confronting the PLO were equally inauspicious. The internal collapse of the USSR removed the PLO's traditional (if not always effective), diplomatic counter-weight to untrammelled US hegemony.²³ Arafat recognised the implications of diminishing Soviet influence, and had publicly supported the anti-Gorbachev coup in August 1991.²⁴ In the era of the NWO,²⁵ the US administration of President Bush and Secretary of State Baker were determined to seize the moment and construct a new Middle Eastern order more favourable to US interests.²⁶ However, confronted with an intransigent Israeli government, Baker found himself obliged to make sweeping concessions to the Israelis simply to get the conference underway at all. As a result, the US imposed a series of Israeli-stipulated conditions on the Palestinians which, it was hoped, would further isolate the PLO. All of these concessions were made by default at Palestinian expense.

The Conditions for Palestinian Participation in Madrid

The restrictions placed upon Palestinian participation in the Madrid Conference undermined the PLO's authoritative leadership in two ways. Firstly, on the national level, the official exclusion of the PLO obliged the Palestinians to field what was in effect a 'second eleven', a delegation of respected and capable nationalist figures with important constituencies (a point to which I shall return shortly), who nevertheless lacked the political weight and, consequently, the power to compromise which inhered solely in the

Tunis leadership. Secondly, on the international level, the very structure of the negotiations - held deliberately outside of UN auspices, despite their being predicated on UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 - deprived the Palestinian delegation of a traditionally sympathetic forum²⁷ and stripped the negotiations of the weight of international legal rulings which the UN had passed in favour of the PLO and Palestinian people.

The composition of the Palestinian delegation was subjected to a series of arbitrary restrictions determined by the Israeli government and agreed to by Baker. Other parties to the talks, with the benefit of sovereign status, freely formed their negotiating teams, while the composition of the Palestinian delegation was determined by the sensitivities of the Israeli government. The restrictions imposed were as follows: firstly, the PLO was excluded from the conference from the outset, as were any persons considered by Israel to be 'members' of the PLO; secondly, Palestinians resident in East Jerusalem or the diaspora²⁸ were also forbidden to join the delegation, solely to assuage the Likud's anxiety that such a precedent might affect final status negotiations by casting doubt on Israel's (illegal) annexation of East Jerusalem or by conceding the (well-established) right to return of Palestinian refugees; thirdly, the Israeli-approved, non-PLO, non-East Jerusalem, non-diaspora Palestinian delegation were denied the right to attend the conference as a Palestinian delegation, being obliged instead to form a joint delegation under Jordanian auspices.²⁹

In the event, the Palestinian delegation were quick to assert their independence. For instance, when interviewed, Albert Aghazarian, the director of the Palestinian Press Centre in Madrid, recalled how the delegation orchestrated a separate press conference on the opening day, ensuring that the Palestinians took an early initiative with the media.³⁰ Furthermore, despite Arafat's historical fear of Jordanian influence,³¹ the Jordanian team were supportive of the Palestinians and helped them to assert their independence. Dr A. Kafanani, subsequently a member of the Jordanian negotiating team in the talks with

Israel, asserted Jordan's interest in facilitating a Palestinian-Israeli track and seeing that it worked; if the Palestinians could reach an agreement with Israel, Jordan would be free to follow.³² Nevertheless, with the structure of the conference finally set under the co-sponsorship of the US and, nominally, of the almost defunct USSR,³³ and with the UN confined to observer status and marginalised from proceedings, the Palestinian delegation undertook its task in patently unfavourable context. The purpose of outlining these conditions is to demonstrate how the Israeli government, with US connivance, set out to deliberately undermine the authoritative leadership of the PLO and to generate an alternative leadership from the occupied territories. The next question is, did they succeed? The evidence suggests that they did not.

Sensitive to the issue of leadership, Arafat only authorised participation in Madrid with the greatest reluctance. In Nizar Amr's view, there were significant risks in accepting a delegation: firstly, because this reduced the Palestinian population to residents of the West Bank and Gaza who were only 40 percent of the total population; secondly, because it threatened to divide the Palestinians between inside and outside; and, thirdly, because of the possibility that the US and Israel could turn the delegation into an alternative leadership. Amr confirmed that this was a major concern for Arafat, particularly given the initial popularity of the delegation within the occupied territories.³⁴ Amr also confirmed that the delegation's steady accumulation of legitimacy as negotiations unfolded, both through their ongoing media exposure and through their regular interaction with the legitimate representatives of other parties to the talks, heightened Arafat's anxieties.

As Arafat himself was later to remark: "We went to Madrid against our will, and in dishonourable conditions."³⁵ In the view of Ghassan al-Khatib, Arafat allowed the delegation to go to Madrid, "simply because he was under the impression that he has no other options."³⁶ Despite Arafat's misgivings, two factors are explored below which it is hoped prove conclusively that the delegation never became an alternative to the PLO, or,

more pertinently, to the Tunis leadership of the PLO. These are the eventual composition of the delegation itself, a combination of actual PLO and unequivocally pro-PLO figures, and the extensive nature of the communications and working relationship between the delegation and the PLO leadership in Tunis. Contrary to certain Israeli and American intentions, the delegation was both *of* the PLO and loyal to the Tunis leadership.

The Composition of the Delegation

The analysis of the delegation's composition illustrates beyond doubt that it should be considered as a PLO delegation, albeit one which represented the PLO-inside (including the institutions of civil society and the NGOs), rather than the PLO-Tunis. Whilst Israeli-US restrictions prevented overt participation by leading figures from amongst the Tunis leadership, several key consultative figures and delegation members can quite clearly be characterised as 'members' of the PLO. The constituencies represented by certain delegation members will also be elucidated during this section.

The delegation began to take shape early in 1991, during exploratory talks between Palestinian figures from the West Bank and Gaza and US Consulate staff in Jerusalem. Anxious to avoid the snub delivered to his predecessor George Schultz (in 1988 Palestinian figures in Jerusalem boycotted a meeting with Schultz, leaving him to address an empty room and referring him to Tunis),³⁷ Baker arranged for the US Consul General in Jerusalem to contact Palestinian figures and establish their mood prior to his arrival.

A brief summary of the profiles of the Palestinians involved in these early exchanges speaks for itself. To begin with, the US Consulate informed Faysal al-Husayni that Baker would be visiting the region and wanted to know if Palestinian leaders would meet him when he did. Al-Husayni was and remains the senior Fatah representative in Jerusalem and would subsequently lead the delegation.³⁸ Descended from the notable clan that had aligned itself with the Mufti during the Mandate, al-Husayni also enjoyed close

links with the intifada activists, represented Fatah in the UNLU from 1990 onwards, and had an institutional base of his own in Orient House, East Jerusalem. Al-Husayni discussed the proposal with other local figures, including Ghassan al-Khatib, official spokesman for the PPP (as noted earlier, this faction had joined the PLO Executive Committee during the 17th PNC in 1987). Al-Khatib also had a base in the NGO movement with the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre (JMCC), and he lectured at Bir Zeit University. Also consulted were Riad Malki, acknowledged as a leading member of the PFLP in the West Bank and who also ran the research NGO, Panorama, and Zahira Kamal of the Yasir Abed Rabbo-wing of the DFLP, now the FIDA faction, and a prominent activist amongst women's groups.³⁹ Both of these factions held seats on the PLO Executive Committee. In addition, the unaffiliated but widely respected physician, Mamdouh al-Akar, and former Bir Zeit University lecturer Hanan Ashrawi, took part in the deliberations.⁴⁰ As a major centre of nationalist activity, a number of Bir Zeit staff were included in the delegation. Indeed, Albert Aghazarian characterised the organisation of the Palestinian mission to Madrid as "a Bir Zeit operation."⁴¹

Once discussions with Baker were sanctioned by Tunis, a series of meetings took place between the Palestinian delegates and the Secretary of State. According to Ashrawi, al-Husayni wasted no time in declaring his allegiance: "We are here at the behest of the PLO, our sole legitimate leadership." Baker responded:

"Whom you choose as your leadership is your own business. I am looking for Palestinians from the Occupied Territories who are not PLO members and who are willing to enter into direct two-phased negotiations on the basis of UNSC resolutions 242 and 338 with the principle of land for peace, and who are willing to live in peace with Israel. Are there any in the room?"⁴²

Of the eleven Palestinians in the room for that first meeting, three noted by Ashrawi might well be considered PLO members. PLO 'membership' has never been rigidly defined, not least by the PLO itself. However, Ghassan al-Khatib of the PPP attended the first meeting, prior to his party's withdrawal from discussions. As spokesman

for the PPP, al-Khatib can be considered unequivocally as a PLO member. Two other figures may not have held an official position in the hierarchy of a PLO faction at that time, yet both possessed good nationalist credentials. Saeb Erekat represented al-Najah University (he was professor of political science), and was also editor of the Arabic daily *al-Quds*, the leading Palestinian daily newspaper acknowledged at the time as taking a clear pro-PLO line. Haydar Abd al-Shafi had been amongst the founders of the PLO, a senior Communist figure and long-standing head of the Palestinian Red Crescent in Gaza. Having helped establish the PLO in 1964, he had been a tireless nationalist campaigner ever since. Abd al-Shafi represented both Gaza and the Communists, and would eventually agree to lead the delegation to Madrid, despite some initial reluctance. In his own words, "they insisted and said that this was a unanimous decision of the Executive Committee."⁴³

Ashrawi estimates a total of 18 meetings took place altogether, mostly in Jerusalem and some in Washington. Following the early withdrawal of the PPP, Tunis permitted only al-Husayni, Ashrawi and Zakaria al-Agha (representing a notable family from Gaza) to deal with Baker.⁴⁴ Of these three, both al-Husayni and al-Agha have since been appointed to the 21-member Fatah Central Committee (and hence to the Revolutionary Council), reflecting their roles in the negotiations and the new circumstances prevailing after PLO redeployment in the West Bank and Gaza. In summary, we can say that the delegation negotiating with Baker included individuals representing significant constituencies from the occupied territories, but that they clearly constituted PLO personnel (if not cadres from Tunis), and were firmly subordinate to the authority of the diaspora-based leadership.

A valuable first-hand perspective on the delegation is provided by Camille Mansour, the Paris-based academic who served as legal advisor to the delegation from the Madrid Conference up to the signing of the Oslo Agreement. When interviewed, Mansour dismissed the conception of a non-PLO delegation from 'inside' with PLO supervisors from 'outside':

"The main distinction is not between the PLO and the inside, it is between the PLO outside and the PLO inside. The PLO from the West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem, and the PLO from Tunis."⁴⁵

Mansour divided the delegation according to place of residence and function, whereby the delegation might be viewed as follows:

- Members of the delegation from the West Bank and Gaza.⁴⁶
- Consultants or advisors from the West Bank and Gaza.
- Advisors from outside (of which Mansour was one).
- PLO personnel from Tunis sent directly to supervise the negotiations.

Although reluctant to specify names, Mansour acknowledged that al-Husayni and possibly Erekat, together with others he remained unwilling to name, belonged to Fatah and should automatically be considered as part of the PLO. In Mansour's view, even Hanan Ashrawi could be considered as an operative member of the PLO *at that time*. From this perspective, during the Madrid and Washington talks, it is quite legitimate to consider the figures from the inside as full members of the PLO, even while they were not a part of the PLO hierarchy or leadership in Tunis.

The case for viewing the delegation as an alternative to the Tunis leadership, if not to the PLO, is put by Inbari.⁴⁷ However, Inbari does acknowledge the essential PLO-nature of the delegation, and divides it into four parts: the first group constituted al-Husayni and those around him, a group which Inbari contends represented an alternative PLO leadership from inside the occupied territories; the second group were led by Abd al-Shafi, apparently close to the leftist PLO factions declining to take part in the talks, and appointed by Arafat to counter-balance al-Husayni; the third group were the relatively minor Yasir Abd al-Rabbo wing of the DFLP; and the fourth group were the PPP, led by Bashir Barghouthi and represented in the talks by their official spokesman, Ghassan al-Khatib. Each of these groups represented an important constituency within the occupied

territories. However, from a leadership perspective, it seems to me that the delegation as a whole constituted less than the sum of its parts, and can in no way be considered a cohesive alternative leadership. Moreover, the authority of the PLO-Tunis remained intact when it came to final decisions on the selection of personnel.

In the end, all of the participants seem to agree that it was the PLO leadership in Tunis that had the final say in the formulation of the delegation. Ashrawi is emphatic:

"Finally, the PLO leadership had to determine the names of the members of the delegation without saying so ... Israel too was aware of this scenario and turned a blind eye ... In Jerusalem James Baker sat with our Palestinian friends allegedly choosing the names of the Palestinian delegation, while in reality the names were being chosen in Tunis."⁴⁸

Mamdouh al-Akar, one of 14 members in the main delegation to Madrid and a senior figure during the bi-lateral talks in Washington, readily confirmed this perspective when interviewed:

"From the very beginning it was well known that the PLO leadership... named the delegation and defined every step and every statement ... so the co-ordination and communication was complete."⁴⁹

Co-ordination with Tunis

In addition to the composition of the delegation, the level of co-ordination between the delegation and PLO leadership in Tunis, both in the run-up to the Madrid Conference and during the negotiations in Washington, further supports the contention that the delegation was directed by, and loyal to, the Tunis leadership. This high level of co-ordination is illustrated below through an examination of specific instances, supported by the personal recollections of those involved. In order, they are: the consultations between Jerusalem and Tunis over Baker's original proposal for a meeting; the address by al-Husayni and Ashrawi to the PLO's Political Committee in Tunis; the debate between Tunis and the delegation over the delegation's opening address to the Madrid Conference; the role of Orient House in supporting the delegation during the negotiations; personal

accounts of regular visits to Tunis by delegation members between rounds of negotiations; and the eventual public presence of Tunis officials in Washington.

Following the initial approach from the US Consulate, al-Husayni and Ashrawi immediately conveyed news of the enquiry to Tunis. Their contact there was Akram Haniyah, a deportee since 1986, former member of the PNF and the NGC, special advisor to Arafat on the occupied territories and a member of Fatah's Revolutionary Council. Haniyah in turn raised the matter with Arafat and the PLO Executive Committee.⁵⁰ Within the Executive Committee, Mahmoud Abbas is said to have taken the most favourable line, in contrast to Arafat and others who were less enthusiastic. When it became clear that most figures on the inside were keen to go ahead, Arafat and the Executive Committee finally gave their consent, suggesting that Tunis responded to pressure from the indigenous leadership whilst retaining ultimate authority.⁵¹ The PLO's decision was announced on 10 March and the first meeting with Baker took place in the US Consulate in West Jerusalem on March 12.⁵²

As the preparatory talks with Baker unfolded, co-ordination between the delegation and Tunis evolved to include regular visits by Ashrawi and al-Husayni to PLO headquarters. The first of these visits took place in Spring 1991 when the two of them were summoned to address the Executive Committee. Later that year they were summoned again, this time to the 20th PNC meeting in Algiers in September. On this occasion they addressed the Political Committee, precipitating a split over participation in Madrid. These visits to Tunis, theoretically forbidden by Israeli law and contrary to the contorted US formula for negotiations, continued regardless for the next two years.

In order to maintain the myth of PLO non-involvement, the level of co-ordination required some initial secrecy. Nevertheless, the fact that co-ordination and communication remained effective is illustrated by the following anecdote. Al-Akar recalled that prior to

travelling to Madrid, delegation members were required to spend four days in Amman for a briefing by senior PLO personnel. In the course of the briefing, a disagreement arose between delegation members and the Tunis officials over the delegation's opening statement. The Tunis officials insisted upon a speech in Arabic prepared by the Executive Committee member and renowned poet, Mahmoud Darwish. The delegation argued that an international conference required a text prepared for a world audience, which in turn meant that it was better to draft a new one in English; although Darwish's speech was wonderful in the original Arabic, it was, they argued, essentially untranslatable. The delegation finally won the argument and, once in Madrid, al-Akar was charged with conveying the new draft to Nabil Sha'ath, a member of the Fatah Central Committee. Al-Akar recalled:

"We agreed to meet in a cafeteria ... we started reviewing the text, and then within half an hour or 40 minutes, the whole cafeteria was flooded with people and we realised that these are all either the Mossad or secret police from different countries."⁵³

This small anecdote serves to illustrate how co-ordination between the delegation and Tunis continued, despite the byzantine restrictions imposed upon them by the Israelis and the US.

In the same regard, Israeli sensitivity to PLO involvement required the Tunis officials to stay in a separate hotel to the delegation for the duration of the Madrid Conference. However, by the time the talks resumed in Washington, the situation had evolved. US officials proved willing to recognise the Tunis personnel as the key reference points for the delegation, and as such permitted them to stay in the same hotel. Even so, just for the sake of propriety, they were accommodated on a different floor. For the duration of the talks in Washington, the two key Tunis personnel were both senior Fatah members, Nabil Sha'ath of the Central Committee, and Akram Haniyah of the Revolutionary Council.

During the negotiations, the delegation's technical support was provided by 34 committees staffed by a large, essentially volunteer team led by Sari Nusaybah and based in Orient House in East Jerusalem. Jack Khano of the PPP worked in the Technical Committees and shared some valuable insights when interviewed. With regard to Tunis-delegation relations, two trends stand out: firstly, all the work of the Technical Committees was referred directly to Tunis from the beginning; secondly, the overwhelming majority of the estimated 600 staff members were either in Fatah or sympathetic to it, and many of them were subsequently employed in the PNA. In Khano's own words: "You would think it was Fatah headquarters."⁵⁴ From his own work in the committee dealing with the media, Khano confirmed the leading (if sometimes heavy-handed) role of Tunis in overseeing their work, and the appointment of Tunis-favoured personnel to head several committees. The overwhelming impression created by Khano's first-hand experience is one of close co-ordination with Tunis throughout the negotiations, with Tunis sometimes asserting its authority to an extent which was never really necessary, all of which is a far cry from the picture of Orient House as an alternative powerbase for an alternative leadership.⁵⁵

Beyond the co-ordination in Madrid and Washington, there were regular meetings in Tunis either between rounds of negotiations, or towards the end of each round, during which delegation members would brief the leadership on the direction of the talks and discuss strategy for the forthcoming round. Al-Akar described the co-ordination during two particularly long rounds of over one month each: "[E]very weekend, two or three of us would go and brief them [Tunis] ... and bring new guidelines or directions."⁵⁶ The level of the Tunis leadership's involvement is also acknowledged by Mahmoud Abbas in his account of the process:

"A committee composed of members of the PLO leadership was formed to follow up the negotiations and to supply the delegation directives and to prepare the studies it would need at the negotiating table ..."⁵⁷

One final testament to the operational unity of the delegation and Tunis can be derived from personal accounts of how the relationship operated in Washington and the difficulties encountered by the delegation when it came to making decisions. Although coordination became easier, it remained awkward. Referring to his frustrating experience of trying to negotiate in the State Department, al-Akar noted that "every point we had to negotiate with the Israelis, we had to go back and phone directly to our people in the hotel ... for every single small point ..." ⁵⁸ Abd al-Shafi maintained that straightforward issues where the PLO could not object were dealt with by the delegation alone. However "we preferred that whenever there is an issue [and] its not clear where the PLO stands, of course we had to communicate." As for the delegation's relationship with the Tunis representatives, "no issue came up where there was a real disagreement."⁵⁹ Mansour also touched upon the subject of decision-making when discussing his definition of PLO membership. Defining 'membership' as "something very broad," he said:

"What matters is ... access to Arafat, access to the Executive Committee. People from outside would go also directly to Tunis. They did not need ... to pass necessarily through the people who were in Washington from Tunis ... all could be considered as taking place within the framework of the PLO."⁶⁰

Incidentally, Mansour attributed this high-level access to several individuals, naming al-Husayni and Ashrawi from the 'Jerusalem group' specifically. If further confirmation of the chain of command were needed, Abd al-Shafi readily acknowledged the authority of Tunis:

"As a delegation we were accountable to the Executive Committee ... I always said when I was asked by the press, 'who is our reference?', I said, frankly, it is the Executive Committee ..." ⁶¹

However, whilst acknowledging the authority of the Executive Committee, Abd al-Shafi's concerns over Arafat's exclusive control of decision-making led him to Tunis in January 1994. During three days of talks, Abd al-Shafi and other delegation members tried unsuccessfully to gain a greater say over the direction of the negotiations.⁶²

On a final point of interest, the PLO had clear and unmistakable representation in the multi-lateral talks and their corresponding working groups on issues such as refugees.⁶³ Following the change of the Israeli government in June 1992, this became relatively easy. As the new Foreign Minister, Peres accepted diaspora PLO members Yusuf al-Sayigh on the economic development committee and Elie Sanbar on the refugee committee, providing they stand down as committee heads and participate as delegation members only.⁶⁴ In addition, the multi-lateral talks were supervised from Tunis by Ahmad Qrai', a member of the Fatah Central Committee.⁶⁵

The Balance-Sheet on an Alternative Leadership

In her autobiographical account of this period, Ashrawi makes the assertion that Baker expected the negotiations - and later the elections - to produce an alternative leadership.⁶⁶ The Israelis would certainly have benefited from separating the delegation and the internal leadership from Tunis, and Arafat undoubtedly feared such a possibility.⁶⁷ The real point of interest is whether or not such a fear motivated Arafat to clutch at the Oslo Agreement. This is a question that can only be answered conclusively by Arafat himself and those closest to him, or at some point in the future when the appropriate internal memoranda are available to historians. In the meantime, we can examine the available evidence and draw some tentative conclusions.

As noted earlier, the Israeli government explicitly stated their desire to generate a non-PLO leadership with which they could negotiate and the Madrid formula reflected this. US priorities were for a settlement, and if a non-Tunis leadership could deliver one then so be it. The Palestinian delegation were aware of this and never displayed any intention, or indeed the capacity, to form an alternative to the leadership in the diaspora. Indeed, sensible analysis of the circumstances makes it clear that the very suggestion that they might do so is quite ridiculous. In Mansours view, "it is a joke ... I have never stopped saying this."⁶⁸

Both the composition of the delegation and the level of co-ordination between them and the leadership in Tunis demonstrates that the Palestinian delegation was a PLO delegation, albeit one composed of PLO personnel from the 'inside' (representing their own constituencies), but effectively managed by PLO personnel 'outside' (mostly drawn from the senior Fatah hierarchy). Moreover, the testimony of delegation members themselves only serves to confirm this point. Al-Husayni, as noted above, went out of his way to explain this to Baker. Other delegation members confirmed that they were aware of US and Israeli intentions, and yet they never demonstrated a readiness to separate themselves from the authority of Tunis. For instance, Mamdouh al-Akar recalled:

"All of us in the delegation, we were aware of the fact that the Israelis and the Americans, they were keen to create an alternative leadership ... From the Israelis it was almost explicit ... explicit in the sense that it was their condition ... that they will talk only to people from inside - the West Bank and Gaza - and they would recognise only these people."⁶⁹

The Americans on the other hand, demonstrated some understanding of reality: "I remember just ten days before we went to Madrid, he (Baker) said; "If you want all of this effort to collapse ... just say 'we are the PLO.' Al-Akar asked: "Can we say we were sent by our leadership?" Baker replied, "If you *have* to say it, just say 'leadership,' without specifying the PLO." To al-Akar, Baker himself never seemed keen to promote them as such:

"But because we were aware ... that this a goal ... it seems that the Americans ... were ... looking from the angle that the evolution of things would lead to the creation of an alternative leadership ... We were aware that sometimes we have to re-emphasise our link with the PLO ... that there is no chance at all of an alternative leadership."⁷⁰

Is it the case that the threat of an alternative leadership increased as the delegation accrued legitimacy of its own? Mansour disagreed: "Everybody knew, people inside and outside, that any implementation could not take place without the PLO. Any agreement, any DoP, without the working mechanism [of the PLO] was useless." Furthermore:

"Any solution would have to be not only *endorsed* by the PLO but *implemented* by the PLO ... we would tell the Americans that and they would get mad about it ... in order to have security in the West Bank and

Gaza ... you've got to bring the PLA [sic], and the Israeli's [knew] this and they agreed to it."⁷¹

Mansour believes this was increasingly obvious to the Israelis and Americans by Spring 1993, by which time the PLO were more visibly involved in Washington.

Inbari asserts that Arafat feared al-Husayni in particular, suspecting that he and the nucleus of intifada activists around him were forming a potential alternative leadership. During the formulation of the delegation, in Inbari's words: "he [Arafat], did all in his power to keep Husayni out."⁷² That Arafat failed to keep al-Husayni out is attributed to both his weakness at this point and to the favourable intercession of Haniyah on al-Husayni's (and Ashrawi's) part. However, the problem with Inbari's supposed threat from al-Husayni is a lack of evidence. Moreover, was it feasible for al-Husayni to even try and depose Arafat had he wished to? Who would follow him beyond his East Jerusalem powerbase, and what form would relations with the Islamic groups take? It seems far more likely that al-Husayni remained loyal to Arafat, whatever his personal feelings.⁷³ This appears to be the conclusion reached by Rabin, who described him as "a mere 'mailbox' for transmitting orders from Tunis to the Palestinian delegation."⁷⁴

If there was no cohesive alternative leadership, there were clearly tensions between the Tunis officials and the delegation. Mansour readily acknowledged this, but, it will be recalled, maintained that everyone considered themselves to be operating "within the framework of the PLO."⁷⁵ Al-Akar recalled:

"they always, all along, resented the fact that there is no direct negotiations with them and that it had to be through a delegation from the occupied territories. They resented the fact that the American-PLO dialogue was not resumed."⁷⁶

Given the PLO's long-cherished status as 'sole legitimate representative', this is not surprising. Aghazarian also acknowledged a certain degree of tension in Madrid, between what he described as the 'organic PLO' (i.e. the delegation), and the 'hierarchical PLO' (i.e.

Tunis). Nevertheless, consistent with all the other interviewees, he stressed they were "aware we are a PLO delegation."⁷⁷

In summary, there is no firm evidence for the existence of an alternative leadership. However, insofar as elements in the delegation represented constituencies and the structural changes taking place within the occupied territories (and manifested during the intifada), the delegation represented a *potential* challenge. The Oslo channel allowed the Tunis leadership to retake the diplomatic limelight, to realise a rapid solution to the institutional crisis of the PLO, and to deny the delegation the opportunity of delivering their own negotiated national project. That hypothetical national project might have dispensed with the diaspora-based PLO altogether (an unlikely outcome given the objections outlined above, including those raised by Mansour), or it could have included them, but only as part of a package that inevitably raised the profile of the constituencies represented by the delegation, thus detracting from the authoritative leadership of the diaspora-based nationalist elite. In the event, the delegation's negotiating position would soon be undermined by the direct negotiations between the PLO and Israel in Oslo, precluding such a possibility.

The Impact of Oslo on the Delegation

According to Mansour, the delegation were aware of other channels (but not necessarily Oslo), for some time. From May and June 1992, "we had reached ... a stage where ... we felt that the Madrid formula ... was leading nowhere." In April, Israel had recognised the indivisibility of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as a single territorial unit. There were also discussions in June about confederation with Jordan, implementation of resolution 242, and territorial compromise. The Israelis, in Mansour's view, were clearly probing different paths, testing ideas on the delegation while trying secret talks with the PLO. When discussions in Washington reached substantive issues, decisions were required at a higher level.⁷⁸ Progress in Washington required discussion of territorial exceptions

such as settlements, military locations, certain areas of Jerusalem. Mansour recalled, "we were told not to do that."⁷⁹

The slow pace of negotiations in Washington was largely attributable to the delegation's insistence on sticking to principles, including a stress on resolution 242

"[as] a guide to the entire process and that Palestinian self-government in the interim period was a transitional phase toward the full implementation of the resolution and toward the exercise of the Palestinian right to self-determination."⁸⁰

Mansour acknowledged that instructions from Tunis were deliberately designed to prevent progress, "but it has been exaggerated ..." Equally: "The Americans didn't do anything to facilitate Washington." Indeed, they only started to intervene in April 1993, presenting a very poorly prepared draft DoP which only widened the gap between the Israeli and Palestinian positions and which the two sides had already closed. Mansour was outraged: "Unbelievable ... I told them this ... I really can't understand the reason ... it was not possible under these conditions to make progress in Washington ... Was it connected to the Oslo track? I don't know."⁸¹

According to al-Akar, between the eighth and tenth rounds in Washington "we started to understand that the leadership is putting obstructions ... we started to realise that to get support from the Europeans and the Americans, we have to *engage* in the negotiations and to start talking in specifics and details. They [Tunis] didn't want us to do that ... they want to convey the message to the Americans and to the Israelis that they have to deal with them directly ... later on it became clear that ... we are just wasting time ... They won't allow any progress in the negotiations."⁸²

From the beginning, al-Akar asserted that the delegation had only ever aimed to achieve a role for the PLO in Tunis: "We cannot deliver and it has to be our legitimate leadership ... they are the only ones who can deliver and ... sign. Who can make

concessions except the leadership? We cannot ourselves.⁸³ The delegation allowed for this all along, but they expected the talks in Washington to lead to recognition of the PLO. The delegation understood their role as reaching a critical point, whereafter "further progress needs the PLO."⁸⁴ The delegation were also insistent on maintaining their 'red lines', crucial if they were to keep the support of their own constituencies, such as the removal of settlements and the release of prisoners. On the other hand, the PLO leadership in Tunis had greater room for manoeuvre, and hence for compromise, which it seems the Israelis understood. This is the view of al-Akar: "It seems that the Israelis realised that if they want to go ahead and strike a deal with this delegation, then they have to give in substantively."⁸⁵

Meanwhile, strains were developing between the delegation and Tunis. Groth's analysis of PLO decision-making during this period illustrates the deterioration in co-ordination between the delegation and Tunis.⁸⁶ In December 1992, Rabin deported 415 Hamas activists to Lebanon, whereafter the PLO immediately suspended round eight of the negotiations. Rabin's refusal to repatriate all the deportees produced a series of contradictory statements and demands, both from within the PLO in Tunis and from the delegation, as to how to resume the negotiations.

"The delegation, while following Arafat's and the PLO EC's [Executive Committee's] instructions and acting as their implementation instrument, nevertheless seems to have made a few crucial statements without prior coordination with Tunis (and *vice versa*). Subsequent developments show that this period exacerbated a deterioration in relations between Tunis and the 'inside' delegation."⁸⁷

The most serious crisis between the delegation and Tunis occurred during the tenth round in Washington. The delegation refused to deliver a position paper negotiated, via Egypt, between Arafat and US Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Al-Akar justified the delegation's position: "We would be betraying our national conscience ... It was a terrible paper, terrible ... the same as Oslo."⁸⁸ Al-Husayni, Ashrawi and Erekat then resigned from the delegation early in August 1993. The 'three mutineers' eventually

resumed their duties,⁸⁹ but developments in Oslo would soon overshadow their efforts. The PLO leadership were about to conclude direct negotiations with the Israeli government over the DoP, the blue-print for a national project that would re-secure the authoritative leadership of the diaspora-based elite, with the crucial institutional support of the bureaucracy and armed forces of the PLO.

The Oslo Channel

The analysis up to this point has established that the conditions for participation in Madrid and Washington were nominally designed to isolate the PLO-Tunis and reflected the institution's unfavourable national, regional and international position. These conditions were circumvented and PLO involvement was thorough, both within and over the delegation, and the delegation remained subordinate to the diaspora-based leadership. Members of the delegation represented certain important constituencies that were themselves a reflection of structural changes in the occupied territories. However, the delegation did not form a cohesive alternative leadership. Indeed, all the available evidence, including the primary material from fieldwork, points the other way. To account for the emergence of the DoP, this section will argue that the Oslo channel allowed the diaspora-based leadership to subordinate the delegation and the national project negotiated in Washington to the interests of re-establishing the exclusive and unequivocal authoritative leadership of Tunis. The provisions of the DoP realised a national project with a central role for the bureaucracy and armed forces of the PLO and precluded the possibility that the internal leadership might coalesce into a coherent alternative. The analysis will focus on Arafat's preference for direct bi-lateral negotiations with the Israelis (in the mould of President Sadat), the benefits of negotiating through well-known colleagues (particularly from the Tunis-based Fatah leadership), and the imperative of reaching rapid agreement on an internationally acceptable national project that would secure a role for the institution of the PLO.

Precursors to Oslo

It is easy to overlook the fact that the Oslo channel began life as only one of several covert channels of communication between Israel and the PLO. Other contacts with both the Likud and the Labor Party had been underway since at least the early 1980s.⁹⁰ When Rabin first learned of Oslo in February 1993, it was not considered particularly serious at the time, assuming a greater significance only when Israel realised Arafat seemed ready to sanction it.⁹¹ A security channel had already been operating concurrently with Washington between the Palestinians, the Israeli government and the US.⁹² According to Nizar Amr, during the fourth meeting, the Americans asked the Palestinians to find someone from the PLO. Nizar Amr was chosen, much to his surprise, and the meeting was taken to be the first signal that Israel was ready to open a channel to the PLO. A series of meetings followed in London, with Amr reporting directly to Mahmoud Abbas. For the PLO, this was a significant development because Israel was now addressing security, an issue at the heart of Israeli preoccupations. Amr suggested that this was difficult to deal with via the delegation as the PLO possessed both the military and organisational power while the delegation possessed nothing of the sort (a point made earlier by Mansour). According to Amr, the security channel gave rise to the Gaza first idea.⁹³ As Oslo opened, the London channel closed having served its purpose.

Direct Negotiations in Oslo: Arafat and the Example of Sadat

The secret Oslo channel was operational between January and August 1993, leading to the signing of the DOP on 13 September 1993.⁹⁴ Despite the PLO's increasingly open role in Washington, the negotiations had still not led to a seat at the negotiating table or to diplomatic recognition as the representative of the Palestinian people. When interviewed, Merei Abd al-Rahman, Director General of the PLO's Department of Arab and International Affairs (Mahmoud Abbas' office), said he had always believed (perhaps rather predictably) that Washington would lead nowhere. He labelled it "a talking shop only,"⁹⁵ and pointed to the example of the Egyptian-Israeli Camp David agreement which

had also required direct negotiations to succeed. Similarly, the PLO would choose to employ direct and secret diplomacy in Oslo; in practical terms a far simpler framework than the complexities of bi-lateral negotiations by proxy in Washington and multi-lateral negotiations elsewhere; in symbolic terms, facilitating direct negotiations between the Israeli government and the PLO and re-establishing the authoritative leadership of Tunis.

Multi-lateral negotiations, with success on one front tied to success on another, may have provided 'protection in numbers', yet the sheer scale of a comprehensive resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict carried the threat of reaching no agreement at all. Sadat had abandoned this model after (indeed during) the 1973 October War, and sought direct and separate talks with the Israelis to regain the Sinai.⁹⁶ Arafat would use the Oslo channel to re-establish his authoritative leadership, firstly by negotiating an internationally acceptable national project, and secondly by gaining a territorial foothold in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho enclave. When informed by Abbas that the Oslo channel had developed a declaration of principles, Arafat apparently remarked: "I want Gaza-Jericho. What would I do with the Declaration of Principles? Why do I need it? Do I frame it and hang it on the wall?"⁹⁷ The opportunity for direct negotiations arose once Rabin concluded that a separate deal with Syria over the Golan was unlikely, and that the PLO represented the next-best opportunity for progress.⁹⁸

PLO Personnel in Oslo

In contrast to the strained relationship with the delegation, the Oslo channel allowed Arafat to exert far greater control over the process. The delegation were constrained by the need to remain sensitive to constituents within Palestine, as well as by their inability to effect real compromise without PLO approval. Additionally, Arafat may have sanctioned the delegation, met with them, and largely controlled their agenda, and yet they represented constituencies in the occupied territories with which he was not entirely familiar and did not fully trust. The PLO Chairman was having some difficulty in

exercising complete control over the relationship (a point which should not be underestimated in regard to Arafat's personality) and, given the state of his institutional powerbase, needed to make rapid progress to restore his authoritative leadership.

The first contact of the Oslo process involved a meeting in London between Qrai' and an Israeli academic, Yair Hirschfeld.⁹⁹ According to Abbas, Qrai's report on the meeting was handed to Arafat, from there to Abbas, and a decision taken between Qrai' and Abbas to pursue the channel further.¹⁰⁰ All three were long-standing colleagues and members of the Fatah Central Committee.¹⁰¹ During Qrai's first trip to Oslo he was accompanied by Hasan Asfour, a member of the PPP rather than Fatah, but well-known by Abbas and considered entirely trustworthy. Qrai' and Asfour were joined by Mahir al-Kurd, a colleague from Qrai's department within the PLO.¹⁰²

In July, with the Oslo channel well underway (between the tenth and eleventh rounds in Oslo), Abbas addressed the Fatah Revolutionary Council, and for a further two days the Central Committee. Careful not to mention Oslo specifically, he simply alluded to the likelihood of an agreement being reached between the PLO and Israel, and the possibility of Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho before the end of the year.¹⁰³ By mid-August the negotiations had reached a critical stage, resolved eventually by telephone diplomacy. According to Abbas, the individuals privy to these calls were "Arafat himself, Yasser Abd Rabbo, Abu Ala, Hassan Asfour and myself."¹⁰⁴ When the agreement was ready to sign, Abbas contacted Said Kamal, the PLO's Ambassador to Cairo, who dispatched Taher Shash, the PLO's legal advisor, to Oslo.¹⁰⁵ According to Groth, the PPP's Bashir Barghouthi was also informed from the start, as was Fatah Central Committee member Mohammad Ghunaym.¹⁰⁶ The relatively small number of personnel involved and their close relationship to Arafat afforded the PLO Chairman a degree of control which he could never exert over the delegation. The significance of personal control to Arafat has

become very clear since the establishment of the PNA, an issue I shall explore further in chapters four and five.¹⁰⁷

In conclusion, the PLO's decision to shift the locus of negotiations from Washington to Oslo can be explained as a means of re-establishing the authoritative leadership of the diaspora-based nationalist elite. This was achieved through the subordination of the delegation's progress in Washington to a directly-negotiated national project realised between the PLO and Israel and enshrining a role for the leadership, personnel and institutions of the PLO in exile. The Oslo channel offered Arafat a direct bi-lateral route to negotiations with the Israeli government, in contrast to the complicated mechanism of directing the delegation in Washington (in this respect, Arafat was following the precedent set by Sadat in 1977; neither felt they could afford to wait for the success of extant multi-lateral negotiations aimed at solving the complexities of the entire Arab-Israeli conflict). Oslo also allowed Arafat to negotiate directly through known personnel from the leadership in Tunis, in particular fellow Fatah Central Committee members Ahmad Qrai' in Norway, directed by Mahmoud Abbas in Tunis. Finally, the successful conclusion of direct negotiations led by trusted personnel served to pre-empt the possibility of the delegation realising their own diplomatic breakthrough. Despite the delegation's failure to constitute a cohesive alternative leadership, delegation members represented constituencies within the occupied territories which, given time, may have formed a serious challenge to Arafat's position. The Oslo channel offered the PLO Chairman the means to rapidly re-consolidate *his* leadership within the Palestinian polity, acquiring new sources of international legitimacy and finance for the institutional powerbase of the PLO and pre-empting the possibility that structural changes within the occupied territories might come to fruition, generating a serious, substantive alternative to the authority of Tunis.

Mamdouh al-Akar was in no doubt that these structural changes generated anxiety amongst the Tunis leadership, an attitude that was shrewdly exploited by the Israeli government:

"The Israelis could detect how desperate our leadership was ... it seems that they felt isolated. I trace this back to after they left Beirut ... they started to lose contact with the reality in the West Bank and Gaza and with the intifada again they felt threatened ... that a new generation of leadership, a new strategy is coming and with the negotiations ... they were kept completely aside, at least on the surface."¹⁰⁸

Fellow delegation member Camille Mansour pointed to the institutional imperative behind Oslo, but noted that "this is something else ... and not against the delegation." In other words, the PLO did save itself in Oslo, but not because it feared an alternative leadership. Faced with political isolation and the threat of insolvency, the PLO sought a way to extricate itself but was entitled to do so: "What is the instrument of the people if there is no leadership? Go back to [19]48 ... the PLO saved itself and by saving itself it saved the Palestinian people."¹⁰⁹ The terms of the Oslo process clearly did redeem the institution, facilitating the transformation of the Tunis-based bureaucracy and military apparatus into the governing institutions of the PNA and, in the process, providing essential new sources of revenue for the PLO Chairman's patronage network.¹¹⁰ The conclusion of the DoP and, more pertinently, the Gaza-Jericho agreement which followed it, would allow Arafat to assert the external elite's authority over the most important, and potentially troublesome, Palestinian constituency.

The subordination of the Palestinian national project to the elite's concern to re-establishing their authoritative leadership seems consistent with the view of Haydar Abd al-Shafi. When asked why he felt the PLO went to Oslo, he replied: "This is a question that you should pose to Chairman Arafat ... certainly there was no *national* gain."¹¹¹ (emphasis added). Moreover, both al-Aker and Abd al-Shafi felt that Washington could have led to a better national project. Al-Akar was adamant:

"I have no doubt that if the negotiations were left to [their] natural development in Washington, the Israelis would have conceded a better deal, and the development of the negotiations was leading to that eventuality ... the settlement is an Israeli necessity. They wanted it, the Americans wanted it ... With the deadlock in Washington, the Israelis had to give in ... The first sessions we had with the Rabin government ... started to move away from previous government proposals and then we came to deadlock and that deadlock could not have been resolved except by Israeli concessions ... we were talking about the whole of the West Bank and Gaza and we were talking about East Jerusalem as part of the transitional period."¹¹²

Abd al-Shafi was equally clear: "I'm sure that if we'd stayed on we could have got much better terms, and much clearer commitments from Israel."¹¹³ However, the Oslo channel foreclosed this option. In al-Akar's words: "They equated the PLO only with their persons - a tragic thing."¹¹⁴ Whether or not the Oslo process will lead to self-determination for the Palestinian people remains to be seen. However, in the view of Abd al-Shafi, the portents are not encouraging:

"I talked to Abu Mazen ... and he is convinced that the process ... is going to end with an independent Palestinian state. Now, I don't doubt that he is speaking sincerely, that really this is his honest belief, but I see he is under an illusion. He does not know the extent of the Israeli determination to hold on to the land."¹¹⁵

The details of the national project negotiated by the PLO are enshrined in the agreements negotiated through the Oslo process. These agreements constitute the legal and institutional framework for the transition to national authority and are assessed in chapter three.

FOOTNOTES

¹Donald Neff made a similar observation prior to the Madrid Conference: "if Israel or the Arabs insist on linking the success of each bilateral negotiation to success in all the others, then the chances for failing to find any solutions at all will increase ..." Middle East International, 25 October 1991.

²The costs accruing from the PLO leadership's failure to clearly condemn the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait were outlined at the end of chapter one.

³The breakdown of nationalist institutional order is discussed by Graham Usher, Palestine in Crisis: the Struggle for Peace and Political Independence after Oslo, (London: Pluto Press in association with TNI and MERIP, 1995), p.18.

⁴The organisational expansion of Islamist networks was in part facilitated by Israel. Prior to the emergence of Hamas as the Islamist reaction to the Intifada, Israel had granted the Muslim Brotherhood a certain degree of latitude in the hope that it would weaken the influence of the PLO within the occupied territories. See Ziad Abu Amr, Islamic Fundamentalism in the West Bank and Gaza: Muslim Brotherhood and Islamic Jihad, (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 35-37, and Jean-Francois Legrain, 'The Islamic Movement and the *Intifada*', in Nassar and Heacock (Ed's), *op. cit.*, pp. 175-189.

⁵Muslih divides modern Palestinian history into three phases and notes the contribution of social organisations during each. The first phase covers the British Mandate from 1917-1948, during which: "a wide array of civil associations existed, including religious groups, clubs, labor unions, women's societies, charitable organizations, town cafes, and village guest houses. These associations emerged outside the framework of British authority, and they articulated the interests of their respective sectors." The second phase covered the era of Jordanian and Egyptian authority from 1948-1967, during which "Palestinians formed social organizations of students, professionals, workers, and women's groups ... Although the associations tried to serve their particular interests, they also worked for the national cause, and, in many instances, work for the national cause was paramount." Muhammad Muslih, 'Palestinian Civil Society', The Middle East Journal, Vol.47, No.2, (Spring 1993), pp.260-261.

⁶Joost Hiltermann, Behind the Intifada, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p.43.

⁷*Ibid.*, p.44.

⁸*Ibid.*, p.5

⁹Eqbal Ahmed cited by Hiltermann, *ibid.*, p.13.

¹⁰Glenn Robinson, 'The Role of the Professional Middle Class in the Mobilization (sic) of Palestinian Society: the Medical and Agricultural Committees', International Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol. 25, (1993), p.309. Robinson notes that the total amount channelled to the occupied territories by the Joint Committee between 1979 and 1985 reached approximately \$400 million. Of the \$30 million channelled into Agriculture, most of it benefited the landed class to buy political loyalty for Fatah. *Ibid.*, p.312.

¹¹As Muslih put it: "Palestinian leftists watched indignantly as Fatah took control of a labor (sic) movement they had nurtured. By the early 1990's, Fatah-supported units, acting under the umbrella of the Workers Youth Movement, represented about 70 percent of the membership in the executive of the Palestinian Federation of Trade Unions." Muslih, *op. cit.*, p.264.

¹²Neil Patrick, Democracy under Limited Autonomy: the Declaration of Principles and Political Prospects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, (Jerusalem: Panorama Center for the Dissemination of Alternative Information, 1994), p.24. Robinson dates the formation of the UPMRC to 1979, Robinson, *op. cit.*, p.304.

¹³Rema Hammami, 'NGOs: the Professionalisation of Politics', Race and Class, Vol.37, No.2, 1995, pp.54-55. Robinson gives details of some of the institutions affiliated with each faction: affiliated with the PCP were the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees and the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee, the PFLP claimed the Popular Committees for Health Services and the Union of Agricultural Work Committees, the DFLP organised the Union of Health Care Committees, the Technical Center for Agricultural Services (which split from the PFLP's organisation and also aligned itself loosely with Fatah), the Union of Palestinian Farmers Committees and the Women's Action Committee, while Fatah claimed the Health Services Committee, the Women's Committee for Social Work and enjoyed influence over the Technical Center for Agricultural Services. Robinson, 'Professional Middle-Classes', *op. cit.*, pp.301-326.

¹⁴Groth has illustrated the decline of the PLO's diplomatic status, noting that; "on 25 December 1990 the GCC (Gulf Co-operation Council) summit, omitted the usual reference to the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The Arab states of the Coalition did the same on 16 February 1991 and the EU 'froze' contacts with the PLO 26 February." Groth, *op. cit.*, p.38.

¹⁵The Madrid Conference took place between 30 October and 1 November 1991. For details, see Camille Mansour, 'The Palestinian-Israeli Peace Negotiations: an Overview and Assessment', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 22, No. 3, (Spring 1993), pp. 5-31.

¹⁶Soviet Jewish immigrants to Palestine totalled 250,000 by May 1991. Groth, *op. cit.*, p.24. Since then, the community had grown to 780,000, constituting a powerful group within Israeli politics which, under the leadership of Nathan Sharansky, has currently aligned itself with the Likud, The Guardian, 2 July 1997.

¹⁷For the debate over Camp David within Israel, see Yaacov Bar-Siman Tov, Israel and the Peace Process 1977-1982: in Search of Legitimacy for Peace, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), pp.137-153, and Shmuel Sandler, The State of Israel, the Land of

Israel: the Statist and Ethnonational Dimensions of Foreign Policy, (West Port, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1993). Another abortive Likud project to generate an alternative leadership was the Village Leagues scheme of Menahem Milson, appointed by Sharon to head the Civil Administration in November 1981. The scheme did little but generate inter-Palestinian violence and was quickly abandoned. *Ibid.*, pp.223-228.

¹⁸Labor's final attempt to implement a solution involving Jordan took place in April 1987. In his capacity as Foreign Minister in the National Unity government of both Labour and Likud, Shimon Peres held secret talks in London with King Husayn. An agreement was reached to hold an international conference concerning peace in the Middle East, without the knowledge of the Prime Minister, Yitzhak Shamir. It was quickly subverted, at Shamir's behest, by Arens. Moshe Arens, Broken Covenant: American Foreign Policy and the Crisis Between the U.S. and Israel. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), pp.22-23.

¹⁹During the 1980's, Israeli politics produced two governments of 'National Unity', the first from 1984-1988, the second from 1988-1990. From June 1990 until June 1992, Likud formed the senior coalition partner in an exclusively right-wing government. Yitzhak Shamir took the Premiership from Peres following the agreed rotation of office in 1986, retaining the post until the elections of June 1992.

²⁰The elections idea also appears to have enjoyed the blessing of Labour's Yitzhak Rabin, Defence Minister during the National Unity government, who apparently claimed the idea as his own. W. Khalidi, *op. cit.*, pp.172-199.

²¹Arens, *op. cit.*, p.18. Following the fall of the National Unity government in March 1990, Shamir headed an ultra-right, ultra-nationalist and ultra-religious coalition comprising the most right-wing government in Israel's history. Elements of this government considered Shamir too left-wing! By extension, the election plan was condemned as a sell-out.

²²*Ibid.*, pp.223-224.

²³The rapid disintegration of Soviet influence, and finally of the USSR itself, climaxed in the coup against Gorbachev on 18 August 1991. Although briefly reinstated, Gorbachev resigned as President on 24 December after failing to reassert the authority of the Communist Party. J.A.S. Grenville, The Collins History of the World in the Twentieth Century, (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994), pp. 826-831. For an analysis of Soviet policy towards the PLO during the Gorbachev era, see Golan, *op.cit.*, pp.32-46.

²⁴During the coup, the PLO's official voice, Radio Palestine, made the position clear: "What happened in the USSR proves that the [struggle against the West] is natural and inevitable, and that perestroika was the anomaly." The PLO also announced that it "viewed this experiment with perestroika with great scepticism, and with trepidation mingled with sadness." FBIS Report cited in Netanyahu, *op. cit.*, p. 235.

²⁵Gorbachev first coined the phrase during an address to the UN in December 1988, with the words: "Further world progress is possible only if we seek universal consensus in the movement towards a New World Order." In August 1990, Bush announced: "I think we do have a chance at a New World Order, there could be a chance for peace all through the

Middle East." 'New World Order? Seven Writers in Search of an Ideal', Guardian Studies Vol. 1., (London: The Guardian, April 1991).

²⁶A useful assessment of Baker's foreign policy can be found in Kathleen Christison, 'Splitting the Difference: the Palestinian-Israeli Policy of James Baker,' Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.24, No.1, (Autumn 1994), pp.39-50.

²⁷The UN shares responsibility for the Palestinian tragedy, but there is also a long list of resolutions passed by the General Assembly, and to a lesser extent by the Security Council, defending the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, together with Palestinian rights in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza and the right of return. There has also been a concomitant criticism of Israel's consistent defiance of those resolutions. For details, see chapter three.

²⁸Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi, This Side of Peace, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), p.85. Ashrawi has also commented on the difficulty of defining who is and is not a 'member' of the PLO. Under conditions of Israeli occupation, people did not carry membership cards. Furthermore, beyond the more narrow institutional structure of each faction, membership can be a fluid affair. How does one distinguish between a cadre and an active sympathiser? People also change factions and levels of activity can vary over time. This point was also made in interview with delegation member Camille Mansour who, whilst not an official member of any faction, insisted that he absolutely considered himself a member of the PLO for the duration of his participation in the negotiations. Interview with Camille Mansour, legal advisor to the Palestinian delegation during the Madrid Conference and the negotiations in Washington, now director of the legal centre at Bir Zeit University, Bir Zeit, 6 December 1995.

²⁹Despite the initial insistence on a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, the Palestinian team immediately asserted their independence. The Jordanian team, by all accounts, were co-operative in this regard, and the Israelis recognised the need to negotiate along two tracks during the first talks in Madrid. Mansour, *op. cit.*, p.10.

³⁰Interview with Albert Aghazarian, Director of the Palestinian Press Centre during the Madrid Conference and head of the Public Relations Office at Bir Zeit University, Bir Zeit, 12 December 1995. Aghazarian described the organisation of the delegation during Madrid as "Bir Zeit operation," and fondly recalled the Palestinian media initiative as "my finest hour."

³¹Lamis Andoni wrote at the time: "Even though PLO officials do not say it publicly, the fact that the American proposals give Jordan a high-profile role has revived historic fears that Jordan might act as spokesman for the Palestinians." Middle East International, 30 August 1991.

³²Interview with Dr A. Kafanani, member of the Jordanian delegation to the peace talks with Israel, advisor in the Prime Ministers office, and Director of the Department of Palestinian Affairs for seven years up to 1991, Jordanian Prime Ministers office, Amman, 14 August 1995. For further details of the Jordanian attitude towards the negotiations, including Husayn's scepticism regarding the potential for success, see Mohamed Heikal,

Secret Channels: the Inside Story of Arab-Israeli Peace Negotiations, (London: Harper Collins Publishers), pp. 412-415.

³³The USSR officially ceased to exist in December 1991. It was replaced with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), organised around the core states of Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia, and finally encompassing eleven of the previous 15 republics of the Soviet Union. Grenville, *op. cit.*, p.828.

³⁴Interviews with Nizar Amr.

³⁵Arafat quoted in al-Nahar, 23 February 1992, in Inbari, *op. cit.*, p.139-151.

³⁶Interview with Ghassan al-Khatib, spokesman for the PPP, delegate to the Madrid Conference, and Director of the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre, Bir Zeit, 25 May 1995.

³⁷Details of the Palestinians' snub to Schultz can be found in Ashrawi, *op. cit.*, p.80. Also see Cobban, '*Intifada'*, *op. cit.*, p.221.

³⁸Haydar abd al-Shafi led the delegation to Madrid and during the negotiations, whereas Husayni led the wider Palestinian team including the support personnel in Orient House.

³⁹Kamal activities included the Palestine Federation of Women's Action, the Women's Studies Center, the Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counselling, the Jerusalem Women's Center and Women's Action Committee.

⁴⁰Cobban made the observation that Palestinian intellectuals and personalities in East Jerusalem were natural interlocutors for Western diplomats: "by virtue of their presence in the avowedly unified city and their relatively easy access to its large body of Western diplomats, Jerusalem intellectuals had more freedom to pursue normal political activity than their colleagues living in the West Bank and much more than colleagues living in the distant obscurity of Gaza." Cobban, '*Intifada'*, *op. cit.*, p.219.

⁴¹Interview with Albert Aghazarian.

⁴²Ashrawi, *op. cit.*, pp.82-83.

⁴³Interview with Haydar Abd al-Shafi, founder member of the PLO, PNC member, President of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Gaza, and head of the Palestinian negotiating team in Madrid and Washington, Gaza, 14 December 1995.

⁴⁴Interview with Ghassan al-Khatib.

⁴⁵Interview with Camille Mansour.

⁴⁶The Palestinian negotiating team lined-up in October 1991 as follows: Haydar Abd al-Shafi (head of Red Crescent), Mamduh al-Akar (physician), Ghassan Khatib (lecturer and media analyst), Sami Kilani (professor of physics), Zakaria al-Agha (surgeon), Ilyas Freij

(Mayor of Bethlehem), Mustafa Natshe (agricultural engineer and Mayor of Hebron), Nabil Jaabari (dentist), Samih Kana'an (former prisoner, close to Fatah), Abd al-Rahman Hamad (dean of faculty of engineering, Bir Zeit), Saeb Erekat (lecturer and columnist), Ahmad Yazji (physician), Frei Abu Midayn (head of Gaza Bar Association), and Nabil Qassis (professor of physics, Bir Zeit). Daoud Kuttab, Middle East International, 25 October 1991. The delegation were referred to rather unkindly by Farouq al-Qaddoumi (PLO 'Foreign Minister'), as an "arbitrary fistful," Ashrawi, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

⁴⁷Inbari, *op. cit.*, pp. 139-151.

⁴⁸Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), Through Secret Channels, (Reading: Garnet Publishing Limited, 1995), p.87.

⁴⁹Interview with Mamdouh al-Akar, former member of the ANM, physician and delegate to the Madrid Conference and Washington negotiations until the twelfth round, absent during the tenth due to the Israeli deportation of 415 Islamists to Lebanon on 17 December 1993, Ramallah, 5 and 9 December 1993.

⁵⁰Ashrawi, *op. cit.* On initial contacts and decision making see Ashrawi pp. 79-80. For a profile of Haniyah see p.97.

⁵¹The PLO's decision to authorise participation in Madrid unfolded gradually. The PLO Central Council rejected an international conference on 21 April 1991, but authorised Arafat to pursue proposals based on pertinent UN resolutions, Middle East International, 3 May 1991, p.14. The 21st PNC in September authorised Palestinian participation, but did not make: "a full commitment to take part in the proposed international conference," *Ibid.*, 11 October, p.6. The Central Council eventually decided in favour of participation, whereupon Arafat authorised al-Husayni to inform Baker of the decision, *Ibid.*, 25 October, p.4. A more detailed analysis of decision-making within PLO institutions during this period can be found in Groth, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-40.

⁵²Dates and details are from Ashrawi, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

⁵³Interviews with al-Akar.

⁵⁴For further background details to the PLO's 'inside-outside' relations during the intifada, see Cobban, '*Intifada*', *op. cit.*

⁵⁵Interview with Jack Khano, Union of Medical Relief Committees, Beit Hanina, 18 July 1995. Khano was one of the few PPP members of the Technical Committee staff, and as such was very aware of the essentially Fatah character of the Orient House operation. According to Khano, Technical Committee heads close to Tunis who later took senior positions in the PNA include Hassan Abu Libdeh, subsequently head of PECDAR, Atif Alawneh, Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Finance, and Mutawakil Taha, former head of the writers union and now Director-General in the Ministry of Information. Khano also worked in the Media Committee which was later replaced by a new committee organised directly in Tunis. Although somewhat aggrieved himself, he noted that most of those around him simply didn't question the establishment of a new committee from Tunis,

which seems to support the view that Orient House was clearly subordinate to the diaspora-based leadership.

⁵⁶Interviews with al-Akar.

⁵⁷Abbas, *op. cit.*, p.88.

⁵⁸Interviews with al-Akar.

⁵⁹Interview with Abd al-Shafi.

⁶⁰Interview with Camille Mansour.

⁶¹Interview with Abd al-Shafi. While stressing the Executive Committee as their reference point, he also noted: "ultimately it is the Palestinian people ... That meant that ... the delegation reserves the right to disagree and if need be to absolve itself from this responsibility."

⁶²Middle East International, 21 January 1994, cited by Andrew Rigby, Palestinian Education: the Future Challenge, (Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1995), p.7.

⁶³The multi-lateral negotiations were organised into five working groups, covering refugees, economic development, water, the environment and security. Mansour, *op. cit.*, p.24.

⁶⁴Abbas, *op. cit.*, p.98.

⁶⁵The restrictions on the PLO's public role in the talks meant that Qrai', despite heading the multi-lateral negotiations, could not actually attend them himself. "Although he was leading the multilateral (sic) negotiations and the teams assigned to them, he did not attend meetings in a physical sense, as the agreement had stipulated that there should not be a PLO official at the negotiations. (This ban also applied to Nabil Sha'ath who supervised the Palestinian delegation to the Washington bilaterals but was not permitted to meet the Israeli delegation.)" *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁶⁶Ashrawi, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

⁶⁷Arafat's anxieties were confirmed first-hand by Nizar Amr, who described the spectre of an alternative leadership as: "a very big concern" for the PLO Chairman. Amr emphasised the impact of the delegations popularity in the Occupied Territories, citing specifically the public prominence of Ashrawi, Husayni and Abd al-Shafi. Interviews with Nizar Amr.

⁶⁸Interview with Mansour.

⁶⁹Interviews with al-Akar.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*

⁷¹Interview with Mansour.

⁷²Inbari, *op. cit.*, p.143.

⁷³Cobban, assessing the viability of an alternative leadership in 1989, concluded that al-Husayni qualified better than most through his genuinely close relationship with the mass movement. Cobban, 'Intifada', *op. cit.*, pp.224-225. However, I found little evidence of this during interviews and informal conversations with activists in East Jerusalem; moreover, Husayni's powerbase would seem to be restricted to East Jerusalem, whereas Arafat remained an icon of Palestinian nationalism across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

⁷⁴Cited by Avi Shlaim, 'The Oslo Accord', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.23, No.3, (Spring 1994), p.29.

⁷⁵Interview with Mansour.

⁷⁶Interview with Abd al-Shafi.

⁷⁷Interview with Aghazarian.

⁷⁸For full details of the Washington negotiations up to the eighth round (7-17 December 1992), see Mansour, *op. cit.*

⁷⁹Interview with Mansour.

⁸⁰Mansour, *op. cit.*, p.15.

⁸¹Interview with Mansour.

⁸²Interviews with al-Akar.

⁸³Interviews with al-Akar.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*

⁸⁵Interviews with al-Akar.

⁸⁶An analysis of the ensuing dispute between the delegation and the PLO over the deportations can be found in Groth, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, p.44.

⁸⁸Interviews with al-Akar.

⁸⁹Ashrawi, *op. cit.*, pp.256-259.

⁹⁰For further details see Abbas, *op. cit.*, pp.37-84, and Abu Sharif and Mahnaimi, *op. cit.*, for an account of Abu Sharif's discrete diplomatic work on Arafat's behalf.

⁹¹A detailed account of the Rabin government's evolution in thinking towards the PLO can be found in David Makovsky, Making Peace with the PLO: the Rabin Government's Road to the Oslo Accord, (Boulder: Westview Press in co-operation with the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 1996).

⁹²According to Inbari, those involved included: "Yossi Alpher, the director of Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center (sic), and from the Palestinian side ... Nizar Ammar (sic)." Inbari, *op. cit.*, pp.201-202. Nizar Amr added the Israelis Shlomo Gazit and Ze'ev Schiff to the list, and Ahmed Khalidi and Yezid Sayigh for the Palestinians. Interviews with Nizar Amr.

⁹³*Ibid.*

⁹⁴For a detailed account of the Oslo negotiations, see Abbas, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-141. For an analysis of PLO decision-making during this period, see Groth, *op. cit.*, pp.41-63.

⁹⁵Interview with Dr Merei Abd al-Rahman, Director General of the PLO's Department of Arab and International Affairs, Ramallah, 30 December 1995. He also added that the PLO was emphatically not in a state of panic, nor was it jealous of the delegation.

⁹⁶For a comprehensive 'inside' account of Sadat's overtures to the Israelis, see Heikal, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-289.

⁹⁷Abbas, *op. cit.*, p.202.

⁹⁸For an account of Rabin's shift in priorities from Syria to the PLO, see Makovsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-116.

⁹⁹This meeting took place in London, 3 December 1992. Abbas, *op. cit.*, p.112.

¹⁰⁰The decision was taken on 7 December 1992. *Ibid.*, p.113.

¹⁰¹The background to the consolidation of decision-making in the hands of Arafat and Fatah is discussed by Sayigh, 'Struggle Without, Struggle Within,' and Groth, *op. cit.*

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, pp.114-115.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, p.165.

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.* p.75.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p.179. According to Groth, it seems that Shash was Egyptian. Groth, *op. cit.*, p.54.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, p.54.

¹⁰⁷A brief reference to the PLO Chairman's conduct since his arrival in Palestine provides a rough index of his autocratic behaviour. Besides the construction of a very substantial

security apparatus, the arrest of hundreds of Palestinian political dissidents, over a dozen deaths in custody, and the subversion of the Legislative Council to the executive (all of which will be detailed in the following chapters), Arafat has systematically neutered the Palestinian media. One particularly clumsy episode involved the arrest of *al-Quds* editor Mahir al-Alami, simply because he failed to print a picture of the PLO Chairman attending mass in Bethlehem during the 1995 Christmas Eve celebrations. The fact that the election campaign was in full-swing and *al-Quds* was overwhelmed with front-page adverts for election candidates did not save al-Alami from a week in prison. The Christmas Eve celebrations followed the Israeli withdrawal and the PNA's assumption of authority the preceding day. During the celebrations (which I attended), a large video screen conveyed pictures to Manger Square of Arafat attending mass. Arafat wanted these images widely publicised, equating his arrival in Bethlehem with that of Omar al-Khatib, the victorious Caliph who undertook to protect the Christian community. When the pictures failed to make the front page, a furious Arafat ordered Preventive Security to arrest al-Alami. *The Jerusalem Post*, 27 and 31 December 1995. *Al-Quds* itself maintained a studied silence throughout the affair.

The human-rights activists Bassam Eid and Iyad Sarraj, neither of whom can remotely be considered as a serious political threat to Arafat, have received similar treatment for daring to criticise the PNA's abuse of power. Bassim al-Eid, formerly an employee of the left-leaning Israeli human rights group B'tselem, had been critical of human rights abuses under the PNA. He was eventually released on 4 January 1996. *Ibid.*, 5 January 1996. Iyad Sarraj, high commissioner of the Independent Palestinian Commission for Citizen's Rights and head of Gaza's Mental Health Centre, was first arrested on 7 December 1995 and has been persistently harassed by the PNA's security services. He consistently criticised the PNA for human rights abuses and censorship. *Ibid.*, 10 December 1995.

¹⁰⁸ Interviews with al-Akar.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Mansour.

¹¹⁰ Following the announcement of the DoP, over 30 states committed a total of \$2.7 billion to the autonomy project, to be disbursed by the World Bank. As of June 1997, the PNA had received \$1.5 billion: \$207 million the US, \$230 million from the EU, \$232 million from Japan, \$66 million from the World Bank, \$83 million from Saudi Arabia, \$90 million from the Netherlands, \$89 million from Germany, and \$31 million from Spain. *The Financial Times*, 5 June 1997.

¹¹¹ Interview with Abd al-Shafi.

¹¹² Interviews with al-Akar.

¹¹³ Interview with Abd al-Shafi.

¹¹⁴ Interviews with al-Akar.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Abd al-Shafi.

Chapter Three

The Framework of Transition: the Palestinian-Israeli Documents Comprising the Oslo Process

The documents comprising the Oslo process constitute the negotiated framework for the transition from liberation movement to national authority. From the perspective of our transitional model, the terms of the agreements have defined the essential characteristics of the national project initiated by the PLO in Oslo. Through the realisation of this project, the diaspora-based elite could re-establish their authoritative leadership, transform the bureaucracy and armed forces of the PLO into the civil and military institutions of autonomy, subordinate indigenous political and military elements through a combination of co-option and coercion, and establish a new governing coalition with indigenous political forces. The Oslo process granted the PLO a measure of accepted territory on which to build the national project, and greatly enhanced the organisation's international recognition, primarily through a realignment of the institution into a position congruent with the international balance of power.

This chapter focuses on two interconnected issues raised by the terms of the agreements, both of which are central to our assessment of the transition process and raise the question of 'transition to what?' Firstly, we address the extent to which the agreements provide for the successful realisation of the PLO's mandate and hence a second transition from national authority to statehood (the full implications are discussed below). Secondly, the analysis explores the specific institutional provisions of the agreements and assesses the implications of the Oslo process for the political and economic foundations of the autonomy project. The framework of transition is shown to reflect the structural constraints impinging upon the PLO leadership, with the scope for elite agency confined to the internal institutional composition of the autonomy project. The analysis will contend that the terms of transition are firmly stacked against the realisation of the PLO's declared

goal of an independent Palestinian state. In other words, from the perspective of the PLO's mandate, the nature of the Oslo process and the documents which define it do not point to the likelihood of a successful second transition to statehood. Rather, the process appears to be leading to the creation of a permanently semi-autonomous entity that is both politically and economically subordinate to Israel, but which is now administered by co-operative local agents in the reconstituted Palestinian elite.

As we saw in chapter one, the PLO's revised mandate was based on the acceptance of partition and the compromise of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This policy became explicit in November 1988 with the Declaration of Independence of the State of Palestine issued by the 19th PNC. The PLO based its decision on UNGA resolution 181,¹ further refining the initiative the following month. Following Arafat's address to the UNGA, the PLO Chairman "explicitly stated that the PLO accepted [UNSC] resolutions 242 and 338,"² implicitly recognised Israel's right to exist within the borders of the UN partition plan, and renounced recourse to terrorism - an initiative which reflected the PLO's conclusive habituation to diplomatic means. However, acceptance of resolutions 242 and 338 was accompanied by a caveat reaffirming the PLO's interpretation. In Arafat's words, this meant "the right of all parties concerned in the Middle East conflict to exist in peace and security, and, as I have mentioned, *including the State of Palestine, Israel, and other neighbours, according to resolutions 242 and 338.*"³ (emphasis added).

The Oslo process has undermined the basis for a successful transition to statehood by avoiding any reference to resolution 181 - the international legal basis for the foundation of a Palestinian state. Resolution 181 is replaced instead with an unspecified interpretation of resolution 242. This has been the case since the Letter of Invitation to the Madrid Conference (and helps explain the delegation's insistence on 'sticking to principles', including the Palestinian interpretation of the resolution's meaning). As one Palestinian critic observed:

"All UN resolutions, whether pertaining to the country, the land or the people, were successfully excluded. Even UN General Assembly Resolution 181, on which the Palestine National Council ... had based the very legitimacy of the proposed Palestinian state, was thrown out ... The United States deftly replaced these resolutions with UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 ..."⁴

The substitution of resolution 242 for 181 represents a fundamental weakening of the PLO's case for a Palestinian state - a clear reflection of structural constraints undermining the legal basis for the transition to statehood. This problem is echoed repeatedly in the documents of the Oslo process.

Arafat's diplomacy since Oslo has been widely criticised as inadequate if not naive. According to Usher: "The idea that the Israelis would not try to capitalise on the ambiguities and lacunae in the agreement betrayed, as one Palestinian observer put it, 'a catastrophic strategic ineptitude' on the PLO leader's part."⁵ However, this critique seems to assume that the only goal of the Oslo process was the fulfilment of the PLO's mandate. From the perspective of our transitional model, we can argue that the restoration of the authoritative leadership of the diaspora-based elite took precedence over the details of the national project. This being the case, the behaviour of the PLO Chairman appears well-calculated and rational: the conclusion of the DoP restored the authority of the diaspora-based elite, allowing them to pursue the wider national mandate from a position of enhanced political and economic security. This security is now entrenched in the institutional content of the Oslo process.

As we shall see, the semi-autonomous institutions of the Oslo project have been subjected to a series of restrictions on both the legal and territorial scope of their political and economic authority. However, within these structurally-determined confines, the scope for elite agency can still be identified in the internal institutional arrangements of the national project. Whilst the secret Oslo channel served to re-secure the authoritative leadership of the nationalist elite, the institutional detail of the agreements facilitated the

practical perpetuation of that elite through the transformation of the diaspora-based bureaucracy and armed forces into the civil and military apparatus of the PNA. Furthermore, institutional expansion and the provisions for an elected council provided additional means for securing local support and realising an alliance between the returnee elite and indigenous political forces. Thus, consistent with the pattern elucidated in our framework of analysis, institutional adaptation is seen as the product of purposive elite agency operating in the context of determinant structural constraints. The empirical institutional content of the PNA will be elaborated in chapters four and five.

The documents assessed in this chapter were all signed between September 1993 and January 1997. They are, in order: the three letters of mutual recognition which preceded the DoP; the DoP itself; the Cairo Agreement; the Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area; the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Oslo 2); and the four documents comprising the Hebron Agreement.

The Three Letters of Mutual Recognition

9 September 1993

The three letters of mutual recognition have been said to form "the root to the DOP's branch."⁶ The analysis of these letters illustrates with stark clarity the asymmetrical nature of the concessions made in Oslo, a function of the PLO's structural context and the elite's need for a rapidly-realised national project. The three letters of mutual recognition were exchanged between the PLO, the State of Israel and Norway at the end of the Oslo talks. The first letter was exchanged between Arafat and Rabin, the second between Arafat and the late Norwegian Foreign Minister Johan Jurgen Holst, and the third between Rabin and Arafat. Dated 9 September, they preceded the DoP by four days and, accordingly, form the ultimate reference point for the Oslo process.⁷ In his excellent analysis, Dajani identifies six key points in Arafat's letter to Rabin: the PLO's recognition of Israel; a failure to territorially specify *which* Israel; de facto recognition of Israeli legislation over the West Bank and Gaza Strip; acceptance of resolution 242; the PLO's commitment to ensure *Israeli* security; and Arafat's unconstitutional abandonment of key clauses in the Palestinian National Charter.

The first point, the PLO's recognition of Israel, bears directly on the issue of Palestinian statehood insofar as the PLO recognised Israel's right to statehood without receiving a comparable commitment in return. In his letter to Rabin, Arafat sets his name to this key Palestinian concession when he affirms that: "The PLO recognizes the right of the State of Israel to exist in peace and security."⁸ In so doing, Arafat conferred upon Israel the *Palestinian* legitimacy which it had always sought without receiving any Israeli guarantees on Palestinian statehood in return. Regardless of Israel's position in international law, its membership of international organisations and the long-standing recognition of a number of sovereign states, no other people or organisation could endow

the State of Israel with the same mantle of legitimacy as that derived from the will of the Palestinian people, as expressed through the PLO.

The truth of this assertion is borne out by events on both the Arab and international levels. As we saw earlier, within the Arab world the Palestinians have always been too weak to lead a war against Israel, whilst simultaneously retaining sufficient influence to prevent an unsatisfactory peace. The over-simplified but nonetheless symbolic precedents set by the assassination of King Abdallah of Jordan in 1951, the ostracisation of Egypt following the Camp David Accords and the assassination of President Sadat in 1981, and finally the assassination of Bashir Gemayel, President-elect of Lebanon in 1982,⁹ all pointed to the symbolic weight of the Palestinian cause and its value to the PLO. No other Arab leader dared to publicly pursue peace with Israel as long as Israel continued to ignore Palestinian rights. However, once the PLO had come to terms with Israel, other Arab leaders were relatively free to follow. The alacrity with which King Husayn took his opportunity in 1994 - only one year after the PLO concluded the DoP - demonstrated just how fundamentally the PLO's concession had altered the equation. Wide-spread normalisation between Israel and the Arab world now appeared to be no more than a matter of time, the chill in relations since the election of Netanyahu notwithstanding.

On the international level, mutual recognition opened the way for a quantum leap in Israel's diplomatic standing. As Haydar Abd al-Shafi noted ruefully, "immediately after Oslo, not less than 40 countries either resumed diplomatic relations or established new diplomatic relations with Israel."¹⁰ The full extent of this improved international standing was dramatically revealed in November 1995. Following the assassination of Rabin on 4 November, the outpouring of official grief at his death demonstrated just how successful his policies had been. The Israeli English language daily The Jerusalem Post, widely noted for its hostility to the Labor Party, Rabin and the DoP, was forced to admit as much:

"It is easy to forget how recently Israel felt isolated and alone in the Cold War world community, with few warm friends in a sea of hostility. Now to see condolences and expressions of sympathy pouring into Israel from India, China, Russia, Ukraine, Slovakia, and South America is a reminder of how far we have come in such a short time."¹¹

In the same edition, the Israeli journalist David Makovsky reported: "22 presidents, 25 prime ministers, 15 foreign ministers, one king, one chancellor, and the heir apparent to the throne of England,"¹² attended the funeral of the leader of a state which until two years earlier had been something of a pariah outside of the western world. Most significantly, those in attendance included President Mubarak of Egypt, a tearful King Husayn of Jordan, the Omani Foreign Minister and an unspecified minister from Qatar. Prior to the PLO's concessions in Oslo, such a turnout would have been quite unthinkable.

The second problem with the PLO's recognition of Israel arises from its vagueness. Nowhere in the text does the letter specify *how much* of Israel, or, in Dajani's words, "*which* Israel,"¹³ is actually being recognised.

"Israel has from its creation resisted adopting a constitution, confining itself instead to a set of 'Basic Laws' so as not to commit itself to the borders drawn by the United Nations in the 1947 partition resolution or the borders defined in the 1948-49 armistice agreements."¹⁴

From its very inception, the state of Israel has possessed a remarkably elastic set of borders, periodically expanding and contracting yet consistently refusing to comply with UN definitions of where its borders *ought* to lie. With the vagaries established in the letter of recognition echoed in the DoP, together with the PLO's unqualified acceptance of resolution 242, the strong international legal underpinnings of the Palestinian case for full Israeli withdrawal appear to have been seriously undermined. Two points can be made in this regard. Firstly, a caveat contained in Article V.4 of the DoP asserts that "the permanent status negotiations should not be prejudiced or pre-empted by agreements reached for the interim period."¹⁵ However, this would seem to be a two-edged sword; while a 'declaration of principles' has no recognised status in international law and thus

might be seen as detracting nothing from the Palestinian case, the state of Israel is a sovereign party to the agreement (and all subsequent agreements), whereas the PLO is not.¹⁶ Treaties can only be concluded between sovereign states, which, Dajani suggests, implies that the final Israeli interpretation will carry the greater weight. As a result: "Israel can claim that the DOP falls within the province of its sovereignty and thus not binding on it."¹⁷ Secondly, at the end of this theoretically open-ended process, Israel could claim the right to annex the entire West Bank and Gaza Strip, a position greatly enhanced by the PLO's recognition of the validity of Israeli legislation in the occupied territories.

The third point derives directly from this unqualified recognition of a state of Israel without borders. Having recognised Israel without reservation, the PLO has in effect recognised all the laws of the state of Israel passed to the detriment of the Palestinian population in the occupied territories, "laws that have been used to expropriate land, usurp water rights, impose extortionist taxes, and expel inhabitants."¹⁸ This *implicit* recognition of Israeli law contained within the letters of recognition and the DoP, went on to become *explicit* in the Gaza-Jericho Agreement.¹⁹ The eminent Palestinian lawyer Raja Shehadeh noted that the issue was left open to interpretation in DoP, but that the subsequent Gaza-Jericho Agreement resolves the situation; "[it] perpetuates, with Palestinian consent, the occupiers law."²⁰ The details and consequences of this will be explored more fully in our assessment of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement.

The fourth point derives from the PLO's unqualified acceptance of resolution 242 as a basis for negotiations, the text of which makes no reference to the Palestinian people or to their right of self-determination, calling instead for "a just settlement to the refugee problem."²¹ From a Palestinian perspective, another difficulty arises from the passage which calls for: 'Withdrawal of Israeli forces from territories occupied ...' It will be recalled that during Arafat's address to the UNGA which followed the Declaration of Independence of the State of Palestine, the PLO Chairman specifically added that the Palestinian

understanding of resolution 242 included the establishment of a Palestinian state. Consistent with the substitution of UNGA resolution 181 with UNSC resolution 242, this interpretation has been excluded from the letters of mutual recognition. In addition, acceptance of the call for withdrawal from 'territories occupied' leaves Israel with some latitude as to just how much withdrawal is necessary. I shall return to the problems of resolution 242 during the course of the chapter. Suffice it to say here that the letters of mutual recognition have undermined the legal basis of the PLO's case for Palestinian self-determination and the legal claim to the territories required for building a Palestinian state.

The fifth point concerns the PLO's commitment to *Israel's* 'peace and security'. In paragraph five, the PLO commits itself to renouncing "the use of terrorism and other acts of violence and will assume responsibility over all PLO elements and personnel in order to ensure their compliance, prevent violations and discipline violators."²² In effect, the PLO has made itself responsible for the security of *Israelis*. More than that, the security of Israelis has marginalised the right of Palestinians to resist an illegal military occupation in their struggle for self-determination, a point which was repeatedly emphasised by disgruntled activists during fieldwork.²³ As we shall see in the DoP, the Palestinian police force is designed to act as a means of enforcing order and the rule of Arafat. The Palestinian security apparatus is clearly intended to protect Israelis from Palestinians, not the other way round, and a glance at three years experience since the deployment in Palestine demonstrates a grim determination on the part of the PNA to fulfil this role. We shall return to this point in chapter four.

Palestinian commitments to Israeli security are expanded upon and, indeed, form the single theme of Arafat's letter to Holst:

"In light of the new era marked by the Declaration of Principles, the PLO encourages and calls upon the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to take part in the steps leading to the normalisation of life, rejecting violence and terrorism, contributing to peace and stability and

participating actively in shaping reconstruction, economic development and co-operation."²⁴

This statement, in effect, strips the Palestinian people of their right to fight for self-determination and amounted to an indirect call from Arafat for an end to the intifada. Despite the persistence of the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian land, albeit in a revised form, the PLO has conceded the right to resist. Consistent with this policy, the Fatah Higher Committee finally decreed the 'official' end of the intifada in a statement issued immediately prior to the elections for the Legislative Council in January 1996.²⁵

The sixth and final point concerns Arafat's assertion that "those articles of the Palestinian Covenant [sic] which deny Israel's right to exist, and the provisions of the Covenant which are inconsistent with the commitments of this letter are no longer valid."²⁶ Despite undertaking to submit the necessary changes to the PNC for approval, Dajani points out that Arafat and his colleagues on the Executive Committee have "exceeded their [constitutional] authority," and defied the procedure stipulated by the Charter itself.²⁷ In the context of Arafat's centralised leadership, this in itself is no surprise. However, it does underline the systematic lack of regard for due procedure and collective decision-making which had increasingly come to define Arafat's leadership of the PLO, not to mention his subsequent rule in Palestine through the PNA.

Turning to Rabin's letter to Arafat, the Israeli response to all these PLO commitments is illuminating in its brevity. Restricted to a single paragraph, it reads as follows:

"In response to your letter of September 9, 1993, I wish to confirm to you that in light of the PLO commitments included in your letter, the Government of Israel has decided to recognise the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and commence negotiations with the PLO within the Middle East peace process."²⁸

The asymmetry in the concessions and commitments made by each side is clear: in return for the PLO's recognition of the State of Israel, an agreement not to specify borders,

acceptance of resolution 242 with all its pitfalls, de facto acceptance of racially biased Israeli legislation in the occupied territories, a commitment to make the PLO responsible for Israeli security and the arbitrary emasculation of the Palestine National Charter, Arafat gained Israeli recognition of the PLO as a suitable negotiating partner. As for the national project, whilst Israel gains recognition as a state, Palestine gains nothing of the sort. There is no commitment to a Palestinian state and no mention of the Palestinian right to self-determination, all of which remained consistent with Israeli and US foreign policy objectives. In summary, the three letters of mutual recognition reveal - in the broadest terms - the essential characteristics of the Oslo process: the diaspora-based nationalist elite restored their authoritative leadership, but only via a national project that ignored (or suspended) the substantive issues of what that national project was supposed to achieve, namely the right to self-determination and the realisation of an independent Palestinian state.

**The Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government
Arrangements**
13 September 1993

If the broad political outlines of the Oslo process were established by the letters of mutual recognition, the first institutional details began to emerge with the DoP. Whilst the DoP is not a formal diplomatic agreement (but rather an affirmation of the parties intentions to pursue negotiations over a five year period), the DoP nevertheless substantially defines the parameters of the Oslo framework and contains essential points from which to assess the likely outcome of the transition process. The points and issues elucidated above predictably thread their way through the DoP. However, the analysis in this section does not dwell on the legal and normative issues relating to the PLO's mandate (such as the

DoP's treatment of Palestinian rights), other than to note that it appears to entail the abandonment of the majority of the refugees. Rather, this section focuses on the provisions for Palestinian institutional, political and economic development. These practical issues constitute central aspects of the PLO's transition and help us to explain the character and outcome of the process.

Institutional, Political, and Territorial Dimensions

This analysis of the institutional outline of the autonomy project introduces the relevant articles and clauses of the DoP. With the basic provisions of the DoP established, we can begin to interpret the proper political significance of the institutional blue-print which they contain. The analysis will focus on the provisions for the Palestinian Interim Self-Governing Authority (PISGA, which evolved to become the PNA), the Palestinian Police force (the various branches, remits and purposes of which are explored in detail in chapter four), and the elected Council (which became the Legislative Council, discussed in detail in chapter five). Issues of responsibility and jurisdiction pertaining to the PLO's mandate will be elucidated along the way.

The institutional provisions of the DoP are outlined on the first page of the document. Article I of the DoP reads:

"The aim of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations within the current Middle East peace process is, among other things, to establish a Palestinian Interim Self-Governing Authority, the elected Council (the 'Council') for the Palestinian people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, for a transitional period not exceeding five years, leading to a permanent settlement based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338."²⁹

The call for the establishment of the PISGA is expanded in Article VI.1:

"Upon the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles and the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area, a transfer of authority from the Israeli military government and its Civil Administration to the *authorized Palestinians for this task*, as detailed herein, will commence. This transfer of authority will be of a preparatory nature until the inauguration of the Council. (emphasis added).³⁰

The authorised Palestinians in question were the PLO leadership returning from the diaspora (in practice this was principally the Fatah leadership), and carefully selected local allies.³¹ The explicit written inclusion of the PLO was underlined by the amendment to the DoP's preamble, which substituted the words 'the Palestinian team' for 'the PLO team'. The DoP thus secured in principle what the Gaza-Jericho Agreement would secure, and the Interim Agreement extend, in practice: the re-establishment of the authoritative leadership of the diaspora-based elite through the initiation of a national project on Palestinian territory with the PLO leadership firmly at the helm.

In order to secure their authoritative leadership in practice, the diaspora-based elite would rely on three institutional planks of the autonomy project. These were, firstly, the transformation of the PLO's bureaucracy into the civil service of the PNA; secondly, the transformation of the armed forces into the security apparatus of the PNA; and thirdly, the construction of a political alliance with local forces, principally the indigenous bourgeoisie and the old notable elite identified by Robinson. This alliance would be reflected in the modalities for election to the Legislative Council, and augmented by the economic provisions of the Oslo process. The DoP established all the essential mechanisms for the realisation of this national project.

Turning to the civil service first, Article VI.2 outlined the spheres of civil responsibility that would be conceded to the PISGA:

"Immediately after the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles and the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area, with the view to promoting economic development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, authority will be transferred to the Palestinians in the following spheres: education and culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, and tourism ... Pending the inauguration of the Council, the two parties may negotiate the transfer of additional powers and responsibilities, as agreed upon."³²

One can take a critical stance on the restricted jurisdiction conceded to the Palestinian side but, from the perspective of our transitional model, the important point to make is that it

granted Arafat and the nationalist elite a margin of institutional space. The provision for direct Palestinian civil responsibilities opened the way for the transformation of the PLO bureaucracy into the administrative apparatus of the PNA. Furthermore, as the sectoral and territorial boundaries of the autonomy project expanded, so too would the opportunities for institutional expansion and hence for recruitment from amongst the local population, thus broadening support for the autonomy project. The profile of the PNA's various ministries is detailed in chapter four.

The second and third institutional planks of the autonomy project were the Palestinian Police and the elected Council. As noted above, Article I introduced the provision for elections. Article III expands on this provision, and also calls for the establishment of the Palestinian Police force:

"In order that the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip may govern themselves according to democratic principles, direct, free and general political elections will be held for the Council under agreed supervision and international observation, while the Palestinian police will ensure public order."³³

The role and parameters of the Palestinian police are expanded in Article VIII:

"In order to guarantee public order and internal security for the Palestinians of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the Council will establish a strong police force, while Israel will continue to carry the responsibility for defending against external threats, as well as the responsibility for the overall security of Israelis for the purpose of safeguarding their internal security and public order."³⁴

Israel's retention of border control and authority over Israeli citizens plainly undermines the jurisdiction of the Palestinian police. Nevertheless, in terms of our transitional model, the important point to make is that these articles of the DoP facilitated the transformation of the diaspora-based armed forces into the core of the security apparatus of the autonomy project.

The role of returnee and local recruits is specified in Annex II.3 (c), with final arrangements to be confirmed as part of the forthcoming agreement on the Gaza Strip and Jericho area. This agreement is to include:

"Arrangements for the assumption of internal security and public order by the Palestinian police force consisting of officers recruited locally and from abroad (holding Jordanian passports and Palestinian documents issued by Egypt). Those who will participate in the Palestinian police force coming from abroad should be trained as police officers."³⁵

From the perspective of the diaspora-based elite, this served three purposes. Firstly, as with the PLO bureaucracy, the transformation of the liberation movement into the institutions of autonomy facilitated the perpetuation of the elite's institutional power-base and the renewal of important patronage networks (discussed in chapter four). Secondly, the construction of a heavy security apparatus (and note Article VIII's emphasis on a *strong* police force), granted the PLO leadership the means to coerce indigenous nationalist and Islamic groups and effectively quell armed opposition to the autonomy project. Moreover, Annex II.3(e) specifies the: "Establishment of a joint Palestinian-Israeli Coordination and Cooperation Committee for mutual security purposes."³⁶ This condition points to the mechanisms for co-operation (that would be effected in practice) between the Palestinian police and Israeli intelligence in the practical enforcement of the autonomy project. Thirdly, consistent with the pattern of bureaucratic expansionism, the development of the security apparatus allowed for wide-spread recruitment amongst the local population. As we shall see, the intifada's semi-independent nationalist fighters, including Fatah's Black Panthers and Fatah Hawks, were neutralised primarily through co-option into the new security apparatus. Through these mechanisms, the provisions of the DoP greatly facilitated the realisation of a subordinate armed force - our third criterion for a successful transition - albeit within the restricted framework of limited autonomy.

The third institutional plank of the autonomy project was the elected Council. As noted above, this was introduced in Article I and expanded upon in Article III, clause 2 of which noted:

"An agreement will be concluded on the exact mode and conditions of the elections in accordance with the protocol attached as Annex I, with the goal of holding elections not later than nine months after the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles."³⁷

Annex I (Protocol on the Mode and Conditions of Elections) established that, amongst other things:

- (1) "Palestinians of Jerusalem who live there will have the right to participate in the election process, according to an agreement between the two sides.
- (3) The future status of displaced Palestinians who were registered on 4th June 1967 will not be prejudiced because they were unable to participate in the election process due to practical reasons."³⁸

Article IV defined the restrictions on the Council's jurisdiction:

"(1) Jurisdiction of the Council will cover West Bank and Gaza Strip territory, except for issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations."³⁹

Article V.3 listed these restrictions on 'remaining issues' as: "Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, security arrangements, borders, relations and cooperation with other neighbors, and other issues of common interest."⁴⁰

In the event, negotiations over the Interim Agreement specifying election modalities were delayed well beyond nine months, and the election turnout in Jerusalem was significantly lower than the rest of the West Bank due to Israeli intimidation. Furthermore, the status of the majority of 'displaced' Palestinians has still not been resolved at the time of writing. (Article XII establishes a Continuing Committee "that will decide by agreement on the modalities of admission of persons displaced from the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967."⁴¹ The rights of the 1948 refugees appear to have been dispensed with). However, the major significance of the Council rested neither in the limitations on

its jurisdiction, nor in the dangerous precedents set for Jerusalem and the refugees. For the returnee leadership of the PLO, the elected Council offered another institutional means of securing local support and legitimising the national project initiated in Oslo. As we shall see in chapter five, Arafat would successfully manipulate the electoral system to suit the needs of the traditional notables and wealthy bourgeoisie. Council members were elected on a constituency basis, clearly favouring candidates with a large familial or other financial powerbase. In summary, the DoP's provisions for an elected Council provided the returnee elite with another institutional means of securing their authoritative leadership, complementing the provisions for the bureaucracy and security services and lending the national project a veneer of democratic legitimacy.

Despite the glaring concessions of the Oslo process, the DoP crucially established the fourth criterion specified in our transitional model - a measure of accepted territory for the national project. Article XIV (misleadingly entitled 'Israeli *Withdrawal*' - the reality was a rather modest redeployment) established that: "Israel will withdraw from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area, as detailed in the protocol attached as Annex II." Annex II.2 noted:

"Israel will implement an accelerated and scheduled withdrawal of Israeli military forces from the Gaza Strip and Jericho area, beginning immediately with the signing of the agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area and to be completed within a period not exceeding four months after the signing of this agreement."⁴²

This redeployment of Israeli forces was to be followed by a second 'withdrawal', to be negotiated as part of the Interim Agreement. Article XIII.1 reads:

"After the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles, and not later than the eve of the elections for the Council, a redeployment of Israeli military forces in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip will take place, in addition to withdrawal of Israeli forces carried out in accordance with Article XIV."⁴³

I shall save the details of this second withdrawal for our analysis of the Interim Agreement. The point to underline here is that the DoP's provisions for a limited Israeli withdrawal secured (at least in a minimal sense), a measure of accepted territory for the establishment of the Palestinian national project.

Economic Dimensions

With the institutional, political and territorial aspects of the DoP outlined above, the analysis now turns to the economic content of the autonomy project. Whilst the political economy of transition is a vast subject in its own right and somewhat beyond the scope of this thesis, the economic provisions of the DoP have a bearing on the character of the autonomy project which we need to consider. However, in order to place the economic implications of the DoP in context, it is helpful firstly to reprise the economic relationship between Israel and the occupied territories. As we noted in chapter one, this is basically a core-periphery relationship between the Israeli metropole and the dependent Palestinian colony, reflecting the settler-colonial nature of the Israeli regime.

In order to fulfil the colonial agenda, successive Israeli governments of both stripes have overseen the systematic destruction of the economic basis for Palestinian national independence in the West Bank and Gaza. The occupied territories have served as a captive market for Israeli exports⁴⁴ and a source of cheap labour and natural resources (most notably land and water), for the core economy. Lack of economic growth has also prompted wide-spread emigration (particularly amongst educated Palestinians), fulfilling another goal of Israeli policy. In the summary of one local analyst:

"Israeli laws are inherently designed to serve the needs of the occupier in manipulating and transforming the Palestinian economy into a state of dependency, prolonging the occupation and thus forcing Palestinians from their homeland.

Israeli laws and policies have been instrumental in tightening Israel's absolute control over land and water, restricting permits for industrial projects, creating a situation of unequal competition between the

Palestinian and Israeli economies, and forcing more than half the Palestinian workforce to become cheap migrant labour working for the Israeli industrial and service sectors. A meager local market and weak purchasing power, coupled with restrictions on exports, have restructured the production infrastructure ... making it dependent and complimentary to Israeli production requirements."⁴⁵

In this context, the economic provisions of the DoP reveal a substantial continuity in Israeli policy. The shift from military government to semi-autonomy promises the perpetuation of the core-periphery relationship, but within the framework of the politico-administrative modifications discussed above.

As noted in chapter one, this shift in Israeli policy was prompted to a large extent by the costs of administering the intifada. The intifada had rendered

"[d]irect occupation through the military authority and the civil administration ... bankrupt ... [Moreover, w]ith the rise to power of the Labor Party, a new concept called for a transition from the old form of colonialism to a form of neocolonialism, economic in nature, in which Israeli rule will be carried out by local agents."⁴⁶

I shall return to this last point shortly. In the meantime, what are the mechanisms established by the DoP for the perpetuation of Israeli control over the Palestinian economy?

The economic aspects of the DoP are introduced in Article VII.4, under the section on the Interim Agreement.

"In order to enable the Council to promote economic growth, upon its inauguration, the Council will establish, among other things, a Palestinian Electricity Authority, a Gaza Sea Port Authority, a Palestinian Development Bank, a Palestinian Export Promotion Board, a Palestinian Environmental Authority a Palestinian Land Authority and a Palestinian Water Administration Authority..."⁴⁷

However, Article XI underlines the extent of Israeli control over the substantive issues of economic development;

"... an Israeli-Palestinian Economic Cooperation Committee will be established in order to develop and implement in a cooperative manner the programs identified in the protocols attached as Annex III and IV."⁴⁸

Annex III expands on the responsibilities of the Israeli-Palestinian Continuing Committee for Economic Cooperation, a body which is mandated to ensure 'co-operation' in a number of spheres central to economic development. This includes the development of water resources, electricity, energy, financial development, transport and communications, trade and industry.

This model is placed in a broader regional context by Annex IV, Protocol on Israeli-Palestinian Cooperation Concerning Regional Development Programs, which calls for the establishment of a Development Program for the region, consisting of two elements: a) an Economic Development Program for the West Bank and Gaza Strip b) a Regional Economic Development Program. The arrangements with the Palestinians are thus conceived of (at least in principle), as means of opening the path to wider economic targets in the Arab world, a view expressed quite openly by the former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres. Were this vision to come to fruition, Israel's status as a relatively advanced economy would allow it to act "as a base for finance and business, a center of international investment, in what is to be a 'Middle Eastern Common Market'."⁴⁹ In the pithy summary of one analysis, "the Palestinians have turned out to be the bridge over which Israel will walk to reach the Arab world."⁵⁰

What are the implications of these arrangements for the economic content of the transition process? To begin with, the stipulation that economic development occurs within a joint Israeli-Palestinian framework denudes the institutions of self-government of any effective economic authority. In the words of Dajani, "this protocol makes the entire process of development contingent on joint action by the two sides - which is tantamount to subordinating development to Israeli control."⁵¹ This important point underlines the

fundamental goals of the autonomy project for the Israeli government; the perpetuation of the core-periphery relationship with some politico-administrative modifications.

The contemporary economic relationship between the occupied territories and Israel underlines the full extent of Palestinian dependence on the Israeli economy. A revealing assessment was presented by the Israeli conglomerate Koor:

"The Palestinian economy in Gaza and the West Bank constitutes a third-world backwater within a highly developed Israeli economy. The economic power of the Gaza Strip does not exceed 1% of that of Israel. Its separation from Israel will condemn it to absolute economic chaos. The Territories depend on Israel for almost everything. Israel takes in 90% of Gaza's exports and 70% of the West Bank's."⁵²

The autonomy project has clearly been born into a dependent economic relationship, a situation which the DoP appears destined to maintain. However, the DoP alters the situation in one respect by creating a semi-autonomous institutional framework with cooperative local agents in place to manage it.

The local agents in question are the returnee PLO leadership and their allies from the notable elite and the indigenous bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie are intended to provide the capital, making the most of cheap Palestinian labour, while the PNA endeavours to provide stability and a climate conducive to investment. Samir Hazboun, writing for the Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI), captured the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the PNA: "The ... PNA will act as a chaperon, overlooking Palestinian interests, and directing and advising the private sector, which is expected to launch most investments leading to economic development."⁵³ The DoP suggests that much of this economic development will take place on a joint Israeli-Palestinian basis.

The DoP's provisions for finance, trade and industry are introduced in Annex III, 'Protocol on Israeli-Palestinian Cooperation in Economic and Development Programs'. Annex III includes provisions for:

"4) Cooperation in the field of finance, including a Financial Development and Action Program for the encouragement of international investment in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and in Israel, as well as the establishment of a Palestinian Development Bank."

6) "Cooperation in the field of trade, including studies, and Trade Promotion Programs, which will encourage local, regional and inter-regional trade, as well as a feasibility study of creating free trade zones in the Gaza Strip and in Israel, mutual access to these zones, and cooperation in other areas related to trade and commerce.

"7) Cooperation in the field of industry, including Industrial Development Programs, which will provide for the establishment of joint Israeli-Palestinian Research and Development Centers, will promote Palestinian-Israeli joint ventures, and provide guidelines for cooperation in the textile, food, pharmaceutical, electronics, diamonds, computer and science-based industries."⁵⁴

A number of factors make it difficult to assess the real opportunities for profit under the PNA, including the embryonic nature of the project, the Labor Party's defeat in May 1996, the stalemate in the negotiations, and the repeated closure of the occupied territories, none of which has provided an encouraging climate for business. However, the provisions of the DoP clearly suggest that, at least in principle, the opportunities exist.

The perpetuation of Palestinian economic dependency, managed by the returnee PLO elite and Palestinian capitalists, was foreseen by the perceptive Adel Samara. Samara observed that during a conference held in Tunisia in 1990, "seventy Palestinian businessmen and tens of P.L.O. leaders, including Yaser Arafat, declared that 'the participants were determined to make a future Palestine the Singapore of the Middle East'."⁵⁵ The implications of this model are;

"the exploitation of the cheap, skilled and educated labor in the West Bank and Gaza, the creation of joint ventures with Japanese multinational corporations [and presumably other foreign concerns], and economic cooperation with Israel."⁵⁶

Moreover, "part of the capital of the multinational corporations who might be invited to exploit the West Bank belongs to Palestinian millionaires who are living in the diaspora."⁵⁷ Whilst the national project is still in its infancy, there is some evidence that

diaspora-based Palestinian financiers and businessmenn are preparing to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the framework of transition.

One of the striking features of the early days of the autonomy project was the rapid growth of the banking sector in the occupied territories. As with other sectors of the economy, banking had previously been restricted by the dictates of the military occupation. According to the Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), "a total of 32 [banks], and nine in Jerusalem, had to cease operation under the new Israeli military rule."⁵⁸

"On the eve of the Madrid Peace Conference, there were only two banks with 13 branches in the West Bank and Gaza - the Cairo-Amman Bank in the West Bank and the Bank of Palestine in Gaza. [However, by] the end of May 1995, the number of banks had increased to ten with 41 branches."⁵⁹

The size of the deposits received by the banks increased accordingly, reaching approximately "\$975 million by the end of May [1995], which at the end of March was \$828 million - almost an 18% increase in two months."⁶⁰ MAS attributed these deposits to an increase in foreign aid, local residents transferring savings from cash to bank deposits, and residents transferring accounts from foreign to local banks.

The revitalised banking sector is clearly intended to help finance development under autonomy. In Gaza, the Egyptian Arab Land Bank and the National (Ahli) Bank, agreed with the PNA to finance construction of the Rafah airport. Palestinian businessmen recently established the Palestine Investment Bank (March 1995), with the intention of funding development projects in conjunction with the PNA. The Commercial Bank of Palestine also emerged during the early days of the PNA, "established by Palestinian business investors, intending to invest all their money in the West Bank ... 'but only to develop industry'."⁶¹ However, disagreements emerged in 1995 between Palestinian economists, the PNA, and the banking sector, over the transfer of deposits outside the occupied territories. The PNA's Finance Minister Muhammad Nashashibi "accused

bankers of transferring deposits abroad without taking part in the operation of re-building and re-construction or encouraging investment."⁶² The banks responded by blaming a lack of stability and a Palestinian central bank for impeding investment. The Arab Bank in Gaza also asserted that they had "granted \$15 million in loans at an interest rate of 10 percent since the bank opened in September 1994."⁶³ The profitability of the autonomy project for local private capital is clearly a topic worth monitoring, as is the relationship between local financiers and merchants and the PNA. In the meantime, the explosion of the banking sector during the early stages of the PNA suggests two things: firstly, private capital perceives a significant economic potential in the autonomy project; and secondly, the PNA is keen to promote the role of local businessmen within this economic framework.

The DoP's provision for joint projects was quickly taken-up by the Israeli conglomerate Koor, with the launch of a project entitled Salam-2000. According to the optimistic Hazboun, this is a two-track project, designed to work as follows:

"The first track involves joint ventures with Arab firms in trade and industrial projects. The second track involves the establishment of an investment company with Palestinian businessmen and other international entrepreneurs to invest in the [West Bank and Gaza]. Some of the initial projects to be implemented by the new company are: 1) a cement plant in the West Bank 2) Telecommunications infrastructure 3) An agro-chemical formulating plant 4) Industrial parks ... 5) Factories in the autonomous regions ... [apparently for food processing] 6) A trading company to export Palestinian goods to existing and new markets, primarily in Europe."⁶⁴

The construction of industrial parks has also been promoted by the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR - the nature of the institution is discussed in chapter four). In June 1995, PECDAR announced "that the PNA and Israel had agreed to establish nine industrial zones inside the Palestinian areas, with three in Gaza and six in the West Bank."⁶⁵ The scheme was estimated to cost around \$920 million, to be raised from private capital, foreign aid and the World Bank.

The World Bank published a plan for "privately-financed Palestinian 'industrial estates' ... in July 1995 ... In the bank's view, the parks would serve as 'security islands' which would attract Israeli-Palestinian joint ventures." Private capital would play the major role in financing the projects:

"Of the \$200m. needed for the program's initial stage, \$150m. would come from private sources, \$20m. from donor states, \$10m. from the World Bank, and \$20m.-worth of land would be allotted by the PA. The same proportions roughly apply for the plan overall."⁶⁶

The industrial zones project had made little progress by the end of fieldwork, apparently partly due to policy disagreements within the PNA.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, in principle, all of the zones were to be built along the 'border' between Israel and the territories. This would serve two purposes; firstly, it would remove the bulk of the Palestinian workforce from Israeli territory (theoretically enhancing Israeli 'security');⁶⁸ and secondly, the scheme would continue to provide access to cheap Palestinian labour for both Israeli and Palestinian capital. According to Palestine Report, (citing the World Bank and other sources), Palestinian unemployment hit 50 percent in the West Bank and up to 70 percent in the Gaza Strip during 1997.⁶⁹ As Graham Usher observed, "the zone's chief draw for private capital is going to be the vast reserves of jobless Palestinians that surround them."⁷⁰ The DoP thus provides a framework for joint Israeli-Palestinian investment in the context of abundant, cheap, and relatively powerless Palestinian labour. As with the banking sector, the development of the industrial zones is a promising area for future research. In the meantime, developments in both sectors indicate that private Palestinian and Israeli capital have a vested interest in the success of the autonomy project.

In conclusion then, the terms of the DoP suggest that Palestinian economic development will remain firmly subordinated to the interests of the Israeli economy. This subordination is realised in practice through the establishment of a series of joint Israeli-Palestinian committees with overall responsibility for planning and development. In effect, responsibility for economic development will continue to inhere in the Israeli government,

rather than in the semi-autonomous Palestinian institutions of the PISGA (the PNA). Israel's politico-administrative shift from direct military occupation to carefully-managed Palestinian autonomy is predicated on an economic arrangement whereby the occupied territories continue to function as a 'colony' for the Israeli 'metropole'. This administratively-modified dependent relationship will be managed by the institutions of the semi-autonomous Palestinian authority, governed by a Palestinian elite composed of the returnee PLO leadership, the local bourgeoisie and the traditional notable class, all of whom have an interest in the realisation of the autonomy project. The diaspora-based elite have restored their authoritative leadership, the bourgeoisie stand to make profits in the new economic framework, and the notable class have re-assumed the socio-political significance that had been undermined by the intifada. The analysis will now consider the remaining agreements that define the framework of transition.

The Cairo Agreement

9 February 1994

The Cairo Agreement is a brief eight page document dealing with joint Israeli-Palestinian control of border crossings, entry procedures and joint patrols along the roads of Gaza and Jericho. Much of the detail of the agreement is expanded upon in the Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area. Nevertheless, its contents do help to build a picture of arrangements in the then soon to be 'liberated' Palestinian areas, particularly in regard to the jurisdiction of the Palestinian police and the territorial basis of the national project.

Under the heading 'General', Article 1.(a) made it clear that Israel retained responsibility for the borders with both Jordan and Egypt: "Israel remains responsible [for]

the Egyptian border and the Jordanian line.⁷¹ The arrangements specified within the agreement are to apply to the Allenby Bridge (between the West Bank and Jordan) and the Rafah crossing (between Gaza and Egypt). Within the provisions for the Gaza Strip, Article 1 stated;

"during the interim period the Gush Katif and Erez settlement areas, as well as the other settlements in the Gaza Strip, and the Israeli military installation area along the Egyptian border in the Gaza Strip ... will be under Israeli authority."⁷²

Under the heading 'The Gaza Strip', Article 2.(a) extended this to the three connecting roads between the settlements in the Gaza Strip, along which "the Israeli authorities will have all necessary responsibilities and powers in order to conduct independent security activity, including Israeli patrols."⁷³

The 'General' introduction also establishes the jurisdiction of the Palestinian police and the formation of the joint patrols: "Roads within Jericho city will be under Palestinian control. Joint patrols on the main roads will be operated, led by the Palestinian vehicle." However, "the Israeli authorities will have the overriding responsibility and powers for security and the Palestinian Authority will have the responsibility and powers for civil affairs, subject to the Gaza Jericho Agreement."⁷⁴

The main points which emerge from this agreement are the ongoing Israeli control of external borders and of large areas within the Palestinian entity. Consistent with the DoP, the implications for future Palestinian sovereignty are not encouraging. The 'liberated' Palestinian zones described by the agreement are systematically divided between areas of Palestinian 'autonomy' (with Israel retaining overall authority), surrounded by large areas which remain under Israeli control. The arrangements thus clarify in practice what the DoP introduced in principle; the division of Palestinian territory as a basis for the national project and the curtailment of the PNA's jurisdiction within the autonomous enclaves.

The Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area
4 May 1994

The Agreement on the Gaza Strip and Jericho Area (hereafter referred to as the Gaza-Jericho Agreement), is arguably more significant than the DoP for two reasons. Firstly, it fulfilled the requirements of Article XIII of the DoP concerning the 'Redeployment of Israeli Forces,' together with Annex II, the 'Protocol on Withdrawal of Israeli Forces from the Gaza Strip and Jericho Area,' facilitating the first redeployment of the diaspora-based armed forces to Palestine. The IDF redeployment is now a matter of record, as is the arrival of Arafat in the Gaza Strip on 1 July 1994. Secondly, the agreement detailed the specifics of the embryonic PNA and, as Raja Shehadeh observed, set the pattern for the Interim Agreement which would eventually follow it.⁷⁵ This wider relevance was alluded to in Annex IV which declared: "Palestinian jurisdiction in the subsequent agreements could cover areas, spheres or functions according to the Interim Agreement."⁷⁶

In the main, the Gaza-Jericho Agreement deals with the specifics of IDF redeployment from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho enclaves and the establishment of Palestinian institutions (although the structure of the civil and military institutions of the PNA, together with their jurisdiction and responsibilities, would become much clearer with the Interim Agreement). The analysis in this section addresses the practical detail of the PNA's embryonic institutions, and the degree and nature of the territorial jurisdiction secured for the national project. The analysis highlights the restrictions imposed on the new Palestinian institutions, and the internal division of the occupied territories. The territorial aspects of the agreement will be augmented by Shehadeh's observations on the legal implications, illustrated with his remarks on legal jurisdiction and jurisdiction over land and water resources, all of which have an important bearing on the legal status of Palestinian territory.

Turning firstly to the security apparatus, Article II.6 provides for the deployment of Palestinian forces in the autonomous areas: "The Palestinian Police shall be deployed and shall assume responsibility for public order and internal security of Palestinians in accordance with this Agreement and Annex I."⁷⁷ The role of the new police force is expanded upon in Article XVIII on 'The Prevention of Hostile Acts'.

"Both sides shall take all measures necessary in order to prevent acts of terrorism, crime and hostilities directed against each other, against individuals falling under the other's authority and against their property, and shall take legal measures against offenders. In addition, the Palestinian side shall take all measures necessary to prevent such hostile acts directed against the Settlements, the infrastructure serving them and the Military Installation Area ..."⁷⁸

Annex I, Article II provides further details of the Palestinian-Israeli co-operation over security. The agreement establishes a Joint Security Coordination and Cooperation Committee (JSC), with a series of District Coordination Offices to implement co-operation in practice. Article II.2.(e.5). specifies that this includes immediate notification of "a terrorist action of any kind and from any source." The remit of the Palestinian security apparatus thus includes the protection of Israeli settlers and the arrest and imprisonment of Palestinians undertaking further resistance against the ongoing (if modified) Israeli occupation.

Annex I, Article III details the structure and composition of the Palestinian security apparatus. According to Article III.(3.a.):

"The Palestinian Police shall consist of one integral unit under the control of the Palestinian Authority. It shall be composed of four branches:

- (1) Civil Police (Al Shurta)
- (2) Public Security
- (3) Intelligence; and
- (4) Emergency Services and Rescue (Al Difa'a Al Madani).

As we shall see in chapter four, the structure of the security apparatus would evolve substantially beyond this blueprint. Nevertheless, the agreement does introduce the basic structure of the apparatus that would be used to police the autonomy project. Article III.(3.c.) specified that: "The Palestinian Police will be comprised of up to 9,000 policemen in all its branches." This number would be substantially exceeded as the autonomy project expanded - a point to which I shall return in due course. For now, the important point to note is that the Gaza-Jericho Agreement facilitated the practical transformation of the PLO's armed forces into the new apparatus of autonomy, whilst also providing for widespread recruitment amongst local activists.

The civil apparatus of the PNA is introduced in Article III on the 'Transfer of Authority'.

"1. Israel shall transfer authority as specified in this Agreement from the Israeli military government and its Civil Administration to the Palestinian Authority, hereby established, in accordance with Article V..."

Article V specified that this authority "does not include foreign relations, internal security and public order of Settlements and the Military Installation Area and Israelis, and external security." Article III.5 also established:

"A Joint Civil Affairs Coordination and Cooperation Committee (hereinafter the CAC) and two Joint Regional Civil Affairs Subcommittees for the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area ... to provide for coordination and cooperation in civil affairs between the Palestinian Authority and Israel..."

The restrictions on the PNA's legislative authority are listed in Article VII. Clause 3 stipulates that all legislation has to be submitted to a legislation subcommittee to be established by the CAC, whilst clause 9 notes that: "Laws and military orders in effect in the Gaza Strip or the Jericho Area prior to the signing of this Agreement shall remain in force, unless amended or abrogated in accordance with this agreement." The spheres of jurisdiction granted to the Palestinian Authority would duly be clarified by the Agreement on Preparatory Transfer of Powers and Responsibilities (the 'Early Empowerment Agreement), concluded on 29 August 1994. This specified the transfer of authority over

education and culture, health, social welfare, tourism, and taxation. The analysis does not address this agreement separately because, as with security matters, the details of the PNA's jurisdiction became much clearer with the Interim Agreement. In the meantime, the Gaza-Jericho Agreement confirms the picture of the autonomy project as an administrative intermediary perpetuating Israeli control.

Despite the restrictions contained in this blueprint, the elite agency of the PLO leadership found scope for expression in the internal institutional composition of the autonomy project. Prior to the election of the Legislative Council, executive and legislative authority were vested solely in the Palestinian Authority. The size and scope of this body are detailed in Article IV:

"The Palestinian Authority will consist of one body of 24 members which shall carry out and be responsible for all the legislative and executive powers and responsibilities transferred to it ..."

The Palestinian Authority shall administer the departments transferred to it and may establish ... other departments and subordinate administrative units as necessary..."

These provisions meant that prior to the election of the Legislative Council, the returnee elite were granted the exclusive right to make appointments and establish the institutions of autonomy, lending them substantial powers of patronage. In this respect, the role of elite agency can be identified in the expansion of the bureaucratic and security apparatus and the disbursement of appointments to senior positions. Arafat and the PLO leadership would use their powers of patronage to construct a substantial institutional powerbase and to recruit allies from key groups amongst the local population. I shall discuss this issue in some detail during the following chapters.

In addition to the provisions for institutional adaptation, the Gaza-Jericho Agreement also deals with the territorial aspects of the autonomy project. Article II.1 of the Agreement begins: "Israel shall implement an accelerated and scheduled withdrawal of Israeli military forces from the Gaza Strip and from the Jericho Area to begin immediately

with the signing of this agreement."⁷⁹ However, the limited scope of IDF 'withdrawal' is made clear in Article II.3:

"In order to carry out Israel's responsibility for external security and public order of Settlements and Israelis, Israel shall, concurrently with the withdrawal, redeploy its remaining military forces to the Settlements and the Military Installation Area, in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement. Subject to the provisions of this Agreement, this redeployment shall constitute full implementation of Article XIII of the Declaration of Principles with regard to the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area only."⁸⁰

Article II.3 thus makes it clear that the 'withdrawal' is a rather limited 'redeployment' which leaves both the IDF and Israeli settlements in place in the Gaza Strip. Furthermore, Article II.5 adds: "Israelis, including Israeli military forces, may continue to use roads freely within the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area."⁸¹

As these two articles make clear, the dominant image which emerges from this agreement is one of the internal division of Palestinian land, division into areas of limited Palestinian autonomy and de facto Israeli sovereignty, compounded by the physical division of Palestinian territory by a network of roads constructed either for the sole purpose of serving Israeli settlements and military installations, or by roads which continue to be used by the IDF and Israeli settlers resident in the Palestinian territories. It is this scenario which has given rise to Palestinian fears of bantustanisation.

The concept of the bantustan has been addressed by Azmi Bishara. Writing in the wake of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, Bishara made the following remarks:

"The Gaza model is a bantustan. Gaza, currently, is a 'place' that lacks sovereignty and at the same time is not a part of Israel. It's neither one thing nor the other. Its people do not have the right of entry to Gaza's neighbouring countries. In this respect, they are even more restricted than in the bantustans of South Africa, where at least you could travel to work ... Gaza is an entity that is totally separate from, yet totally dependent on, Israel, politically and economically. It is a bantustan with one gate that can be opened and closed any time Israel chooses."⁸²

The extension of Palestinian autonomy facilitated by the Interim Agreement has confirmed that the Gaza model is also being applied to the West Bank. The creation of Palestinian enclaves in the major population centres denoted as 'Area A,' has replicated this model, complete with the infrastructure of an extensive network of settler roads specially constructed prior to the IDF redeployment. To quote Bishara once more: "Where is the basis for statehood? It resides only in the fact that there will be one PNA for all these bantustans ... At the end of the day, we can call these townships a state if we wish. We can call Arafat 'emperor' if we wish, but the reality is bantustanisation."⁸³

Successive Israeli governments may long have planned for the bantustanisation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, yet Israel has always lacked a solid international legal basis for the implementation of such a policy. As we have seen, the letters of recognition and DoP omitted any reference to resolution 181 and failed to specify the Palestinian interpretation of resolution 242, allowing Israel to continue to claim that there is no legal basis for a Palestinian state and that 'withdrawal' need not mean full-withdrawal to the 1967 borders. However, although the international legal status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip appeared jeopardised by the DoP, the legal situation *within* the occupied territories left room for hope. Shehadeh has noted that Article VII.9 of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement appeared to have resolved this conundrum, declaring that "laws and military orders in effect in the Gaza Strip or the Jericho Area prior to the signing of this Agreement shall remain in force, unless amended or abrogated in accordance with this Agreement."⁸⁴ The full implications of this concession are that, in effect, the PLO has now consented *explicitly* to the perpetuation of Israeli law within the autonomous areas, in addition to their de facto perpetuation in the areas which remain under full Israeli occupation.⁸⁵ Shehadeh explores the implications of this concession in the spheres of legal jurisdiction and jurisdiction over land and water.

In Shehadeh's view, the formally intact legal jurisdiction of Palestinian courts beyond annexed East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements was implicitly undermined by the DoP.⁸⁶ He draws attention to Article IV of the Agreed Minutes to the DoP:

"It is understood that:

1. Jurisdiction of the Council will cover West Bank and Gaza Strip territory, except for issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations: Jerusalem, settlements, military locations, and Israelis.
2. The Council's jurisdiction will apply with regard to the agreed powers, responsibilities, spheres and authorities transferred to it."⁸⁷

This implicit differentiation in legal status between Palestinians resident in the occupied territories and the Israeli settlers living in their midst, became explicit with the Gaza-Jericho Agreement. Annex III, Article I.2 declares that:

"Israel has sole criminal jurisdiction over the following offences:
 a. offences committed in the Settlements and the Military Installation Area subject to the provisions of this Annex; and
 b. offences committed in the territory by Israelis.⁸⁸

Shehadeh perceptively points out that the Gaza-Jericho Agreement "has entirely removed the Israeli settlements - as well as the Palestinians of East Jerusalem - from the legal jurisdiction of Palestinian courts."⁸⁹ The legal distinction between Israelis and Palestinian residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has thus shifted from the *de facto* extension of Israeli law to the occupied territories into the *de jure* maintenance of the occupation and the legal codification of the status quo, setting potentially dangerous precedents for the final status negotiations.

This shift from *de facto* to *de jure* occupation is confirmed in the articles dealing with jurisdiction over land. Annex II, Article II.B.22 specifically excludes 'Settlements and the Military Installation Area', from Palestinian jurisdiction, despite the fact that the land upon which they are built was Palestinian-owned and the process of confiscation entirely inconsistent with the provisions of international law. The same is also true of the

provisions dealing with the water supply, listed in Annex II, Article II.B.31 which stipulate the ongoing control of major water resources by the Israeli company, Mekoroth.⁹⁰

- "a. All water and sewage ... systems and resources in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area shall be operated, managed and developed (including drilling) by the Palestinian Authority..."
- b. As an exception ... the existing water systems supplying water to the Settlements and the Military Installation Area, and the water systems and resources inside them continue to be operated and managed by Mekoroth Water Co...
- d. ... the Palestinian Authority shall enable the supply of water to the Gush Katif settlement area and the Kfar Darom settlement by Mekoroth, as well as the maintenance by Mekoroth of the water systems supplying these locations and the water lines crossing the Jericho Area."⁹¹

In summary, notwithstanding the unique status of the DoP in international law, analysis of the legal implications of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement in the spheres of Palestinian legal jurisdiction, jurisdiction over land and jurisdiction over water, confirm the impression that the Gaza-Jericho Agreement has transformed the Israeli occupation from an illegal but de facto reality into a de jure blue-print for extra-territorial autonomy and the bantustanisation of Palestinian areas, whereby Israeli settlements and military installation areas acquire an altogether new legitimacy, and Israeli control over the resources of both land and water remain essentially intact. This arrangement will be administered by the reconstituted Palestinian elite, governing through the institutions detailed above and benefiting from the economic arrangements that accompany the project. The codification of Israeli control over this national project is both confirmed and extended by the Interim Agreement.

The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip

28 September 1995

The Interim Agreement was finally concluded after lengthy negotiations in the Red Sea resort of Taba. Instantly dubbed 'Oslo 2,' it provided further photo-opportunities and was signed in a second and hastily arranged ceremony at the White House on 28 September 1995. The text of the Agreement runs to 231 pages including annexes, the core of which fulfilled the requirements of Article VII.2 of the DoP which stipulated the following:

"The Interim Agreement shall specify, among other things, the structure of the [Legislative] Council, the number of its members, and the transfer of powers and responsibilities from the Israeli military government and its Civil Administration to the Council. The Interim Agreement shall also specify the Council's executive authority, legislative authority ... and the independent Palestinian judicial organs."⁹²

In addition, Article XXXI.2 declares that the provisions of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement (with minor exceptions), are superseded by the more detailed content of the Interim Agreement.⁹³ This section will focus on the extension of Palestinian autonomy to further areas of the West Bank which the Interim Agreement facilitated, assessing the implications for prospective statehood contained within its provisions. The analysis will address the territorial and legal aspects of the Agreement, with some concluding remarks on the 'securitisation' of Palestinian society. The concept of securitisation was introduced by Graham Usher and highlights the process whereby the Israeli priority of 'security' has been substituted for the provisions of international legality through the Oslo process.⁹⁴ The institutional content of the Interim Agreement demonstrates the accuracy of this analysis.

The most striking aspect of the Interim Agreement was the formal division of the West Bank into three differentiated zones, labelled Areas A, B and C (see Appendix 5). This division first emerges in Article XI, which appears to confirm the internal division of West Bank territory:

- "1. The two sides view the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as a single territorial unit, the integrity of which will be preserved during the interim period.
- 2. The two sides agree that West Bank and Gaza Strip territory, except for issues that will be negotiated in the permanent status negotiations, will come under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Council in a phased manner, to be completed within 18 months from the date of the inauguration of the Council, as specified below:
- a. Land in populated areas (Areas A and B), including government and Al Waqf land, will come under the jurisdiction of the Council during the first phase of redeployment.
- b. All civil powers and responsibilities, including planning and zoning, in Areas A and B ... will be transferred to ... the Council ..."
- c. In Area C, during the first phase of redeployment Israel will transfer to the Council civil powers and responsibilities not relating to territory ...
- d. The further redeployments of Israeli military forces to specified military locations will be gradually implemented ... in three phases, each to take place after an interval of six months, after the inauguration of the Council ..."⁹⁵

The stipulation that the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be considered as a single territorial unit appears reassuring, until we consider that for all practical purposes they are already divided, not only geographically but also by the regular imposition of Israeli closures which almost totally seal them off from one another. Moreover, the scheduled redeployment of Israeli forces to locations *within* the West Bank implies a measure of some permanency, especially in the light of the accelerated campaign of land confiscation and road construction which preceded the redeployment, in conjunction with the undisguised expansion of existing settlements which occurred under both the Labor Party and the Likud administration.

The three distinct zones established by the Interim Agreement are the major West Bank urban centres excluding Jerusalem and Hebron, the villages and hamlets outside them, and the 'unpopulated' areas. Area A comprised the most densely populated Palestinian areas in the West Bank, centred around the six towns of Jenin, Tulkarm, Qalqilya, Nablus, Ramallah and Bethlehem. Jerusalem was excluded as an issue for final status negotiations, whilst Hebron, with its unique concentration of militant religious Jewish settlers, was subject of another agreement concluded almost 18 months later and discussed below. The territory included in Area A totalled four percent of the West Bank with 19 percent of the Palestinian population.⁹⁶ The IDF was withdrawn fully from Area A towards the end of 1995, but redeployed immediately to the outskirts of each town. The impression conveyed to me by residents of Ramallah in the wake of the redeployment was one of relief that the town centre was now free of Israeli troops, accompanied by cynicism over the creation of new checkpoints along all of the major roads; a Palestinian checkpoint nearest to the town centre, followed by another IDF checkpoint barely a stone-throw away.

Populated Palestinian zones outside of town centres were designated Area B. This included 450 Palestinian villages, occupying some 23 percent of West Bank territory and including 68 percent of the population.⁹⁷ Within Area B, the PNA was allowed to assume civil responsibilities and the Palestinian police deployed to maintain order, yet Israel retained a presence and overall responsibility for security. Israel retained full control of Area C, which included areas with no sizeable Palestinian population and territory occupied by Israeli settlements and military installations. Significantly, Area C covered 73 percent of the West Bank,⁹⁸ a very large proportion of the land which would be required to form the territorial basis of a prospective Palestinian state.

According to Article XI.1.(d), noted above, the IDF committed itself to a series of three further redeployments at six month intervals from the remainder of Area B. Assuming that these redeployments go ahead and that the borders of Area C really do

begin to shrink as the IDF implements further withdrawals, Israel can still be expected to retain control of around one third of West Bank territory. The Israeli retention of settlements and military installation areas during the interim phase creates the impression of a blue-print for the final status negotiations which confirms precisely the fears expressed by Bishara of bantustanisation. Finally, fears have been compounded by the subsequent imposition of 'internal closures' within the West Bank, a new policy which Israel has employed during times of tension since the redeployment.⁹⁹

The permanent internal division of Palestinian territory seems a justifiable fear in light of the ongoing expansion of illegal Israeli settlements.¹⁰⁰ In August 1992, the Rabin government had announced a freeze on new settlement construction, but added that "the 10,000 units whose construction was begun by the Likud would be completed."¹⁰¹ In effect, housing construction continued apace during the Labor government, compounded by further land confiscation for the new re-deployment roads built prior to the withdrawal. With the election of the Likud in May 1996, the situation deteriorated further. In July 1996, Prime Minister Netanyahu bowed to pressure within Likud and installed Ariel Sharon as the new Infrastructure Minister. The cabinet agreed thereafter to abolish all previous restrictions on settlement expansion (such as they were), as laid down by the previous Labor administration.¹⁰²

The Likud's settlement plans became clearer during 1997 with the publication of Netanyahu's 'Allon Plus' plan. The central provisions of the 'Allon Plus' plan include:

"Israeli sovereignty in a 15-km.-wide belt, including the Jordan Valley and its western mountain ridge, and in the Judean Desert running west from the Dead Sea.

Expansion of the territorial bridge between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean coast by widening Israeli sovereignty north-west of the city to the settlement of Beyt Horon and south to the Etzion Bloc.

Expansion of metropolitan Jerusalem by annexation of territory north to the settlements of Givat Ze'ev and Beyt El, east to Ma'ale Edumim, and south to the Etzion Bloc.

Disruption of the territorial continuity of the Palestinian entity in the West Bank by the placement of Israeli settlements under Israeli sovereignty and the creation of four transport 'corridors' ... running in an east-west direction, connecting Israel to the Jordan Valley.

Disruption of the territorial continuity between the Palestinian population straddling the Green Line ... by expanding Israeli sovereignty east ..."¹⁰³

This plan, apparently similar in content to a map presented to US President Clinton in February 1997, would entail the annexation of over 50 percent of the West Bank.¹⁰⁴ In summary, the expansion of the settlements, the construction of an inter-connecting road infrastructure, the formal internal division of Palestinian lands, the strangulation of East Jerusalem and the potential annexation of such a large percentage of West Bank territory plainly undermines the territorial basis for a prospective Palestinian state.

If the internal division of the West Bank appears to erode the territorial basis for statehood, the restrictions placed upon the Legislative Council set equally alarming precedents for the legal status of the autonomous institutions and their jurisdiction over the land. Article XVIII.4-6 listed these restrictions as follows:

"4.(a). Legislation, including legislation which amends or abrogates existing laws *or military orders* [emphasis added], which exceeds the jurisdiction of the Council ... shall have no effect and shall be void ab initio.

b. The Ra'ees of the Executive Authority of the Council shall not promulgate legislation adopted by the Council if such legislation falls under the provisions of this paragraph.

5. All legislation shall be communicated to the Israeli side of the Legal Committee.

6. ... the Israeli side of the Legal Committee may refer for the attention of the Committee any legislation regarding which Israel considers the provisions of paragraph 4 apply ..."¹⁰⁵

Consistent with the provisions of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, legislation promulgated by the Legislative Council is still subject to the approval of the occupying power. The somewhat circumscribed authority of the Legislature is consistent with the legal situation which Shehadeh so lamented and which the Interim Agreement serves to confirm.

Annex IV of the Interim Agreement (Protocol Concerning Legal Matters), adds a little more detail to the legal situation created by the Gaza-Jericho Agreement. The principles - one law for Palestinians and another for Israelis and the consequent circumscription of the PNA's jurisdiction - remain the same. Article I. includes the following:

"1.a. The criminal jurisdiction of the Council covers all offences committed by Palestinians and/or *non-Israelis* [emphasis added] in the Territory, subject to the provisions of this Article.

... "Territory" means West Bank territory except for Area C which, except for the Settlements and the military locations, will be gradually transferred to the Palestinian side ... and Gaza Strip territory except for the Settlements and Military Installation Area ...

2. Israel has sole criminal jurisdiction over the following offences:

- a. offences committed outside the Territory ...
- b. Offences committed in the Territory by Israelis.¹⁰⁶

The establishment of two codes of law and two distinct realms of jurisdiction is not new to the Interim Agreement, but it does confirm Shehadeh's suspicions regarding the formal legitimisation of the occupation which began with the Gaza-Jericho Agreement (albeit in a revised and less-obtrusive form), and the undermining of the rule of 'Palestinian' law and the basis for a Palestine state.

The last point to make regarding the Interim Agreement is its contribution to the idea of 'securitisation'. As noted earlier, references to a 'strong police force' first appeared in the DoP (Article VIII) and were echoed in the Gaza-Jericho Agreement (Article VIII, Article IX, expanded in Annex I). Similar references to the Palestinian police force and security appear in the Interim Agreement (Articles I.3, XII - XV and Annex I). Two important points might be made here: firstly, the remit of the Palestinian police is firmly directed towards the protection of Israelis from Palestinians and not the other way around and, secondly, despite the stipulation that the Police be established by the Legislative

Council, they were in fact established by the PLO Chairman and his close colleagues and are basically beyond the control of the elected authority.

Annex I (Protocol Concerning Redeployment and Security Arrangements), contained comprehensive details on the PNA's security apparatus, including the structure and composition of the different services which are discussed in detail in the following chapter. With regard to the present analysis, Annex I, Article II is of the greatest interest. Under the heading of 'Security Policy for the Prevention of Terrorism and Violence,' Article II outlines the policy of the Palestinian police.

"1.b. The Palestinian Police will act systematically against all expressions of violence and terror.

d. The Palestinian Police will arrest and prosecute individuals who are suspected of perpetrating acts of violence and terror.

2. Both sides will ... act to ensure the immediate, efficient and effective handling of any incident involving a threat or act of terrorism, violence or incitement, whether committed by Palestinians or Israelis. To this end, they will cooperate in the exchange of information and coordinate policies and activities. Each side shall immediately and effectively respond to the occurrence or anticipated occurrence of an act of terrorism, violence or incitement and shall take all necessary measures to prevent such an occurrence.

3.c. [Each side shall] apprehend, investigate and prosecute perpetrators and all other persons directly or indirectly involved in acts of terrorism
...
¹⁰⁷

This outline of policy, viewed in the context of the security apparatus constructed by Arafat and the practice of the police in the intervening period, makes it clear that the Israeli priority of internal security has taken practical precedence over the international legality of the Palestinian claims to self-determination and the right to struggle for that end. Moreover, the PNA's security apparatus is specifically obliged to cooperate with Israeli intelligence while the IDF remains in occupation of much of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Palestinian prisoners remain in Israeli jails.

The politics of the security apparatus, dealt with in detail in chapter four, is no small matter. What needs to be emphasised here (and has been noted by Usher), is the unaccountability of the Palestinian police as they perform their duties according to the Israeli agenda. Article XIV of the Interim Agreement had stipulated that: "The Council shall establish a strong police force."¹⁰⁸ However, as we saw with the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, the PNA began to assume its responsibilities in May 1994, almost two years before the inaugural session of the elected Council in March 1996. This is an important point because in the period between Arafat's arrival in Gaza and the inauguration of the Council, the PLO Chairman transformed and transplanted his personalised network of military cadres into the core of the PNA's security apparatus. These cadres are not in reality accountable to elected civilian politicians. They receive their orders from Arafat and are accountable to him alone, while Arafat in turn is accountable to the Israeli government. The apparent victory of the Israeli policy agenda and the co-option of senior PLO (Fatah) cadres into the structures built to enforce it does indeed amount to the securitisation of the Oslo process.

The Four Documents Comprising the Agreement on Hebron 15 January 1997

There are four separate documents which together constitute the Israeli-PLO agreement on Hebron (referred to hereafter as the Hebron Agreement). These are: the Protocol Concerning the Redeployment in Hebron; Agreed Minute: American Plan on al-Shuhada Street; the U.S Note for the Record; and the Letter from US Secretary of State Warren Christopher to Netanyahu. The Hebron Agreement is a small agreement which need not detain us at length. The important point to note is the reproduction on a micro-scale of the principle of internal division which the Gaza-Jericho Agreement and the Interim Agreement facilitated on a macro-scale.

Following the massacre of 29 Palestinians by a Jewish settler in Hebron's Ibrahimi Mosque in February 1994, former Prime Minister Rabin appeared to have the excuse he needed to evacuate the militant settlers from the heart of Hebron's old city. Instead he did nothing at all, other than allow a token international presence in the form of peace-keeping troops.¹⁰⁹ This has led many to conclude that the Israeli government - of whatever hue - has no intention of uprooting even the most political and militant of settlers. The Hebron Agreement appears to support this assessment, leaving around 420 militant and well-armed settlers in the heart of Hebron's old city, surrounded by 120,000 Palestinian residents whose entire pattern of daily life is governed by the needs of the settlers in their midst.¹¹⁰ The negative effect of the settler's presence ranges from the division of rights to worship in the Ibrahimi Mosque to the closure of the main commercial road in the town centre, al-Shuhadeh Street. Closed to *Palestinians* after the massacre in February 1994, the Hebron Agreement provides for its gradual re-opening, with the addition that, significantly, the US development agency, US AID, will construct a wall down the middle, "0.40 meters wide, 1.50 meters high and 30 meters long."¹¹¹

The limited IDF withdrawal from Hebron fulfilled the requirements of Annex I, Article VII of the Interim Agreement. This had established, and the Hebron Agreement confirmed, the division of Hebron into zones 'H-1' and 'H-2'. Article 2.(a) of the Protocol Concerning Redeployment in Hebron stipulated the following:

"a.1. The Palestinian Police will assume responsibilities in area H-1 similar to those in other cities in the West Bank; and

[a]2. Israel will retain all powers and responsibilities for internal security and public order in Area H-2. In addition, Israel will continue to carry responsibility for overall security of Israelis."¹¹²

Article 9 adds the reassurance that: "Both sides reiterate their commitment to the unity of the City of Hebron, and their understanding that the division of security responsibility will not divide the city."¹¹³ However, for all practical purposes, Israel's retention of control

over the Jewish settlement area in the heart of Hebron's old city does precisely that, setting another predictable yet alarming precedent for the final status negotiations.

With regard to Israeli jurisdiction, Article 10.b. stipulates the following:

"In Area H-2, the civil powers and responsibilities will be transferred to the Palestinian side, except for those relating to Israelis and their property, which shall continue to be exercised by the Israeli Military Government."¹¹⁴

Consistent with the pattern established since the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, Israel has again established the legitimate right to exercise authority within occupied Palestinian areas, detracting from the jurisdiction of the PNA and consolidating the rule of one law for Palestinians and another for Israelis.

In conclusion, juxtaposing the PLO's mandate with the framework of transition does not inspire confidence in the PLO's capacity to realise a second transition from semi-autonomy to statehood. The analysis of the institutional, political, and territorial content of the process illustrates the severe restrictions placed on the autonomy project, restrictions that are equally apparent in the economic content of the process. The establishment of a series of Israeli-Palestinian 'joint committees' subordinates the Palestinian national project to a broader framework under Israeli control. This principle was established by the DoP and elaborated in the Gaza-Jericho and Interim Agreements. The territorial aspects of the process are apparent from the outset, but became especially clear with the Interim Agreement and, on a smaller scale, with the Agreement on Hebron. The West Bank and Gaza will remain under external Israeli control, with islands of Palestinian autonomy surrounded by newly-legitimate settlements and an accompanying road infrastructure. This gloomy scenario, derived above from textual analysis, seems entirely consistent with the physical reality in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as I experienced it. The sheer scale of land confiscation, settlement construction, the settlement-road infrastructure and the continuing Israeli military presence (entailing a network of roadblocks and checkpoints),

overseen by a heavily armed but heavily circumscribed PNA, does indeed point to the bantustanisation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Beginning with the letters of recognition and the DoP, the framework of transition conveys the impression of a continuum of compromise, whereby the provisions of international law have been undermined in return for Israeli recognition of the PLO as an acceptable negotiating partner. This outcome can be explained in terms of our framework of analysis. In the first place, the framework of transition reflects the structural context in which it was negotiated. As we have seen, changes in the social structure of the occupied territories generated a *potential* threat to the authoritative leadership of the diaspora-based nationalist elite. In the wake of the second Gulf War, this elite also found itself diplomatically isolated on both the regional and international levels, with its institutional powerbase facing the threat of insolvency. The Oslo process offered a path out of this dilemma, providing an institutional solution that sacrificed much of the PLO's mandate (and most of its constituents outside Palestine), whilst securing the perpetuation of the elite through the transformation of the liberation movement into the institutions of semi-autonomy.

The institutional content of the framework of transition illustrates the mechanisms available to the elite as they sought to re-secure their authoritative leadership. Firstly, the terms of transition from the DoP onwards facilitated the transformation of the bureaucratic and military apparatus of the PLO into the civil institutions and security apparatus of the PNA. Secondly, provisions for local recruitment allowed for bureaucratic and military expansionism and wide-spread recruitment amongst local activists. This would facilitate the co-option and coercion of local armed elements. Thirdly, the Gaza-Jericho Agreement's provisions for the 'Palestinian Authority' left executive and legislative power in the hands of the returnee elite, granting scope for elite agency to shape institutions and co-opt representatives of local forces into the new national project. Fourthly, the construction of

an alliance with local notables and bourgeois elements was enhanced by the prospect of an elected Council, promising local agents a role in government and the means to disburse patronage. Fifthly, this alliance between the returnee elite and local elements was underpinned by the economic arrangements specified in the DoP. However, as with the institutional content of the agreements, Palestinian economic development appears destined to remain subordinate to Israel, perpetuating the neo-colonial exploitation of the occupied territories with some politico-administrative modifications. These modifications, embodied in the institutions of the autonomy project, will be managed by co-operative local agents from amongst the reconstituted Palestinian elite. The empirical detail of the institutions of autonomy will now be examined in chapters four and five.

FOOTNOTES

¹UN General Assembly resolution 181 was passed on 29 November 1947. It called for the partition of Palestine into two separate Arab and Jewish states with Jerusalem granted special status under the administration of the UN. Excerpts in the PASSIA Diary 1996, pp. 286-288.

²Ovendale, *op. cit.*, p.258. UN Security Council resolution 242 was passed on 22 November 1967, resolution 338 on 22 October 1973. Texts in PASSIA Diary 1996, pp. 291-293.

³Arafat cited in Rabie, *op. cit.*, p.65.

⁴Burhan Dajani, 'An Alternative to Oslo', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 25, No.4, (Summer 1996), p.8.

⁵Mouin Rabbani, cited in Usher, *op. cit.*, p.14.

⁶Burhan Dajani, 'The September 1993 Israeli-PLO Documents: A Textual Analysis,' Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 23, No. 3, (Spring 1994), pp.5-23.

⁷As Dajani points out, one of the letters was not actually signed until 10 September. The text of the three letters ('Arafat's letter to Rabin,' 'Rabin's Letter to Arafat,' and 'Arafat's letter to Holst'), together with the text of 'the DOP', 'the Cairo Agreement,' and 'the Gaza-Jericho Agreement', are taken from: Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information (IPCRI), Israeli-Palestinian Peace Documentation Series (Vol.1 No.1), (Jerusalem: IPCRI, 1994). Copies of the three letters and the DoP can also be found in the appendix to Abbas, *op. cit.*, and Makovsky, *op. cit.*

⁸'Arafat's letter to Rabin', (listed under DoP) *op. cit.*, p.26

⁹Gemayel's assassination remains a murky affair, commonly attributed to Syria. He was not assassinated directly for abandoning Palestinian rights, but was ensnared in a contentious alliance with Israel at the time. Equally, Sadat's assassination owed as much to the affront caused to Islamists by his westernisation of Egypt as it did to his abandonment of Palestine. Nevertheless, both leaders were perceived to have betrayed the Palestinian cause in the context of broader policy considerations which resulted in their deaths.

¹⁰Interview with Hayder Abd al-Shafi.

¹¹The Jerusalem Post, 6 November 1995.

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³Dajani, 'The Israeli-PLO Documents,' *op. cit.*, p.6.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p.6.

¹⁵'The DoP', *op. cit.*, p.11.

¹⁶The law of treaties was codified in the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties in 1969. According to Akehurst: "Article 2(1)(a) ... defines a treaty, for the purposes of the Convention, as 'an agreement concluded between states in written form and governed by international law, whether embodied in a single instrument or in two or more related instruments, and whatever its particular designation.' Michael Akehurst, A Modern Introduction to International Law (6th Edition), (London: Unwin Hyman, 1987), p.124. The full text of the Vienna Convention can be found in Ian Brownlie (Ed.), Basic Documents in International Law (3rd Edition), (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), pp.349-386.

¹⁷Dajani, 'The Israeli-PLO Documents,' *op. cit.*, p.18.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p.6.

¹⁹Raja Shehadeh, 'Questions of Jurisdiction: a Legal Analysis of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement,' Journal of Palestine Studies Vol. 23, No. 4, (Summer 1994), pp.18-25.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p.19.

²¹The full text of resolution 242 is contained in the PASSIA Diary 1996, p.291.

²²'Arafat's Letter to Rabin', *op. cit.*, p.26.

²³This point was repeatedly made to me by activists of all factions during fieldwork. This perspective is not based on a specific interview, but rather on the repetition of the same viewpoint during casual conversations and numerous interviews in the course of 14 months fieldwork between July 1994 and February 1996.

²⁴'Arafat's Letter to Holst', *op. cit.*, p.28.

²⁵The Fatah Higher Committee signalled the end of the Intifada by "annulling the general strike" observed in the occupied territories "on the ninth of each month to commemorate the beginning of the Intifada on 9 December 1987." Ironically, this was the same week that Israel assassinated Yehya Ayyash, the Hamas mastermind known as 'The Engineer' who was responsible for several bus-bombings in Israel. (Israel has never acknowledged responsibility). 'Intifada is Over', Palestine Report, 12 January 1996, p.13.

²⁶'Arafat's Letter to Rabin', *op. cit.*, p.26.

²⁷Dajani notes that; "the letter does not say that these provisions *will* become inoperative, but that *they are* inoperative. Article 33 of the Palestine National Charter requires that any amendment receive a two-thirds majority within the Palestine National Council (PNC)..." Arafat only asks for their approval to a commitment he has already made. Dajani, 'The Israeli-PLO Documents', *op. cit.*, p.8.

²⁸'Rabin's Letter to Arafat,' *op. cit.*, p.27.

²⁹'The DoP', *op.cit.*, p.9.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p.11.

³¹For the details of the first PNA cabinet, the 'Council of Ministers', see appendix 4.

³²*Ibid.*

³³*Ibid.*, p.10

³⁴*Ibid.*, p.12.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p.17.

³⁶*Ibid.*, p.18.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p.10.

³⁸*Ibid.*, p.16.

³⁹*Ibid.*, p.10

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p.11.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, pp.11-12. Article XII comes under the heading 'Liaison and Co-operation with Jordan and Egypt'. The status of the refugees is raised again during the conclusion.

⁴²*Ibid.*, p.17.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p.14.

⁴⁴The scale of the trade imbalance between the West Bank and Israel is highlighted by the following figures:

West Bank Trade with Israel for Selected Years (in Millions of \$US).

Year	Balance	Exports	Imports
1969	-39.0	12.3	51.3
1970	-38.4	16.3	54.7
1971	-39.6	20.9	60.5
1972	-55.6	25.6	81.2
1973	-76.7	41.6	118.3
1974	-109.2	62.8	172.0
1975	-134.1	69.9	204.0

Year	Balance	Exports	Imports
1976	-145.0	77.1	222.1
1977	-166.0	73.6	239.6
1978	-139.2	77.9	217.1
1979	-208.6	89.0	297.6
1980	-239.6	111.3	350.5
1981	-252.2	129.6	381.8
1983	-272.9	134.0	406.9
1984	-263.2	99.9	363.1
1985	-243.4	96.1	339.5
1986	-280.8	156.0	436.6

Figures from the Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1986, in Samara, *op.cit.*, p.314.

⁴⁵Ghassan al-Khatib, in Israeli Obstacles to Economic Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, (Jerusalem: JMCC, 1994), p.viii-ix.

⁴⁶The Committee for Democratic Action (CDA), Autonomy versus Statehood - Gaza and Jericho First: A New Phase in the Struggle of the Palestinian People, (Jerusalem: Hanitzotz A-Sharara Publishing House, 1994), p.25.

⁴⁷'The DoP', *op.cit.*, p.12.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p.13.

⁴⁹The CDA, *op.cit.*, p.30. For further details of this noble project, see Shimon Peres, The New Middle East, (New York: Henry Holt and Company Inc., 1993).

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p.31.

⁵¹Dajani, *op.cit.*, p.11.

⁵²Yediot Aharonot, Magazine Section, 15 September 1993, cited in The Committee for Democratic Action, *Ibid.*, p.27.

⁵³Samir Hazboun, 'The Economic Impact of the Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles on the West Bank, Gaza Strip and the Middle East Region', Israel/Palestine Issues in Conflict, Issues in Cooperation, Vol.III, No.1 (January 1994), p.5.

⁵⁴'The DoP', *op.cit.*, pp.19-20.

⁵⁵Samara, *op.cit.*, p.347.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, p.344.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p.348.

⁵⁸Study of Palestinian banking produced by The Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS), reported in the Jerusalem Times, 6 October 1995.

⁵⁹MAS report, cited in *Ibid.*, 7 July 1995.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 6 October 1995.

⁶¹*Ibid.*

⁶²*Ibid.*, 30 June 1995.

⁶³*Ibid.*

⁶⁴Hazboun et al, *op.cit.*, p.10.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*

⁶⁶The Jerusalem Post, 'Money Magazine' section, 6 December 1995.

⁶⁷According to the Jerusalem Post, the Minister of Planning and Economics, Nabil Shaath, together with Mohammad Nashashibi in the Finance Ministry, opposed the project on the grounds that it would delay developments in Gaza which were more independent of the Israeli economy. On the other hand, Ahmad Qrai' in the Ministry of Trade and Industry took a different view. For him, a seaport in Gaza and other related projects were unnecessary. According to the report, "In an apparent gesture to Shaath, the first of nine suggested 'border estates' has been designated for the Karni site, outside Gaza City, closer to where a Gaza seaport would hopefully be dug, rather than at the Erez checkpoint, which leads to Ashdod."

⁶⁸Up to 120,000 Palestinian labourers were employed in Israel prior to the signing of the DoP, a figure which has since fallen to around 10,000 as Israel turned to alternative sources of cheap foreign labour, principally from Thailand and eastern Europe.

⁶⁹Palestine Report, 5 July 1997.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, 23 June 1995.

⁷¹'The Cairo Agreement,' *op. cit.*, p.2.

⁷²*Ibid.*, p.3

⁷³*Ibid.*, pp.3-4.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p.3.

⁷⁵Shehadeh, 'Questions of Jurisdiction,' *op. cit.*, p.18.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*

⁷⁷"The Gaza-Jericho Agreement', *op.cit.*, p.3.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, p.14.

⁷⁹"The Cairo Agreement,' *op. cit.*, p.2.

⁸⁰"The Gaza-Jericho Agreement,' *op. cit.*, p.3.

⁸¹*Ibid.* p.3

⁸²Bishara, 'Bantustanisation or bi-nationalism: an interview with Azmi Bishara', Race and Class, Vol.37, No. 2, (October-December 1995), p.46.

⁸³*Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

⁸⁴Shehadeh, 'Questions of Jurisdiction,' *op. cit.*, p.19.

⁸⁵Shehadeh noted; "The seriousness of the concession made by the Palestinian side in the 4 May agreement's Article VII.9 - which perpetuates, with Palestinian consent, the occupier's law - may not have yet been fully grasped by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) leadership, which as we shall see is quite astonishingly inattentive to legal niceties." *Ibid.*, p.19.

⁸⁶The basis of the formal jurisdiction of Palestinian civil courts in the West Bank, including the impact of Israeli military orders issued during the occupation, is outlined by Shehadeh, *Ibid.*, pp.19-20. For a study of the legal situation in the West Bank from Ottoman times to the DoP, see Raja Shehadeh, The Declaration of Principles and the Legal System in the West Bank, (Jerusalem: PASSIA, 1994).

⁸⁷Shehadeh, 'Questions of Jurisdiction,' *op. cit.*, p.20. 'The Gaza-Jericho Agreement,' *op. cit.*, p. 23.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*

⁸⁹Shehadeh, 'Questions of Jurisdiction,' *op. cit.*, p.20.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, pp.21-22.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 21-22. 'The Gaza-Jericho Agreement,' *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

⁹²'The DoP,' *op. cit.*, p.12.

⁹³Article XXXI reads: "The Gaza-Jericho Agreement, except for Article XX (Confidence-Building Measures), the Preparatory Transfer Agreement and the Further Transfer Protocol will be superseded by this Agreement." 'The Interim Agreement,' JMCC Occasional Document Series, No.7, (The Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre: Jerusalem, 1996), p.24.

⁹⁴Graham Usher, 'The Politics of Internal Security: the PA's New Intelligence Services,' Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.25, No.4, (Summer 1996), p.21.

⁹⁵'The Interim Agreement,' *op.cit.*, p.15.

⁹⁶Figures from The Middle East, November 1995, p.5.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*

⁹⁸*Ibid.*

⁹⁹Israel imposed 'internal closure' on the West Bank during February and March 1996, following the campaign of suicide bombings. The closure was employed again after demonstrations erupted in protest at the opening of the 'Hashmonean Tunnel' under the al-Aqsa Mosque on 23 September 1996. During these extensive clashes, 86 Palestinians were killed by the IDF, the majority by live ammunition. Israeli tanks were deployed on the outskirts of major population centres, and movement between Areas A, B and C was all but impossible. The impact of closure crippled economic activity and effectively rendered Palestinians prisoners within their allotted 'zones'. Palestine Report, 27 September and 4 October 1996, JMCC Press Service, 28 September 1996. Personal correspondence with Palestinian friends from Bir Zeit.

¹⁰⁰The status of the settler population has been estimated as follows:

	1994	1995	1996
Settlement population beyond the Green Line	290,000	301,000	313,000
Settlements beyond the Green Line	250	250	300
Settlers in the West Bank	121,000	127,600	136,000
Yearly increase of settlers in the West Bank	9,400	3,500	6,000
Residential sites in the West Bank	181	180	190
Israeli population in 20 neighborhoods of East Jerusalem	149,000	153,700	156,000 166,800*
Yearly increase of Israeli individuals in East Jerusalem neighborhoods	9,000	4,700	2,600
Israeli settler population of 20 settlements in Gaza Strip	4,800	5,000	5,000
Annual increase in Israeli population in Gaza Strip	300	200	0
Israeli Settler population in the Golan Heights	14,700	14,800	15,000

Israeli settlements in the Golan Heights	36	34	36
Annual increase of Israeli population in the Golan Heights	700	100	200
Israeli settlers as a percentage of the population in the occupied territories	12	11	13
Unoccupied housing units in existing Israeli settlements	15,000	15,600	17,000
Housing starts in settlements beyond the Green Line	3,700	4,100	3,100
Housing completions in settlements beyond the Green Line	2,600	3,800	3,500

*Statistical Yearbook, Jerusalem 1996.

Source: Settlement Report July-August 1997, cited in 'Settlement Monitor', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.27, No.1., (Autumn 1997), p.135.

¹⁰¹'Peace Now, Report on Planned Expansion of Settlements,' Jerusalem, 10 January 1995 in 'Documents and Source Material', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.24, No.3, (Spring 1995), p.145.

¹⁰²On the internal politicking over Sharon's appointment, see The Guardian, 4 July 1996.

¹⁰³'Netanyahu Presents His 'Allon Plus' Final Status Map' in 'Settlement Monitor', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 27, No.1, (Autumn 1997), pp.126-128.

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵'The Interim Agreement,' *op. cit.*, p.20.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p.17.

¹⁰⁹Rabin's refusal to forcibly evacuate the Hebron settlers echoed his decision not to confront the militant Gush Emunim settler movement over a settlement near Sebastia, (an early 'political' as opposed to 'security' settlement), in the West Bank, during his first period in office (1974-1977). Prior to his assassination, Rabin's public statements betrayed an attitude towards the settlers which bordered on contempt, yet he plainly lacked the courage or vision to take decisive action and uproot them. Boas Evron, 'The Rabin that Failed,' Palestine-Israel Journal, Vol.2 No.1, (Winter 1995), pp. 50-55. The Labor Party's ambiguous position on this matter is underlined by the fact that Kiryat Arba (the settlement

which proudly spawned Baruch Goldstein), was first established by Labor in 1968. Useful sources on the politics of Israeli settlements include: Sandler, *op. cit.*, and The Department of Palestine Affairs (Ed's), Secretariat General of the League of Arab States, Israeli Settlements in the Occupied Arab Territories: an International Symposium, (Place of publication not specified: Dar al-Afaq al-Jadidah, 1985).

¹¹⁰Figures from The Middle East, March 1997, pp.6-8.

¹¹¹The full text of the Hebron Agreement is drawn from Palestine Report, (Special Edition), 17 January 1997.

¹¹²*Ibid.*, no page number included.

¹¹³*Ibid.*

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*

Chapter Four

From Liberation Movement to National Authority: The Institutional Basis of the National Project

The conclusion of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement on 4 May 1994 facilitated the arrival of the first contingent of PLO forces in the Gaza Strip and Jericho enclave¹ and the establishment of the PNA. The provisions of the DoP for a Palestinian Interim Self-Governing Authority led to the establishment of the PNA, the designation chosen for the new national project by Arafat's decision to invoke the Ten Point 'Phased Political Programme' from the 12th PNC of 1974.² Point two of the programme had called for the establishment of a "people's national, independent and fighting authority on every part of Palestinian land that is liberated."³ The PLO Central Council ratified Arafat's decision, together with the DoP, on 10 October 1993.⁴

I have argued above that the negotiated framework of transition provides for a national project constituting a politico-administrative modification of the Israeli occupation, managed by a re-constituted Palestinian elite, and predicated on the perpetuation of Palestinian economic dependency. In this context, this chapter assesses the elite-driven institutional adaptation of the PLO, returning us to the first three criteria of Table 1; an authoritative leadership, a bureaucracy and a subordinate armed force. The focus on institutions is not intended to exclude analysis of social forces during what amounts to a state-building process (even though a state is by no means the guaranteed outcome). Rather, institutions are said to provide a subject for analysis reflecting the role of elite agency and the nature of power within the new national project. The analysis draws on empirical material (much of it derived from fieldwork), in order to help explain the process of elite formation under autonomy. As Rex Brynen has noted:

"Palestinian elite formation ... *must* be understood in different ways. In other words, the impact of traditional patterns of social organization, occupation and socio-economic change, and the organizational dynamics of the Palestinian national movement operate simultaneously, generating different paths of elite recruitment and multiple lines of elite cleavage. Moreover, the future emergence of formal state structures may complicate this picture further."⁵

Because the primary concern of the thesis rests with the *PLO's* transition, the bulk of the information presented here focuses on PLO institutions and personnel, leading by extension to the hegemonic Fatah faction. Fatah personnel are said to retain a centrality, but not omnipresence, in the transition process. In terms of our transitional model, the analysis argues that the diaspora-based nationalist elite succeeded in reasserting their authoritative leadership, supported by the practical transformation of the PLO's bureaucratic and military institutions into the quasi-state apparatus of the PNA. This authoritative leadership was enhanced by bureaucratic and military expansionism, a common feature of Third World state-building projects.⁶ The authority of the PNA was further bolstered by an alliance with local elites: the co-option of local notables and wealthy businessmen into the institutions of the PNA promised a share in the disbursement of (quasi) state-patronage, complementing the opportunities for private capital established (in principle) by the DoP.

The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section addresses the nature of power and decision-making within the PLO, underlining predictable yet significant lines of continuity with the PNA. The analysis identifies a pattern of what might be termed 'factional-corporatism,' whereby institutional cohesion is linked with the authoritarian rule of Arafat. We can borrow here from the model of the rentier state, which argues that freedom of "rulers from their dependence on domestic revenue sources, frees them from the demands for democratic participation that accompanies the provision of taxes."⁷ The Palestinian 'liberation tax' notwithstanding, PLO finances have been mostly based on donations from state-sponsors, sponsors that generally favoured Fatah. Arafat's centrality

within Fatah has both facilitated and maintained his personalised control of PLO finances. Control of financial resources allowed the PLO Chairman to rely on rent-seeking within the PLO, perpetuating his authority and helping to maintain the cohesion of the institution. My analysis will demonstrate how this pattern has been repeated, with some modifications, in the PNA.

The second section examines the formal structure of Fatah and the patterns of institutional adaptation prompted by the autonomy project. This serves two purposes. Firstly, it allows us to assess the political processes within the central faction of the autonomy project, in particular the grafting-on of the internal-wing with external structures. Secondly, as the PLO begins to realise its institutional solution, attention to the key players within Fatah facilitates a more nuanced analysis of Fatah's role in the autonomy project. The third section outlines the civil institutions of the PNA and the nature of the bureaucracy which staffs them, illustrating the centrality of Fatah personnel and the supporting role of local elites. The fourth and final section examines the structure and composition of the security services, detailing the role of returnee and local activists. The analysis concludes by examining their performance since redeployment, the role played in the state-building process, and the implications of the mandate established by the framework of transition.

Patterns of Continuity in the PLO and the PNA

There is a demonstrable continuity in the patterns of patronage, rent-seeking and centralised leadership in the PLO and the PNA. In order to underline the level of continuity, this section takes a look at the PLO from the perspective of the Executive Committee. Most of the observations that follow are based on an interview with Sulayman al-Najjab, the PPP's representative on the Executive Committee. Al-Najjab has been a member of the Executive Committee since the PPP took a seat during the 18th PNC in 1987, following which the essence of the PPP's political programme was adopted by the

19th PNC in 1988. He was present in Geneva for the launch of the diplomatic initiative which led to the US-PLO dialogue, and was reconfirmed as the PPP's representative by the 21st PNC in 1996. As a non-Fatah and genuinely independent member of the Executive Committee, al-Najjab is not privy to the same information as Arafat and, indeed, has his own, contestable interpretation. Nevertheless, with ten years first-hand experience of the workings of the Executive Committee, his observations offer a valuable insight into the PLO with clear implications for the PNA.

Al-Najjab's account illustrates four characteristics of the PLO which demonstrate the rent-seeking model in transition: firstly, the consolidation of Fatah hegemony within the PLO; secondly, the personal control of PLO finance by Arafat; thirdly, the importance of the military within the diaspora nationalist elite; fourthly, in the wake of the DoP, the increasing substitution of PLO institutions by the PNA.

The diaspora-based nationalist elite has always served as Arafat's key constituency. In al-Najjab's words, there is:

"a fundamental reason why Yasir Arafat had such influence and power within the framework of the PLO and its executive organs. This goes back to the fact that the PLO was in the diaspora and the representation reflected in its institutions reflects the balance of forces among Palestinian gatherings outside, not the balance of forces within the framework of Palestinian society which is in the Occupied Territories."⁸

The composition of the Executive Committees elected by the 20th and 21st PNC's (the latter being the first held in Palestine since 1964), are detailed in Appendix 1 to illustrate the point. Three of the factions, the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF), the Arab Liberation Front (ALF) and the PLF, have a barely discernible following in Palestine which probably only extends to a network of friends and family. Equally, not one of the representatives elected by the 20th PNC was resident in the West Bank or the Gaza Strip at the time. Israeli obstacles to resident Palestinian participation have obviously affected their ability to assume a greater role within the PLO, but this is not the only factor at work.

In 1991, the PPP launched an initiative to redress the imbalance of representation in favour of independent Palestinians and representatives from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Not surprisingly, this initiative was "rejected by *all* the Palestinian organisations. *All of them*, because it touches on the privilege of many."⁹ This included the non-Fatah factions, anxious to defend their small share in the PLO bureaucracy, the PNC, and the Palestinian unions. In al-Najjab's view, this system now faces a real test:

"That is to say, how, in composition and functioning, would these institutions reflect and defend the real interests of Palestinian society, formed of different social classes, with different social interests, but [sharing] a main aim of a real independent democratic state?"¹⁰

Al-Najjab attributed Fatah's dominant position within the PLO to its ongoing financial strength, facilitated to a large extent by Arafat's traditionally good relations with the Gulf states and Egypt. He confirmed the concentration of patronage in Arafat's hands, adding that this was a 'process' consented to by all the PLO factions as long as Arafat agreed to maintain their privileges. These privileges consisted principally of a fair share of PLO cash and a guaranteed number of seats on the PNC. In al-Najjab's words, "the main principle of relations between the different Palestinian military organisations [PLO factions] was how to divide the cake between them."¹¹ From his position on the Executive Committee, al-Najjab confirmed that after the second Gulf War, the PLO was "in real financial trouble,"¹² and that the defeat of Saddam Husayn (a major patron of the PLO at that time, as noted in chapter one), represented a real disaster for Arafat's patronage network, driving him to seek new sources of revenue which, as noted earlier, eventually materialised through the Oslo process.

Al-Najjab also confirmed the significance of the PLO military as a key constituency for Arafat: "When I joined the Executive Committee, there was an established system or some kind of tradition, that gives Arafat a free hand in the budget of the military forces."¹³ This 'free-hand' amounted to 40 percent of the PLO's total budget. The impact of

the financial crisis that gripped the PLO after the second Gulf War proved sufficiently serious to affect Arafat's ability to maintain this arrangement and with it the loyalty of all of the PNLA. An instructive story (which I could not find reported in the Palestinian press), emerged in The Jerusalem Post in August 1994. The paper reported, and Jordanian sources confirmed, that *Qiwvat Badr*, a 2,000 strong unit of the PNLA, requested that it be placed under the patronage of King Husayn.

"The King said the move was prompted by the lack of attention by the PLO, which had led to a financial crisis for the brigade and a collapse in morale among its soldiers.

In a statement carried by the state-run media, Hussein said he was responding to appeals from the brigades commander, Brig. Mohammed Abdul-Rahim Kudssiyeh...

The unit, officially known as the Badr Forces, [had] been stationed in Jordan under the command of the PLO for nearly 12 years."¹⁴

The depth of the crisis was explained in a statement issued by Husayn, instructing Prime Minister Abd al-Salam Majali, to assume responsibility for the brigade.

"The commander of the brigade has pointed out that ... his unit is undergoing the severest difficulties it has ever faced..."

It is suffering paralysis resulting from lack of funds, which has resulted in the forced discharge of its recruits, the undermining of its morale and its destruction as an effective military unit."¹⁵

The defection of PLO forces through financial crisis illustrates the depth of damage done to Arafat's patronage network and the pressing need for new sources of revenue.

Within the PLO's formal structure, the factions were represented on the Higher Military Council (*al-Majlis al-'Askari al-'Ulya*). Significantly, al-Najjab suggested that this was now more or less defunct, and that as part of the PLO's re-deployment to Gaza and Jericho, the Higher Military Council had been replaced by the National Security Council (*al-Majlis al-Amn al-Qawmi*). Moreover, the National Security Council was composed solely of representatives of Fatah and the new security services of the PNA.

As a member of the Executive Committee, al-Najjab was also a member of the Central Council which ratified the DoP. The Central Council "has the authority of the PNC," whereas the Executive Committee is considered as "a reference to the PNA and the peace negotiations with Israelis."¹⁶ This seems to imply that the legitimacy of the PNA rests in the authority and the decisions of the Executive Committee; furthermore, as we shall see in chapter five, the PNA's second 'cabinet', the Executive Authority, and the PLO Executive Committee now hold joint meetings to set policy. As of February 1996, the Central Council had not met once since ratifying the DoP, in al-Najjab's view because Arafat did not want it to. Constitutionally, the PLO Chairman was bound to convene the Central Council in order that it might ratify the Gaza-Jericho Agreement and the Interim Agreement. Instead, Arafat has preferred to rely on the smaller Executive Committee, boycotted by the PFLP, the DFLP, the ALF and sometimes by Fatah's own Farouq al-Qaddoumi and the PPP's al-Najjab. The Executive Committee (as elected by the 20th PNC) was also short of two of its 'independent' members since the resignations of Shafiq al-Hout and Mahmoud Darwish, in protest at Arafat's secretive and authoritarian decision-making and the agreements he has concluded. According to Edward Said: "Hout said that Yasir Arafat had become an autocrat whose personal handling of Palestinian finances was a disaster and, worse, accountable to no one."¹⁷

Between the Gaza-Jericho Agreement (May 94) and February 1996, the Executive Committee itself only met five times, two of which were attended by al-Najjab. The Central Council conferred upon the Executive Committee the right to monitor the negotiations, but retained the right to ratify all agreements, an arrangement which has plainly not functioned since approval of the DoP. Within the Executive Committee, two-thirds of the membership are required to form a quorum. Decisions are taken by a majority within that quorum, which has seldom been present since 1993, and then only when al-Najjab and Farouq al-Qaddoumi attended.

Al-Najjab asserted that Arafat is no longer interested in the Executive Committee, the Central Council or the PNC. In his view, Arafat has historically relied on a consensus within the PLO, retaining the loyalty of the PNLA and a working consensus with the political leadership of the PFLP, DFLP and more recently the PPP. Now, the PLO Chairman no longer needs this legitimacy to conduct his negotiations with Israel, the US and certain Arab states. Since the Legislative Council elections in January 1996, he has a new source of legitimacy, not only as the head of Fatah, but as the President of the PNA directly elected by the people. Similarly, the initiation of the autonomy project has opened-up new sources of finance (discussed in chapter three). Fatah is in line to become the party of state, yet Arafat is not even interested in all of Fatah (a view regularly expressed by Fatah activists). Arafat retains his position as the representative of Fatah, yet now as President of all the Palestinians, he considers himself invested with a higher legitimacy.

Beyond his 'higher legitimacy' as President of the PNA, Arafat continues to rely on an extensive and reconstructed patronage network which extends through the bureaucracy, the security services, and beyond. This is not surprising, given that the PNA is founded on returnee PLO personnel familiar with Arafat's modus operandi. Salim Taamri reported that 38,000 PLO cadres, administrative staff and family members have returned to the autonomous areas since 1995. According to Taamri, "the bulk of these returnees (about 80%) were integrated into the institutional bodies of the state (police and civil servants) ... Unemployment among returnees is less than 2%, while it is over 35% among the population at large." In addition: "Most of them ... [constitute] recruits for the Palestinian police and security apparatus."¹⁸ Edward Said has noted Arafat's role at the centre of this extensive patronage network:

"his [Arafat's] employees plus their dependants give him an impressive network of about 350,000 dependants throughout the territories. If you add to that the number of prospective seekers of employment, businessmen and unscrupulous speculators who must go through Arafat to get projects approved, the number almost doubles."¹⁹

Further useful evidence of the patronage network has emerged through the activities of the *al-Bahr* company and the monopolies for primary resources granted to senior PNA personnel. According to one contemporary press source, *al-Bahr* belongs to Arafat's wife, Suha,

"and other 'shareholders' who handle his private finances ... [it] is the new, strictly domestic instrument of Arafat's take-over of the Gazan economy. It complements already existing monopolies, for cement, petrol or flour, which he operates in complicity with the Israelis. For example, out of the \$74 for which a ton of cement is sold in Gaza, \$17 goes to the Authority, and \$17 into his own account in a Tel Aviv bank."²⁰

Whilst it is not easy to assess the veracity of this report, the activities of the *al-Bahr* company have certainly attracted a lot of attention, not least of all amongst ordinary Gazans. The fact that local people *believe* it to be true conveys something of the impression made by the PNA. Edward Said has also claimed that the IMF are party to Arafat's personal control of PNA finances: "At a donors meeting in Paris on April 25-6 1995, an IMF observer told me that the group voted \$18.5 million to the Palestinian people: \$18 million was paid directly to Arafat, \$0.5 million put in the public treasury."²¹ When I put this story to Ali Khader at the World Bank's office in al-Ram he dismissed it as ridiculous, citing the very stringent accounting regulations employed by the World Bank and the IMF. However, Khader did acknowledge that he could not vouch for the PNA's accounts in general: "There are, at the very least, question marks."²² These question marks have since been thrown into sharp relief by the commission of enquiry into the PNA's finances. The commission's report, publicised on 29 June 1997, does not appear to implicate Arafat directly (though whether it would dare to do so in any event is open to question), but did criticise three ministers in the Executive Authority - Nabil Sha'ath, Jamil Tarifi and Ali Qawasmah.²³ An earlier audit into PNA finances reported that \$326 million "had been squandered or mismanaged ..."²⁴

To summarise the points made above, Arafat and Fatah retain a centrality to the PNA which reflects (and has seemingly enhanced) their hegemony within the PLO. This

centrality owes much to external sources of revenue, accrued directly by Arafat and Fatah. As the recipient of state-largesse, Arafat has maintained consensus over his leadership and decision-making through a reliance on rent-seeking - powers of patronage were employed to good effect by disbursing rent to clients, including the PLO military, who formed a key constituency in the PLO. The transformed PLO military now form a key component of the new national project as the security apparatus of the PNA. I shall return to this issue below. In the meantime, my analysis now turns to the structure and composition of Fatah itself, in order to provide a more detailed assessment of role of Fatah in the PNA.

The Institutional Structure of the Fatah Movement

Central elements in the consolidation of the returnee elite's authoritative leadership are the Fatah military (through the PNLA), and the Fatah Chairman's unrivalled position as patron. In order to further elucidate the continuities between the PLO and the PNA, this section provides a basic outline of the formal organisational structure of the Fatah Movement. This is an appropriate and necessary step for two reasons. Firstly, given the depth of Fatah's penetration of the PNA, a sound understanding of the movement's formal institutions and personnel facilitates a more detailed analysis of the institutions and personnel of the PNA, allowing for a nuanced account of the institutions concerned (Fatah personnel in the PNA can be placed within the Fatah hierarchy, rather than being characterised as Fatah per se). Secondly, with the benefit of a clear picture of the institutional structure of Fatah, it becomes easier to begin to interpret the political struggles which have taken place within it and which continue to affect the nature and performance of the PNA. In this respect, the focus of this analysis falls squarely upon formal institutional relations rather than the informal networks which doubtlessly operate both within and beyond them. This approach is not intended to elevate formal structures beyond their real significance, but it does enable us to assess the place of the returnee elite within the PNA.

The outline presented below is based on my own translation of Fatah's Basic Law (*al-Nizam al-Asasi*),²⁵ with additional information gathered from a series of interviews with Fatah cadres and activists within the various institutions outlined below.

The General Conference

The General Conference constitutes the highest authority within Fatah, just as the PNC constitutes the highest authority within the PLO. The Conference is responsible, amongst other things, for electing members to both the Revolutionary Council and the Central Committee. According to Article 43 of the Basic Law, the General Conference is obliged to meet once every five years at the invitation of the Central Committee, with the proviso that such meetings can be legitimately postponed to take account of prevailing circumstances. Since Fatah publicly announced its existence in 1965, there have been five conferences in total,²⁶ the most recent of which was held in Tunis during August 1989 and attended by some 1200 delegates.²⁷ Delegates are drawn from a variety of institutional positions, including all incumbent members of the Revolutionary Council, representatives from the world-wide Regional Committees, members of the General Military Council of the PNLA,²⁸ and cadres staffing several Fatah institutions and popular organisations including the Fatah trade unions.

The Revolutionary Council

It would seem that the Revolutionary Council did not constitute a part of the original Fatah structure but rather emerged later as an intermediary body between the Central Committee and the General Conference, rather as the PLO's Central Council stands between the Executive Committee and the PNC.²⁹ According to Article 50 of the Basic Law, the Revolutionary Council is empowered to act as the Movement's highest authority between sessions of the General Conference, assuming responsibility for numerous matters, the most important of which include overseeing implementation of all policies adopted by the General Conference and supervision of the military wing, with the

exception of particularly clandestine operations. Article 58 stipulates that the Revolutionary Council is obliged to meet once every three months, although in practice it appears to meet rarely, at least since the arrival of many cadres in Palestine.

Membership is established by the General Conference in a similar manner and at the same time as membership of the Central Committee, with each member of the Central Committee becoming by default a member of the Revolutionary Council. According to the Basic Law, overall membership of the Revolutionary Council is drawn from the members (21) of the Central Committee, the Chairmen of the Financial Supervision and Membership Committees, up to 25 representatives of the Fatah Military Committee, up to 15 persons chosen directly by the Central Committee, an unspecified number of persons representing the Fatah leadership within occupied Palestine and a further 50 elected directly from amongst the General Conference by secret ballot. The Basic Law does not set a limit on membership of the Revolutionary Council, the size of which appears to vary over time, standing at 111 persons as of February 1996.³⁰ A definitive list of Revolutionary Council members was not acquired during fieldwork. However, written sources, together with research at the Fatah Higher Committee offices in Ramallah and Gaza City and interviews with two current Revolutionary Council members, Marwan Barghouthi and Jamil Shehadeh, gave rise to a substantial list of names contained in Table 2 below.

TABLE 2. Members of the Fatah Revolutionary Council Elected by the Fifth General Conference, Tunis, 6 August 1989.

All 18 members of the Central Committee (names listed below).

Haydar Ibrahim
 Jamal Muhsin
 Abdallah Hijazi
 Najla Yasin
 Abu Ali Masoud
 Zakaria Abd al-Rahim
 Arif Hatar
 Jamil Shehadeh
 Izzedin Sharif Jaradeh
 Abd al-Karim Nasir
 Rawhi Fatouh
 Abd al-Muhsin al-Zahar
 Yahya Yahluf
 Marwan Barghouthi
 Usama al-Ali
 Nabil Ramalawi
 Kharbi al-Sarsour
 Abu Ali Shaheen
 Zuhayr al-Wazir
 Fatma Birnawi
 Sufyan al-Agha
 Um Lutf
 Um Sabri
 Sakher Bassaysu (Vice Chairman)
 Rabkhi Musa
 Col. Aboud
 Akram Haniyeh
 Anis al-Khatib
 Samir Abu Razaleh
 Ibrahim Asad
 Adnan Samara (Vice Chairman)
 Azzam al-Ahmad
 Nasir al-Qudwa
 Walid Sa'd Sayil
 Abu Daoud
 Muin al-Tahir
 Abu Firas
 Salwa al-Qudra
 Rashad al-Kasir
 Bakir Abd al-Munim
 Maryan al-Atrash

Abu Minhal
 Hikmat Zayd
 Mahmud al-Alloul
 Khalid Mismar
 Adli Muhammed al-Madani
 Arif Basaysu

Source: Guy Bakhur, *Lexicon ASHAF (Lexicon of the PLO)*, (Second Edition), (Tel Aviv: Israeli Ministry of Defence, 1995).

Other Members Identified During Fieldwork

Abd al-Razzaq al-Majjaydah
 Haj Ismail Jabr
 Jamilah Zaydan
 Majid al-Agha
 Othman Abu Gharbiyah
 Ziyad al-Atrash
 Musa Arafat
 Abu Ali al-Tayib
 Amin al-Hindi
 Sami Mussalam
 Mohammad Jaradah
 Marwan Abdul Hamid
 Yahya Hassan Yakhlef
 Jamal Ahmad Muhsin
 Abdallah Hijazi
 Mustafa Liftawi
 Izzedin Sharif
 Nabil Amr
 Fayz Zaydan
 Mahmoud Da'aas
 Salah Ta'amari
 Birhan Jarrar
 Azam al-Ahmad
 Rafiq al-Natshe

These members identified during fieldwork have returned to Palestine and were thus more visible than those who remained in the diaspora.

Sources: Fatah Higher Committee offices, Gaza and Ramallah. Interviews with Jamil Shehadah and Marwan Barghouthi.

The Central Committee

The Central Committee appears to be the most significant of all Fatah institutions, judging by the responsibilities outlined in the Basic Law and current practice discernible within Fatah. The Central Committee functions as an executive, meeting approximately once per month to direct Fatah policy. Moreover, it is Arafat's position as Chairman of the Central Committee that allows him to lead the PLO. Article 63 of the Basic Law stipulates a maximum of 21 members, 18 of whom are elected by the General Conference with the remaining three being assigned by a two-thirds majority vote within the elected 18.

Membership of the present Central Committee has evolved somewhat since the Fifth General Conference, firstly due to the death of four incumbents and secondly due to appointments made in order to accommodate new circumstances arising from the Oslo process. With the exception of the Farouq al-Qaddoumi (the PLO's secular, pro-Syrian 'Foreign Minister'), all members of the Central Committee had returned to Palestine by the end of fieldwork in February 1996.

TABLE 3: The Fatah Central Committee elected by the Fifth General Conference, including subsequent changes, as of December 1995.

Yasir Arafat, (Chairman)
 Mahmoud Abbas
 Farouq al-Qaddoumi
 Sakher Habash
 Hani al-Hassan
 Abbas Zaki
 Mohammad Jihad
 Hakim Bala'wi
 Abdallah Ifranjiah
 Intisar al-Wazir (Um Jihad)
 Nabil Sha'ath
 Ahmad Qrai' (Abu Ala)
 Mohammad Ghunaym (Abu Mahir)
 Tayib Abd-al Rahim
 Nasir Yusuf
 Salim Za'noun

*Faysal al-Husayni

*Zakaria al-Agha

*Both al-Husayni and al-Agha were appointed to the Central Committee in 1991, not elected by the General Conference.

The four deceased members are:

*Saleh Khalaf (Abu Iyad).

*Hayel Abd al-Hamid (Abu al-Hol).

Subhi Abu-Kirsh.

Khaled al-Hassan.

*Abu Iyad and Abu al-Hol were killed in Tunis by Hamza Abu Zaid, an Abu Nidal assassin, on the eve of Operation Desert Storm, 14 January 1991.

The Higher Committees

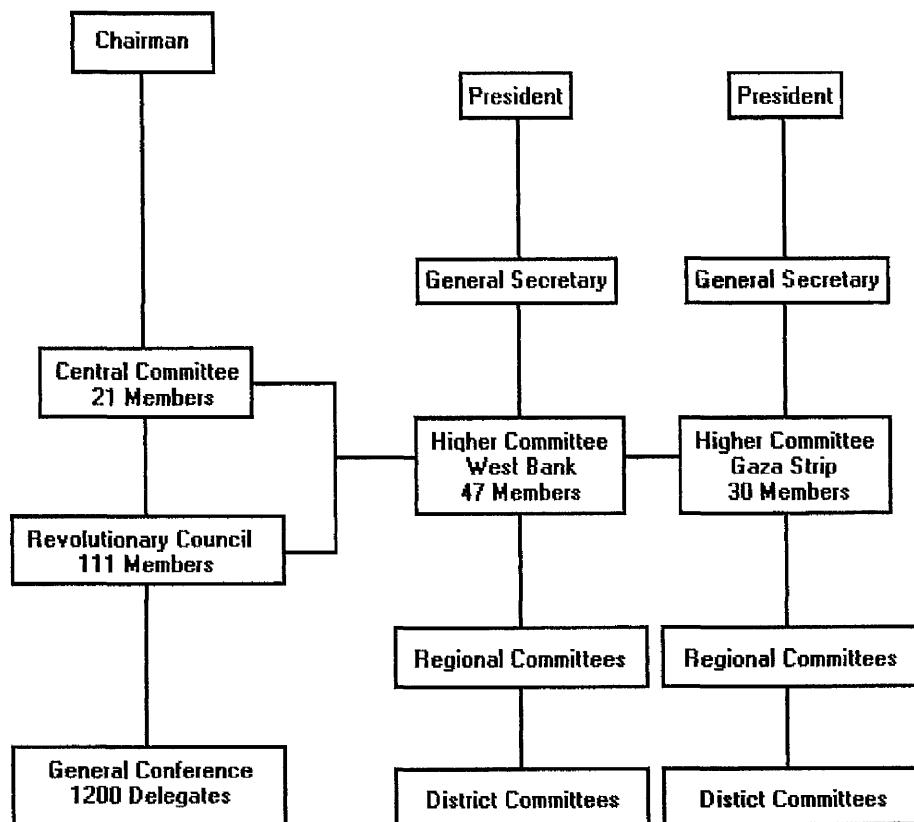
There are two Fatah Higher Committees in Palestine, one in the West Bank and one in the Gaza Strip. They have no constitutional position defined by the Basic Law as they only emerged during 1993, four years after the most recent General Conference. The creation of the Higher Committees illustrates the institutional adaptation of Fatah to new circumstances: they are specifically intended to represent the local leadership in the new national project.

The Higher Committees are subordinate to the Revolutionary Council and the Central Committee. Both Higher Committees are led by a President and a General Secretary who connect them directly to the Revolutionary Council and the Central Committee. In the West Bank, the President of the Higher Committee is Central Committee member Faysal al-Husayni, whilst the General Secretary, Marwan Barghouthi, has a seat on the Revolutionary Council. As we saw earlier, Husayni represents a traditional notable family from Jerusalem and established good relations with some of the intifada activists. Barghouthi is a returned deportee who was previously active in student politics at Bir Zeit University. In Gaza, the President is Zakaria al-Agha, a representative of another notable family promoted, like Husayni, to the Central Committee. The General Secretary, Saleh al-Qudwa, holds no other official position. Both al-Husayni and al-Agha were appointed to the Central Committee, and hence to the Revolutionary Council during 1991,³¹ illustrating the co-option of local agents into the formal Fatah structure during the autonomy project.

With no official position laid out in the Basic Law, the intended role and responsibilities of the Higher Committees are rather more vague than those of the other bodies. Gaza Higher Committee member Ahmad al-Deek defined their aims as three-fold: to further the nationalist agenda by continuing the struggle to establish an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, to help build a Palestinian political regime

on the basis of the peace process with Israel, and to underpin democratisation in Palestine by helping to build an infrastructure of civil society through the Fatah NGO's.³² To these ends, the Higher Committees mobilise Fatah activists from within the occupied territories in support of the PNA and the Oslo process. Each Higher Committee divides into a number of sub-committees which take care of issues including finance, publishing, international relations, daily affairs and public relations.³³ Members of the Higher Committees are drawn from the regional committees (*iqlim*) within the West Bank and Gaza, whose membership in turn is elected by the local or district committees.³⁴

**Figure 1. Basic Structure of the Fatah Movement Following the Declaration
of Principles and PLO Redeployment to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
March 1996.**



The Internal Politics of Redeployment: Fatah's Intifada Generation and the Historic Leadership.

The formal structure of Fatah outlined in Figure 1 provides a useful framework for exploring the relationship between different elements within the movement. Whilst redeployment has effectively resolved the strategic debate over armed struggle versus diplomacy, it has given rise to a new and largely non-ideological competition for influence within Fatah and within the PNA between the returnees in the historic leadership and the younger generation of intifada activists from the West Bank and Gaza, including those deported during the uprising. This competition has taken a partially institutional form, with the historic leadership represented by the Revolutionary Council and the intifada generation forming the Higher Committees.

As we saw in chapter one, prior to the peace process and redeployment, Fatah activities in the West Bank and Gaza, together with the other PLO resistance groups, were co-ordinated under the umbrella of the Western Sector, commanded by Khalil al-Wazir. Following his assassination, a collective command maintained and operated his networks as best they could. However, once the PLO had taken a clear decision to participate in the Madrid Conference, elements within Fatah in both Tunis and Palestine perceived the need for new arrangements in Palestine. The resulting initiative took the original form of the Political Committees, led in the West Bank by Sari Nussaybah. The same was true in Gaza, where Fatah began to organise publicly in 1991 under the guise of the office of the Palestinian delegation to the Washington talks. As noted in chapter two during the discussion of Orient House, this development underlined the control of Fatah personnel over the negotiations even prior to Oslo. During 1993, the Political Committees evolved a stage further to form the two Fatah Higher Committees, the one based in Gaza City and the other in Ramallah.³⁵

Foremost amongst Tunis personnel anxious to capitalise on the new situation was Marwan Barghouthi, former President of the Student Council at Bir Zeit University from 1983-87, prisoner for six years and subsequently a political deportee from 1987-94.³⁶ Barghouthi and a group of like-minded individuals around him sensed which way the wind was blowing and understood the need to shift from clandestine organisation to visible and public institution. This would allow Fatah to better defend the Oslo process in public and so compete more effectively with the opposition factions. Simultaneously, such a move afforded the intifada activists an opportunity to carve for themselves a new and positive role within a public institutional framework. In other words, the Higher Committees carry a significance beyond their declared role: besides providing a means of organising Fatah publicly in the new era, they also provide the intifada generation with a valuable institutional framework around which to mobilise in order to advance their interests. The principal interests concerned appear to include a competition for influence within the movement and over its policy, recruitment of intifada activists to the PNA, and a genuine desire to advance a democratic discourse within both Fatah and Palestinian society at large. The need for such a framework becomes much clearer when we consider the substantial representation of the historic leadership in the better-established institutions of the movement and the senior ranks of the PNA.

Both the Revolutionary Council and the Central Committee are elected by the General Conference. This being so, the General Conference seems the natural place to begin looking for influence in Fatah. In fact, due to the diaspora-based nature of Fatah's original leadership and the prolonged Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, no Fatah General Conference to date has ever been held on Palestinian territory. Not surprisingly, this has produced a striking over-representation of diaspora-based personnel in all Conferences to date and a concomitant under-representation of cadres from within the West Bank and Gaza. Whilst this characteristic holds true for most PLO factions (with the notable exception of the PPP), Fatah is no longer in the same position. Indeed,

following redeployment, the bulk of Fatah's diaspora-based staff and leadership are now in Palestine. This point was made very clear to me in an interview with Barghouthi, who personally makes an interesting case in this regard: an insider himself, he was deported at the beginning of the intifada and as such was able to stand for election during the 5th General Conference where he duly won a seat on the Revolutionary Council, thus becoming a rare creature indeed as an insider in this overwhelmingly diaspora-based institution.³⁷ Furthermore, as Cobban observed, deportees from the territories were generally *not* incorporated into the higher echelons of whatever faction they belonged to, "in most cases, and especially in Fatah, this took place at levels considerably lower than that of the top leadership."³⁸

For the intifada generation, equitable representation at the General Conference is a prerequisite for redressing their under-representation in the Revolutionary Council and the Central Committee. However, it is equally possible that the Revolutionary Council - a diaspora-based institution formed during the armed struggle - will be overtaken by events and cease to have any real relevance. In the context of the Legislative Council and the potential 'normalisation' of Palestinian politics, new structures might arise which are purpose built for the different tasks of a different set of circumstances. Equally, there is the very real possibility of a splintering of Fatah into two or more political parties. Either way, prior to the next meeting of the General Conference, the Higher Committees constitute the most effective means for advancing the concerns of the intifada generation.

According to Barghouthi, there are no plans to convene the Conference in the foreseeable future, principally on the grounds that it is inappropriate as well as extremely difficult to arrange, prior to the conclusion of the final-status negotiations with the Israelis. Should this continue to be the case, the 6th General Conference might not be convened until 1999 or even later. However, when it is next convened, the meeting will almost certainly take place for the first time in Palestine. Barghouthi confirmed the importance of

the next General Conference to the Higher Committee activists and noted that he would be campaigning for 50 percent of the delegates to be drawn from the inside (which presumes that the distinction would continue to be valid). His plans centred on elevating a majority of the Higher Committee members to positions in the Revolutionary Council.³⁹ Should this initiative prove successful, Fatah cadres from within Palestine can be expected to take a greater role in the running of the movement as they permeate the Revolutionary Council and the Central Committee in significant numbers for the first time. However, if previous practice within the PLO or Fatah is anything to go by, this influence will be tempered by an expansion of both bodies rather than a drastic turnover of personnel. Such a move would allow Arafat to incorporate more people from the Higher Committees into these institutions whilst simultaneously retaining a sufficient number from the historic leadership in place at the same time.⁴⁰

Above and beyond the formal structures of Fatah, the most important arena of competition for power and influence is the PNA. The role of these different constituencies in the bureaucratic and security institutions of the PNA provides the next subject for analysis.

The Bureaucratic Apparatus of the PNA

The conclusion of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement contained a double significance for the PLO: firstly, the Agreement established Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho enclave and, secondly, it also facilitated, in accordance with Article VI (2) of the Agreed Minutes to the DoP, the establishment of Palestinian ministries with responsibility for civil affairs *beyond* the borders of the two narrowly defined autonomous enclaves. Article VI.2 defined these responsibilities as covering "education and culture, health, social welfare, direct taxation, tourism, and other authorities agreed upon." As these spheres of Palestinian authority gradually expanded, so did the bureaucracy of the PNA required to administer them.

Brynen has pointed out that research into the PNA is complicated by the ambiguous nature of the institutions concerned, contradictory accounts of appointments and responsibilities, and the unclear nature of relations between institutions.⁴¹ This point is neatly illustrated by the immediate establishment of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economics, Trade and Industry, and the Ministry of Planning and International Co-operation, in addition to the already pre-existing PECDAR, established prior to the PNA "as an interim step toward the management of external assistance and the formulation of economic policy..."⁴² Whilst bearing this caveat in mind, analysis tries to detail the attributes of the bureaucracy as ascertained through fieldwork and the available secondary sources.

The Top Strata of the PNA Bureaucracy

The senior level of the PNA bureaucracy is structured according to a simple scheme of four ranks which appear to remain consistent for each ministry. As one would expect, each ministry is headed by a minister (*wazir*) with a seat on the PNA's cabinet. Second to the minister is the deputy minister or assistant under-secretary (*wakil*), followed by the assistant-deputy minister (*al-wakil al-musa'id*) of which there may be several to each ministry. The fourth, and by far and away the largest strata of the bureaucratic hierarchy, is that of the director general (*al-mudir al-'amm*). Below the director general level are the directors, and beneath them are 12 grades of executive.⁴³

According to Basil Ramahi, Director General in the Ministry of Finance, the personnel recruited to staff this fledgling bureaucracy were drawn from three principal sources: returnee PLO personnel from Tunis and elsewhere; Palestinian personnel from the incumbent Israeli Civil Administration; and qualified technocrats, many of whom were drawn from the pool of Palestinian NGOs.⁴⁴

Illustrative of the role of the returnee elite, a substantial number of the senior and sensitive positions in the top three ranks have been occupied by cadres from the Fatah Central Committee and Revolutionary Council, and a number of non-Fatah cadres from the PLO Executive Committee and Central Council.⁴⁵ The highest-placed technocrats in the PNA appear to be deputy ministers. Ramahi believed himself to be the highest placed individual from the Civil Administration (director-general), with the remainder of Civil Administration staff occupying intermediate and clerical positions below the top four levels. Raja Shehadeh noted that Article II. B.6. of Annex II of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement *stipulated* the retention of the Civil Administration personnel in the autonomous areas.⁴⁶ In practice, they appear to have been absorbed into the structures of the PNA across the West Bank.

According to Walid Salim of the Jerusalem-based Centre for the Dissemination of Alternative Information (Panorama), there were 908 director-generals prior to the elections for the Legislative Council in January 1996.⁴⁷ These were spread across a total of 21 ministries.⁴⁸ An exhaustive study of the director-general strata fell well-beyond the capacity of this researcher, but it would be interesting to know the number of Fatah cadres from the diaspora. Reuters Journalist Wafa Amr believes they have been mostly recruited from the inside. More manageable research was conducted into the three highest echelons of the PNA. The results of fieldwork are presented in Table 3, illustrating the centrality of Fatah cadres from the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Council within the top three ranks of the PNA.

At the ministerial level, Arafat's co-option of local forces also becomes clearer, reflecting the policy over municipal appointments made prior to the election. According to Robinson, "mayors appointed by Arafat prior to municipal elections have often come from the old land-owning class, including the Shawwa family in Gaza and the Natsche family in Hebron."⁴⁹ In the first PNA cabinet, the Council of Ministers, Faysal Husayni was allotted

the role of Minister without Portfolio, acting as the PNA's would-be 'Foreign Minister' from Orient House. He continued to retain this role after the election, despite losing his seat in the new cabinet. Ilyas Freij, the Christian Mayor of Bethlehem since 1972 and a representative of the traditional elite, became Minister of Tourism in the first cabinet and retained his position in the second. Zakaria al-Agha, representative of a notable family in Gaza, served as Minister of Housing in the first cabinet. Mahir al-Masri, the "chosen son"⁵⁰ of the powerful Nablus-based al-Masri family, was allocated a seat in the second cabinet. Altogether, Robinson asserts that "more than half of the PA's cabinet ministers in the lead-up to the 1996 elections came from the landowning class."⁵¹ Perhaps the most obvious example of the local bourgeoisie is Jamil Tarifi, who served as Minister of Civil Affairs in both administrations. Saeb Erekat, a local Fatah representative, was appointed to the Ministry of Local Government and retained this position after the election.

The Opposition in the Bureaucracy

The absence of the opposition (both secular and Islamic), from the top strata of the bureaucracy further illustrates Fatah's dominance of the PNA. Fatah's dominance, partly a simple reflection of its larger following, was enhanced further by the self-marginalisation of the opposition factions. The fact that there are no senior civil servants from the opposition factions is largely attributable to their marginalisation within the PLO through their refusal to participate in the Oslo process, rather than to any conscious policy of discrimination on the part of Arafat. They were not represented in the senior ranks of the PNA because their leadership determined that they should not be. This is true of both the PLO and the non-PLO Islamic factions.

After an initial boycott of all PNA institutions, the PFLP leadership in Damascus decided to review its decision. According to Walid Salim, the PFLP Central Committee met on 5 December 1996 and decided to open a dialogue with the PNA.⁵² The new decision maintained the boycott of the top three ranks (the political level), as this implied

responsibility for conducting the negotiations with Israel as part of the Oslo process, the basis of which the PFLP continued to reject. However, the Central Committee sanctioned the entry of PFLP members into the bureaucracy at the level of director-general and below, and also gave its approval to cadres joining the Civil Police, but not the intelligence services. Fayz Khalifah, a member of the PFLP Politburo from 1972-1992, accepted the position of Director-General in the Ministry of Local Government in Jericho, together with seven other PFLP cadres accepting similar positions in the PNA in Gaza. Salim estimated a total of no more than ten PFLP members were working as director-generals in the PNA. Finally, research does suggest that a number of PFLP members are working at lower administrative and clerical levels in the PNA. Visits to the Ministry of Youth and Sports in Ramallah led to interviews with Marwan Jilani, Director of Planning and Development and Jibril Mohammad, Chief of the Volunteer Work Section. Jilani described himself as a non-active Fatah member, whilst Mohammad readily confirmed his membership of the PFLP. However, he estimated that no more than eight out of an approximate 100 employees in the Ministry were non-Fatah or non-FIDA cadres (prior to the elections for the Legislative Council, the Ministry was headed by Azmi Shu'abi of the FIDA faction), and claimed that positions at all levels were more easily secured for Fatah personnel.⁵³ The DFLP has taken a similar view, while the PPP had one known Director-General, Mohammed Ghadiah, in the Ministry of Planning in Gaza.

TABLE 4 . Fatah Cadres from the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Council in the Top Three Echelons of the PNA Bureaucracy.

Name	Position in Fatah	PNA Institution	Position in Institution
Yasir Arafat	Chairman	President's Office Ministry of the Interior	President Acting Minister
Tayib Abd al-Rahim Sami Mussalam	CC RC	President's Office President's Office (Jericho)	PNA Secretary General Director
Jamil Shehadah	RC	Ministry of the Interior	Ass't. Dep. Minister
Nabil Sha'ath	CC	Ministry of Planning	Minister
Ahmed Qrai' Adnan Samara	CC RC	Ministry of Economics Ministry of Economics	Minister Dep. Minister
Mohammad Jaradah	RC	Ministry of Finance	Ass't. Dep. Minister
Zakaria al-Agha Marwan Abd al-Hamid	CC RC	Ministry of Housing Ministry of Housing	Minister Dep. Minister
Haydar Ibrahim	RC	Ministry of Labour	Ass't Dep. Minister
Yahya Hassan Yakhlef	RC	Ministry of Culture	Dep. Minister
Jamal Ahmed Muhsin	RC	Ministry of Sports and Youth	Ass't. Dep. Minister
Intisar al-Wazir	CC	Ministry of Social Affairs	Minister
Abdallah Hijazi	RC	Ministry of Tourism	Dep. Minister
Faysal al-Husayni	CC	Orient House	Minister without Portfolio
Mahmoud Abbas	CC	Electoral Commission	Director

The Governorates

Parallel to the ministerial institutions of the PNA are the more recently established and regionally specific governorates. There is no specific provision for these institutions within the Oslo framework, so we can characterise them as the specific product of elite-agency on the part of the PLO leadership. The governorates only began to emerge towards the end of fieldwork (February 1996), and then only in certain towns in the West Bank, rendering accurate information difficult to come by. Nevertheless, a few comments regarding their character and relationship to the ministries seem appropriate because they appear to form a central part of power-structure of the PNA. Moreover, three of the governors in place by the end of fieldwork were members of the Fatah Revolutionary Council.

What can be said with certainty is that governorates had been established by early 1996 in the West Bank towns of Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah and Tulkarm, and have since been added to by one in Hebron.⁵⁴ There were also plans to appoint Jamil Othman as governor in Jerusalem, based in the former Israeli Civil Administration building in Abu Dis, just outside Jerusalem.⁵⁵ The four incumbent governors known at the time of fieldwork, including the three members of the Revolutionary Council, are detailed in Table 5.

Johar Sayigh, a physician from Bir Zeit and former operative in the Western Sector, had just taken-up a position in charge of health in the Ramallah Governor's office when I interviewed him in January 1996.⁵⁶ According to Sayigh, all of the ministries, the security services and the other institutions of the PNA, as well as co-ordination with the Israelis, were to be the responsibility of the Governor in each area. The Governors, in turn, were responsible directly to Arafat as President of the PNA, making each Governor the direct representative of the President. Sayigh added that there was no Governor appointed for Gaza as Arafat was there himself, while in Jericho Sami Mussalam, Director of the

President's office, acted in the same capacity as Arafat's direct representative. Interestingly, Mussalam is also a member of the Revolutionary Council.

Hillel Frisch of the Hebrew University was quick to point out that this raised the question of the role of the Ministry of the Interior, which, if Sayigh is correct, would now seem to be subordinate to the Governor's office.⁵⁷ Frisch characterised this system of government as a 'prefecture system'. Clearly this is an aspect of the PNA which requires further research: firstly, to establish if the governorates have subordinated the central ministries to their direct, presidential authority; and, secondly, to establish which has control over the budget of the other. Sayigh was emphatic in his assertion that the ministries would be subordinate to the governorates, but, given the embryonic nature of the relationship, it was simply not possible to confirm how this arrangement unfolded in practice.

TABLE 5: Fatah Cadres from the Revolutionary Council in the Governorates.

Name	Position in Fatah	PNA Institution	Position in Institution
Mahmoud Alloul	RC	Governate of Nablus	Governor
Mustafa Liftawi	RC	Governate of Ramallah	Governor
Izzedin Sharif	RC	Governate of Tulkarm	Governor

Interviews with various Fatah activists from different parts of the movement⁵⁸ conveyed the impression that the Revolutionary Council is not currently significant in an operational sense, particularly since its membership was fragmented by the turmoil of redeployment. Nor is it entirely united in its support of Arafat. Since the implementation of the DoP, it seems to have met only twice up to early 1996, despite the stipulation in the Basic Law that it meet once every three months; moreover, up to half of the Revolutionary

Council's members had yet to return to Palestine. However, there does appear to be pattern at work within the PNA bureaucracy, whereby cadres from the Revolutionary Council consistently turn up in at least one of the top three positions in a majority of ministries and the governorates. This being so, it seems fair to contend that the real significance of the Revolutionary Council during the transitional period lies in its role as a pool of loyal and trusted senior Fatah personnel, carefully deployed by Arafat to fill a spectrum of sensitive positions within the overall structure of the PNA.

The point might be raised that Arafat's policy in this regard is not surprising. As Jamil Hilal pointed out, it seems quite natural for the leader of a liberation movement attempting to construct his quasi-state apparatus under difficult circumstances to place known and trusted cadres in vital positions of power.⁵⁹ Indeed, from this perspective it would be surprising if he behaved otherwise. However, this phenomenon merits attention because it illuminates the transition of Fatah as an institution from a liberation movement into quasi-state apparatus. It also sheds light on the nature of power within the PNA. In addition, Arafat's arbitrary appointments policy has not gone unnoticed within Palestinian society, generating a good deal of criticism and alienating many potential contributors and supporters. The implications for an open and meritocratic system of government are explored further in chapter five.

The Security Apparatus of the PNA

In terms of our transitional model, one of the major features of the Oslo process has been the advances made toward the establishment of a subordinate armed force. However, the imperatives of state-building notwithstanding, the PNA's security apparatus has been constructed in a framework of transition that has further encouraged the militarisation of the occupied territories. As Graham Usher noted, the substitution of unconditional Israeli security over the precepts of international legality has generated a dynamic of 'securitisation' that has come to define the character of the PNA.⁶⁰ This section examines

the structure, content and mandate of the security services, illustrating the role of returnee and local forces within the framework of transition.

Article VIII of the DoP originally called for the establishment of 'a strong police force'. The Gaza-Jericho Agreement facilitated the arrival of this police force in Palestine, pending the 'withdrawal' of the IDF. Article II.6 stipulated that: "The Palestinian police shall be deployed and shall assume responsibility for public order and internal security of Palestinians in accordance with this Agreement and Annex I." Article VIII again refers to, 'a strong police force', as does Article IX.2 which stipulates: "Except for the Palestinian Police referred to in this Article and the Israeli military forces, no other armed forces shall be established or operate in the Gaza Strip or the Jericho Area." Annex I set the timetable for IDF 'withdrawal', established a Joint Security Co-ordination and Co-operation Committee (JSC), with five to seven members from the IDF and the Palestinian Police, and District Co-ordination Offices (DCO's), to implement this co-ordination, including the Israeli-Palestinian Joint Patrols, on the ground.

Article III.2 of Annex I provides an initial outline of the role the Palestinian Police are intended to serve. There is nothing remarkable here, save for the predictable emphasis on "maintaining internal security and public order." Article III.3 outlines the structure and composition of the police force. Article III.4 details the nature of recruitment to the new apparatus, and Article III.5 details the arms and equipment with which they are to be supplied. Article III.3 stipulates that the police force is to be "one integral unit under the control of the Palestinian Authority ... composed of four branches." These are listed as Civil Police, Public Security, Intelligence and Emergency Services and Rescue, with an additional provision for a Palestinian Coastal Police unit. Finally, the size of the Palestinian Police is set at "9,000 policemen in all its branches."

The Gaza-Jericho Agreement stipulated that the Palestinian Police were to consist of elements recruited from abroad and from the local population. This provided Arafat with the opportunity to re-invent and re-employ his constituency within the PNA, whilst also facilitating the recruitment of Fatah activists from the inside. For those returning from the diaspora, Article III.4 stipulates that: "The number of Palestinian recruits from abroad shall not exceed 7,000, of whom 1,000 will arrive three months after the signing of the Agreement." This is followed by the rather hopeful proviso that: "The employment of policemen who have been convicted of serious crimes or have been found to be actively involved in terrorist activities subsequent to their employment will be immediately terminated."

The Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement gives further details of the role and structure of the Palestinian Police. These are referred to briefly in Article XIV, which retains the emphasis on 'a strong police force', expanded further in Annex I. Annex I, the 'Protocol Concerning Redeployment and Security Arrangements' gives new details on the revised 'official' structure of the Palestinian Police in Article IV, referred to generically as 'Public Security' (*al-Amn al-'Amm*). This is now composed of six separate branches, listed in the Interim Agreement as follows: the Civil Police, Public Security, Preventive Security, Amn al-Ri,asah (sic) (Presidential Security), Intelligence and Emergency Services and Rescue.

Interviews with Major General Nasir Yusuf, the overall Commander of all the branches of Public Security in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and a subsequent interview with Major General Abd al-Razaq al-Majaydah, overall Commander of Public Security in the Gaza Strip after the signing of the Interim Agreement, confirmed a total of six branches with thirteen separate forces between them. It is almost certain that additional small forces with vaguely defined responsibilities exist beyond this structure, and indeed Usher has already reported one (the Special Security Force headed by General Abu Yusuf al-

Wahadi),⁶¹ but the official structure does at least provide a reference-point. The structure of Public Security is detailed in Figure 2, accompanied by the titles given in Arabic during the interviews.

FIGURE 2: The Official Structure of the PNA's Security Apparatus, Public Security (*al-Amn al-'Amm*), as of the Signing of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement, September 1995.

1. National Security (*al-Amn al-Watani*).

The Navy (*Bahariyah*).

The Information Bureau (*Istikhbarat*), (responsible for external intelligence).

The Military Police (*al-Shurta al-'Askariyah*).

2. General Intelligence (*Mukhabarat al-'Amm*), (responsible for internal intelligence).

3. Civil Defence (*al-Difa' al-Madaniyah*).

4. The Civil Police (*al-Shurta al-Madaniyah*)

Criminal Security (*al-Amn al-Jina'i*).

The Drug Squad (*Mukafahat al-Mukhaddarat*).

Public Order/Riot Police (*Mukafahat al-Shaghab*).

The Traffic Police (*Shurtat al-Murur*).

5. Preventative Security (*al-Amn al-Waq'a'i*).

6. Presidential Security (*Amn al-Ra'is*).

Force Seventeen (*Quwwat al-Sab'atash*).

Senior Fatah activists form the command of Public Security, consistent with Arafat's recruitment policy to the top three ranks of the bureaucracy. Wafa Amr made the point that they are generally on the Central Committee or Revolutionary Council, are well known and trusted by Arafat, and have been recalled from Tunis, Lebanon or Libya.⁶² The overall Commander of Public Security, Major General Nasir Yusuf, has a seat on the Fatah Central Committee,⁶³ whilst his deputies in the West Bank and Gaza respectively, Major General Haj Ismail Jabr and Major General Abd al-Razaq al-Majjaydah, both have seats on the Revolutionary Council.⁶⁴ The Commander of National Security, Hakim Bal'awi, is a member of the Central Committee. The head of General Intelligence, Amin al-Hindi, has a seat on the Revolutionary Council. Al-Hindi was apparently Salah Khalaf's assistant in the diaspora, which would support the wide-spread belief that he was involved in the Munich operation.⁶⁵ Fatah cadres from the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Council with positions in Public Security are listed in Table 6 below.

There are important returnee figures in the security apparatus who do *not* have a seat on these bodies. These include Ghazi Jabali, the head of the Civil Police in the Gaza Strip, and Musa Arafat, head of the external intelligence branch, (*Istikhbarat*). (It was widely reported in Gaza that Musa Arafat was so unpopular because of his attacks on Hamas that his house was actually better guarded than Yasir Arafat's). Johar Sayigh of the Ramallah Governorate believed the five most important Fatah military cadres were collected together on the Higher Security Committee (*al-Lajna al-Amniya al-'Aliya*), together with Arafat himself. He listed them as Faysal Abu Shalkh (Force 17), Amin al-Hindi (General Intelligence), Nasir Yusuf (overall commander), Musa Arafat (Information Bureau), and Fathi al-Razim (Navy). It was impossible to verify the existence of this committee before the end of fieldwork, but the fact that the people concerned are definitely located in positions of power lends weight to Sayigh's information, as does his history in the Western Sector, his position in the Governorate and his apparently good relations with Force 17.

TABLE 6. Fatah Cadres from the Central Committee and Revolutionary Council in the Apparatus of Public Security.

Name	Position in Fatah	PNA Institution	Position in Institution
Nasir Yusuf	CC	Public Security	Commander (Overall)
Abd al-Razaq			
al-Majjaydah	RC	Public Security	Commander (Gaza)
Haj Ismail Jabr	RC	Public Security	Commander (W.Bank)
Amin al-Hindi	RC	General Intelligence	Head
Hakim Bal'awi	CC	National Security	Head
Fatma Birnawi	RC	Women Police	Head
Ziad al-Atrash	RC	Joint Security Committee	Director

It is important to remember that both the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Council were originally diaspora institutions, and as such their membership is overwhelmingly composed of cadres from the outside. Accordingly, each of the cadres listed in Table 6 is a returnee. Within the structure of Public Security, the most important strong-hold of the returnees appears to be Force 17, the branch ostensibly in charge of Arafat's personal security and which includes the Presidential Guard.⁶⁶ Research during fieldwork suggested that the head of Force 17 was Colonel Faysal Abu-Shalkh, one of the later returnees. Usher has written that Force 17 is led in the West Bank by Colonel Ikhmat Barakat in Jericho and Colonel Faysal Abu Shirah in Gaza. What does appear clear is that Force 17, originally derived from Black September according to Inbari, is a long-established elite Fatah institution with broad responsibilities accountable essentially to Arafat. This was the impression conveyed consistently to me by Fatah activists during

fieldwork.⁶⁷ It is also known to have broadened its base since re-deployment, recruiting widely from amongst the local population in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.⁶⁸

Preventive Security

Whilst the results of fieldwork serve to highlight the presence of returnee Fatah cadres from the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Council at the command level of Public Security, this pool of diaspora personnel certainly does not form the only significant group within the security apparatus. The most pervasive and probably the largest branch of the PNA's security apparatus is Preventive Security. Usher reports that Preventive Security, "is generally agreed to be the largest of the PA's intelligence forces, though precise figures are impossible to obtain," whilst noting that Israeli sources suggest a figure of "'2,000 salaried agents' in the West Bank and at least the same number in Gaza ..."⁶⁹ In terms of personnel, Preventive Security is very much the preserve of the 'insiders'.

According to a report by the Israeli Human Rights group B'Tselem,⁷⁰ the head of Preventive Security is Brigadier General Musbah Sager. This may be the case, yet enquiries during fieldwork did not generate the same information. The report continues, and other sources confirm, that the heads of Preventive Security in the West Bank and Gaza are, respectively, Colonel Jibril Rajoub and Colonel Mohammad Dahalan.⁷¹ Neither of them has a seat on the Central Committee or the Revolutionary Council, as is the case with almost all of the 'insiders'. Nevertheless, both have impressive service records with Fatah, and both were deported in 1987 by the Israeli authorities and subsequently employed by Arafat for their in-depth knowledge of the local areas and activists. In this respect, the Israeli policy of deporting activists both before and during the intifada appears to have diluted, if not dissolved, the dichotomy between inside and outside.

Colonel Jibril Rajoub is an 'insider'. According to a profile in the Jerusalem Post Magazine,⁷² Rajoub is 44 years old as of May 1997 and speaks fluent English and Hebrew.

He was arrested in 1968 for a grenade attack on a bus near Hebron. 17 years later, in 1985, "Rajoub was among the 1,150 prisoners released in exchange for three Israeli POW's "held by the PFLP-GC in Lebanon. He quickly resumed his nationalist activities and was deported to Lebanon in 1988, at which point Arafat intervened. Arafat "summoned Rajoub to Tunis and made him the PLO's enforcer in the territories." With his impressive service history in Fatah and a keen knowledge of the local area, Rajoub - like Dahalan in Gaza - was the ideal choice for Preventive Security. In addition, Rajoub's brother "is the spiritual leader of the Hebron-area village of Dura, where they both grew up."

According to the well-informed Wafa Amr, Dahalan studied the Sharia at Gaza's Islamic University, acted as an assistant to Khalil al-Wazir, and rose to lead the Fatah Hawks at the age of 33. Amr considers him the most important of all Arafat's security personnel. His staff are reputedly all drawn from local activists, and, significantly, Hamas are said to genuinely fear him because of his breadth of local knowledge and professionalism. To paraphrase Amr, he knows where their hideouts are and he can just go there and get them.⁷³

The Black Panthers and the Fatah Hawks

The ranks of Preventive Security are filled with Fatah activists from the inside, many of whom were either members of the Black Panthers in the West Bank, or the Fatah Hawks in the Gaza Strip. The Hawks have been described as, "a youth militia loosely allied to ... Arafat's Fatah Party,"⁷⁴ a description which seems to suit both groups. Formed independently of Tunis, relations were quickly established, and the Panthers and the Hawks acted as the two semi-independent armed wings of Fatah during the intifada. The incorporation of these two groups into the PNA contributed significantly to the subordination of local armed elements, and further illustrates the adaptation of the institution to its structural context.

Detailed information on such clandestine and, indeed, amorphous groups is naturally hard to come by, but according to Palestinian sources, the Black Panthers were formed in Nablus during the early days of the intifada in 1988.⁷⁵ They were formed independently of Tunis and always retained a measure of autonomy. According to a famous story circulating in Nablus, late 1988-1989 saw the Panthers execute a number of collaborators. The concern generated by these executions prompted Arafat to send a written message to the Panthers telling them to stop. They reputedly took the note, stuck it on a wall in Nablus, and shot it. One further indicator of autonomy - and hence their potential to trouble Arafat - is the source of their weapons. The Panthers were not armed by Tunis but bought their own weapons locally. Interestingly, these weapons were said to include M16's originally in the possession of the IDF.⁷⁶

The Fatah Hawks were established in 1990, with an estimated 300-500 activists, somewhat smaller than the Black Panthers, but accurate figures simply do not exist. The Hawks served the same role as the Panthers, taking a leading part in the intifada, attacking soldiers and settlers and executing collaborators. Mostly confined to Gaza, the Fatah Hawks developed a presence around the West Bank towns of Tulkarm and Qalqilya and, as we shall see, in the old city of Nablus.⁷⁷ A majority of both groups were quickly recruited into Preventive Security following the re-deployment,⁷⁸ whilst others joined Force 17.

For the Fatah hierarchy, the incorporation of the Panthers and the Hawks into the new security apparatus served a dual purpose: firstly, it disarmed a potential source of resistance to the DoP by giving autonomous militant activists a stake in the process, both through the prestige of their positions and the material fact of their salaries; secondly, as with Rajoub and Dahalan, these were precisely the right sort of people with the requisite local knowledge for implementing the writ of Arafat across the territories. In terms of our transitional model, the absorption of these two groups into the security apparatus of the

PNA greatly facilitated the creation of a subordinate armed force - a key component in the state-building process.

An interesting case study of recruitment to Preventive Security is the 33 year-old one-time deputy-leader of Fatah in Nablus, Ahmad Tabouk. After spending ten years in Israeli jails, and later having split with the Black Panthers for reasons unknown, Tabouk declared himself to be a Fatah Hawk. When interviewed, the former Mayor of Nablus, Ghassan Shak'a, believed the core of the group comprised only Tabouk and three or four friends with the remainder being simply followers. Having met him only once, Shak'a acknowledged Tabouk's nationalist motivations but recalled ruefully, "he thinks he's saving Nablus and Palestine."⁷⁹ According to a Jerusalem Post report: "He began issuing orders to shoot drug dealers, and others considered moral deviants or collaborators. He and his followers killed at least eight people and wounded 40 over the past year (1994-5)."⁸⁰ During this final year of Israeli control, Tabouk held sway over Nablus, dispensing summary justice through executions and knee-capping from his strong-hold in the old city.

With the Interim Agreement concluded by September 1995, Nablus opened-up to the PLO in December. Arafat moved quickly to assert his authority. According to the Post's report, the PLO Chairman,

"who understands charismatic leadership, was reportedly dismayed by film footage of Tabouk swaggering through the casbah days before the IDF left, firing in the air and enjoying the adulation of the crowd."⁸¹

The same point was made by Tabouk's sister: "When Arafat came to Nablus and saw Ahmed's picture on the front page of the newspaper, he was shocked and ordered his arrest ... He did not like to see Ahmed on an equal footing."⁸² Tabouk initially defied both the newly appointed Governor, Mahmoud Alloul, and Rajoub, until a ten hour siege of the old city finally persuaded him to surrender on 17 December.⁸³ He was arrested, together with 40 colleagues, and served 13 months in prison in Jericho.

The relationship between Preventive Security, the Black Panthers, and Fatah Hawks is illustrated neatly by Tabouk's fate. During his arrest, Rajoub's Mercedes was observed close to the scene. Rajoub informed reporters,

"we have assumed responsibility to ensure security and to act against any Palestinians who want to kill this agreement. I don't want to teach Israelis how to deal with their extremists, and I don't need them to teach me how to deal with ours."⁸⁴

By March 1997 Tabouk had been rehabilitated. Reportedly on good terms with Rajoub,⁸⁵ he has been awarded a commission in Preventive Security despite a lack of "any police training."⁸⁶ He has since been posted to Hebron.

The Role of the Security Apparatus

From one perspective, the role of the security services has been determined by the terms of the Oslo process, with the PNA forming an institutional innovation mediating ongoing Israeli control. The terms of transition established a mandate for the PNA designed to protect Israeli security, and the suppression of dissent and the militarisation of the occupied territories provides some evidence that this mandate is being fulfilled. On the other hand, the inter-Palestinian violence witnessed during the first three years of PNA rule can also be seen as a function of the state-building process. Rapid expansion of the security services is a typical feature of most Third World state-building projects, and the sometimes violent suppression of the opposition has indeed consolidated the rule of the PNA within Palestinian society. Furthermore, the security services have been relatively successful in finessing their awkward position by turning collaborators, compromising Israeli intelligence, and refusing to 'extradite' Palestinian suspects to the Israeli authorities. This has strengthened the hand of the PNA in its external relations with Israel and further consolidated the autonomy project.

Major General Nasir Yusuf was disarmingly forthright when questioned about his mandate. He stated that the PNA was broadly concerned to "rebuild all aspects of life in

the Palestinian community," but warned that "security is the basis."⁸⁷ In accordance with the terms of the Oslo process and the emphasis on guarantees for Israeli security (see chapter three), co-ordination between PNA security staff and their Israeli counterparts preceded by several months the conclusion of the Interim Agreement. A particular role was assigned to Preventive Security. In January 1994 Rajoub and Dahalan travelled to Rome to meet with Israeli officers, former General Security Service (GSS) head Ya'acov Peri and then deputy chief of staff Amnon Lipkin Shahak.⁸⁸ They were there, according to Usher,

"to sort out the modalities of their future role, both with Israeli intelligence and with the Palestinian street. Ehud Ya'ari summarised an Israeli view of the consensus that emerged from the meeting. 'Fatah-armed bands whose members were wanted by the Israeli security services, like the Hawks, will have special tasks', he wrote in January 1994. 'They will be charged with putting down any sign of opposition [to the DoP]; the intent is for them to administer show-punishments at the earliest possible stage, aimed at creating proper respect for the new regime."⁸⁹

Within Israel, support for the formula whereby Palestinians repress Palestinians in the name of Israeli security was forthcoming from the highest level. One week prior to the signing of the DoP, Rabin had justified the agreement in the following terms:

"I prefer the Palestinians to cope with the problem of enforcing order in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinians will be better at it than we were because they will allow no appeals to the Supreme Court and will prevent the Israeli Association of Civil Rights from criticising the conditions there by denying it access to the area. They will rule by their own methods, freeing, and this is most important, the Israeli army soldiers from having to do what they will do."⁹⁰

The relationship between Preventive Security and Israel is not based solely on repression by proxy. Shin Bet and Preventive Security also co-operate on intelligence matters. "These two secret services routinely exchange information about radical opposition groups, such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, the Israelis relying on the Palestinians' local knowledge to monitor and hunt down underground rivals."⁹¹ According to an Israeli source quoted in The Guardian: "They don't let the Shin Bet into their interrogation rooms and we don't let them into ours. They exchange information all the

time. Neither side really trusts the other. But it works very well.⁹² Based on press sources, the accuracy of these statements is difficult to assess. However, in the context of the joint-security measures established by the Oslo process, it is quite feasible.

The formal terms of transition notwithstanding, the PNA has been relatively successful in pursuing its own agenda, suppressing opposition and consolidating its authority. The most notable clash in the state-building process unfolded within the first six months of PNA rule, when simmering tension between the PNA and the Islamic opposition exploded outside the Palestine Mosque, symbolically close to the compound which serves as the headquarters of Public Security in Gaza City (*al-Sarayah*), on the 18 November 1994. The Islamic movements had organised a large demonstration, centred on the mosque, to commemorate the death of Islamic Jihad activist Hani Abed, assassinated on 2 November by a car bomb. During Abed's funeral, popular anger at the assassination, which everyone agreed looked very much like an Israeli operation, resulted in mourners denouncing Arafat as a "traitor."⁹³ The following week, another Islamic Jihad activist, "detonated himself outside Gaza's Netzarim settlement, killing three Israeli soldiers."⁹⁴ According to Usher, Rabin summoned Arafat to an emergency meeting where he was informed, in no uncertain terms, that "any more incidents like Netzarim and the IDF would 'fire indiscriminately' on Palestinians in Gaza 'regardless' of the Palestinian police."⁹⁵ The acid test for the PNA's security apparatus was about to unfold, and Hamas decided to provide it.

The ever well-informed Wafa Amr gave the following first-hand version of events. On the night before the demonstration, Hamas activists advised journalists, but not Islamic Jihad, that 'there will be an event'. According to Amr, PNA security were prepared for the demonstration and deployed outside the mosque. As the security forces looked on, Hamas banners were unfurled and stones thrown at the police. Stones were met with bullets, although Amr is insistent that shots were also fired at the police, resulting in six non-fatal

police casualties. The result was 13 demonstrators killed and many more injured, until Arafat personally gave the order to stop before a massacre of far larger proportions unfolded.⁹⁶ The implications of the Palestine Mosque killings were clear: Hamas had challenged the authority of Arafat and the PNA in the heart of the autonomous areas and lost. The security apparatus had demonstrated its readiness to defend the autonomy project. From this point forth, PNA-Hamas relations would be tense, but the military strength of the PNA determined that the relationship would henceforth be based on dialogue, rather than direct physical confrontation.⁹⁷

The establishment of the PNA's authority has also led to a number of deaths in custody. The East Jerusalem-based Palestine Report reported a total of eleven deaths as of February 1997. At the time of writing, the latest, Yusuf Ismail Baba, died in Rafidiyah hospital 1 February 1997: "Baba was the eleventh Palestinian to die in PA detention, the second in two weeks. His death is the first without a political motive ..."⁹⁸ According to the report, PNA Minister of Justice, Frei Abu Midayn:

"confirmed on February 3 that Baba had died from injuries caused by the 'brutal violence' inflicted on him, and said an autopsy had been ordered. Some of those involved in torturing him have been arrested, Abu Middein said, and will be dealt with severely..."⁹⁹

Significantly, the Legislative Council, "condemned Baba's death, demanded an investigation into the actions of the military intelligence, and, apparently unappeased by Abu Midayn's statement, accused the Cabinet of total culpability for the killing." Furthermore, the report concluded that human rights organisations "note that at least 1,600 Palestinians remain in PA custody, 700 of them held without charge."¹⁰⁰

The security services' enthusiasm for clashes with the opposition has shown a clear differentiation between the returnees and the insiders, with Rajoub and Dahalan demonstrating a greater willingness to tolerate the opposition than the returnee officers at the highest level of command.¹⁰¹ Rajoub has made clear his respect for them: "They are

nationalists. They care about the Palestinian interests no less than I do."¹⁰² In contrast, the most hated man in the Gaza Strip is the returnee Musa Arafat, the only commander not to stop shooting demonstrators outside the mosque according to Amr and, as noted earlier, widely reported to be more closely guarded than the PLO Chairman himself.¹⁰³ Usher asserts that Nasir Yusuf and Ghazi Jabali, both from outside, "favoured a strong-arm approach to crush the Islamists once and for all, Dahalan and Rajoub, mindful of Hamas's base in the territories, urged a policy aimed at splitting the movement's political and military wings."¹⁰⁴ As we shall see in the following chapter, this policy has enjoyed a measure of success, for example the inclusion of former Hamas leader Imad Faluji into the Legislative Council and the Executive Authority.

Besides consolidating the PNA within Palestinian society, the security services have strengthened the project vis a vis Israel. They have been able to subvert the articles in the Gaza-Jericho agreement which required the PNA to 'transfer' Palestinian prisoners suspected of 'terrorism' to Israel, and Rajoub in particular has successfully emasculated the network of collaborators supplying Israel with intelligence from the West Bank.

As the Gaza-Jericho Agreement facilitated the first Israeli redeployment and the establishment of PNA jurisdiction, it also contained detailed provisions for the 'transfer' of Palestinians suspected of violent resistance activities from the PNA enclaves to the Israeli authorities (the term 'extradition' was not used because extradition treaties could only be realised between sovereign states).¹⁰⁵ These provisions are listed in Annex III, the 'Protocol Concerning Legal Matters.' Article II.7. deals specifically with the 'Transfer of Suspects and Defendants.' Article II.7(b). stipulated:

"Where an individual suspected of, charged with or convicted of an offence that falls within Israeli criminal jurisdiction is present in the Territory, Israel may request the Palestinian Authority to arrest and transfer the individual to Israel."

In practice, the PNA has refused to transfer any suspects to Israeli custody, generating a great deal of complaint within Israel. Prior to the conclusion of the Interim Agreement, some 70 Knesset members, among them several from the governing Labor Party, "signed a petition urging the government to halt all further Palestinian prisoner releases,"¹⁰⁶ in order to pressure the PNA to honour the transfer clauses of the Agreement.

Clearly the handing-over of Palestinian activists to Israel by the PNA would be interpreted on the Palestinian street as evidence of collaboration, a charge all Palestinian officials are anxious to avoid.¹⁰⁷ The mechanism used to prevent this has been in-camera trials of suspects through the State Security Courts. The creation of this non-legal space by the PNA has served to protect the image of the security services. The wider implications of this were noted by Edward Said when he wrote: "Arafat, I believe, is correctly banking on the fact that many of the details of the May 4 accord are simply unenforceable."¹⁰⁸ I shall return to this point in the following chapter.

The other area in which the security services have enjoyed a measure of success is in turning Palestinian collaborators who previously worked for Israel. The best account of this success is given by Usher, who cites information from Israeli sources that suggests they numbered up to 5,000 individuals in the pay of the Israelis at the time of the signing of the DoP.¹⁰⁹ Under the terms of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, collaborators were to be "granted amnesty or, in certain cases, Israeli citizenship to enable them to move inside the Green Line."¹¹⁰ Beyond a small number of elite collaborators absorbed by Israel, most have been left at the mercy of Preventive Security.

"Abandoned by their former GSS employers, former collaborators surrender themselves to the Palestinian security forces as a way of gaining mitigation. Some are imprisoned, others tortured. Around five have 'died' while in PA custody. Some, however, have been 'turned', not in the classical sense of becoming 'double agents,' but in the more mundane sense of becoming employees of the PSF [Preventive Security] rather than the GSS."¹¹¹

This has served the PNA in two ways. Firstly, the information generated by these collaborators on the Palestinian opposition Leftist and Islamic groups strengthens the ability of the security apparatus to contain dissent and prevent armed attacks against Israeli targets. Secondly, the Israeli security establishment has readily acknowledged the decline in the quantity and quality of the intelligence it now receives from the West Bank and Gaza Strip - no longer able to rely on an extensive network of collaborators, they are rendered dependent on the co-operation of the PNA's security apparatus. Both of these factors help strengthen the PNA's authority and negotiating position during the transition process.

To conclude, within the constraints of the framework of transition, the PLO leadership has embarked on the construction of a quasi-state apparatus. Elite agency has adapted the institution to its structural context, restoring the authoritative leadership of the diaspora-based elite with some predictable patterns of continuity. The reliance on external sources of revenue has perpetuated patterns of rent-seeking and patronage which have passed from the PLO to the PNA. This has perpetuated the centralisation of authority, a measure of unaccountability, and the multiplication of institutions within the autonomy project. The patronage network extends to both the bureaucracy and security services of the PNA, each of which has performed a key role in the transition process. The PLO bureaucracy has been transformed into the civil institutions of the PNA, with senior Fatah cadres placed in strategic positions. Appointments at a ministerial level illustrate the co-option of local elites, whilst bureaucratic expansionism has secured support from the wider local population. The diaspora-based armed forces have been transformed into the security services of the PNA, with senior returnee Fatah cadres again placed in sensitive command positions. Senior local Fatah activists have established their own preserve, recruiting widely from the intifada generation and contributing to the realisation of a subordinate armed-force. The expansion of the security apparatus partly reflects the terms of transition and the emphasis on Israeli security. However, it also reflects the imperative of state-

building which accompanies the autonomy project. Within Palestinian society, the security services have co-opted local activists and coerced the opposition, whilst the successful recruitment of former collaborators has reduced Israeli intelligence capacities, strengthening the PNA in relation to Israel. Chapter five concludes our analysis of the transition process with an assessment of the elections to the Presidency and the Legislative Council, and the patterns of PNA-society relations.

Footnotes

¹The first contingent of PLO forces crossed the Rafah checkpoint from Egypt into the Gaza Strip on 10 May 1994. The al-Aqsa Brigade of the PLA took over in Jericho on 13 May 1994. PASSIA Diary 1996, p.273.

²Ashrawi notes that Arafat wanted to establish a provisional government, "but neither the Americans nor the Israelis would accept it..." Ashrawi, *op. cit.*, pp. 276-278.

³Gresh, *op. cit.*, p.168.

⁴Ashrawi provides a brief account of the decision-making process concerning PLO ratification of the DOP and the decision to establish the PNA. Ashrawi, *op. cit.*, pp.276-278. Also see Usher, Palestine in Crisis, *op.cit.*, p.14. The PLO Central Council (107 members as of October 1993), approved the DoP and the establishment of the PNA by a vote of 63 to 8, with 11 members abstaining and 25 members boycotting the session. Palestine Report, 8-14 October 1993.

⁵Rex Brynen, 'The Dynamics of Palestinian Elite Formation', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.24, No.3, (Spring 1995), p.38.

⁶Roger Owen, *op.cit.* Paul Cammack, David Pool and William Tordoff, Third World Politics: a Comparative Introduction (Second Edition), (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd,1993).

⁷Jill Crystal, 'Authoritarianism and its Adversaries in the Arab World', World Politics, Vol.46 (January 1994), p.269.

⁸Interview with Sulayman al-Najjab, PPP Member of the PLO Executive Committee since 1987, re-elected by the 21st PNC in April 1996, Jibya (near Bir Zeit), 2 February 1996.

⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴The Jerusalem Post, 19 August 1994.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁶Interview with Sulayman al-Najjab.

¹⁷Shafiq al-Hout quoted in Said, *op. cit.*, p.3.

¹⁸Salim Tamari, comments on Jill Tansley, 'Adaptation' in the West Bank and Gaza: Discussion Paper. Refugee Working Group Intersessional. Middle East Peace Process/ PRRN: Research Materials/ ICAS. From the McGill Website. 17 May 1996.

¹⁹Said, *op. cit.*, pp.170-171.

²⁰The Guardian, 21 April 1997. Precisely who has been granted which monopoly is unclear, but according to Edward Jenkinson, the monopoly for importing gravel into the Gaza Strip was awarded to Mohammed Dahalan, head of Preventive Security in Gaza. Clearly this is not an easy area to research, but the subject does merit further attention. Said quotes Julian Ozane from the Financial Times who reported that the bank in question was Bank Leumi, Said, *op. cit.*, p.169

²¹*Ibid.*

²²Interview with Ali Khader, World Bank office in al-Ram, West Bank, February 1996.

²³Sha'ath is a leading Fatah returnee and a wealthy businessman in his own right. Tarifi is a prominent member of the local bourgeoisie co-opted by Arafat. He reputedly made a substantial fortune building Israeli settlements. We will return to him later.

²⁴The Financial Times, 30 July 1997.

²⁵*Harakat al-Tahrir al-Watani al-Filistini* (The Palestinian National Liberation Movement - Fatah), al-Nizam al-Asasi (The Basic Law) (no place of publication, publisher or date). This latest version of the Basic Law was adopted in 1980 and the author's copy obtained from the Fatah Higher Committee office, Gaza, February 1996.

²⁶Interview with Jamil Shehadeh, Revolutionary Council member and Assistant Deputy Minister in the Ministry of the Interior, Ramallah, 25 January 1996. Interview with Diab Allouh, 24 October 1995.

²⁷Dates and figures were agreed on in separate interviews with two members of the Fatah Revolutionary Council present at the Fifth General Conference. Interview with Marwan Barghouthi, Fatah office, Ramallah, 3 and 10 February 1996. Interview with Jamil Shehadeh, Ministry of the Interior, Ramallah, 22 and 25 January 1996. Cobban reports that the fifth General Conference was held in Tunis during August 1989. Cobban, '*Intifada*', *op. cit.*, p.230.

²⁸As noted in chapter one, the PNLA is a result of the merger between the military wing of Fatah, sometimes referred to as *al-'Asifa* (The Storm), and the PLO's regular forces, the PLA, which took place in 1983. This was made clear to me during an interview with Major General Abd al-Razak al-Majjaydah, Commander of Palestinian General Security in the Gaza Strip, who emphasised that it was inappropriate to draw a distinction between Fatah and the PLA. Interview with Major General Abd al-Razaq al-Majjaydah.

²⁹Sources suggest that the Revolutionary Council emerged, together with the current version of the Basic Law, during the 4th General Conference held in Damascus in 1980. Inbari, *op. cit.*, p.21. Fatah, *al-Nizam al-Asasi*. However, it should be noted that Gresh refers to the Revolutionary Council's existence as early as 1974. Gresh, *op. cit.*, p.160.

³⁰Inbari suggests a total of 80 members, whilst in separate interviews Shehadeh and Barghouthi agreed on the figure of 111. Inbari, *op. cit.*, p.24. Interviews with Jamil Shehadeh and Marwan Barghouthi.

³¹Interviews with Marwan Barghouthi.

³²Interview with Ahmad al-Deek, member of the Fatah Higher Committee in the West Bank, Legislative Council member for Salfit, married to the daughter of Khalil al-Wazir, Fatah office, Ramallah, 6 November 1995.

³³Interview with Samir Sinjalawi.

³⁴Interview with Husam Shaheen, Fatah activist and employee in the Palestinian Centre for Non-violence, Jerusalem, 19 January 1996. At the time of fieldwork, the Higher Committees comprised 47 members in the West Bank and 30 members in Gaza. Interviews with Marwan Barghouthi, Ahmad al-Deek and Diab Allouh, noted above.

³⁵Interviews with Diab Allouh.

³⁶Interviews with Marwan Barghouthi.

³⁷The Labor Party in particular has favoured the deportation of politically active Palestinians. Cobban suggests that up to 15,000 Palestinians from Gaza were deported to Egypt immediately after the 1967 occupation, and a further 1,150 from the West Bank and Gaza between 1967 and 1978. Rabin later employed deportations as a central plank of his 'Iron Fist' policy from 1985. However, the policy had unforeseen consequences. In Cobban's words: "Like most Palestinians who preceded and succeeded them into political exile, the community leaders deported before the intifada were immediately incorporated into the command structures of the various PLO groups ..." Cobban, *'Intifada'*, *op. cit.*, p.227. This explains the Likud's general reluctance to rely on deportations as a means of suppressing nationalist dissent.

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰Fatah and PLO institutions have a habit of growing over time in order to accommodate more and more figures into their ranks. Former PNC member Ibrahim Abu Lughod made this point with regard to the PNC. Interview in Ibrahim Abu Lughod, Ramallah, 20 December 1995.

⁴¹Brynen, 'Elite Formation', *op. cit.*, footnote no. 40, p.43.

⁴²Prem Garg and Samir el-Khoury, 'Aiding the Development Effort for the West Bank and Gaza', Finance and Development, September 1994.

⁴³Interview with Jibril Mohammed, PFLP member, head of the voluntary work section in the PNA's Ministry of Sports and Youth, Beitunia (near Ramallah), 10 September 1995.

⁴⁴Interview with Basil Ramahi, former Civil Administration employee, Director General in the PNA's Ministry of Finance, Ramallah, 11 February 1996.

⁴⁵The Council of Ministers and the Executive Authority are detailed in Appendix 4.

⁴⁶Shehadeh, 'Questions of Jurisdiction', *op. cit.*, p.22. Article II. B.6 of Annex II reads as follows: "The Palestinian Authority assures that it shall keep employing the present Palestinian Civil Administration employees in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area and shall maintain their rights."

⁴⁷Interview with Walid Salim, former prisoner accused of holding a senior position in the leadership of the PFLP, currently a journalist and board member of The Centre for the Dissemination of Alternative Information (Panorama), a left-leaning research centre in East Jerusalem with sponsorship from various Palestinian sources, the Swiss and Canadian Consulates, and the Dutch Socialist Party. The head of Panorama is Riyad Malki, professor at Bir Zeit University and official spokesman for the PFLP in the West Bank. Panorama, Jerusalem, 19 January 1997

⁴⁸PASSIA Diary 1996, pp.7-9.

⁴⁹Robinson, The Incomplete Revolution, *op.cit.*, p.180.

⁵⁰BBC World Service, 17 January 1996.

⁵¹Robinson, The Incomplete Revolution, *op.cit.*, p.180.

⁵²Interview with Walid Salim.

⁵³Interview with Marwan Jilani, Director of Planning and Development in the Ministry of Sports and Youth, Ramallah, 10 September 1995. Interview with Jibril Mohammed.

⁵⁴The first four governorates were recorded in the PASSIA Diary 1996, p.10. The more recent establishment of the Hebron Governorate is noted in the Palestine Report, 15 November 1996. At the time of writing, it was not known if the Governor of Hebron, Aziz Amr, was a member of the Revolutionary Council or not.

⁵⁵The Jerusalem Post, 19 January 1996.

⁵⁶Interview with Johar Sayigh.

⁵⁷Interview with Hillel Frisch, Hebrew University, 29 January 1996.

⁵⁸Interviews with Marwan Barghouthi, Diab Allouh and Jamil Shehadeh, plus other activists during fieldwork.

⁵⁹Interview by Jamil Hilal, Ramallah, February 1996.

⁶⁰Graham Usher, 'The Politics of Internal Security: the PA's New Intelligence Services', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 25, No.2, (Winter 1996), pp. 21-34.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 24. According to Usher, the SSF: "is the newest of the services, having been established in January 1995. It is also the smallest - Peace Watch estimates its strength at 'a few dozen policemen' - and has the murkiest of remits. Formally authorised to protect Arafat during his visits to Jericho, Palestinian sources say its actual function may be to gather intelligence on and monitor the PA's other security services. It is currently based at the PA's police headquarters in Jericho, but is expected to radiate out from there once redeployment in the West Bank gets underway."

⁶²Interview with Wafa Amr, Reuters journalist, Jerusalem, 29 November 1995.

⁶³According Johar Sayigh, Nasir Yusuf's background is Force 17. Interview with Johar Sayigh.

⁶⁴It should be noted that al-Majjaydah did not inform me of this himself, preferring instead to stress his background in the PLA and the PNLA. However, activists at the Fatah Higher Committee office in Gaza had no doubts about his membership of the Revolutionary Council, and interviews with his colleagues, Marwan Barghouthi and Jamil Shehadeh, served to confirm this.

⁶⁵Conversations with various activists during fieldwork.

⁶⁶Usher adds a caveat of uncertainty as to whether Force 17 includes the Presidential Guard or vice versa. In operational terms, Force 17 is both larger and operates according to a wider remit. Usher, 'Internal Security', *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24. This would suggest that Force 17 includes the Presidential Guard, a perspective reinforced during an informal conversation with a member of the Presidential Guard from the President's Office in Gaza during January 1996.

⁶⁷This impression is derived from various informal sources during fieldwork in Gaza and the West Bank. Force 17 has a training compound/shooting range along the Gaza sea-front. Usher reports that its members are, "mainly concentrated in Nablus and in the northern West Bank..." Usher, *Ibid.*, p.23.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, pp.23-24. The author knew personally a Fatah activist approached to join Force 17, as well as reports of others who had done so.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, p.23.

⁷⁰B'Tselem, 'Neither Law nor Justice', Report on the Palestinian Preventive Security Service, Jerusalem 1995 (exerts) in 'Documents and Source Materials', Journal of Palestine

Studies, Vol. 25, No.2, (Winter 1996), pp.148-151.

⁷¹PASSIA Diary 1996.

⁷²Steve Rodan and Bill Hutman, 'Order in Jericho', The Jerusalem Post Magazine, 19 May 1995, pp.10-15.

⁷³Interview with Wafa Amr.

⁷⁴The Guardian, 22 February 1997.

⁷⁵This material is based on informal conversations with a former Fatah activist from Nablus who asked that his name not be cited.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*

⁷⁷The Jerusalem Post, 18 December 1995.

⁷⁸Nasir Yusuf confirmed that Preventive Security in Gaza was composed almost entirely of former Fatah Hawks. Interview with Major General Nasir Yusuf, senior figure in Force 17, member of the Fatah Central Committee, overall commander of PNA Security Services in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, 30 August 1995.

⁷⁹Interview with Ghassan Shak'a, Mayor of Nablus and subsequently Fatah member of the Legislative Council, elected to the PLO Executive Committee by the 21st PNC, Nablus Municipality, Autumn 1995.

⁸⁰The Jerusalem Post, 18 December 1995.

⁸¹*Ibid.*

⁸²The Guardian, 22 February 1997.

⁸³Palestine Report, 29 December 1995.

⁸⁴The Jerusalem Post, 13 December 1995.

⁸⁵According to The Jerusalem Post: "Opinions are divided on who controlled him. B'Tselem condemned him as a brute in the service of Rajoub. Others named other less well-known Fatah operators, Nasser Joumeh or Mahmoud Jmeil." The Jerusalem Post, 18 December 1995.

⁸⁶The Guardian, 22 February 1997.

⁸⁷Interview with Major General Nasir Yusuf.

⁸⁸The Jerusalem Post Magazine, 19 May 1995. Usher notes the meeting in Palestine in Crisis, *op. cit.*, p.66, although he dates it to December 1993.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p.66.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, pp.71-72.

⁹¹The Guardian, 22 January 1997.

⁹²*Ibid.*

⁹³Usher, Palestine in Crisis, *op. cit.*, p.70.

⁹⁴*Ibid.*

⁹⁵*Ibid.*

⁹⁶Interview with Wafa Amr.

⁹⁷Ghazi Hamed, editor of the Hamas weekly newspaper al-Watan (circulation around 9,000), confirmed the readiness of the PNA to pursue Hamas's military-wing, the Qassem Brigades, together with the killings at the Palestine Mosque, had forced Hamas into a dialogue with the PNA. Nevertheless, despite the dialogue, al-Watan continued to be regularly harassed by security services (various branches of it), and Hamed himself had regularly been on the wanted list. Interview with Ghazi Hamed, Managing Editor of al-Watan, Gaza, 26 October 1995.

⁹⁸Palestine Report, 7 February 1997.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁰¹Usher, Palestine in Crisis, *op. cit.*, p.68.

¹⁰²The Jerusalem Post Magazine, 19 May 1995.

¹⁰³Informal conversations with Palestinian friends and UN staff, Gaza.

¹⁰⁴Usher, Palestine in Crisis, *op. cit.*, p68.

¹⁰⁵The report contains details of Israeli attempts to 'transfer' Palestinians to Israel in ten 'murder' cases. "In no instance has any suspect been transferred to Israel for trial or even questioning. In at least four cases, where formal papers were submitted for the suspects' transfer, the Palestinian Authority has either rejected the Israeli requests outright, or ignored them." Jerusalem Report, 21 September 1995, p.26.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, p.27.

¹⁰⁷Rajoub, who remains acutely aware of this dilemma, complained of the Israelis: "They

want me to be another Sa'ad Haddad." The Jerusalem Post Magazine, 19 May 1995, p.10. Haddad was the original commander of the SLA, Israel's proxy in southern Lebanon, now led by Antoine Lahad.

¹⁰⁸Said, *op.cit.*, p.70.

¹⁰⁹Usher, 'Internal Security', *op. cit.*, p.25.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*, p.25.

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, p.26.

Chapter Five

NGOs, the Legislative Council and the Party of State: The Social Basis of the National Project

Chapter four detailed the establishment of the bureaucracy and security services as an institutional basis for the national project. This chapter expands our analysis by examining the role of civil society, the NGO community, the Legislative Council, and Fatah as the prospective party of state. The exercise serves a dual purpose: firstly, it completes our analysis of the institutional consequences of transition; and secondly, it allows us to assess the relationship between different social classes and the quasi-state apparatus of the PNA. Consistent with our framework of analysis, I shall examine the processes at work in terms of elite agency and structural context.

As we have seen, in the context of the Israeli occupation, important changes in the structure of Palestinian society have included the decline of the traditional land-owning elite, the ascent of a middle-class counterelite, and the rise of the intifada generation. The emergence of the middle classes has prompted references to Palestinian 'civil society', the strength of which has been expressed in the vibrant NGO community. My analysis will show how the NGO community has been neutralised by the PNA through institutional expansion, recruitment into the quasi-state apparatus, and the diversion of resources away from the 'non-state' sector. Besides neutralising the 'counterelite', the returnee leadership have co-opted the notable class and wealthy Palestinians into the ruling-coalition of the autonomy project. This co-option can be seen in the manipulation of the electoral system - a clear example of elite-agency adapting institutional arrangements to the social structure of transition. Fatah's transition towards party of state will be examined with reference to the primaries conducted prior to the election and the content of the Council. The results point to a ruling-coalition between the returnee historic leadership, local notables, and the

indigenous bourgeoisie, with the intifada generation securing a measure of representation through the mobilisation of the Higher Committees.

The PNA and the NGOs

This section assesses the character and development of civil society within the autonomy project. Palestinian civil society is found to be largely a society of NGOs, many of whom were affiliated with Leftist factions. The PNA is shown to have largely neutralised the NGO movement through institutional expansion, the recruitment of technocrats and clerical personnel into the apparatus of the PNA, and the diversion of external sources of finance away from the NGOs and toward the incipient 'state sector'. The NGO's attempts to retain their autonomy notwithstanding, the role of the 'non-state' sector in the autonomy project is seen to be tangibly shrinking, pointing to the emergence of a state-centric middle-class in common with other Arab states.

The vibrant nature of Palestinian civil society has been much remarked upon by analysts keen to see the establishment of the first truly democratic Arab state.¹ In view of the personalistic and authoritarian tendencies of the neighbouring Arab regimes, Palestinian civil society has been characterised as a decentralised and pluralistic counter-balance with an important role to play in the establishment of a democratic PNA.² Equally, the PLO's tolerance of political pluralism has been seen as setting a favourable precedent. For instance, according to Muslih:

"it is precisely because the state surrogate [the PLO] has sustained political pluralism that it may be inclined to sustain a pluralistic civil society if independence is achieved. That Palestinian civil society is pluralistic bodes well for its ability to sustain a state based on pluralism."³

The pluralism of the PLO factions has indeed been a striking feature of Palestinian political life since the 1960's, a phenomenon which, in the view of George Giacaman, Professor of Philosophy at Bir Zeit University, constitutes a modern political model:

"By modern I mean parties not centered around notables, families, or clans, as used to be the case in Palestine in the inter-war years. This feature allows for social and political mobility ... without having a traditional power-base. Individuals from rural backgrounds, from refugee camps, and from the ranks of the poor, could rise to positions of influence in parties ..."⁴

Much of the hope for a modern and pluralistic PNA has been invested in civil society. Beginning with a brief definition of the concept, the analysis outlines the constituent parts of civil society in Palestine and assesses the dilemmas raised by the transition process.

Giacaman, also an active proponent of a role for NGOs in the generation of a civil society, defines the concept in terms of a three-fold distinction between the state, civil society and the family.

"If the family denotes the realm of the private, and the state the realm of what is public, then civil society subsists in between, occupying a space that is both private and public. It is the space within which individuals and organized groups act in relative independence from the state within a sphere of guaranteed but relative autonomy."⁵

In Giacaman's view, this autonomy pertains to rights in two spheres of public life, civil rights and economic rights, both of which are secured through an autonomous civil society. In the contemporary West Bank and Gaza Strip, this is understood to mean political freedom in the context of the PNA, and economic freedom in the context of structural dependence on the Israeli economy.⁶

The role of civil society needs to be seen in the context of the relationship between the PLO leadership and the NGOs prior to the establishment of the PNA. As we saw in chapters one and two, what is widely referred to as Palestinian 'civil society' is largely a society of NGOs, often established by, or coopted into, the orbit of the PLO in order to

provide services and win adherence to the nationalist agenda. Not surprisingly, the establishment of the PNA and the imperatives of state-building have put the role of the NGOs in doubt. The returnee leadership has reclaimed exclusive control over the nationalist agenda, whilst simultaneously securing a vastly expanded vehicle for the provision of services through the apparatus of the PNA. The return of the leadership has allowed it to dispense with the need for proxies in the NGOs (many of which were affiliated with Leftist factions anyway, a point I shall return to shortly), while the apparatus of the PNA has partly displaced the NGOs' service provision functions with the centralised provision of welfare and development projects such as those undertaken by PECDAR and the various PNA ministries. Giacaman has noted that the PNA's attitude to the NGOs, from the outset:

"ranged from the hostile to the indifferent. Hostility stemmed from the perception of competition for funds, from the need to deprive elements from the opposition of an infrastructure for influence, and from the need to assert its authority internally, given its relative inability to assert its authority externally, especially in relation to Israel."⁷

According to Ibrahim Daybis of the Health Development Information Project (affiliated to the PPP), shortly after the establishment of the PNA, Minister of Social Affairs Intisar al-Wazir openly called for the incorporation of all NGOs into the PNA.

A further index of PNA centralisation materialised in November 1995, when all the NGOs in the Gaza Strip were issued with a registration form by the PNA's 'Department of NGO and NG Institution's Security'. The form included questions such as, "have you ever belonged to any Palestinian organisations, has any of your family been charged with spying, do any of your family members belong to a political party, and have you ever been imprisoned for political reasons or others?"⁸ This development generated a great deal of indignation amongst the NGO community, as did the first draft of an 'NGO law', both of which were seen as unnecessary attempts to regulate and control their activities. The

World Bank appeared to side with the NGOs, at least partially, surmising that they may indeed have a useful role to play in 'democratisation'.⁹

Despite the ambivalent relationship between the PNA and the NGOs, Daybis did acknowledge that the PNA had actually called upon NGOs for help in certain sectors in which the ministries had little experience, most notably in health care provision.¹⁰ The NGOs have partly finessed their difficult position through similar attempts to co-ordinate with PNA ministries and to provide specialist technical expertise. This argument has been put forward by the PPP's Mustafa Barghouthi, a leading light in the NGO community, who suggested that "what is needed from the authority's [i.e. the PNA's] side is **coordination with NGOs** rather than **coordinating the NGOs**".¹¹ However, the dilemma which continues to face the NGOs is reflected in the diversion of international funding away from them and towards the official institutions of the PNA. According to Rema Hammami:

"The World Bank estimates that external support for Palestinian NGOs dropped from a high of between \$170 to \$240 million in the early 1990s, to between \$100 to \$120 million post-Oslo - which amounts at the very least to a 40 per cent drop in funding."¹²

In essence, the transition from liberation movement to national authority has tightened the space available to the NGOs from two sides, marginalising their role in promoting the nationalist agenda and supplanting their role in service provision through the apparatus of the PNA.

The contraction of the space available to the NGOs and the expansion (if not creation) of a public sector has caused a substantial (though as yet unquantified) shift amongst qualified professionals and technocrats from the NGOs to the institutions of the PNA. In this respect, the political significance of the professional 'middle class' who previously staffed the NGOs (a central element in the 'counterelite' identified by Robinson), can be seen to have decreased. In its current form, the PNA is becoming a substantial public sector employer, a development enhanced by 30 years of Israeli

occupation and the deliberate de-development of the Palestinian economy.¹³ The PNA has expanded and the NGO sector shrunk, professionals and technocrats have been steadily co-opted into the apparatus of the PNA, and the ever-expanding bureaucracy has absorbed significant numbers of clerical staff, including many new graduates, into its various institutions.

The rapid expansion of the public sector through the expansion of the institutions of the PNA, and the absorption of the middle class into it, seems consistent with John Waterbury's observations on the state-centric orientation of the Arab middle classes in general.¹⁴

"[T]he middle classes in the Middle East may be particularly dependent upon or absorbed by the state and therefore unable to create space beyond the control of the state. More specifically the private-sector bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia have, to a great degree, been suborned by the state and have made little contribution to the creation of a civil society able to bargain with the state."¹⁵

In this regard, one particular aspect of Palestinian society that will merit very close attention over the next few years is the network of universities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The university community has expanded considerably since the 1970s and both students and staff have contributed greatly to the struggle for self-determination. Student councils have served as a traditional battleground for factional influence, both between the various secular-nationalist factions and, since the mid-1980s, between the various secular groups and Hamas and Islamic Jihad. In the period since the signing of the DoP, secular opposition factions have regularly joined forces with the Islamists to challenge Fatah. A culture of political pluralism has taken root and, at least up to now, student council elections are still fiercely and openly contested. Equally, university staff (who are often also leading figures in the NGO community), have been free to voice criticism of the PLO and the Oslo process (and did so constantly during my four semesters at Bir Zeit), yet Arafat's intolerance of criticism and the precedents set by the intimidation of the press have cast doubts on the prospects for this relatively free intellectual climate. As with so

many aspects of this transition process, it is simply too early to tell how the situation will develop.

Waterbury accounted for the state-centric attitude of most Arab state intelligensias through the shared values of both the intelligencia and the regimes. "The coincidence of interests of the intelligencia and the state goes beyond emoluments, employment, and professional licensing to include a strong sense of identity and shared goals."¹⁶ To an extent, this statement held true for the relationship between the PLO and Palestinian universities prior to the DoP, but the scale of the concessions made in Oslo, compounded by the miserable reality of limited autonomy as experienced by most Palestinians over the last three years, gives reason to question whether this will continue to be the case. One indicator of the potential restraint of campus dissent is the Executive Authority's decision taken in August 1996 to create a special new police force for 'guarding' university campuses.¹⁷ Interestingly, this decision was immediately criticised by the Legislative Council, together with local human rights groups. Palestine Report attributed the Authority's move as response to a raid of al-Najah campus on 3 March 1996, during which "a large number of armed security forces stormed the university campus, wounding 12 students."¹⁸ Minister for Higher Education Hanan Ashrawi (a former lecturer at Bir Zeit and delegation member who was duly co-opted into the PNA), said she expected the police to be "deployed outside university campuses and to be called in only 'when needed',"¹⁹ but did not oppose the decision.

As part of the continuing debate over democracy under the PNA, the NGO community have tried strenuously to cast themselves as an essential component in the construction of a pluralistic civil society. This initiative quickly led to the formation of the Palestinian NGO Network (PNGO), and the publication of a quarterly report, Newsletter: Perspectives on the PNGO Network. The Newsletter (published in English since late 1994), details the PNGO's goals, the activities of the member institutions, and details of the

unfolding (but, in the absence of legislation, still unspecified) relationship between the PNGO Network and the PNA. The front page of one early newsletter stated; "It is our belief that the activities of NGOs make an essential contribution to the promotion of democracy and the establishment of civil society in Palestine."²⁰

Giacaman, arguing forcibly in support of this view, has stated, "for the purpose of the development of Palestinian civil society, it is essential that the continued existence of relatively autonomous forms of association be made secure."²¹ Giacaman viewed the creation of the PNGO Network as a step in this direction. However, part of the PNA's antipathy towards the PNGO Network stems from the strength of the Leftist opposition factions within the NGO community. According to Hammami's analysis:

"The PNGO Network reflects two contradictory strands within the NGO community; the NGO professionals who are mainly concerned with protecting their ability to deliver services; and the politicians who see NGOs as playing more aggressively political roles. This tension is reflected throughout the PNGO position paper. On the one hand, NGO activities are presented as efficient and complementary to the PNA's, yet, on the other, the document calls for 'total [financial and operational] independence from the Authority's structures and institutions."²²

This statement alludes to the profound problems confronting the PLO's secular opposition factions within Palestine; demoralised by the collapse of the Soviet bloc and marginalised from PLO decision-making, the Leftist factions have almost been *absorbed into* the NGOs, a phenomenon that Azmi Bishara called the 'NGO-isation' of the Left.²³ To quote Giacaman once more: "Opposition politics should be the legitimate work of parties not NGOs."²⁴

Bishara argued in favour of the Left's participation in the elections for the Legislative Council.²⁵ Instead, with the exception of the PPP (which failed to win one seat), the Damascus-led groups opted once again for self-imposed marginalisation. Effective political opposition requires viable political parties, a role which the Palestinian

Left has so far seemed incapable of assuming. However, as we shall see, there are early indications that the Council, despite the dominance of Fatah, may still present a solid counter-weight to the Executive Authority and its autocratic President.

One important indicator that society retains a measure of freedom to mobilise is a readiness to take strike action. Two contrasting instances have taken place during 1997; the first focused on the nationalist agenda, the second addressing a purely social conflict. On 1 February 1997 the Legislative Council, meeting in emergency session, called for a strike to protest the Israeli cabinet's decision to go ahead with settlement construction on Mount Abu Ghnaym (Har Homa in Hebrew), in East Jerusalem. According to Palestine Report, the Council "called for a general strike as a means to protest unprecedented settlement activity in Jerusalem which members argued is intended to pre-determine the final status negotiations and change the character of Jerusalem ..."²⁶ The general strike was duly organised, and widely observed, on 3 March.

A second and more significant strike was organised by the teachers' union over low pay. 23,000 teachers observed the strike,²⁷ again with the support of the Legislative Council which recommended an additional 10 percent pay increase at the beginning of the next school year. The strike endured for three months, despite the actions of the Ministry of Education, (headed by the 'independent' PLO Executive Committee member Yasir Amr), which "submitted names of some 50-60 school teachers to PA General Intelligence for questioning."²⁸ The strike was finally suspended, "after members of the Teachers Higher Coordinating Committee were arrested by Preventive Security and 'forced' to sign a statement promising to suspend the strike."²⁹ The Council remained supportive of the teachers, but acknowledged that it was powerless to help them until a civil service law was in place (the legislation had been formulated but not ratified). If the strike indicated a readiness and ability to defy the Executive Authority, the PNA's eventual response suggests a readiness to employ strong-arm tactics in the absence of a solution.

"Human rights organizations have voiced alarm at the crackdown on the teachers, noting that their campaign for better salaries is the first non-partisan social movement to challenge the PA, and did not get a very warm reception."³⁰

The teachers strike raises the question of the role the rest of the Palestinian trade union movement might play under autonomy. As with other sections of Palestinian civil society, the trade union movement has been driven by factional and nationalist politics rather than class-consciousness. In addition, the employment of a large proportion of Palestinian labourers in Israel on a migratory day-to-day basis compromised opportunities to organise effectively as a traditional union movement in the workplace.³¹ As we saw in chapter three, the economic provisions of the DoP suggest that the autonomy project will remain subordinate to the Israeli economy. Furthermore, the proposed 'industrial zones' suggest that Israeli and indigenous capital are ready to take advantage of a Palestinian labour force that is both cheap and relatively powerless.

To summarise the main points made above, the establishment of the PNA and the expansion of the bureaucratic apparatus has marginalised the NGO movement and severely contracted the space available to them. The PNA has assumed many of the NGOs' responsibilities, diverted external sources of finance away from the non-state sector, absorbed many of the NGOs' technocratic and clerical personnel, and reduced the salience of the NGOs as a haven for the Leftist opposition. In effect, the PNA appears to have successfully subordinated the indigenous middle-classes to the imperatives of state-building. The next section examines the elections to the Legislative Council in order to further illustrate the construction of a social basis for the national project. The analysis examines the manipulation of the electoral system and the content of the Council.

The Elections to the Legislative Council

The elections for the Legislative Council served two inter-related purposes. Firstly, in spite of the restrictions inherent in the framework of transition, the elections legitimised the national project initiated in Oslo: candidates agreeing to enter the race would *by definition* have accepted the Oslo process and the PNA as a valid diplomatic and political framework. Secondly, careful manipulation of the electoral system allowed the returnee elite to enhance their authoritative leadership by formally incorporating local allies into the ruling coalition. As part of this process, the PLO appointed all members of the Legislative Council, and the 100 closest runners-up, to the PNC. This move guaranteed Arafat the two-thirds majority he needed to revoke the 1968 Palestinian National Charter, relieving substantial Israeli pressure and facilitating the continuation of negotiations towards a final settlement. Nabil Sha'ath would duly point out that these appointments were entirely consistent with the by-laws of the PNC, which had always "called for 50 percent of its members to be elected from the homeland, when that becomes possible ..."³²

The agreement to hold elections for a Legislative Council in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was one of the first commitments listed in the DoP. Article I reads as follows:

"The aim of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations within the current Middle East peace process is, among other things, to establish a Palestinian Interim Self-Governing Authority, the elected council (the 'Council') for the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, for a transitional period not exceeding five years ..."³³

Article III.2, gives further details:

"An agreement will be concluded on the exact mode and conditions of the elections in accordance with the protocol attached as Annex I, with the goal of holding elections not later than nine months after the entry into force of this Declaration of Principles."³⁴

Annex I contains a commitment to allow Palestinians living in Jerusalem to participate in the election, and an agreement not to prejudice the rights of Palestinian refugees "who

were registered on 4th June 1967 ... because they are unable to participate in the election process due to practical reasons.³⁵ Finally, there is a commitment to negotiate a further agreement specifying the electoral system, international supervision, and media and campaigning arrangements.

These issues were not addressed in the Gaza-Jericho Agreement, which dealt instead with the establishment of the PNA and the transfer of powers to the first, unelected cabinet, the Council of Ministers.³⁶ Matters of real substance concerning the elections are elucidated in the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement negotiated at Taba, specifically Chapter 1 and Annex II. Chapter 1, Article 2.1, stipulated that "direct, free and general political elections will be held for the Council and the Ra'ees of the Executive Authority of the Council..."³⁷ This arrangement, providing for separate ballots for the President and the Legislative Council,³⁸ would allow Arafat to draw upon all his nationalist symbolism and to appear to stand above factional politics. As one Israeli commentator shrewdly noted:

"This is why many Palestinians who criticise Arafat, and even loathe his De Gaulle persona, will vote for him. De Gaulle was the man of the hour. Like De Gaulle, Arafat became a symbol of his people's independent spirit ..."³⁹

In the cautious words of Hanan Ashrawi: "He is the most suitable leader - at this time."⁴⁰

Article III.4 of the Interim Agreement stipulated that: "The Council and the Rae's [sic] of the Executive Authority of the Council shall be elected for a transitional period not exceeding five years from the signing of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement on May 4, 1994."⁴¹ The Israelis eventually agreed in Article IV to an 82 member legislature plus the President, having tried previously to restrict the size of the Council to 27 members due to fears that "a large council with legislative powers would be a symbol of sovereignty."⁴² By the time of the election, the size of the legislature was revised further upwards to 88 members plus the president.⁴³

Article V.4.(C), stipulated that following the election, 80 percent of the new cabinet (the Executive Authority), should be drawn from the elected council (in practice, Arafat finally restricted this to 67 percent).⁴⁴ Article V.4.(C) reads:

"The Ra'ees of the Executive Authority shall have the right to appoint some persons, in number not exceeding twenty percent of the total membership of the Executive Authority, who are not members of the Council, to exercise executive authority and participate in government tasks."⁴⁵

This provision ensured a continuing role in government for the four members of the PLO Executive Committee, besides Arafat, who held ministerial positions in the previous cabinet, the Council of Ministers. This allowed Arafat to keep elements of the former diaspora PLO-leadership in the leadership of the PNA, positions they could easily have lost had they been obliged to stand for election.

The Electoral System

Annex II, Article 1.3, provided for the establishment of a Palestinian Central Election Commission (CEC), with nine members and a president. Arafat appointed PLO Executive Committee and Fatah Central Committee member Mahmoud Abbas as the President of the CEC. The CEC was granted responsibility for "the preparation and conduct of the elections."⁴⁶ The electoral law formulated by the CEC was duly ratified by the Council of Ministers. "It contained an expanded version of the electoral rules agreed upon in the interim agreement, including appendices which dealt with the status and role of international observers."⁴⁷

Annex 2 of the Interim Agreement made several indirect references to a constituency system. As expected, when the CEC finally published the Election Law in Gaza on 7 December 1995, it confirmed that the elections would be held on a constituency basis.⁴⁸ Article 5 of the Election Law divided the West Bank and Gaza Strip into 16 constituencies, "the number of seats in each constituency proportional to the population therein."⁴⁹ The system was later 'modified' to allocate a disproportionate number of seats

to Gaza city, the base of Arafat's regime. Of the five seats added late to the Legislative Council, two went to Gaza City,⁵⁰ giving it 14 percent of the seats for less than 10 percent of the registered voters.⁵¹ Six seats were also reserved specifically for Christian representatives, and one for the Samaritan community in Nablus.⁵²

The decision to adopt a constituency system was contentious as it clearly favoured large notable families and wealthy individuals with a regional powerbase. In terms of our framework of analysis, this can be identified as purposive elite agency manipulating institutional arrangements to take advantage of the social-structural context of the autonomy project. The purpose of a constituency system was to consolidate a social basis for the regime, based on an alliance with local elites behind the authoritative leadership of the returnees. Ali Safarini, one of the Palestinian lawyers responsible for drafting the election law, alluded to its real purpose (whether he meant to or not), when he defended the system on the grounds of its resemblance to traditional models: "Before 1967 this was the system we were accustomed to. It is the system applied in Jordan and Egypt."⁵³ He also pointed-out that were Hamas to run (and as we shall see, Arafat exerted great efforts to encourage them to do so), they might repeat their success in various chamber of commerce and student union elections in certain districts.

Detractors of the constituency system⁵⁴ were critical of the likely impact on national unity and the advantage bestowed on the powerful and wealthy. With regard to national unity, Khalil Shikaki of the CPRS noted that a constituency system might allow for the smooth functioning of government in an established democracy, "but when you are coming out of a major national crisis you should have proportional representation."⁵⁵ This would have encouraged the anti-Oslo PLO and non-PLO factions to enter the election race with some hope of gaining representation. Under the constituency system, as Immanuel noted, "there is nothing to motivate them if they are virtually guaranteed no seats and no influence."⁵⁶ This point was also made by Walid Salim, who explained the PFLP's

preference for proportional representation and a national list to guarantee pluralism. Salim also pointed-out that the PFLP's representative on the PLO Executive Committee, Abd al-Rahim Malluh, was apparently in favour of PFLP entry into the Legislative Council elections, providing they were based on proportional representation and were considered a prelude to elections amongst *all* Palestinians, including the refugees outside Palestine.⁵⁷

The second objection concerned the incorporation of the notables' informal clan-networks into the new Legislative Council. Manuel Hassassian of Bethlehem University observed how the division of Palestine into separate constituencies served large local families; confining them to their specific geographical areas served to concentrate notable family influence and ensured that they would win.⁵⁸ Shikaki confirmed this view, adding that Arafat's preference for a balance between local grass-roots and what Shikaki called the 'commercial bourgeoisie' ensured a role for the wealthy. A prime example of this is the co-option of Mahir al-Masri onto the Fatah list in Nablus. The "chosen son" of his clan, al-Masri could rely upon an estimated 1,000 relatives in Nablus to work for his electoral success.⁵⁹ In Ramallah, the businessman Jamil Tarifi (widely reviled by many Palestinians for making profits from settlement construction), could virtually 'buy' his electoral success with the promise of patronage to local clients. The co-option of powerful clan-networks and wealthy individuals into the PNA was clearly a cause, and not a consequence, of the constituency system. The elections thus served to legitimise the autonomy project and extended the social basis of the regime.

The Election Campaign

Originally scheduled to take place within nine months of the entry into force of the DoP, the elections were finally scheduled for 20 January 1996. Arafat announced that nominations would be open from the 14th until the 22nd December 1995,⁶⁰ although the Council of Ministers later extended this in Jerusalem, Hebron, Khan Yunis and Gaza city,⁶¹ "to give a final chance to the national and Islamic factions to participate in the

elections ..."⁶² The election campaign was eventually launched by the CEC on 2 January 1996.⁶³

Article 57 of the Election Law called for "equal and fair' campaigning opportunities for each of the candidates."⁶⁴ In practice, the final tally of 672 candidates, including 506 independents, rendered this improbable.⁶⁵ The radio station 'Voice of Palestine' (*Sawt Filistin*), ran a series of two minute slots which provided the fairest and most comprehensive platform for electoral campaigning.⁶⁶ The PPP proved to be the only PLO faction to actively campaign against Fatah, entering 21 candidates, whilst FIDA entered ten candidates on joint lists on the Fatah, pro-Oslo slate.⁶⁷

The haste with which the election campaign was organised, together with the absence of a substantial, coherent opposition, enhanced Fatah's ability to dominate the campaign. This dominance was particularly obvious in the Palestinian media, where campaign opportunities were limited not only by finance but by the availability of media outlets. The official Palestinian television station, the Palestine Broadcasting Company (PBC) ran a series of election broadcasts, and one enterprising businessman from Jalazoun refugee camp (near Ramallah) set up his own station transmitting purely election material for the duration of the campaign. Newspapers were plastered with pictures of candidates, as were most buildings.

"According to a survey published on election day, during the campaign electoral publicity took up about one-fourth of the total newspaper-space; every day electoral advertisements filled 23 of the total 92 pages of the daily papers."⁶⁸

This was to cause serious difficulties for *al-Quds* editor Mahir al-Alimi, arrested on Arafat's orders after election adverts on Christmas Day relegated the PLO Chairman's picture to page seven. On the other hand, media analyst Ghassan al-Khatib played-down the significance of the media: "We are small communities and the official media is not as essential as in bigger countries."⁶⁹ Al-Khatib suggested that traditional campaign stumping

was more important, but noted that Fatah had a big advantage in this respect as well: "Fatah can move easily because of its connection to the PA; Israel gives travel permits according to the recommendation of the Palestinian Authority."⁷⁰

The freedom of the press serves as another index of Fatah's dominance of proceedings, and perhaps more significantly, of Arafat's autocratic behaviour. There are five Palestinian daily newspapers to assess. The two more established dailies, *al-Nahar* and *al-Quds*, were both intimidated into taking a very pro-Arafat, if not pro-Fatah, view. *Al-Nahar* is widely noted for its pro-Jordanian sympathies, whereas *al-Quds* possessed solid Palestinian nationalist credentials yet still proved too independent for Arafat. The paper's silence during the detention of its own editor illustrated very clearly the increasing tendency towards self-censorship in the face of intimidation by the PNA. In addition to the established titles, the Palestinian press quickly expanded to include three new daily newspapers following the implementation of the DoP. All three - *al-Ayyam*, *al-Hayat al-Jadidah* and *al-Bilad* - were sympathetic, if not connected to, Fatah and the PNA.

The increasing self-censorship of the Palestinian media was attested to by Ghazi Hamed, Managing Editor of the Hamas weekly *al-Watan*. Hamed complained that prior to the establishment of the PNA, *al-Quds* represented all the Palestinians, "but now it cannot permit or allow any article against the Palestinian Authority. They just report Arafat and his Authority."⁷¹ Hamed has tried many times to publish in *al-Quds*, all of them unsuccessfully. Furthermore, his own newspaper had been closed following an article on the security services, and *al-Watan's* editor promptly received a three year sentence from the state security court. After a two month closure, the paper reopened, printed a small article about Arafat, and was closed again. Hamed compared the situation in Palestine to Jordan: "You can speak about everything but not Arafat. Like Jordan - you can speak about the government, but not about King Husayn."⁷²

Hamas and the Election

An important illustration of Arafat's attempts to elevate himself above factional politics and realise a broader coalition were his efforts to co-opt the Islamic opposition into the election process. In the event, this particular effort to generate a national consensus around the Oslo process was undermined by the decision of the external Hamas leadership to boycott proceedings. The decision was eventually taken by the Hamas leadership resident in Jordan. From Amman, spokesman Ibrahim Ghoshah announced that Hamas intended to boycott the elections during a telephone link-up with a rally at al-Najah university in Nablus, called to mark the eighth anniversary of the intifada.⁷³ Following a prolonged but ultimately inconclusive dialogue between the PNA and the *local* Hamas leadership, three senior Hamas activists engaged in the talks - Ismail Haniyah, Said Namrouti and Khaled Hindi - registered as independent candidates only to withdraw on 2 January, just three days after they first registered.⁷⁴ As they explained it:

"We mandated ourselves to be a safety valve when Hamas relations with the Palestinian Authority were in crisis ... In nominating ourselves for the forthcoming elections, we believed in serving Islam and the homeland. But due to the eruption of a state of confusion within the Islamic circle ... despite our conviction in the value of our beliefs, we have decided to revoke our nominations."⁷⁵

The confusion within Hamas was neatly illustrated by an observation made in The Jerusalem Post: "Leaflet 131 called for a boycott last week [week-ending 13 January 1996] followed by another leaflet 131 denying there was a boycott."⁷⁶

Nevertheless, other lower-ranked Hamas and non-Hamas Islamic candidates did stand for election as independents, most notably Imad al-Faluji in Gaza who won his seat and was subsequently included in the Executive Authority. Al-Faluji was formerly editor of the Hamas weekly *al-Watan*, which, as noted above, Arafat was not averse to closing-down periodically whilst arresting various members of staff in the process.⁷⁷ The confusion within Hamas points to its relatively loose structure, the difficulty of dealing with the dilemmas arising from the DoP, and the extent to which its popular support might

be eroded by the reality of living with the PNA. To quote The Jerusalem Post again, Hamas is a "large, amorphous organisation ... [which] had many supporters whose allegiance was to Islam rather than to any organisation."⁷⁸ Arafat's apparent success (with the ample assistance of Preventive Security), in separating the political and military-wings of the Movement further underlines the problems confronting the Islamic opposition in the era of the PNA.

Election Modalities

The constraints inherent in the framework of transition, which in turn impinged upon the election, were neatly illustrated by the process of voter registration. Hasan Abu Libdeh, President of the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics (PBS, established in 1993 by a decision of the PLO Executive Committee, rather than by the PNA), and a member of the nine-man CEC, led a determined and professional campaign in the face of continual Israeli obstructionism. Such were the obstacles placed in the way of the PBS that Abu Libdeh characterised the elections in Areas B, C and East Jerusalem as "pseudo-elections."⁷⁹ Every action of the PBS was subject to Israeli approval; the Israelis only released their population register to the PBS on 1 December 1994 (after negotiating since February of the same year), the register arrived in Hebrew rather than Arabic (raising such complicated problems of translation that the PBS decided to start from scratch), and the Civil Administration only released their maps at the last minute - and then they were very old and largely outdated. In East Jerusalem, the PBS employed 7,000 volunteer students and teachers to register as many people as they could in the absence of *any* Israeli provision of information whatsoever.⁸⁰

Abu-Libdeh's account was confirmed by an interview with Mark Mullen, Program Officer for the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the US organisation charged with helping to facilitate the election process. According to Mullen, the Israeli's largely "wrote-off" the West Bank and Gaza Strip, "but not Jerusalem ... They

did all they could to hinder things in Jerusalem [and] went to great lengths to make things as unapparent within the municipal boundaries as possible."⁸¹ This included the process of voter registration, the election campaign and the final vote itself. Mullen also recalled the logistical difficulties confronting the registration process in the Gaza Strip. One of NDI's election workers, Nadir al-Khatib, was actually detained by the IDF in the course of his work, while six tons of registration cards were held-up at the Erez checkpoint for several days. When the Israelis finally allowed them into Gaza, workers were obliged to hand all six tons - by hand - over the concrete barriers which surround the checkpoint. In addition, NDI's workers in Gaza were never allowed to meet their colleagues in the West Bank. In Mullen's words, "its not easy to co-ordinate with people you are not allowed to meet."⁸² In the face of all these obstacles, Mullen was effusive in his praise for the PBS, which got the job done *despite* Israel and entirely due to its own efforts.

For all these Israeli obstructions and the inherent shortcomings of the framework set by the Oslo process, the elections received the seal of western and international approval in the form of an extensive contingent of international observers, working in tandem with a larger Palestinian observation team. "The main delegation of US observers was organized jointly by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and the Carter Center."⁸³ The European Union Election Unit, headed by Carl Lidbom, provided monitors for 150 polling stations, while observers from other countries took responsibility for a further 170 stations. During the weeks preceding the election and particularly on election day itself, the foreign contingent formed a highly visible presence (at least in Ramallah, Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Gaza), in their bright blue jackets with 'international observer' printed on the back in Arabic.⁸⁴ A total of 650 foreigners and 2,500 Palestinians from the Palestinian Domestic Monitoring Committee were engaged in the observation operation.⁸⁵ Lidbom was publicly critical of the brevity of the campaign (reduced from 22 days to 14), the arbitrary expansion of the Council by five seats through Presidential decree,

and the elusiveness of the CEC president. He also questioned its independence, given Abbas's positions in Fatah and the PLO.

Illustrative of the constrained nature of the entire election campaign, the process of voter registration in Jerusalem was severely handicapped by widespread fears amongst the Palestinian population of threats to their welfare status. Anxieties centred around the threat of losing the valuable blue Israeli identification cards, a treasured commodity which allows the bearer access to the city through the IDF road blocks which encircle it, a privilege denied to non-East Jerusalem residents with the orange West Bank card or the red cards issued to residents of the Gaza Strip.⁸⁶ In addition, East Jerusalem residents receive certain welfare benefits such as unemployment benefit and national insurance, both of which, the rumours suggested, would be rescinded by anyone choosing to exercise their right to vote. These anxieties were instigated and enflamed by a disingenuous Israeli campaign which included posters in Arabic and Hebrew, deliberately designed to appear like official municipality publications. The posters were pasted across East Jerusalem by Likud activists determined to sabotage the poll.⁸⁷ Furthermore, Israeli restrictions imposed on voter participation on election day required most of the 45,000 registered voters to travel to polling stations outside the city. Altogether, less than 5,000 voters were actually allowed to cast their votes *inside* the city.⁸⁸ Finally, an extremely heavy Israeli police presence throughout East Jerusalem did little to encourage voters to the polls.⁸⁹

The Fatah Primaries and the Election to the Legislative Council

This section details the construction of a social basis for the PNA by examining the politics of transition within Fatah - the prospective party of state. The analysis illustrates the co-option of the notables and indigenous bourgeoisie into an alliance with the returnee historic leadership, with the intifada generation securing a measure of representation through the work of the Higher Committees.

The politics of transition in the context of the Oslo process and the PNA generated a lively debate within Fatah, particularly around issues arising from the unification of the internal and external wings of the Movement. The competition for power and representation revolved around three, loosely-defined key groups: the diaspora-based historic leadership returning from Tunis and elsewhere who were generally represented by the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Council; the younger generation of intifada activists from within the West Bank and Gaza Strip who were widely, but not exclusively, represented on the Higher Committees; and wealthy or otherwise influential individuals from the traditionally powerful families and the commercial-bourgeoisie who fell outside of 'formal' Fatah structures but whom Arafat wished to co-opt into his coalition.

The means chosen to deal with this competition took the form of primary elections organised during November and December 1995 to select candidates for the Legislative Council. These primary elections provided a useful opportunity to study the lines of competition within Fatah and the formation of a social basis for the regime. With this in mind, my analysis focuses on these primaries in some detail.

The initial impetus to hold the primaries came from Marwan Barghouthi, General Secretary of Fatah in the West Bank and, as we saw in chapter four, a focal point for the West Bank intifada activists. Barghouthi characterised his proposal as a means of democratising Fatah, providing the grass-roots membership with a say in candidate selection whilst also taking Fatah one step closer towards transformation into a modern political party. His initiative was put before the Central Committee, who in turn convened the Revolutionary Council to finalise the details.⁹⁰ Members of the Central Committee were then assigned responsibility for supervising the election process throughout the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This process defused local pressure for greater involvement and kept the intifada generation on-board as the ruling-coalition emerged. Unfortunately for the PLO Chairman, he had not foreseen that an apparently harmless means of keeping the

local activists quiescent would turn into something of a fiasco when the elections failed to produce the results he required. In the event, Arafat and the Central Committee felt obliged to intervene in strength, overturning a series of results in the process in favour of candidates *they* wanted to see on the list, amongst them figures from the diaspora-based 'historic leadership' and local representatives of influential families and business interests. Not surprisingly, this generated a good deal of ill-will amongst the ranks of the local intifada activists.

During November and December 1995, primaries were scheduled for each of the 16 electoral constituencies defined by the CEC for the Legislative Council. There was little opportunity to organise anything earlier as details could only be finalised following the conclusion of the Interim Agreement on 28 September 1995. The primaries were conducted amongst delegates drawn from Fatah's district and regional committees as well as representatives of the various unions, university leadership committees and so on, providing they fell within the boundaries of the new electoral constituencies.

The Central Committee approved a system whereby each primary conference would elect a list containing double the number of candidates required to compete in each constituency, ranked according to the results of each primary election. These results would then be conveyed to the Central Committee who would in turn select the candidates they preferred from amongst the winners. This arrangement, accepted by the local activists as consistent with Fatah's official organising principle of 'democratic centralism,'⁹¹ also provided a measure of flexibility between the wishes of the senior leadership and the will of the grass-roots activists. In practice, this meant that the Jerusalem constituency, granted seven seats in the new Legislative Council, would produce a list of 14 names in the primaries from amongst which the Central Committee could then select its preferred seven candidates. Ramallah, also with seven seats, would again produce a list of 14 names whilst Tulkarm, with four seats, would produce a list of eight. Candidates arose from amongst the

Central Committee, the Revolutionary Council and the Higher Committees as well as other figures more loosely associated with Fatah but outside of its 'formal' structure. The entire process was supervised by members of the Central Committee. The following examples illustrate how in the event, the process did not run as smoothly as might have been hoped.⁹²

Case Studies of the Fatah Primaries

The Jerusalem primary included some 300 delegates, drawn, as noted earlier, from amongst the district and regional committees, local union representatives and student council leaderships. The ballot eventually produced a list restricted to only seven candidates. Of those seven, the only representative of the intifada activists - journalist and former political prisoner Hatim Abd al-Qadir (the first-placed candidate), was chosen by the Central Committee to run for Fatah in the legislative election.⁹³ According to The Jerusalem Times, by the time a final decision was made, the "list had undergone several revisions and was the last one to be formulated."⁹⁴ It was not, in fact, a proper Fatah list at all. Besides Abd al-Qadir, Central Committee member Ahmad Qrai' was the only other real Fatah cadre on the list, and the list itself consisted of only five candidates. The regional committee accepted Qrai's candidacy and did not force him to compete in the primaries out of respect, but not without some complaint. As one local activist put it, the local leadership had nothing personal against Qrai', it was just the case that "we don't know him,"⁹⁵ a remark which suggests a significant degree of estrangement between the local activists and the historic leadership. However, Qrai's position as head of SAMED and involvement in PLO finances, rather than as a cadre in the Western Sector, would seem to explain why the local intifada activists were unacquainted with him; prior to the election, there had never been any operational utility in their communicating. The remaining three seats were divided-up more controversially. Salwah Hadib, a Fatah activist on the regional committee who came fifth in the primary, was replaced by Zahira Kamal, formerly of the DFLP and now of FIDA and, as we have seen, an activist in the NGO community. Ahmad

Zughayr, a merchant and farmer from Hebron known to be close to Fatah, took the fourth Muslim seat to secure for Fatah the vote of Jerusalem's large Hebronite community. The fifth place went to Emile Jarju'i, a Christian of whom the activists knew little, to provide Fatah with a candidate for the Christian seat. (Interestingly, Jarju'i has since been appointed to the PLO Executive Committee). As Salwa Hadib put it;

"This list does not represent the ambition of the Fatah movement, especially that of the youth leadership ... We will vote for those individuals in the bloc who are suitable and qualified but not for all the names mentioned on the list."⁹⁶

Ahmad Ghnaim, one of Jerusalem's representatives on the Higher Committee and the second placed candidate in the primaries, took a more conciliatory line; "maybe there is no consensus, but everybody is committed to Fatah."⁹⁷ Ghnaim himself was compensated for his loss by an appointment to a senior position within the Ministry of the Interior, making him the highest-placed member of the Higher Committee within the civil institutions of the PNA.

In Ramallah, a similar situation prevailed, with Fatah again forming a coalition of forces in favour of the PNA and the DoP. In this case, another member of FIDA was placed on the list, together with an 'independent' member of the PFLP. This list, known as *Kutlat al-Watan* (The National Bloc), did include a majority of those well-placed in the original primaries, these being second-placed Marwan Barghouthi (a representative of the intifada activists), Rabihah Dhiab (fourth), Ghazi Hananiya (fifth, Christian, and a dentist by profession), and Bashir Nafa'a (seventh).⁹⁸ Yacoub Hasounah was brought in to represent local business interests. Azmi Shu'aybi, Minister of Sports and Youth prior to the election, stood for FIDA and Fawz Khalifah, formerly a senior figure in the PFLP and a veteran of the Black September crisis, made up the list.

Fieldwork shed little light on the situation in Bethlehem, except for the remark of one local activist that the local Fatah leadership chose a list itself and forwarded this to

Arafat, only to see their suggestions substantially altered prior to the formation of a final list.⁹⁹ Andoni provides some useful material which seems to support this.

"In Bethlehem, consultations resulted in the decision to drop two Fatah veterans, Salah Ta'amri and Daud al-Zir, from the official list in order to include two Christians. According to several senior Fatah officials, the real reason for the change was that Arafat did not want to endorse Ta'amri, who had made a name for himself in Lebanon through supervising the training of young fighters and through his resistance to the Israeli army in 1982. More to the point, Ta'amri had developed since returning to Bethlehem in 1994 a power base well beyond his own mainly bedouin Ta'amareh clan and had asserted some independence from Arafat by outspoken criticism of certain PA policies."¹⁰⁰

Further south in Hebron, according to The Jerusalem Report:

"[Arafat] called the local activists and told them not to run. He placed PLO leaders who arrived from abroad at the top of Fatah lists of endorsed candidates. He also made sure that the large affluent families ... [were] well represented on the lists."¹⁰¹

Events in the North of the West Bank told a similar story. In Nablus, as with Jerusalem and Ramallah, around 300 delegates drawn mostly from the district and regional committees voted for their preferred candidates. Nablus was allocated eight seats in the Legislative Council, with one of those specifically reserved for the Jewish (but not Israeli) Samaritan community. In the event, five of the top seven candidates from the primaries were chosen for inclusion on the final list, these being first-placed Mahir al-Masri (a representative of the notable family), Sirhan Dukat (second), Imad Ya'ish (third), Dalal Salamah (fourth - an intifada activist) and Fawz Zaydan (sixth). Ghassan Shak'a, the former Mayor of Nablus and representative of the notables, was added to the list, although he had done reasonably well in his own right, apparently coming a legitimate fourteenth in the primaries. Amin Maqboul, a Fatah leader from 'outside', was added by decision of the Central Committee. Of those who lost their place, seventh-placed Husam Khader was one of several intifada activists who went on to challenge the Fatah list and subsequently win a seat in the Legislative Council as "Fatah independents."¹⁰²

In Tulkarm, over one thousand delegates chose eight candidates for their four seats. Arafat and the Central Committee did select three out of four from this first eight, these being Sulayman Zuhayri (first), Tayib Abd al-Rahim (fourth - a returnee) and Abd al-Nasir Salah (eighth).¹⁰³ Unfortunately, this was cold comfort to seventh-placed Ibrahim Khorayshi who found himself ignored and replaced with Central Committee member Hakim Bala'wi who was placed, in Khorayshi's view, an inadmissible ninth. For Khorayshi, President of the Student Council at Bir Zeit University, former UNLU leader, prisoner for six years and a well-known Fatah activist of long standing, his plight typified the arbitrary nature of the established leadership he had previously campaigned for. It also underlined the need to democratise the movement, Barghouthi's declared aim of introducing the primaries in the first place.¹⁰⁴

The Tulkarm primaries were overseen by Central Committee member Abbas Zaki who, according to Khorayshi's account, showed little interest in proceedings from the start. Zaki asked the local leadership to simply give him two names which he could then add to those of fellow Central Committee members Tayib Abd al-Rahim and Hakim Bal'awi. When 60 local leaders refused to comply, he insisted they call the election there and then, on the spot, at 6pm Friday 8 December. A major row ensued, the upshot of which saw the primaries eventually take place on 12 December but leaving unhealed scars between three indignant members of the Central Committee and a great many disaffected younger local leaders who still referred to, "the battle of holding the primaries in Tulkarm."¹⁰⁵

Further north in Jenin, events proceeded in similar fashion. 1,300 delegates started voting in a process that was finally abandoned due to "technical problems."¹⁰⁶ Early results gave an initial impression of local feelings and two of the first four candidates, Jamal al-Shati (Higher Committee) and Izam al-Ahmad (Revolutionary Council) were selected, with the Central Committee deciding the other three, amongst them additional Revolutionary Council member, Birhan Jarar. The goings-on in the smaller West Bank

constituencies of Salfit and Tubas remain uncertain, whilst Jericho was a foregone conclusion with little need for a contest. Jericho is the stronghold of local Arafat-loyalist Saeb Erekat. Erekat is an insider who appears to hold no official position in the Fatah structure, but he is close to Arafat and was appointed head of the CEC prior to Mahmoud Abbas.¹⁰⁷

Events in Gaza were recounted by intifada activist and former prisoner Diab Allouh,¹⁰⁸ a member of the Gaza Higher Committee, editor of the Fatah newspaper *al-Karamah*, and head of the Fatah Media and Culture Department in the Gaza Strip. According to Allouh, primaries were held amongst 300 activists in Central Gaza in order to select a list of 20 candidates that could be presented to the Central Committee. As explained by Allouh, the Central Committee committed itself to choose ten out of 20. The problem arose when they actually chose five and Allouh (who came joint second with Central Committee member Intizar al-Wazir), was not one of them. As with fellow activists in the West Bank, Allouh ran as a Fatah 'independent', the only one to do so in the Central Gaza constituency, and only narrowly failed to win a seat. In Khan Yunis, five out of nine primary winners made it onto the final list, these being Jawad al-Taybi, Ahmad al-Shibi, Ahmad Nasir, Zakaria al-Agha (a notable) and Ibrahim Abu al-Naja. In Rafah, conversations with other Gaza-based activists suggested that the list was decided upon without a vote.

This review of the Fatah primaries, whilst not being an exhaustive account, gives a fair impression of the process of candidate selection within Fatah. In so doing, it highlights the politics of transition within the PLO's most influential faction and the cleavages which are likely to make a smooth transition to ruling party problematic. Besides the competition between the three broadly defined groups: the diaspora-based historic leadership generally represented by the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Council; the intifada activists generally represented by the Higher Committees; and representatives of influential

families and the commercial bourgeoisie co-opted by Arafat into the ruling-coalition, it also suggests the dubious value of procedure within Fatah. Firstly, despite the formulation of due procedures for candidate selection, the Central Committee modified the results of that procedure when it suited them, giving priority to their preferred social basis for the regime. Secondly, a number of disaffected intifada activists removed from the official Fatah lists decided to run as 'independent' Fatah candidates, in outright defiance of the Central Committees instructions issued in December.

Fatah in the Legislative Council

With the furore over candidate selection still fresh in everyone's memory, Fatah went to the polls. Indeed, in the absence of the PFLP, the DFLP, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, almost *only* Fatah went to the polls. This point is well-made by Andoni who reported that such was the dominance of the whole electoral procedure by Fatah, PFLP spokesman Riad Malki labelled the election itself, "the Fatah primaries."¹⁰⁹ Despite the row over candidate selection, official Fatah candidates did extremely well in most constituencies, with a number of Fatah 'independents' also running and succeeding.

In the separate poll for the presidency, Arafat was spared a serious challenge for the position he felt to be his by right. The only candidate capable of mounting a remotely genuine challenge, Hayder Abd al-Shafi, declined to do so. Nevertheless, the process was legitimised by the surprise candidacy of the long-standing nationalist campaigner, Samiha al-Khalil. Loosely associated with the DFLP¹¹⁰ and a member of the PNC, al-Khalil announced her candidacy on 21 December. She ran her campaign from the women's organisation she has long-led in the West Bank town of al-Bireh, *In'ash al-Usra*, closed during the intifada. During the intifada, al-Khalil herself was, "detained six times by the Israeli authorities for inciting violence and placed under town arrest for two and a half years."¹¹¹ Although never in a position to seriously contest the authority of Arafat, al-Khalil's candidacy at least lent the presidential poll the formal appearance of a contest. Her

appeal was largely restricted to secular Palestinians opposed to the Oslo process, but her candidacy did provide a useful outlet for something of a protest vote. Al-Khalil ran her campaign on the single issue of halting the Oslo process,

"until the Palestinians are guaranteed an independent state encompassing all of Gaza and the West Bank, with Jerusalem as its capital ... the return of all refugees and the unconditional release of Palestinian prisoners still in Israeli jails."¹¹²

These themes were consistent with the nationalist agenda of most of the candidates running for the Legislative Council. As Jon Immanuel noted: "A look at the election literature ... shows that most of them have no program beyond liberating Jerusalem, returning refugees and releasing prisoners."¹¹³ One might add that this was not surprising, given that the framework of transition produced by the Oslo process has hardly resolved the majority of pressing issues facing Palestinian nationalism.

In the event, Arafat won a resounding victory in the presidential poll with 87.1 percent of the vote, while Samiha al-Khalil won 12.9 percent. Total voter turn-out was 75.86 percent, 73.5 percent in the Gaza Strip and 86.77 percent in the West Bank reflecting the PNA's direct control over all of the Gaza Strip and more limited authority in the West Bank. Only 40.5 percent of the eligible electorate voted in Jerusalem and 66.40 percent in Hebron due to continuing Israeli control over these two Palestinian areas.¹¹⁴ The relatively high turn-out clearly legitimised the national project, bolstering the PLO-PNA's authoritative leadership.

The strength of Fatah cadres in the new Legislative Council is impressive. Of the 88 deputies, official Fatah candidates took 50 seats, but altogether, "71 (including Imad al-Faluji) are affiliated with Fatah in one way or another - either full-fledged Fatah members, supporters of Fatah, or backed by Fatah in the elections."¹¹⁵ From within the formal Fatah structure, 19 members of the Revolutionary Council won seats in the Council (six of them were also members of the Central Committee), whilst 14 members of the two Higher

Committees took up seats beside them. Thus, despite the leadership's imperative of forming a ruling coalition based on the returnees, the notables and the bourgeoisie, the intifada generation secured a substantial representation in the Council. Table 7 demonstrates the breakdown of cadres from the Fatah's formal structure in the Legislative Council.

TABLE 7: Cadres from the Fatah Movement's Formal Institutional Structure in the Legislative Council.

Constituency	Name	Position in Fatah
<u>Jerusalem</u>	Ahmad Qrai'	CC
	Hatim Abd al-Qadir	CC
<u>Ramallah</u>	Marwan Barghouthi	RC
	Qadura Faris	HC
	Abd al-Fatah Hamail	HC
<u>Bethlehem</u>	Salah al-Ta'amari	RC
<u>Hebron</u>	Abbas Zaki	CC
	Nabil Amr	RC
	Rafiq al-Natshe	RC
	Jamal Shawbaki	HC
	Mohammad Hourani	HC
<u>Nablus</u>	Musa abu Subheh	HC
	Fawz Zaydan	RC
	Kamal Afghani	HC
<u>Tulkarim</u>	Dalal Salamat	HC
	Tayib Abd al-Rahim	CC
	Hakim Bal'awi	CC
<u>Qalqilya</u>	Mahmud Da'as	RC

Constituency	Name	Position in Fatah
<u>Salfit</u>	Ahmad al-Deek	HC
<u>Jenin</u>	Izam al-Ahmad Birhan Jarar Hikmat Zaid	RC RC RC
<u>Gaza City</u>	Intisar al-Wazir Fakhri Shaqurah	CC RC
<u>North Gaza</u>	Abd al-Rahman Hamad Hisham Abd al-Razaq	HC HC
<u>Dier al-Balah</u>	Jamilah Saidam	RC
<u>Khan Yunis</u>	Nabil Sha'ath Ahmad Nasir	CC HC
<u>Rafah</u>	Rawhi Fatouh Abd al-Aziz Shaheen	RC RC

Key: CC = Central Committee, RC = Revolutionary Council, HC = Higher Committees.

Within the Council, as within Fatah, the struggle between the Higher Committees and the Revolutionary Council is only one of several salient divisions. As we have seen, this particular division appears to have more to do with equitable representation between generations than it does with ideology. The concept of generations is difficult to define, but in this particular context the idea of political generations seems helpful. As noted in chapter four, Barghouthi and his colleagues on the Higher Committees represent the 'insiders', they are generally in their thirties and their formative experiences came during the intifada. On the other hand, cadres from the Revolutionary Council are 'outsiders', they are generally in their fifties or sixties, and their formative experiences are derived from the era of armed struggle, led from the diaspora.

To complicate matters further, within the Legislative Council officially sanctioned Fatah representatives sit next to the Fatah 'independents' who ran against the instructions of the Central Committee. This points to a series of complex divisions within Fatah - social, generational, and ideological - which have yet to surface with much clarity, and explains Arafat's desire to retain a looser structure, focused and united on a broad nationalist agenda. This important point is alluded to in Fatah's full official title; 'The Palestinian National Liberation Movement' (*Harakat al-Tahrir al-Watani al-Filistini*), and Fatah's traditional role as a 'national front' within the broader national front of the PLO. In Barghouthi's view, the 'normalisation' of Palestinian politics will require Fatah to step beyond its traditionally loose structure and evolve into a fully-fledged political party, addressing more prosaic issues beyond the nationalist agenda such as economic and social legislation. Barghouthi anticipated such a development exposing the latent divisions within Fatah - between different classes, secularists, Christians, observant Muslims, free marketeers, socialists and Marxists - and predicted the likely division of Fatah as a consequence.¹¹⁶

In Jarbawi's view, the success of many 'independent Fatah' candidates could prove a mixed blessing:

"The fact that a number of Fatah members ran against the movement's official list, ignoring the party leadership's call to pull out of the race, proves that Fatah's electoral success came at the expense of its coherence. Indeed, the elections saw the final division of the movement into different centers of power."¹¹⁷

However, based on the material generated by fieldwork, it seems that Fatah was far from coherent even prior to the election, except insofar as it possessed a formal structure and a centralised source of finance in the person of Arafat (discussed in chapters one and four).

Under these circumstances, a smooth and simple transition from hegemonic faction to party of state is difficult for several reasons: firstly, divisions between different 'factions', including the diaspora leadership, the intifada generation, and influential clan and/or commercial representatives for *power* within Fatah form latent if unclear fault-lines; secondly, the shift in agendas from nationalist struggle to economic and social legislation could expose different ideological streams within the Movement; thirdly, new structures are required to deal with new realities as the centre of Palestinian political life shifts from the diaspora to Palestine.

Jarbawi predicts that: "Fatah will be able to retain its political effectiveness and power in the future if it is able to transform itself into a political party, with a clear organizational structure and political program."¹¹⁸ However, this view appears to be derived from a very western-political science notion of what a political party *ought* to be: given the divisions and conflicting interests which exist within Fatah, it seems far more likely that any tightening-up of the previously informal structure could lead to its division, all of which points to the centrality of Arafat. In the event of Arafat's demise, the informal network of connections which up until now have bound the whole thing together will in all

likelihood disappear with him, presaging the division of Fatah into separate and distinct parties envisaged by Barghouthi.

The Legislative Council

As we saw in chapter three, according to the Interim Agreement, the Legislative Council was elected for a term not exceeding five years from the signing of the Interim Agreement on 4 May 1994. Once elected, the Council held its inaugural session in Gaza on 21 March 1996. A brief review of the Council's performance facilitates an interim assessment of the legislative branch of the new governmental institutions: moreover, it raises again the question of where the institutional content of the transition process is leading, an issue explored with regard to the bureaucracy and the security services in chapter four. At such an early stage of transition, a stage at which Palestinian politics are in a considerable state of flux, conclusions need to remain tentative. However, early indications suggest two developments of particular significance: firstly, despite Fatah's overwhelming domination of the Council, the elected representatives have demonstrated a determination to avoid becoming a 'rubber-stamp' for the executive; secondly, the relationship between the legislature and the executive so far points towards an executive-led political system.

Because the Council had yet to be inaugurated by the end of fieldwork, the following assessment of its performance is based entirely on secondary sources. An excellent series of reports on the Council is provided by Palestine Report's Amal Hasan. Assessing the Council one year after its inauguration, Hasan identified two major obstacles to the Council's performance: the restrictions inherent in the Oslo agreement (outlined at length in chapter three), and "a president averse to sharing power."¹¹⁹ Hasan's reports provided valuable material with which to illustrate these problems.

The terms of the Oslo process have placed severe restrictions on the legislature's authority over important areas of national life; moreover, the authority of the legislative branch has been consistently undermined by the authoritarian nature of its chief executive, now 'President' Arafat.¹²⁰ The consistent refusal of the Executive Authority to implement legislation promulgated by the legislature and Arafat's refusal to discuss the Basic Law put forward by the Council are illustrative in this regard. In addition, Arafat's improvisation of holding joint meeting of the Executive Authority and the PLO Executive Committee is seen to detract from the Council's role. Simple logistical constraints such as freedom to travel through IDF checkpoints both within the West Bank and between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have undermined both the credibility and effectiveness of Council members. Moreover, the internal Israeli control of the autonomous areas underlines the compromised territorial basis for future Palestinian statehood. Furthermore, the Council has no authority to legislate on any of the issues reserved for the final status negotiations which are the sole preserve of negotiations between the Israeli government and the PLO: these issues include Jerusalem, Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, borders, foreign policy and refugees, all of which are particularly sensitive issues within Palestinian society. Finally, a lack of media coverage has also served to distance the electorate from their elected representatives.

The ongoing Israeli control of the autonomous areas, both through external border controls and the extensive network of internal roadblocks and checkpoints, has allowed the IDF to regularly hinder and detain Council members. Hasan reported:

"In April, as six Gaza members were returning home from a session in Ramallah, they were detained by Israeli authorities and accused of transporting Palestinian students from Gaza to the West Bank. In another case, 22 members traveling from Gaza to Nablus were detained for two hours before Israeli officers arrived at the scene to check their briefcases..."¹²¹

During Spring 1997, the Council was repeatedly unable to establish a quorum due to the IDF's refusal to allow Council members freedom of movement. At the Council session

held on April 14, "members from Gaza were turned back at Erez by Israeli officials who denied them entry into the West Bank."¹²² The inability of Council members to travel freely to sessions of the PNA's legislature not only detracts from the work of the Council, it also undermines the credibility of the elected representatives within Palestinian society. Despite the high turnout for the election and high expectations of the electorate, the performance of the Council has widely been considered a disappointment. This is reflected in a series of polls documenting a continual and dramatic fall in the public's estimation of the value of the Council.¹²³

The Council's authority has been further undermined by Arafat's determination not to delegate authority. During the inaugural session, Arafat attempted to make all Council members, "take their oath of office before [him] alone." The Council members pointedly refused, insisting instead "on being sworn in in the presence of their colleagues."¹²⁴ However, this small victory for the Council is a rare example of their triumph over the executive. Legislation passed by the Council has been largely ignored by the Executive Authority. Perhaps most prominently, a major row erupted over the Council's refusal to adopt the Basic Law presented by Arafat. As Council Speaker Ahmad Qrai' attempted to hold a debate on the issue:

"he was repeatedly interrupted by Arafat, who insisted that the [Council] should be discussing a draft ... submitted by the PLO Executive Committee ... When the Council continued with the discussion, Arafat stormed out of the room ..."¹²⁵

Arafat's petulance prompted Qrai' to temporarily resign his position as Speaker.

Hasan also noted that:

"The Council has also passed hundreds of resolutions that can more accurately be characterised as political statements, e.g., condemnation of the closure and collective punishment by Israel; of settlement expansion, land confiscation, building of bypass roads, and home demolitions; of failure to release political prisoners and in particular female prisoners."¹²⁶

However, the Council is powerless to implement any of these resolutions due to the restrictions on its ambit defined by the terms of the Oslo process. Equally, any legislation which is passed by the Council has to be submitted to the Israeli side of the 'Legal Committee', "an obvious impediment to free and fair governance."¹²⁷

Finally, the Council has also suffered from a lack of coverage in the Palestinian media, reputedly because of Arafat's concern to monopolise media coverage for himself. According to Hassan, this situation began to change during Spring 1997:

"when the Al-Quds [sic] Education Channel began airing the Council's weekly sessions live on local television. However, after coverage of only six sessions, the broadcasts have been jammed off the airwaves, in what some Palestinians are calling yet another ploy by the Palestinian Executive Authority to diminish the role of the LC [the Council] and infringe the freedom of the press ... most sources concur that the EA [Executive Authority] and the Palestinian Broadcasting Company [PBC, supervised by Nabil Amr] had a hand in keeping Al-Quds off the air, and did so in order to diminish the role of the Council."¹²⁸

Although the Legislative Council is still in its early days and the role of the legislature has still to take shape, Hasan's observations permit some tentative remarks. The ability of the IDF to detain Council members underlines both the external and *internal* control of the autonomous areas still enjoyed by the IDF, raising serious doubts about the territorial status of Palestinian areas under autonomy and the territorial basis for a future Palestinian state. The restrictions on the legislature's ambit raise similar doubts about the authority of Palestinian institutions under autonomy. Finally, the attempts by the executive to marginalise the Council, both by ignoring Council resolutions and restricting media coverage of Council sessions, point to a potentially authoritarian PNA under the centralised leadership of Arafat.

The difficulties besetting the Legislative Council reflect the inherent constraints of the framework of transition. Nevertheless, this framework has provided for the realisation of a Palestinian national project. The consolidation of this project has prompted the

construction of a social basis for the regime, complementing the institutional basis outlined in chapter four, and enhancing the authoritative leadership of the returnee elite. The expansion of the PNA bureaucracy has marginalised the NGO community - the heart of Palestinian 'civil society' and a stronghold of the Leftist opposition - through centralising the provision of services, redirecting resources away from the non-state sector, and widespread recruitment from amongst the professional and technocratic middle-class. This process points to the evolution of a state-centric middle-class comparable with other Arab regimes.

The partial co-option of the professional middle-class has been accompanied by a political alliance between the returnee leadership, local notables and the bourgeoisie. This alliance can be seen in the elite-driven manipulation of the electoral system - a clear example of institutional adaptation driven by elite-agency to meet social-structural conditions. The constituency system favoured large notable families and wealthy individuals, many of whom were placed on the Fatah list at the expense of the intifada activists. However, the analysis of the primary elections and the content of the Legislative Council suggests that the intifada activists (both those within and those outside of the Higher Committees), have secured a substantial degree of representation with the legislature. Despite the obvious tensions within Fatah, the embryonic nature of the autonomy project and the unresolved issues of the nationalist agenda suggest that it may retain sufficient institutional cohesion, at least for the time being, to constitute the party of state.

Footnotes

¹On the origins of the debate over 'civil society', Giacaman writes that: "the phrase civil society gained popular currency beginning nearly two decades ago. In the Western media it was mainly used to describe the forces active against communist regimes first in Poland, and later in other East European countries. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the phrase gained currency in other parts of the world, including the Arab world, and by extension, among many Palestinians." George Giacaman, 'The Role of Palestinian NGO's in the Development of Palestinian Civil Society', conference paper, Jerusalem, March 1995. Muslih also cites the collapse of the East European communist bloc as the starting-point for debate as to how civil society might provide answers, "to the questions of how individuals can pursue the common good, and how society and state can interact and reinforce each other in a manner that creates and sustains a democratic system." Muhammed Muslih, 'Palestinian Civil Society,' Middle East Journal, Vol. 47, 2. (Spring 1993), p.258. Both authors cite Adam Seligman, The Idea of Civil Society (New York: The Free Press, 1992). Muslih is amongst the authors who sought to extrapolate the political pluralism of the PLO into a democratic order following independence. For a similarly optimistic approach, see Joost Hiltermann, Behind the Intifada, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

²The problems of discussing 'democracy' in the context of limited autonomy and the absence of national self-determination have been discussed at length by Neil Patrick, Democracy under Limited Autonomy: the Declaration of Principles and Political Prospects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, (Jerusalem: Panorama, 1994).

³Muslih, *op. cit.*, p.272.

⁴Giacaman, *op. cit.*, p.2

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷Giacaman, *op. cit.*, p.5.

⁸I obtained a copy of this form during fieldwork.

⁹Interview with Ali Khader, February 1996.

¹⁰Interview with Ibrahim Daybis, HDIP, 10 July 1995.

¹¹Mustafa Barghouthi, Palestinian NGOs and their Role in Building a Civil Society, (West Bank: The Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees, 1994), p.8.

¹²Hammami, *op. cit.*, p.59.

¹³For an succinct analysis of the calculated subordination of the West Bank and Gazan economies to the needs of Israel, see Samir Abdallah Saleh, 'The Effects of Israeli Occupation on the Economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip' in Nassar and Heacock (Ed's), *op. cit.*, pp.37-51. For the economic decline of the Gaza Strip, see Sara Roy, 'Gaza: New Dynamics of Civic Disintegration,' *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol.22, No.4, (Summer 1993), pp.20-31.

¹⁴John Waterbury, 'Democracy without Democrats?: the Potential for Political Liberalisation in the Middle East', in Ghassan Salame (Ed.), *Democracy without Democrats: the Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World*, (London: I B Taurus, 1994), pp. 23-47.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p.33.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p.27.

¹⁷The decision was taken by the Executive Authority on 31 August 1996. *Palestine Report*, 13 September 1996.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰Newsletter: Perspectives on the NGO Network, Vol.1, No.2.

²¹Giacaman, *op. cit.*, p.6

²²Hammami, *op. cit.*, p.60.

²³Interview with Azmi Bishara, Bir Zeit University, July 1995.

²⁴Giacaman, *op. cit.*, p.5.

²⁵Interview with Azmi Bishara, Bishara, *op. cit.*, pp.47-48.

²⁶Palestine Report, 7 February 1997.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 18 April 1997.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 21 March 1997.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 2 May 1997.

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹In April 1993, the West Bank-based Democracy and Worker's Rights Centre calculated that Palestinian labourers totalled 339,000 in total, of which 189,000 were employed in

Israel, 90,000 in the West Bank and 60,000 in the Gaza Strip. Cited by Usher in Middle East International, 23 June 1995.

³²The announcement that members of the Legislative Council and the 100 best runners-up would be added to the PNC was made by Sha'ath during a lecture at Tel Aviv University. The Jerusalem Post, 3 January 1996.

³³'The DoP', *op. cit.*, p.9.

³⁴*Ibid.*, p.10.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p.16.

³⁶The composition of the Council of Ministers is detailed in Appendix 4.

³⁷'The Interim Agreement', *op. cit.*, p.11.

³⁸Israel and the PLO reached agreement on separate ballots during talks ending 13 February 1995 in Jericho. The Jerusalem Times, 17 February 1995.

³⁹The Jerusalem Post, 19 January 1996.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*

⁴¹'The Interim Agreement', *op. cit.*, p.12.

⁴²The Jerusalem Post, 27 December 1995.

⁴³The figure of 82 members stipulated in the Interim Agreement was revised twice, firstly to allow a representative of the Nablus Samaritan community to hold a reserved seat, and secondly following a personal request from Arafat to the Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres for a further five seats in December 1995. The figure of 82 seats seems to have derived from "the number of West Bank and Gaza Palestinians who sat in legislative councils under Jordan and Egyptian rule before 1967". The Jerusalem Post, 27 December 1995.

⁴⁴Palestine Report, 17 January 1997. The composition of the Executive Authority can be found in Appendix 4.

⁴⁵'The Interim Agreement', *op. cit.*, p.13.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p.79.

⁴⁷As'ad Ghanem, 'Founding Elections in a Transitional Period: the First Palestinian General Elections.' The Middle East Journal, Vol. 50, No.4, (Autumn 1996), p.516. Ghanem provides a comprehensive technical account of the electoral procedure.

⁴⁸An unofficial translation of the Palestinian Election Law was published by The

Jerusalem Times, 15 December 1995, pp.7-15.

⁴⁹*Ibid.* The 16 constituencies are listed below, followed by the number of seats allocated to each and the number of candidates in brackets. In the West Bank; Jerusalem 7, (52), Jericho 1, (6), Bethlehem 4, (30), Nablus 8, (55), Hebron 10, (72), Jenin 6, (36), Tulkarm 4, (38), Qalqilya 2, (12), Tubas 1, (12) Salfit 1, (11), and Ramallah 7, (46). In the Gaza Strip, Northern Gaza (Jabaliya) 7, (67), Gaza City 12, (92), Dier al-Balah 5, (50), Khan Yunis 8, (66), and Rafah 5, (27).

⁵⁰The Jerusalem Post, 31 December 1995.

⁵¹*Ibid.*, 2 January 1996. Arafat's choice of Gaza for the headquarters of the PNA, at least as a temporary measure, allowed him to secure control over the most neglected area of Palestine and the stronghold of the Islamic opposition. Moreover, by placing himself in Gaza, Arafat kept himself geographically closer to Egypt and, equally, distanced himself from the regime in Amman. As noted in chapter two, Egypt under Mubarak had helped facilitate the DoP and subsequently continued to lend Arafat valuable diplomatic support in the international arena, all of which helped to place Egypt's treaty with Israel, reached nearly 20 years ago at Camp David, in a more favourable light.

⁵²Two Christian seats were allocated for Jerusalem, two for Bethlehem, and one each for Ramallah and Gaza City.

⁵³The Jerusalem Post, 16 June 1995.

⁵⁴As we shall see, in this particular context, the 'first past the post' system associated with constituency-based elections became something of a moot point; Fatah was the only credible 'party' competing for power, FIDA joined the Fatah list in certain districts and the PPP failed to win one seat. The election boycott of Hamas and the remainder of the secular opposition gave Fatah a clear run at power, with a limited challenge arising from an assortment of independent and independent-Fatah candidates.

⁵⁵The Jerusalem Post, 16 June 1995.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁷Interviews with Walid Salim.

⁵⁸BBC World Service, 17 January 1996.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*

⁶⁰The Jerusalem Times, 15 December 1995.

⁶¹Ghanem, *op. cit.*, p.516.

⁶²The Jerusalem Post, 10 December 1995.

⁶³According to information released by the CEC, there were 1,013,325 registered voters, including 76,400 in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem Post, 3 January 1996. Another report suggested 80,051 registered voters in the Jerusalem constituency, of whom an estimated 49,500 possessed Israeli-issued Jerusalem identity cards. A total of 672 candidates stood for election across 16 constituencies, 27 of them women (4%). The Jerusalem Post, 19 January 1996.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 31 December 1995.

⁶⁵These figures are taken from The Jerusalem Post, 19 January 1996. Ghanem, 'Founding Elections in a Transitional Period', gives a total of 725 candidates but has got his addition wrong. His own figures actually add-up to 672. With this in mind, the figure of 506 independents taken from The Jerusalem Post is considered more reliable than the higher figure of 559 suggested by Ghanem. Both agree on a figure of 76 Fatah candidates.

⁶⁶The Jerusalem Post, 19 January 1996.

⁶⁷*Ibid.* Ghanem, gives a figure of 25 candidates for the PPP, *op.cit.*, p.521.

⁶⁸*Ibid.*, p. 522.

⁶⁹The Jerusalem Post, 31 December 1995.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*

⁷¹Interview with Ghazi Hamed.

⁷²*Ibid.*

⁷³The Jerusalem Post, 10 December 1995.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, 3 January 1996.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 19 January 1996

⁷⁶*Ibid.*

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, Interview with Ghazi Hamed.

⁷⁸The Jerusalem Post, 19 January 1996. My own impressions from fieldwork suggest that the Post's assessment is correct and factional loyalty rather more fluid than might be assumed. During a visit to Gaza in early 1996, I stayed with a Palestinian family which had been generally sympathetic to Hamas, but now had a son in the security services. As the father of the household put it: "I was Hamas, now I'm Fatah!" Another Palestinian friend from Bir Zeit University had spent four years in prison as a member of the PFLP, subsequently joined Islamic Jihad, and now worked for the security services with the rank of a Major. In addition (and I acknowledge that this is not quantifiable and probably 'methodologically incorrect'), there did seem to be a tendency to claim allegiance to Hamas

simply because it appeared to be more militant than Fatah, rather than through a deep commitment to political Islam.

⁷⁹Interview with Hasan Abu Libdeh, President of the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics and member of the CEC, Ramallah, 3 February 1996.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*

⁸¹Interview with Mark Mullen, Program Officer for NDI, Jerusalem, 29 January 1996.

⁸²*Ibid.*

⁸³*Ibid.*

⁸⁴I met several of the international observers during the course of the campaign and on election day, including representatives from the US, Japan, Belgium, and the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem. Ghanem reported of the observers: "their presence [was] noticeable because of the special blue uniforms they wore on which the title 'International Observer' was visible." Ghanem, *op. cit.*, p.523.

⁸⁵The Jerusalem Post, 19 January 1996.

⁸⁶According to Mark Mullen of NDI, Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem have found it increasingly difficult to retain their blue ID cards since the onset of the Oslo process. NDI generally employed holders of the blue ID cards because they found it so much easier to travel in the course of work than regular West Bank residents without one. Interview with Mark Mullen.

⁸⁷The author saw these posters stuck on walls across Jerusalem during the electoral campaign. They were translated by Edward Jenkinson.

⁸⁸The Jerusalem Post, 10 January 1996.

⁸⁹I visited the polling stations at the Salah al-Din Street and Jaffa Gate Post Offices on polling day and witnessed the extraordinarily heavy police presence as well as one bomb scare which disrupted polling. I also know of two personal acquaintances who arrived at their designated polling station only to find that their names were not on the list of registered voters.

⁹⁰On Barghouthi's initiative see The Jerusalem Post, Jerusalem, 5 January 1996. The Central Committee's approval was confirmed by Diab Allouh, and the Revolutionary Council's role mentioned by Jamil Shehadeh. Interviews with Diab Allouh and Marwan Barghouthi.

⁹¹The Basic Law, p.15.

⁹²A note on methodology. Most of the information presented here had to be gathered piece by piece through interviews with those involved. With 16 constituencies to cover and no

centrally compiled list of results available for reference, research was limited to getting such information as could be uncovered by interviews with participants as and when they became available. The following information was not derived from official printed Fatah documents, but was confirmed by informed sources whenever possible.

⁹³Interview with Husam Shaheen, local activist and delegate to the Jerusalem primary, Palestinian Centre for Non-Violence, Jerusalem, 19 January 1996.

⁹⁴The Jerusalem Times, Jerusalem, 12 January 1996.

⁹⁵Interview with Husam Shaheen.

⁹⁶The Jerusalem Times, 12 January 1996.

⁹⁷*Ibid.*

⁹⁸Interview with Samir Sinjalawi and other activists, Fatah office, Ramallah, 27 January 1996.

⁹⁹Conversation with Imad Ghayatha, former Fatah activist from the village of Nahalin near Bethlehem, Bir Zeit University, February 1996.

¹⁰⁰Lamis Andoni, 'The Palestinian Elections: Moving toward Democracy or One-Party Rule?', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 25, No.3, (Spring 1996), p.9.

¹⁰¹The Jerusalem Report, 25 January 1996.

¹⁰²Interview with Husam Khader, former prisoner, political deportee, member of the Higher Committee until January 1994 and Legislative Council member for Nablus, Balata Refugee Camp, 28 January 1996.

¹⁰³Conversations with Fatah student activists at Bir Zeit University, January 1996. Interview with Ibrahim Khorayshi, President of the Bir Zeit Student Council and participant in the Tulkarm primary, Bir Zeit University, 3 February 1996.

¹⁰⁴Interview with Khorayshi.

¹⁰⁵Interview with Khorayshi.

¹⁰⁶Interview with Jamal Shati, Higher Committee member and member of the Legislative Council for Jenin, Fatah office, Jenin, 1 February 1996.

¹⁰⁷Under Jordanian rule, Jericho fell within the borders of Jerusalem. However, Jericho-based Erekat created a new constituency and duly became its representative.

¹⁰⁸Joint interviews with Diab Allouh and Sufiyan Abu Ziad, Fatah Higher Committee office, 5-6 February 1996.

¹⁰⁹Malki quoted by Andoni, *op. cit.*, p.8.

¹¹⁰"Two of her four sons, who served jail sentences in Israel and were deported, are DFLP members now living in Jordan." The Jerusalem Post Magazine, 5 January 1996.

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, 5 January 1996.

¹¹²*Ibid.*

¹¹³The Jerusalem Post, 19 January 1996.

¹¹⁴Ghanem, *op. cit.*, p.525.

¹¹⁵Andoni, *op. cit.*, p.14.

¹¹⁶Interviews with Marwan Barghouthi.

¹¹⁷Ali Jarbawi, 'Palestinian Politics at the Crossroads', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.25, No.4, (Summer 1996), p.35.

¹¹⁸*Ibid.*, p.36.

¹¹⁹Palestine Report, 17 January 1997.

¹²⁰Besides his role as Chairman of Fatah and Chairman of the PLO, Arafat is now the President of the PNA, directly elected by the population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Many activists have questioned his commitment to Fatah, particularly in light of the broader national legitimisation bestowed upon him by the elections. The construction of coalition blocs prior to the election which co-opted non-Fatah cadres to the pro-Oslo slate at the expense of duly elected Fatah cadres seems to underline the importance Arafat attaches to this broader legitimacy which extends beyond - or perhaps supersedes - his commitment to Fatah.

¹²¹Palestine Report, 17 January 1996.

¹²²*Ibid.*, 18 April 1997.

¹²³Hasan cites a JMCC opinion poll from December 1996: "only 24 percent of the public believe that the Council represents the Palestinian people well; 48 percent of Palestinians believe that the Council represents them but with no effect. Finally, 14 percent believe that the Council represents them poorly." Palestine Report, 17 January 1997. However, the Council's ratings appeared to improve somewhat three months later. A CPRS poll suggested that, "50 percent of those polled viewed the Council's work as positive, compared with 24 percent ... " from the poll in December. Palestine Report, 21 March 1997.

¹²⁴Palestine Report, 17 January 1997.

¹²⁵*Ibid.*

¹²⁶*Ibid.*

¹²⁷*Ibid.*

¹²⁸*Ibid.*, 16 May 1997.

Conclusion

Employing the structural approach to transition and the transition approach to democratisation, this thesis has sought to explain the PLO's transition from liberation movement to national authority. The structural approach has drawn attention to national, regional, international and transnational factors, enabling us to conceptualise the environment within which the PLO been obliged to operate. The transition approach has illuminated the scope for elite agency on the part of the PLO leadership, whilst the PLO as an institution has been conceptualised as the product of purposive elite agency operating within determinant structural constraints.

The analysis of the PLO's environment demonstrated that structural factors precluded the possibility of success through armed struggle, rendering diplomacy the only realistic option for the nationalist elite. The PLO's trajectory has thus been conceived of as a transitional route, composed of overlapping but distinct stages, each of which described movement towards a diplomatically-realised institutional solution to the problem of Palestinian self-determination. The elite-driven adaptation of the institution was shown to have gradually established a quasi-state apparatus, with admission to a meaningful diplomatic process finally secured in 1993. From this point forth, the aim of the transition process became the consolidation of the national project initiated in Oslo and the conversion of the PNA into an independent Palestinian state. The final results of the transition process are still to be negotiated, but the outcome at the end-point of analysis can be measured according to the institutional content of the autonomy project in 1996. What has been this outcome, and how do we explain it?

In the first place, the 'external' profile of the national project has been determined by the framework of transition, a framework which has been shown to reflect the structural context in which it was negotiated. The ongoing costs of administering the intifada - a reflection of structural changes to Palestinian society in the context of Israeli colonialism -

prompted the Israeli government to seek an institutional solution to the Palestine problem. However, in the aftermath of the second Gulf War, a constellation of regional and international factors served to isolate the PLO leadership in the diaspora, with apparently serious consequences for the institution. In addition, structural changes in the occupied territories provided for a capable proxy delegation that was ready and able to negotiate on the leadership's behalf. This scenario encouraged Israeli and US policy-makers to pursue an institutional solution which dispensed with the diaspora-based leadership. In the event, the Tunis leadership successfully subordinated the delegation in Madrid and Washington to their own authoritative leadership, precluding the realisation of a national project which excluded them. The ongoing search for an institutional solution duly prompted the Oslo channel, a means by which the diaspora-based elite were able to re-secure their authoritative leadership within a negotiated framework.

Following the success of the Oslo channel and the PLO's redeployment to Palestine, Jarbawi observed:

"Given Arafat's long-held position as the key factor in Palestinian politics, the center follows him. Thus, having ceased to move from one Arab capital to another, the center has come at last to rest in Palestine, and more specifically in Gaza, at least for the moment."¹

However, based on our analysis of structural changes to Palestinian society, it seems to me that we can reverse the equation; structural changes to Palestinian society shifted the centre of Palestinian politics to the occupied territories and Arafat has clearly followed them. From the perspective of the leadership in Tunis, the pressing case for a return to Palestine has been elucidated above, and the advantages accruing from this decision are readily apparent.

Returning to Table 1, we can see how in 1993 the Oslo framework enhanced the authoritative leadership of the diaspora-based elite, secured a new role for the bureaucracy and armed forces of the PLO, and established a measure of accepted territory for the

establishment of the national project. The DoP similarly enhanced the PLO's international recognition through the adoption of a pro-western orientation, realigning the institution with its international structural context. Nevertheless, the terms of transition embedded in the Oslo framework reflect the relative weakness and vulnerability of the PLO leadership at this point.

The analysis of the documents comprising the Oslo process illustrated that in return for Israeli recognition, the PLO gained a fresh legitimacy and restored its authoritative leadership, but only at the expense of much of its mandate. The PLO's acceptance of the *unspecified* interpretation of resolution 242 fundamentally weakened the case for a Palestinian state. Furthermore, the suspension of major issues for 'final status' negotiations (including Jerusalem, settlements, military locations, jurisdiction over Israelis, and the future of the refugees), may have facilitated a diplomatic agreement, but has set very dangerous precedents for the final outcome of the process.

The institutional, political and territorial provisions of the process illustrate the practical implications of the framework of transition. The institutions of autonomy are subject to a series of Israeli-Palestinian 'joint committees' that effectively subordinate the national project to Israeli sovereignty. This principle applies to both the executive and legislative branches of the PNA, and to the mandate of the security services. The territorial aspects of the process point to the retention of Israeli control over external borders, as well as the internal division of the autonomous Palestinian areas. The ongoing expansion of Israeli settlements and the settlement-road infrastructure, together with the imposition of 'internal closures' during times of tension, point to the veracity of fears over 'bantustanisation'. Moreover, the publication of Netanyahu's 'Allon Plus' plan, the implementation of which may yet fall to the sinister Ariel Sharon, can only serve to confirm those fears. In this context, Arafat continues to assert that the PLO has chosen "a just peace and not surrender."² He may indeed still believe it. However, as my thesis has

sought to demonstrate, the miserable reality for most Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza seems entirely consistent with the framework of transition agreed to by the PLO. From this perspective, it is hard to disagree with the assessment of Islamic Jihad leader Ramadan Shalah: "Peace is not a reality now, what is reality is the systematic destruction of our people's cause and goals through a process dubbed a peace process."³

The real nature of the process, and the mechanisms at work within it, become clearer when we consider the economic content of the DoP. A further series of Israeli-Palestinian 'joint committees' has removed real economic authority from the jurisdiction of the PNA. Moreover, control over the resources necessary to promote economic development remains in the hands of the Israeli government.⁴ The Palestinian economy is destined to remain a dependent 'colony', subordinated to its Israeli 'metropole'. However, the perpetuation of Israeli economic colonialism will now be managed by the politico-administrative modifications of the new national project. This national project is to be managed by a reconstituted Palestinian elite, composed of the returnee PLO leadership in alliance with co-operative local agents from the traditional notable class and the indigenous bourgeoisie. Each of these classes stands to benefit from the success of the autonomy project; the returnee nationalist elite have restored their authoritative leadership, the notable class have recovered the socio-political status that hit its nadir during the intifada, and the bourgeoisie stand to make profits from the exploitation of cheap and powerless Palestinian labour, not least of all through joint ventures with Israeli and other foreign capital. This interpretation is entirely consistent with our framework of analysis, whereby elite agency is said to have adapted institutional arrangements to meet its structural context. The role of elite agency can be further identified in the construction of the institutional and social basis of the PNA, both of which had made significant advances by 1996.

The analysis of the Gaza-Jericho Agreement showed how executive and legislative power was vested in the hands of the PLO leadership (in reality this was mainly the Fatah leadership), for the period prior to the elections. Furthermore, within the constraints of the agreement, the leadership were granted an adequate margin for institutional innovation and expansion. During the early stages of the 'state-building' process, elite agency thus secured some scope for manoeuvre in the construction of the institutional basis of the autonomy project. With a fresh source of revenue from new (principally western) external sponsors, this space was used to restore, replicate, and extend patterns of patronage, rent-seeking, centralised leadership and unaccountability from the PLO to the PNA.

The PLO bureaucracy was transformed into the civil institutions of the PNA, with senior cadres from Fatah's Central Committee and Revolutionary Council placed in strategic positions in most ministries. Bureaucratic expansionism duly added vital support from the wider local population, absorbing a number of middle-class technocrats, professionals, clerical staff, and, significantly, new graduates, into the apparatus of the PNA. As a function of the state-building process, this also reduced the resources available to the non-state sector represented by the NGO movement. In light of the solid presence of the Leftist opposition within the NGOs, this process has further marginalised the disoriented secular opposition and co-opted a significant section of the middle-classes into the autonomy project. This points to the creation of a state-centric middle-class, consistent with the pattern in surrounding Arab countries.

In a parallel process, the PLO's armed forces have been transformed into the security services of the PNA. Consistent with the bureaucracy, senior returnee Fatah cadres were placed in key command positions, while local activists secured their own preserve in Preventive Security. Wide-spread recruitment from amongst the local Fatah activists (in particular the Black Panthers and the Fatah Hawks), diffused a potential source of opposition and greatly facilitated the construction of a subordinate armed force. The record

of the security services in suppressing the opposition partly reflects the mandate established by the framework of transition. However, it also reflects the imperatives of state-building and the extension of the PNA's authority. The PNA's refusal to 'extradite' Palestinian suspects wanted by Israel demonstrates some willingness to defy the terms of transition, whilst the successful turning of collaborators and the damage caused to Israeli intelligence has strengthened the hand of the PNA in relation to Israel.

The social basis of the regime - and the role of elite agency in constructing it - is further illustrated by the elections to the Legislative Council. The adoption of a constituency system deliberately favoured the Palestinian notable class and other wealthy individuals with a strong local power-base. This is a clear example of elite agency adapting institutional arrangements to suit social-structural conditions. The conflict generated by the Fatah primaries also illustrates the attempt to construct a ruling-coalition between the returnee historic leadership, local notables and the indigenous bourgeoisie. This seems to confirm the veracity of Robinson's argument that the gains of the intifada were 'hijacked' by the PLO-Tunis.

However, drawing on the results of fieldwork, it seems to me that Robinson slightly over-states his case. The institutional innovation of the Higher Committees, the fact that Arafat sanctioned the primary elections *at all*, and the relatively high representation of Fatah's intifada activists in the legislature, suggest that the intifada generation have not been so completely marginalised as might be imagined. Furthermore, as Rex Brynen observed⁵ and my own research has catalogued in detail, the intifada activists have been widely recruited into the security apparatus, in particular into Preventive Security - probably the most powerful branch of the PNA's security apparatus. Illustrative of this point, the West Bank branch of Preventive Security is commanded by the returned deportee Jibril Rajoub, while the Gazan branch is commanded by the former intifada activist Mohammad Dahalan. The future of the intifada generation, the Higher

Committees, and indeed of Fatah itself remains an interesting and potentially productive issue for future research. In the meantime, the conflicts over the Fatah primaries and the contrasting social backgrounds of the candidates suggest that the transition to party of state might not be so smooth.

On a final note, I have argued throughout this thesis that the framework of transition does not inspire confidence in the PLO's capacity to transform the PNA into an independent Palestinian state. The analysis of the institutional, territorial and economic provisions of the agreement's provide ample evidence for this assessment, as do the declarations of the Israeli government and the policies followed in the occupied territories. The implications of the Oslo process for the Palestinian hopes of self-determination are bleak. However, if the Oslo process has been a failure for the majority in the occupied territories, it has proved a disaster for the Palestinian refugees in the diaspora. The implications of this issue return us to the very starting-point of analysis - Rustow's background condition of national unity.

It will be recalled that national unity is taken to mean a combination of national identity and political community. The Palestinian refugees may retain their sense of national identity, but the terms of transition appear destined to exclude them from the redefined political community. This is apparent in the marginalisation of the refugee problem from the agenda for negotiations, a fact felt especially keenly by the Palestinian community in Lebanon. The majority of refugees in Lebanon are descended from families formerly resident along the Mediterranean coast and the Galilee area prior to 1948-49. Their return is entirely ruled-out by Israel.

As Rosemary Sayigh has noted, the relationship of the refugee community in Lebanon to the PNA is more or less defined by the *absence* of a relationship; moreover, following the redeployment of PLO personnel to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the

PLO has effectively ceased to provide services in Lebanon,⁶ elevating the significance of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). However, UNRWA, like the PLO, is now focusing its attention on the autonomous areas in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Following the DoP, the UN Secretary General proposed moving UNRWA headquarters to Gaza. UNRWA's largest donor, the US, is also keen to reduce its operations in the diaspora.⁷

Sayigh gives further evidence of the steadily diminishing significance attached by all concerned to the refugees in Lebanon by citing UNRWA's recent budget allocations. During 1992-93, UNRWA's budget allocations were as follows: Lebanon received 11.8 percent, Jordan 21.2 percent, Syria 12.8 percent, the Gaza Strip 31.8 percent, and the West Bank 22.4 percent. The pattern was similar for 1993-94: Lebanon was allocated 10.4 percent, Gaza, 30.6 percent, and the West Bank 22.9 percent. In Sayigh's view: "The concentration of international aid on Gaza and, to a lesser extent, on the West Bank is clearly a pay-off for the concessions made by Arafat during the Oslo negotiations."⁸

Despite the absence of any operational relationship between the PNA and the refugees in the diaspora, a situation implicit in the terms of transition, the PLO has clearly not forgotten the issue. In September 1996, Arafat opened the First Palestinian Refugee Conference in Gaza. According to Palestine Report: "The conference opening was attended by an array of PLO Executive Committee members, PNC members, PA ministers, Legislative Council deputies and foreign dignitaries ..."⁹ The head of the committee is Asad Abd al-Rahman, a member of the PLO Executive Committee.¹⁰ During the conference, Abd al-Rahman declared that, "when you talk about the Palestinian issue, you are talking about the refugee issue."¹¹ However, public displays of national solidarity do nothing to alter the marginalisation of the refugee community which is inherent within the framework of transition. The Oslo process has largely eliminated the refugee issue from the international agenda, in line with Israeli policy, supported in turn by the US. This

situation is unlikely to change. In the view of Salim Tamari, a member of the Multi-lateral Working Group:

"The only difference is that the Likud explicitly states in its government guidelines that refugees would not be allowed to the west of the Jordan river. Labor perceived of a future with some PNA control over the readmission of Palestinians; the Likud is completely opposed to this."¹²

As Sayigh has observed, the long-standing extension of Jordanian citizenship to the refugees on the East Bank, together with Egypt's announcement that it intends to 'naturalise' its 90,000 Palestinian residents, suggests a regional and international consensus set to liquidate the refugee issue permanently without attaining any substantial rights to compensation or return.¹³ In light of the limited prospects for statehood in the West Bank and Gaza, and the uncertain future facing so many refugees in the diaspora, the transition from liberation movement to national authority appears to leave us with little to cheer about.

Footnotes

¹Arafat's speech to the Legislative Council, 10 October 1996. Palestine Report, (Jerusalem), 18 October 1996.

² *Ibid.*, p.30.

³Ali Jarbawi, 'Palestinian Politics at the Crossroads', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.25, No.4, (Summer 1996), p.35.

⁴This point was made by Dajani, 'Israeli-PLO Documents', *op.cit.*, p.16.

⁵Rex Brynen, review of Robinson, The Incomplete Revolution, *op.cit.*, in Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.27, No.1, (Autumn 1997), pp.99-100.

⁶According to Julie Peteet, the economic difficulties confronting refugees in Lebanon, "has been further compounded by a decline in remittances after the (second) Gulf War and the PLO's inability to pay indemnities to families of martyrs." Julie Peteet, 'From Refugees to Minority: Palestinians in Post-War Lebanon', Middle East Report and Information Project (MERIP), July-September 1996, p.29.

⁷Rosemary Sayigh, 'Palestinians in Lebanon: (Dis)solution of the Refugee Problem', Race and Class, Vol.37, No.2, p.28. A further indication of US policy came in May 1996; during a vote on the continuation of UNRWA's mandate, the US chose to abstain from reiterating support for resolution 194. Ingrid Gassner-Jaradat, 'Interview with Salim Tamari', MERIP, October-December 1996, p.9.

⁸*Ibid.*, p.29.

⁹Palestine Report, 20 September 1996.

¹⁰Gassner-Jaradat, *op. cit.*, p.9. Under the terms of the Madrid Conference, negotiations on the refugee issue were the responsibility of the Multi-lateral Working Group on Refugee Affairs which first met in Ottawa in July 1992. Following the conclusion of the DoP, "the question of repatriation of the 1967 refugees to the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip was to be dealt with immediately by a quadripartite committee (the Quadripartite Committee on the Repatriation of the 1967 Displaced Persons), composed of delegations from Israel, Jordan, Egypt and the PLO." *Ibid.*, p.7. Neither the Multi-lateral Working Group nor the Quadripartite Committee have made any substantial progress, a situation which is unlikely to change as long as the final status negotiations remain mired in crisis.

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²Salim Tamari in Gassner-Jaradat, *op. cit.*, p.7.

¹³Sayigh, 'Palestinians in Lebanon', *op. cit.*, p.31. For a useful discussion of possible

solutions to the refugee issue, including matters such as the right of return, compensation or resettlement, see Rex Brynen, 'Imagining a Solution: Final Status Arrangements and Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 26, No. 2, (Winter 1997), pp.42-58.

APPENDIX 1**The PLO Executive Committee elected by the 20th PNC, Algiers, 23-28 September 1991.**

Name	Affiliation
Yasir Arafat	Fatah
Mahmoud Abbas	Fatah
Farouq al-Qaddoumi	Fatah
Abd al-Rahim Mallouh	PFLP
Taysir Khaled	DFLP
Yasir Abed Rabbo	FIDA
Sulayman al-Najjab	PPP
Samir Ghowsheh	PPSF
Ali Ishack	PLF
Mahmoud Isma'il	ALF
Shafiq al-Hut	Independent
Abdallah Hourani	Independent
Mahmoud Darwish	Independent
Bishop Ilya Khouri	Independent
Yasir Amr	Independent
Juwaid al-Ghussayn	Independent (Treasurer, PNF)
Mohammad Zuhdi Nashashibi	Independent

Sources: 'Documents and Source Material', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 21, No.2, Winter 1992, pp. 155-156. Factional affiliation confirmed by Sulayman al-Najjab.

The PLO Executive Committee Elected by the 21st PNC, Gaza, 25 April 1996.

Name	Affiliation	New Member	Resident inside pre-PNA
Yasir Arafat	Fatah		
Mahmoud Abbas	Fatah		
Farouq al-Qaddumi	Fatah		
Faysal al-Husayni	Fatah	*	*
Zakaria al-Agha	Fatah	*	*
Abd al-Rahim Malluh	PFLP		
Taysir Khaled	DFLP		
Yasir Abed Rabbo	FIDA		
Sulayman al-Najjab	PPP		
Samir Ghowsheh	PPSF		
Ali Ishaq	PLF		
Mahmud Isma'il	ALF		
Yasir Amr	Ind.		
Mohammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi	Ind.		
Asad Abd al-Rahman	Ind.	*	
Emile Jarju'i	Ind.	*	*
Riyad al-Khudri	Ind.	*	*
Ghassan Shak'a	Ind.	*	*

Fatah increased its representation from three seats to five. Independents were reduced from eight seats to six. Five representatives resident in Palestine were elected for the first time.

Source: Journal of Palestine Studies Vol.25, No.4, (Summer 1996), p.146.

APPENDIX 2: Regular Sessions of the Palestine National Council, 1964-1996.

Session No.	Year	Dates	Venue
1st	1964	28/05 - 02/06	Jerusalem
2nd	1965	31/05 - 04/06	Cairo
3rd	1966	20/05 - 24/05	Gaza
4th	1968	10/07 - 17/07	Cairo
5th	1969	01/02 - 04/02	Cairo
6th	1969	01/09 - 06/09	Cairo
7th	1970	30/05 - 04/06	Cairo
8th	1971	28/02 - 05/03	Cairo
9th	1971	07/07 - 13/07	Cairo
10th	1972	11/04 - 12/04	Cairo
11th	1973	06/01 - 12/01	Cairo
12th	1974	01/06 - 09/06	Cairo
13th	1977	12/03 - 20/03	Cairo
14th	1979	15/01 - 23/01	Damascus
15th	1981	11/04 - 19/04	Damascus
16th	1983	14/02 - 22/02	Algiers
17th	1984	22/11 - 28/11	Amman
18th	1987	20/04 - 24/04	Algiers
19th	1988	12/11 - 15/11	Algiers
20th	1991	23/09 - 28/09	Algiers
21st	1996	22/04 - 26/04	Gaza

Sources: The 1st to 17th PNC's are recorded in Gresh The PLO, Appendix III. Details for the 18th PNC are from Faruq al-Qaddumi, 'Assessing the Eighteenth PNC', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.17, No.2, (Winter 1988), p.3. The dates of the 19th PNC are from Nassar and Heacock (Ed's), *op. cit.*, p.223, and the 20th from the PASSIA Diary 1996, p.307 and Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol.21, No.2, (Winter 1992), pp.151-155. The dates for the 21st PNC are recorded in the BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 29 April 1996.

APPENDIX 3: The Constituent Factions of the PLO.

Factions represented on the PLO Executive Committee, elected April 1996.

Fatah. Founded in Kuwait in 1959, Fatah established a functioning Central Committee in 1963. Fatah spokesman Yasir Arafat became PLO Chairman at the 5th PNC in February 1969. As the largest faction in the PLO, Fatah originally held three seats on the Executive Committee, increasing its representation to five at the 21st PNC in April 1996. Palestinian nationalist but non-ideological, Fatah members possess an array of political opinion from conservative and Islamic to secularist. Fatah is the largest faction with the widest popular following by a huge margin, both inside and outside Palestine. Almost all of the Fatah leadership now based in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

PFLP. The PFLP was established in Beirut in September 1967, through a merger of the Arab Nationalist Movement, the Heroes of the Return, and the Palestinian Liberation Front, and has been led from its inception by the Orthodox Christian physician George Habash. The PFLP has maintained its membership of the PNC whilst periodically suspending its participation in the Central Council and the Executive Committee in protest at Fatah's policies. A series of hijackings from the late 1960's were the work of a wing of the PFLP led by Wadi Haddad based in Yemen. Haddad died on 28 April 1978. Officially Marxist-Leninist in ideology, the PFLP leadership is based in Damascus, but retains a significant if diminished following in Palestine

DFLP. Established in 1969 after seceding from the PFLP over differing interpretations of Marxism. Originally entitled the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP), the group changed its name to the DFLP in 1974. The DFLP has been led from its inception by the Jordanian Christian Nayef Hawatmeh, who remains in Damascus. The DFLP retains a small following in Palestine.

FIDA. Established in January 1991 after split within the DFLP over participation in the Madrid Conference. Led by Yasir Abed Rabbo. The FIDA leadership is based in the West Bank where it retains very limited local support.

PPP. Formerly the PCP which joined the PLO and took a seat on the Executive Committee during the 17th PNC in 1987. Following the collapse of the USSR, the PCP changed its name to PPP in 1991. Led by Bashir Barghouthi and Sulayman al-Najjab, the PPP is unique amongst PLO factions for having been established *inside* Palestine, where it retains a small but articulate following. PPP members have a strong presence amongst Palestinian NGO's.

PPSF. Seceded from Fatah in 1969. Led by Samir Ghowsheh. Leftist-Ba'athist in character. Returned to the PLO after Syria prevented its participation in the 17th and 18th PNC's. Almost no following in the occupied territories.

PLF. The PLF originally split from the PFLP and later from the PFLP-GC in 1977. The group was pro-Iraqi with members in both Syria and Iraq. Led by Mohammad Zaydan (Abul Abbas), the PLF were responsible for the Achille Lauro hijacking in 1985 and the

abortive assault on a Tel Aviv beach which led to the suspension of the US-PLO dialogue in 1990. The pro-Syrian wing of the PLF returned to the PLO in 1987 at the 18th PNC.

ALF. Established in 1969 to represent the Iraqi Ba'ath Party within the PLO. Led by Abd al-Rahim Ahmad. Almost no following in the occupied territories.

Factions outside of the Executive Committee.

PFLP-GC. Split from the PFLP in 1969. Based in Damascus and led by Ahmad Jibril, a former officer in the Syrian Army.

Al-Saiqa. Established in 1968 by Syrian Ba'ath Party to represent Syrian interests within the PLO. Led by Issam al-Qadi, based in Damascus. Formerly second only to Fatah in terms of size and influence, al-Saiqa is now marginalised after participating in the Syrian assaults on Palestinians in Lebanon. Al-Saiqa operates solely in Syria and has absolutely no following in the occupied territories.

Factions outside the PLO.

Fatah Intifada. Formerly known as the Fatah Provisional Command, which split from Fatah in 1983. Led by Col. Sa'id Musa based in Syria. Absolutely no following in the occupied territories.

Fatah Revolutionary Council. Split from Fatah and expelled from the PLO in 1974. Led by Sabri al-Banna, who was sentenced to death by the PLO for treason. Responsible for the death of leading Palestinian moderates including Issam Sartawi and most prominently Salah Khalaf. Has been supported, in order, by Iraq, Syria and Libya.

Hamas. The Palestinian-wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, formally established in Gaza in August 1988 to enable the Brotherhood to take a more active role in the intifada. The movement's spiritual leader is Shaykh Ahmad Yassin.

Islamic Jihad. Split from the Muslim Brotherhood in the mid-1960's. Islamic Jihad is currently led by Ramadan Shallah following the assassination of former leader Fathi Shikaki, (almost certainly by Israel), in Malta, October 1995. Islamic Jihad has always viewed Palestine as the centre of the Islamic struggle and taken a traditionally pro-active stance on military operations against Israel, in contrast to the Muslim Brotherhood which (prior to the intifada), placed greater emphasis on social and spiritual renewal within the Muslim community as a precursor to birth of the 'Jihad generation'.

The results of a poll conducted by the JMCC during August 1996 give a good indication of the levels of support for each faction within the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The poll asked the question: "Which Palestinian political or religious faction do you trust most?"

Faction	Total	West Bank	Gaza Strip
Fatah	34.00%	29.30%	41.70%
Hamas	6.50%	6.50%	6.60%
PFLP	2.80%	3.30%	2.00%
Islamic Jihad	1.40%	1.10%	1.80%
PPP	1.10%	1.60%	0.20%
FIDA	0.60%	0.90%	0%
DFLP	0.20%	0.30%	0%
None at all	29.40%	29.90%	28.60%
Others	2.00%	2.60%	0.70%
No answer	22.20%	24.40%	18.40%

Source: Palestine Report, 30 August 1996.

APPENDIX 4**The first PNA Cabinet, the Council of Ministers, February 1996.**

Name	Portfolio	Affiliation	Background
Yasir Arafat	President & Interior Ministry	Fatah*	Diaspora#
Tayib Abd al-Rahim	PNA Secretary	Fatah*	Diaspora
Ahmad Qrai'	Economy	Fatah*	Diaspora
Nabil Sha'ath	Planning	Fatah*	Diaspora
Intisar al-Wazir	Social Affairs	Fatah*	Diaspora
Faysal al-Husayni	(without portfolio)	Fatah*	Jerusalem
Zakaria al-Agha	Housing	Fatah*	Gaza
Saeb Erekat	Local Government	Fatah	Jericho
Frei Abu Midayn	Justice	Fatah	Gaza
Riyad Za'noun	Health	Fatah	Gaza
Abd al-Aziz al-Haj Ahmad	Transportation		Ramallah
Mohammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi	Finance & Agriculture	Ind.	Diaspora#
Yasir Abed Rabbo	Information & Culture	FIDA	Diaspora#
Samir Ghowsheh	Labour	PPSF	Diaspora#
Yasir Amr	Education	Fatah	Diaspora#
Azmi al-Shu'aybi	Youth and Sports	FIDA	Deportee
Jamil Tarifi	Civil Affairs	Ind.	Ramallah
Abd al-Hafiz al-Ashab	Communications	Ind.	Hebron
Ilyas Freij	Tourism & Archeology	Ind.	Bethlehem
Hasan Tahboub	Religious Affairs	Ind.	Jerusalem
Munib al-Masri	(without portfolio)	Ind.	Diaspora

* = Member of Fatah Central Committee. # = Member of PLO Executive Committee.

The Second PNA Cabinet, the Executive Authority, May 1996.

Name	Portfolio	Affiliation	Background
Previously in Council of Ministers			
Yasir Arafat	President & Interior Ministry	Fatah*	Diaspora#
Tayib Abd al-Rahim (LC)	(adv. PNA Secretary)	Fatah*	Diaspora
Ahmad Qrai' (LC)	Economics	Fatah*	Diaspora
Nabil Sha'ath (LC)	Planning	Fatah*	Diaspora
Intisar al-Wazir (LC)	Social Affairs	Fatah*	Diaspora
Saeb Erekat (LC)	Local Government	Fatah	Jericho
Frei Abu Midayn (LC)	Justice	Fatah	Gaza
Riyad al-Za'noun (LC)	Health	Fatah	Gaza
Abd al-Aziz al-Haj Ahmad	(adv. Transportation)		Ramallah
Mohammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi	Finance	Ind.	Diaspora#
Yasir Abed Rabbo	Information and Culture	FIDA	Diaspora#
Samir Ghowsheh	Labour	PPSF	Diaspora#
Yasir Amr	Education	Ind.	Diaspora#
Jamil Tarifi (LC)	Civil Affairs	Ind.	Ramallah
Abd al-Hafiz al-Ashab	(adv. Communications)	Ind.	Hebron
Ilyas Freij	Tourism and Archeology	Ind.	Bethlehem
Hasan Tahboub	Religious Affairs	Ind.	Jerusalem
New to Executive Authority			
Azzam al-Ahmad (LC)	Youth and Sports	Fatah	(unknown)
Abd al-Aziz Shaheen	Supply	Fatah	Diaspora
Ali al-Qawasmi (LC)	(unspecified)	Fatah	(unknown)
Abd al-Rahman Hamad (LC)	Housing	Fatah	Gaza
Mahir al-Masri	Trade and Industry	Fatah	Nablus
Imad al-Faluji (LC)	(unspecified)	Fatah*	Gaza
Bashir Barghouthi	Industry	PPP	Dep/Ram?
Hanan Ashrawi (LC)	Higher Education	Ind.	Ramallah
Abd al-Jawad Salah (LC)	Agriculture	Ind.	Dep./ al-Bireh
Abdallah Hourani	(adv.unknown)	Ind.	Diaspora
Ahmad Abd al-Rahman	(adv.unknown)	(unknown)	(unknown)

Adv. indicates one of five special advisors to Arafat with ministerial rank but no official seat in the Executive Authority. al-Haj Ahmad and al-Ashab are assumed to have kept the same portfolios they held in the Council of Ministers.

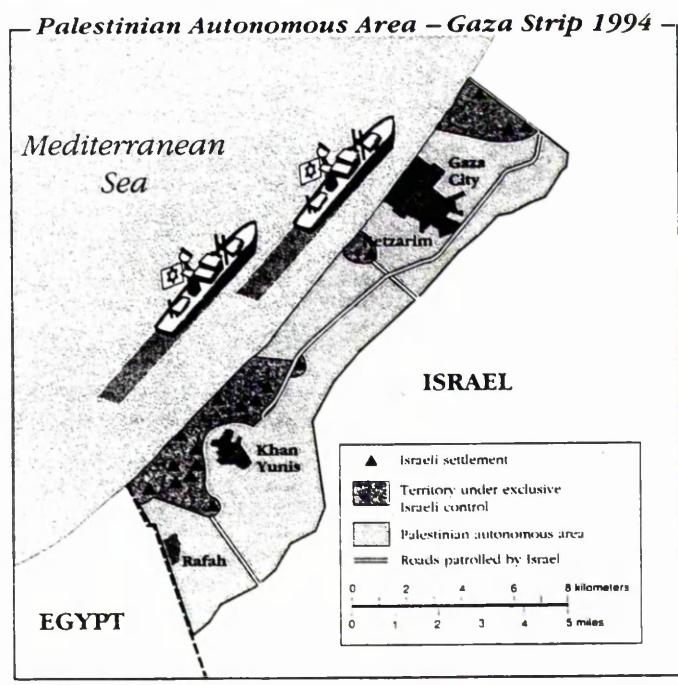
(LC) = Member of the Legislative Council. * = Fatah Central Committee. # = PLO Executive Committee.

*Imad al-Faluji was expelled from Hamas during December 1995 for agreeing to take part in the election to the Legislative Council. He eventually ran on the Fatah list.

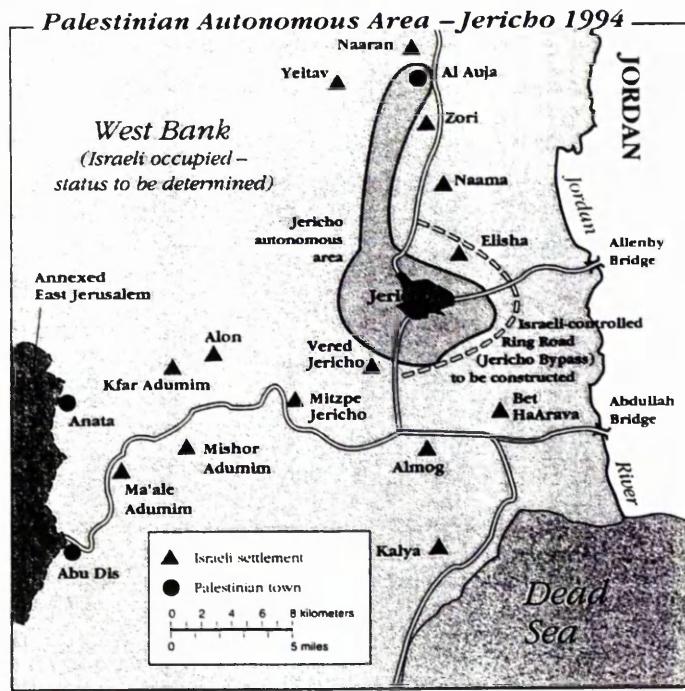
Sources: Brynen, 'Palestinian Elite Formation', p.39. PASSIA Diary 1996, pp.7-9, 'Documents and Source Material, Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 19, No.1, (Autumn 1989), pp.142-143 & Vol. 25, No.4, (Summer 1996), pp.146-147. Andoni, 'The Palestinian Elections', Vol.25, No.3, (Spring 1996), pp.5-16.

APPENDIX 5

Areas of PNA Jurisdiction established by the Gaza-Jericho Agreement and the Interim Agreement



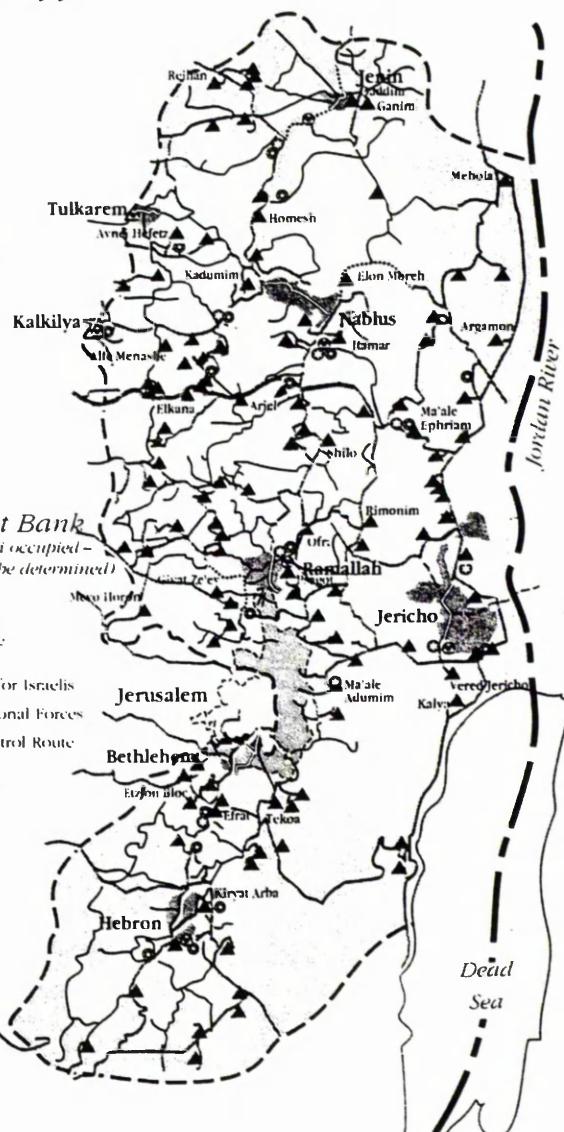
Source: Foundation for Middle East Peace



Source: Foundation for Middle East Peace

Source: 'Settlement Monitor', Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 23, No. 3, (Spring 1994), p.126.

Road Map for IDF Redeployment – the West Bank – 1996



SOURCE: *Yediot Aharonot*, January 3, 1996.

Source: Geoffrey Aronson (Ed.), 'Settlement Monitor', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 4, Spring 1996, p.134.

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DAILY NEWSPAPERS

The Financial Times

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WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Middle East International

Palestine Report

The Jerusalem Post Magazine

The Jerusalem Report (fortnightly)

The Jerusalem Times

The Middle East (monthly)

INTERVIEWS

LUTFI ABU OMAR, Journalist and Photographer, Jerusalem, November 1995.

ALBERT AGHAZARIAN, Director of the Palestinian Press Centre during the Madrid Conference and head of the Public Relations Office at Bir Zeit University, Bir Zeit, 12 December 1995.

MAMDOUH AL-AKAR, physician and delegate to the Madrid Conference and the Washington negotiations until the twelfth round, absent during the tenth due to the Israeli deportation of 415 Islamic personalities to Lebanon on 17 December 1993, Ramallah, 5 & 9 December 1995.

DIAB ALLOUH, Fatah cadre released in the 1985 PFLP-GC prisoner exchange, editor of *al-Karamah* (Fatah weekly publication), head of the Media and Culture Department in the office of the Fatah Higher Committee in the Gaza Strip and Higher Committee member, Gaza, 24 & 26 October 1995 & 5 February 1996.

COLONEL NIZAR AMR (Nazih Hilmi al-Mubasher), PLO's first Ambassador to Iran after the Islamic Revolution, served as "National Security Advisor to the PLO, as head of the Unit for Informational Analysis and Evaluation, and head of the Israeli Studies Department at the PLO Planning Center. (Also) ... a member of the Palestinian negotiating teams to the bilateral and multilateral talks on arms control and regional security, the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Security Committee, and the conference of Arab interior ministers." (this profile from photocopy of unspecified article provided by Colonel Amr). Involved in

negotiations with US in Tunis with Salah Khalaf, member of Force 17 and close to Nasir Yusef (Inbari). Following the establishment of the PNA, he was given a military rank and appointed Director of the Department of Planning, Organisation and Studies for PNA Public Security, Gaza, 5, 6 & 7 February 1996.

WAFA AMR, Reuters journalist, Jerusalem, 29 November 1995.

MARWAN BARGHOUTHI, former head of Bir Zeit University Student Council, former prisoner, deported during the Intifada, member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council and General Secretary of the Fatah Higher Committee in the West Bank, Legislative Council member for Ramallah, Ramallah, 3 & 10 February 1996.

AZMI BISHARA, lecturer at Bir Zeit University, July 1995.

IBRAHIM DAYBIS, official at HDIP, Ramallah, 10 July 1995.

AHMAD AL-DEEK, married to the daughter of Khalil al-Wazir, member of the Fatah Higher Committee for the West Bank and Legislative Council member for Salfit, 6 November 1995.

HILEL FRISCH, academic, Hebrew University, 29 January 1996.

IMAD GHAYATHA, teaching assistant at Bir Zeit University and former Fatah activist from the village of Nahalin near Bethlehem, February 1996.

GHAZI HAMED, Managing Editor of Hamas newspaper *al-Watan*, Gaza, 26 October 1995.

JAMIL HILAL, Palestinian writer closely involved in the PLO's media department, former member of the DFLP, now close to FIDA, Ramallah, February 1996.

MARWAN JILANI, Director of Planning and Development, PNA Ministry of Sports and Youth, Beitunia (near Ramallah), 10 September 1995.

A. KAFANANI, member of the Jordanian delegation to the peace talks with Israel, advisor in the Prime Minister's office and Director of the Department of Palestinian Affairs for seven years up until 1991, Amman, 14 August 1995.

ALI KHADER, World Bank official, al-Ram, West Bank, February 1996.

HUSAM KHADER, former prisoner and deportee, member of Fatah Higher Committee until January 1994, now an 'independent Fatah' member of the Legislative Council, Balata Camp near Nablus, 28 January 1996.

JACK KHANO, member of PPP, employee at the Medical Relief Committee, Beit Hanina, and former worker in Orient House during the Madrid Conference and the Washington negotiations, Beit Hanina, 18 July 1995.

GHASSAN AL-KHATIB, spokesman for the PPP, delegate to the Madrid Conference, and Director of the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre, Bir Zeit, 25 May 1995, Jerusalem, 22 & 27 July 1995.

IBRAHIM KHURAYSHI, Fatah activist, former prisoner and President of Bir Zeit University Student Council, 3 February 1996.

HASAN ABU LIBDEH, President of the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics and member of the CEC, Ramallah, 3 February 1996.

IBRAHIM ABU LUGHOD, PNC member from 1977-1991, head of the Palestinian Curriculum Development Centre, Ramallah, 12 October & 20 December 1995.

MARK MULLEN, NDI Program Officer for Civic Education, Jerusalem, 29 January 1996.

COLONEL KHADER MUSTAFA MA'AROUF, PNLA officer now on the staff of Major General Abd al-Razaq al-Majaydeh (head of PNA Public Security in the Gaza Strip), Gaza, 25 October 1995.

COLONEL ABD AL-RAZAQ AL-MAJJAYDAH, PNLA officer now a member the Fatah Revolutionary Council and Commander of Public Security in the Gaza Strip, Gaza, 25 October 1995.

CAMILLE MANSOUR, legal advisor to the Palestinian during the Madrid Conference and the negotiations in Washington, now director of the legal centre in Bir Zeit University, Bir Zeit, 6 December 1995.

JIBRIL MOHAMMAD, PFLP member and head of the voluntary work section of the PNA Ministry of Sports and Youth, Beitunia (near Ramallah), 10 September 1995.

SULAYMAN AL-NAJJAB, PPP member of the PLO Executive Committee since 1987, re-elected by the 21st PNC in April 1996, Jibya (near Bir Zeit), 2 February 1996.

MEREI ABD AL-RAHMAN, Director General of the PLO's Department of International and Arab Affairs, Ramallah, 30 December 1995.

BASIL RAMAHI, former Civil Administration employee, Director General in the PNA Ministry of Finance, Ramallah, 11 February 1996.

WALID SALIM, former prisoner accused of holding a senior position in the PFLP, currently a journalist and board member of The Centre for the Dissemination of Alternative Information (Panorama), Jerusalem, 19 January 1996.

JOHAR SAYIGH, Physician, Fatah operative in the Western Sector and former prisoner, now employed in the Governorate of Ramallah, Bir Zeit, 23 January 1996.

HAYDAR ABD AL-SHAFI, founder member of the PLO, PNC member, President of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Gaza, and head of the Palestinian delegation to the

Madrid Conference, initially led the delegation during the negotiations in Washington, Gaza, 14 December 1995.

HUSAM SHAHEEN, Fatah activist and employee at the Palestinian Centre for Non-Violence, Jerusalem, 19 January 1996.

GHASSAN SHAK'A, Former Mayor of Nablus and subsequently Fatah member of the Legislative Council, elected to the PLO Executive Committee by the 21st PNC, Autumn 1995.

JAMAL SHATI, Fatah activist, member of the West Bank Higher Committee and official Fatah member of the Legislative Council, Jenin, 1 February 1996.

JAMIL SHEHADAH, member of the Fatah Revolutionary Council and Assistant Deputy Minister in the PNA Interior Ministry, Ramallah, 22 and 25 January 1995.

AZMI SHU'AYBI, former DFLP activist, now a senior figure in FIDA. Minister of Sports and Youth in the original Council of Ministers and later Legislative Council member for Ramallah, Beitunia (near Ramallah), 11 October 1995.

SAMIR SINJILAWI, Fatah activist involved in the Ramallah primaries and the reformulated Fatah youth movement, the Fatah Youth Organisation, Ramallah, 27 January 1996.

MAJOR GENERAL NASIR YUSUF, senior figure in Force 17, member of the Fatah Central Committee, currently overall commander of all PNA security services in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 30 August 1995.

SUFIYAN ABU ZIAD, member of Fatah Higher Committee in the Gaza Strip, Gaza, 5 & 6 February 1996.

HOSNI ZU'ARAB, Fatah member since 1960, senior Fatah organiser in Kuwait prior to the second Gulf War, member of 20th PNC, currently Director General in the PNA Ministry of Education in Gaza, Gaza, 30 August 1995.

Numerous individuals interviewed during fieldwork asked that their names not be mentioned. Their help and contribution to this thesis has been recorded in the appropriate footnotes.

LECTURES

Ali Jarbawi, Bir Zeit University, 27 September 1995.

Camille Mansour, Bir Zeit University, 22 March 1995.

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BBC World Service, 17 January 1996.