

\* \* \*

## FOREWORD by Mubarak Awad and Edward (Edy) Kaufman

The timing of this publication is particularly important. The wave of nonviolent struggle in the Middle East and Northern Africa for democracy, human rights and dignity has been already resulting in regime change in a few countries; and while co-authoring these lines, we have been deeply interested in the possible outcomes of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza joining such struggle; and within it, what is going to be the reaction of Israeli Jews to work with Arabs who shared such values across the divide? The personal story of Hillel, whom we knew from the days of the first Intifada, is not only a testimony but a source of inspiration for both our societies. At the same time, the human dimension of the experiences should wake up not only the Arab and Jewish Diasporas but all others keen to understand the obstacles and potential impact of nonviolent struggle in one of the most protected and violent conflicts.

For transparency sake, we should mention that this foreword is been written by a Palestinian and Israeli that have been involved in furthering nonviolent struggle for ending Israeli occupation and searching for a just peace. Subsequent to the first Intifada, we have spent a considerable amount of our lives in advancing this strategy: Mubarak worldwide, as Chair of Nonviolence International and a teacher; and Edy through academic research and dealing with it through activism in human rights organizations and facilitations conflict transformation workshops. We both knew and befriended Hillel and were participants in some of the stories covered in the book.

Moving from the individual to the collective narrative we humbly believe that our contribution could best serve the reader, not just by adding our personal experiences but projecting the wider context within which the stories in the book have taken place. From the June 1967 War until the end of 1987 resistance to occupation was conducted by small groups of armed fighters who were trained outside and carried out lethal attacks- almost exclusively against civilian targets in Israel proper, the settlements in the Occupied Territories and abroad. (e.g. airplane hijackings and the killing of Israeli athletes at the Munich Olympics). Israeli retaliations and often pre-emptive punitive actions against non armed civilians also amounted at times what could be considered state terror.

Not a few argue that the Palestinians have already tried non-violence before, only with partial success during the first Intifada, which broke out at the end of 1987. If it didn't work then, what's the point in trying it again? Indeed, prevaillingly non-violent methods were utilized during this uprising, this being a most significant change compared with the previous period. Furthermore, this moderation was seen not only in terms of means but also by the Palestinians under occupation putting successful pressure on the PLO to move from formulas such as "a democratic and secular Palestine" into a "two state solution", an Israeli and Palestinian state living peacefully each next to the other. However, certain elements of the first Intifada prevented it from constituting a true and complete peaceful resistance movement. It was spontaneous but only partially organized, with grassroots widely shared leadership but without a clear top-down message of endorsement of such form of popular civil disobedience. Hence, the lessons learnt from previous

weaknesses should be important for what is becoming a widespread acceptance of this way of action as effective.

One can highlight some structural reasons for the breakdown of the Intifada in December 1987. The deterioration of the economic situation and growing unemployment with the Israeli economic crises; a generation of university graduates that could not find sources of income but in menial jobs; the stagnation of the appeal for *Summud* – Steadfastness- when the policy of crippling annexation through the establishment of more Jewish settlements. The trigger came as a result of a spontaneous protest for the accidental deaths caused by an army truck driver colluding with two cars in Gaza. Palestinians gathered at first spontaneously becoming mobilized under directives into a massive protests across the Palestinian territories, blocking roads and Israeli army movements. Demonstrators threw stones at the Israeli soldiers despite the tear gas and rubber-coated bullets. Massive funeral processions also demonstrated non-violent resistance to Israeli occupation. The bottom up nature of the uprising can be recognized not only through the political parties represented in the PLO but increasingly by the emergence of NGOs advocating organizing, and resistance and nonviolent actions. Much of the story has been covered by Mary King (2007), Maxime Kaufman (2009) and others. What is important to our analysis is that many individuals and organizations at that time advocated the involvement of Israeli activists in their struggle. And Hillel was eagerly trying to reach out from the Israeli side.

A strong impetus for a planned peaceful resistance was triggered by one of us, Mubarak Awad, founding the Palestinian Center for the Study of

Nonviolence, making its presence known by the then illegal display of the Palestinian flag. A disciple of Gene Sharp, Awad delved into the non-violent methods utilized by Palestinians during the first Intifada; demonstrations, obstruction, non-cooperation, harassments, boycotts, strikes, alternative institutions, and civil disobedience. One of the more effective demonstrations Awad mentioned was the clean up campaign the youth of al-Bireh and Ramallah organized protesting the dismissal of the mayors and closures of municipalities. Another example of defying the Israeli army in Ramallah occurred when Palestinians blew whistles and car horns protesting the closure of Bir Zeit University (Awad: 28). It also managed a “Library on Wheels”, translating and spreading the lecture of nonviolent books by children across the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Planned acts of non-cooperation included boycotts of Israeli goods, the refusal to work in the military government, refusal to pay taxes, refusal to sign official forms, refusal to work on building Israeli settlements and any other forms of ‘Judaization’. Harassment of Israeli soldiers was conceived as a psychological tactic to remind them of the role they play in the injustice. More and more Israelis were becoming attracted to join this nucleus of Palestinians and participated in their actions. While advocacy of such methods was made public, only partial implementation reached the organized efforts during the intifada. Furthermore, Awad’s presence in Jerusalem was declared illegal by Israeli PM Yitzhak Shamir (although he was born there and was counted as a resident in the post-1967 census) and imprisoned for several months, Edy joined him together with other Jews and Arabs in a reciprocal hunger strike in a parking lot in Jerusalem’s Russian Compound, on the other side of the prison’s wall, . The Supreme Court

confirmed the decision for his deportation and Awad was expelled, but as documented in the book, dialogue a joint action continued human and national rights. Another NGO based in Beit Sahour, PCR was responsible for underground schools, the notorious Tax Revolt, and dialogue groups with Israeli supporters of nonviolent struggle.

Yet, the resistance during the first Intifada was not totally non-violent. While many protestors participated in peaceful acts of civil disobedience, few others threw not only stones but also Molotov cocktails against Israelis. Although the Palestinians were overmatched by Israel's military capability, the mass Israeli perception of the Palestinian resistance was violent. Symbolic stone throwing was seen as life threatening rocks. On the other hand, there was an idealizing of a "limited" "non-lethal", "nonviolent", "popular" "symbolic" violence. Two articles analyzed the negative perceptions of the Israeli public" (Kaufman: 1990 and 1991). The sense of taking the best from two worlds in only running "limited violence" incorporating both strategies did not produce the desired results. Also, PLO Chairman Arafat praised the "children of the stones "as he did with the "children of the RPGs" (rocket propelled grenades used during the First Lebanon War against the IDF) now aiming rocks not only towards soldiers but civilians as well. Adding a nonviolent dimension to a violent struggle is self-defeating and a contradiction in its terms. Throwing rocks at soldiers may be gratifying for an individual but it does not advance the goals for Palestinians and only provokes Israeli aggression. Sharp acknowledges that such retaliatory acts to the opponents have no strategic purpose and will likely undermine the resistance (Sharp: 2009, 488).

Consequently, the breadth of support from staunch non-violent Palestinian advocates like Faisal Husseini, Sari Nusseibeh and Mubarak Awad diminished. These two critical elements of a non-violent resistance movement, uniformity of struggle in the Land and the Diaspora and their active top-down support were absent in the first intifada.

The world was overall sympathetic, a shift in attitudes towards what was earlier considered in the West as a terrorist movement. The Palestinian struggle gained international recognition and therefore, added pressure on the Israelis to respond to Palestinian demands. Within Israel, the resourcefulness and imagination of some of nonviolent techniques caught their eyes. While they could not identify a distinct non-violent leader, there was a sense that the previous status quo that considered the Palestinian acquiescence to a “benign occupation” that provides economic improvements was totally gone. Furthermore, the transition from passivity to massive rebellion was recognized and the realization that the partners for peace are now the Palestinians – and not only established Arab states- led eventually to the Oslo Peace process making the PLO an acceptable partner. Still there was widespread criticism of non-violence as naïve and ineffective and that it did not shatter the “positive” results from the old violent tactics. Many on both sides continued to believe that “the only language Israelis understand to relinquish power is by force as well as the reverse “the Arabs only understand that might is right.”

It would be misleading to complete this section as a mixed picture, since the positive outcomes prevailed, as mentioned by Abu Nimer:(2007), paving the way for direct PLO/Israel negotiations and the two state solutions emerged

from such struggle the achievements of the Intifada: it also showed the ability to mobilize whole sectors of a civilian population through networks of underground civilian resistance and communal self-help projects, challenging Israel's ability to continue ruling the West-Bank and Gaza. "The pattern of daily street confrontation has dealt a moral, if not logistic, blow to the might of the Israeli army. Above all, the Intifada placed relations with the Palestinians and the future of the occupied territories at the top of the agenda of all Israeli political parties".<sup>2</sup> (Tamari: 1990)

Nonviolence as a mean was also represented by the low figure –in the two digits- of Israeli casualties, most killed in the Occupied Territories and not within Israel itself, marking the boundaries of the two state solution. Israeli repression produced more than a thousand Palestinians killed, marginally outnumbering the number of the subsequent "Intrafada", when internal armed confrontations within the brethren marked the end of the success story.

Within an even wider spatial and temporal context, deep rooted trauma among Israeli Jews to fear oral incitement from the Arab world as well as actual violence. Not a few Muslim and Arab public and popular statements and behavioral expressions have not been conciliatory towards the Israelis and the Jews, including lately questioning the true nature of the Holocaust, "They are surrounded by an ocean of hatred as Arabs could not accept defeat and their rhetoric was fierce." (IHT, April 3, 2001, Eyad El Sarraj, Palestinians Should Try Nonviolent Resistance.) The Israeli psyche has been more prone to perceive the message as: "We will kill you all", even if many voices are standing up bravely among the Palestinians to condemn

publicly suicide and car bombings. Still, *Itbah Al Yehud* (butcher the Jew) has more resonance. True, the mirror image exists in the cry, “*Mavet laAravim*”, (Death to the Arabs), the mob calling for revenge whenever a killing of Israelis takes place; both cries, even if not implementing, are terrifying. Similarly, for the Jews the perception of the call for *Jihad* (Holy War) rings a different bell than the internal struggle in one self as interpreted by pious Muslims.

Back to the present, we can observe through public opinion polls that the Israeli public in general is ready to end the violence and is leaning towards conciliation. The low coverage of non-violence events in Israeli media may also suggest that the Israeli publics' reaction has been blunted and an extraordinary, wide spanning breakthrough activity is necessary to gain attention.

Palestinians can legitimately ask: where is the Israeli nonviolent movement? It may be necessary to remind them that peaceful resistance in an asymmetric situation is an equalizing tool for the weak side. Furthermore, the centrality of security for the Jewish people is not a slogan or excuse but the result of a long history of threats to their existence. So, in spite of a superficial lack of reciprocity in the resistance to occupation, Hillel and other concerned Israeli citizens have channeled, albeit it in decreasing numbers, their commitment to shared goals through their involvement in human rights and peace organizations. But the refusal to serve Israeli security utilizing military means has been and will continue to remain negligible, until the time when Palestinian

nonviolent empowerment is going to oblige them to look at the mirror introspectively and join rather than fight them. “When you are talking to the enemy, to an Israeli, your own people will ask you whether you are a traitor”... “but, you cannot talk only to the world or with other Palestinians, you have to tell the Israeli what is happening” (Awad, 88). After a period in which both societies are inflicted with violence, when it was easier to escalate than de-escalate, perhaps a dramatic nonviolent action can shape a clear-cut departure from the current spiral of mutual reprisals. Perhaps it may be possible to build wide consensus against the targeting of innocent civilians in the first stage, calling for reciprocity, namely stopping both terror and state terror. While limiting the scope of violence is not the equivalent to nonviolent action, a gradual decrease can contribute to the finding common ground on means of deflating the current situation.

While majorities in both nations are ready to settle for a two state solution, their pessimism about seeing that achieved in our lifetimes is making the goal to be a distant utopia.. Nonviolent struggle has the demonstrative elements to prove that the struggle for a just solution can be conducted heroically by such means. It may be possible to recognize already a small but at the same time significant progress in the debate and limited actions towards bottom up and top bottom endorsement of Palestinian nonviolent struggle. But criticism of the militarized Second Intifada by President Abbas and a pro-active stand boycotting Jewish settlement good by PM Fayyad is not enough; these are efforts in the right direction but strategic planning is

needed involving all vital sectors of Palestinian government and society. At times these steps can be enhanced by charismatic and determined leaders, like Anwar Sadat of Egypt or King Hussein from Jordan who were able to reach Israeli hearts. But looking at the popular revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and other Arab countries, a massive movement can produce results even when a Gandhi figure is not available.

Means and ends have an important correlation. Moderation in Arab aims has already taken place since 1988 at the 19<sup>th</sup> Palestinian National Council, with a Declaration of Independence for state to live in peace with Israel as a neighbor. This became regionalized with the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative. If such steps can be accompanied with a long-term struggle legitimated by nonviolent means, indirectly the growing support at the international level and dissonance with unchanged official policy is likely to impact Jewish public opinion and strengthen the peace camp in Israel.

Moving from the macro picture to the role of dedicated individual, Hillel has been a well known and pioneering figure among the advocates of nonviolence in Jerusalem, advocating dialogue and bottom up peacebuilding. His effort to work for nonviolence while were with Israel Defense Force (IDF) uniform has been truly unique. On the one hand, he was punished with short term imprisonment for doing so; but on the other hand, he has been able to identify some behavior of empathy to issues such as water, the right of Palestinians to call for peace. Most of the activities took place during the first Intifada, but he relentlessly continued, albeit getting diminishing returns.

By sharing with us about twenty different stories, the book now can provide a pattern that appears across the case studies that he himself summarizes in the last chapter.. He has grown over the years to realize the limits of such often Jewish-initiated joint nonviolent peace activism. Through trial and error he comes to endorse the idea of forming “Dialogue-Action Groups” one in which the dialogue leads to community action. He notes that certain contradiction between dialogues which are open to people of all points of view, and action which is designed to affect public opinion in a particular direction. On the other hand, he does not favor gatherings with the sole purpose of drafting a joint statement, get it into the press, and then disband. While dialogue is a necessary but not sufficient condition, formulating policies without implementation. In both cases, action is the added dimension that needs to take place in order to be both credible and effective. In his own words “ the ideal group is one which combines dialogue with activities whose planning is assisted by expert consultants who analyze strategic goals. The activities tap into the strengths of the community, which are activated by the dialogue group, which is given legitimacy by a local leadership which has the long range national goals in mind.”

Looking around in the region and the empowerment of civil society in popular demands for regime change, the challenge has been to predict impact on massive nonviolent protest and disobedience on Israeli n weapons will be untenable, but no riot equipment can stop a real massive and sustained uprising ( IDF: We won't be able to contain widespread civil in the west bank, anshel pfeffer, Ha'aretz, March 9, 2011).A one person enterprise cannot provide enough of full answer, but it remains a strong source of inspiration

.  
Awad, Mubarak E. and Kaufman, Edward Edy,. The Prospect of Non-violent Action from the Intifada to the Israeli/Palestinian Peace Process, Civil Society, (Cairo, November 1998), pp. 16-18.

Awad, Mubarak E. *Non-Violent Resistance: A Strategy for the Occupied Territories*.

University of California Press: Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 13, No. 4 1984, pp 22-36.

Kaufman, Edy, Israeli Perceptions of the Palestinians 'Limited Violence' in the Intifada." Journal of Terrorism and Political Violence, (Vol. 3, No. 4, (Winter 1992), pp. 1-38

.  
Kaufman, Edward Edy, "Limited Violence and the Intifadah," Journal of Arab Studies, (Fall 1990),(Vol.9,No. 2), pp. 109-121.

Kaufman, Edward Edy, "Dialogue-Based Processes: A Vehicle for Peacebuilding", in P. van Tongeren, M. Brenk, M.Hellema and J. Verhoeven, (eds.), People Building Peace II- Successful Stories of Civil Society, Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005, pp 473- 487.

Tamari, Salim " The Uprising's Dilemma", MERIP Middle East Report, May-August 1990, pg. 4

Sharp, Gene and Raqib, Jamila, Self-Liberation: A Guide to Strategic Planning for Action to End a Dictatorship or Other Oppresion, (Boston, Albert Einstein Institution, [www.aeinstein.org](http://www.aeinstein.org)., 2009)

King, Mary Elizabeth. A Quiet Revolution: The First Intifada and Nonviolent Resistance. New York: Nation Books, 2007.