

# The Resolutions of the 19th Palestine National Council

Rashid Khalidi\*

In November 1988, the 19th session of the Palestine National Council (PNC) meeting in Algiers adopted a Declaration of Independence of the State of Palestine and a Political Statement. In these documents, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) put forward the most comprehensive expression to date of its views on a peace settlement in the Middle East, while also conforming to the positions regarding UN Security Council resolution 242, the recognition of Israel, and the issue of terrorism that had been imposed by the United States as preconditions for its opening a dialogue with the PLO.

Almost a year has passed since that time, but there has been no substantive response to the Palestinian initiative. The PNC resolutions were largely ignored in the media and rejected by the Shamir government as a basis for negotiation on a Middle East settlement. Although U.S.-PLO contacts began in December, during the first four sessions of talks between the two sides—restricted at American insistence to Tunis—the PLO proposals based on these resolutions have been studiously ignored by the U.S. side.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, the Bush administration has proclaimed both privately and in public that “the only game in town” is Israeli Prime Minister Shamir’s elections proposals made in May of 1989.

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\*Rashid Khalidi, associate professor of Middle Eastern history at the University of Chicago, is the author of *Under Siege: PLO Decisionmaking During the 1982 War*.

## *The Shamir Plan: No quid pro quo*

These proposals were the fruit of an unusual cross-pollination between the U.S. and Israel. The Shamir government, reluctant to undertake any peace initiative at all despite damage to its image caused by the intifada, was persuaded by Bush administration officials to put forward a plan based on ideas these same officials had promulgated in a think tank report the year before.<sup>2</sup> The result was a “peace plan” that was Israeli in name only. The plan called for elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to select negotiators on the terms of a five-year transitional period, with negotiations of an as-yet undetermined nature to follow on a final status for the occupied territories whose outer limits were represented by Camp David-style autonomy.

As could be expected, the plan said nothing about ending—either before, during, or after the elections—the routine repression attendant on the military occupation, which has killed over 700 people during the first two years of the intifada. It said nothing about ending Israeli settlement and land expropriations, which have placed over 50 percent of the land in the West Bank and 30 percent of that in the Gaza Strip under direct Israeli control. It said nothing about releasing—before, during, or after the elections—the nearly 2,000 Palestinian leaders (many of them potential candidates in any free elections) held in administrative detention without charge or trial, essentially because of their beliefs. It also ignored the question of the inclusion in the elections, as candidates or as voters, of the more than 140,000 residents of occupied Arab East Jerusalem, where a very high proportion of Palestinian leaders live. Yet despite these gaping holes in its plan, the Shamir government assumed a take-it-or-leave-it attitude, refusing to offer any formal clarifications either to the United States or Egypt on these and other crucial matters, while at the same time privately making it clear that no concessions could be expected on any of them.

Nevertheless, and not entirely surprisingly, the Bush administration enthusiastically welcomed the Shamir plan, in effect approving with its right hand what its left hand had inspired in the first place. Thus, a proposal that originated in Washington, and which seemed aimed at relieving the public relations and diplomatic pressure on Israel while consecrating the status quo in the occupied territories (with occupation, settlement, and denial of full political freedoms and self-determination to be prolonged indefinitely), was transmogrified into an Israeli “peace plan.” Meanwhile, these and other objectionable features of the Shamir plan were cloaked

under the sacred mantle of elections, thereby making it eminently saleable both in the media and on Capitol Hill.

For many years, Palestinians had heard a constant refrain from various quarters that if the PLO would only be reasonable, accommodate the hard realities of Israeli and American domestic politics, and make a few unilateral concessions to get the ball rolling, then a serious negotiating process would begin. The concessions requested usually included the recognition of Israel, accepting Security Council resolution 242, and halting violence against Israel, although in some cases the shopping list was even longer.

No Israeli quid pro quo was offered to the Palestinians, nor was there reason to expect one, for it should have been obvious that no foreseeable Israeli government would take the reciprocal and matching steps of accepting 242 and its core of land for peace, recognizing Palestinian national rights, or ceasing violence against Palestinians. It might, however, have been expected that some positive substantive response to the content of the PLO proposals would be forthcoming, if not from Israel, then at least from the United States.

Instead, the PLO's moves have done nothing beyond starting a dialogue of the deaf with the United States, in which the American side has acted in essence as a conduit for Israeli proposals. Substantively, it has been Israeli proposals or Israeli inertia that have determined the agenda since the Bush administration took office.

In the light of this sad performance, it is worth considering the decisions of the PNC—certainly the most important in Palestinian politics in decades but whose full import has received a lack of attention typified by their treatment in the American newspaper of record, the *New York Times*. On the day the Palestinian Declaration of Independence was issued, the *Times* carried a front-page story on Abu al-Abbas, alleged mastermind of the notorious *Achille Lauro* hijacking, with the Declaration relegated to an inside page. Similarly, the political resolutions adopted by the PNC have not been published in full or in a decent translation by the *Times*.<sup>3</sup>

## *Resolutions of the 19th PNC*

The 19th PNC marked the completion of an important evolution in Palestinian political discourse that goes back at least to the 12th PNC held in Cairo in June 1974. It was at this Cairo meeting that the PNC first put forward the concept of establishing a Palestinian state alongside Israel in only part of Palestine, although it was highly conditional and couched in

exceedingly ambiguous language; the term used for this Palestinian state in the 1974 resolution was “a national authority on any part of Palestinian soil liberated,” and there was no explicit mention of Israel.<sup>4</sup>

The language that was finally decided upon to express this new orientation in 1974 emerged only after intensive political bargaining. It represented an attempt at compromise with those in the Palestinian national movement, led by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) under Dr. George Habash, who rejected anything less than the liberation of Palestine in its entirety. Ironically, despite the ambiguities in the language of the 1974 resolutions that were introduced in an effort to keep the PFLP and other smaller groups within the PLO consensus, later in the same year they left the PLO Executive Committee anyway and formed the Rejection Front in protest against the new approach. They returned to the Executive Committee only in 1977, after the Lebanese fighting of 1975-76 reimposed unity on the factions of the PLO. From that point on, these groups came increasingly to accept the new line of the PLO, albeit often with some reservations.<sup>5</sup>

The resolutions of the 19th PNC, then, constitute the most explicit formulation to date of the objectives that have been for over a decade the dominant trend in Palestinian politics: the trend towards a peaceful, comprehensive two-state solution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Moreover, since the PNC is the PLO’s highest decision-making body, the 1988 resolutions provide the “constitutional legitimacy” for the diplomatic moves made by the PLO since then, notably PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir Arafat’s statements in Stockholm and Geneva in December 1988, and in Paris in May 1989. Finally, these resolutions are the major result to date of the uprising in the occupied territories, and represent the views of the grass-roots leadership of this popular movement. For all these reasons, they deserve closer textual scrutiny than they have thus far received.

### *The Declaration of Independence*

The two major documents issued by the 19th PNC are the Declaration of Independence of the State of Palestine and the Political Statement adopted two days later, summarizing, as is normal practice after every PNC, the decisions taken.<sup>6</sup> Several important general points can be made about the declaration. The first has to do with the echoes of the Israeli and American Declarations of Independence in the early paragraphs of the document, echoes that have been noted by a number of commentators. Far

from being a coincidence, this was undoubtedly intended by the individual who drafted the document in Arabic, the poet Mahmud Darwish, a member of the PLO Executive Committee who was educated in the Israeli school system, and by Professor Edward Said, who was responsible for the official English translation.

Thus, a paragraph of the preamble in English translation begins with words reminiscent of the American Declaration of Independence, “When in the course of modern times, a new order of values was declared with norms and values fair for all . . .”<sup>†</sup> Like the Israeli declaration, the Palestinian declaration begins by emphasizing the ties that bind the people to the land. But while the Israeli declaration stresses the *exclusive* link of the Jewish people to the land of Israel, the Palestinian declaration—in addition to evoking the historic bonds between Palestinians and the land—refers to Palestine as “the land of the three monotheistic faiths.” This acceptance of the country’s diversity (and of the integral status in it of Judaism) is further underlined by the Palestinian declaration’s reference to “temple, church and mosque.”

In substantive terms, the Declaration of Independence does two major things: it grounds Palestinian independence in international law and in natural right, and it sets forth the guidelines for the nature and constitution of the new state. As far as these guidelines relate to internal matters, the declaration is quite explicit:

The State of Palestine is the state of Palestinians wherever they may be. In it they shall develop their national and cultural identity and enjoy full equality in rights. Their religious and political beliefs and their human dignity shall be safeguarded under a democratic parliamentary system of government built on freedom of opinion, on the right to form parties, on the protection of the rights of the minority by the majority and respect of the decisions of the majority by the minority, on social justice and equal rights, free of ethnic, religious, racial or sexual discrimination, and on a constitution that guarantees the rule of law and independence of the judiciary . . .

Concerning the outside world, the declaration recognizes that the Palestinian state has yet to be constituted and exists only on paper when it calls for Arab support “to consolidate and enhance the emergence in reality of our state.” It goes on to describe the State of Palestine as “peace-loving,” as adhering to the principles of “peaceful coexistence,” and as working “to assure a permanent peace based upon justice and the respect of rights” via

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<sup>†</sup>Text of the Palestinian Declaration of Independence, as quoted throughout, may be found in JPS 70, Winter 1989.

the “settlement of regional and international conflict by peaceful means, in accordance with the UN Charter and resolutions.” At the same time, it rejects “the threat or use of force, violence and terrorism” against the “territorial integrity of other states.”

The most important section of the declaration grounds the Palestinian people’s right to independence not only in their natural and historic rights in the land of Palestine and in the general principle of self-determination of peoples, as might be expected, but also on two specific elements of international legality. The first is Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations of 1919, which recognized that the peoples formerly part of the Ottoman Empire, including the Palestinian people, “have reached the stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized, subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone.”<sup>7</sup> Although the Palestinians (unlike the peoples of Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Jordan to which the same article applied) were never allowed to exercise this independent existence, the PNC could claim with some justification that the League of Nations had provided a basis in international law dating back to 1919 for the independence of Palestine.

The second element of legality cited as a basis for Palestinian independence is the United Nations General Assembly’s partition resolution 181 of 29 November 1947. In a carefully-worded section, the declaration states: “Despite the historical injustice done to the Palestinian people by their dispersion and their being deprived of the right of self-determination after UN General Assembly Resolution 181 of 1947, which partitioned Palestine into two states, one Arab and one Jewish, that resolution still provides the legal basis for the right of the Palestinian Arab people to national sovereignty and independence.”

This brief passage has revolutionary import in terms of modern Palestinian political discourse. Earlier PNC resolutions, going back to 1974, have implicitly accepted the principle of two states in Palestine, one Arab and one Jewish. But never before has this principle, or the UN resolution that embodies it, explicitly been accepted by the PNC, or for that matter, by any other representative Palestinian body. Indeed, rejection of partition in letter and spirit is at the heart of the Palestinian National Charter adopted at the first PNC in Jerusalem in 1964 (the so-called Covenant), its updated version of 1968, and most authoritative statements of the Palestinian position ever since the first partition plan put forward in the Peel Commission report of 1937. The 1964 Charter states categorically that “Palestine is an Arab homeland,” implying exclusivity, and that partition

of the country along the lines of resolution 181 or on any other basis, and the creation of a Jewish state there, are fundamentally illegitimate.<sup>8</sup>

Twenty-four years after the adoption of the Palestine National Charter embodying these ideas—which largely reflected the thinking of the pre-1948 generation of Palestinian political leaders who were members of the first PNC—the 19th PNC resolved in the Declaration of Independence to base the international legitimacy of Palestinian independence partly on the 1947 partition resolution that mandated the establishment of a sovereign Jewish state in part of Palestine.

The PNC was therefore recognizing that for all the injustices inherent in partition, new realities had been created, notably the Jewish state explicitly mentioned in the declaration; just as the international legitimacy of this Jewish state was partly grounded in the partition resolution, so too, was that of a Palestinian state. It is worth noting that this declaration, and the profound transformation in Palestinian thinking that it exemplifies, was unanimously approved by the 19th PNC. This means that even those groups, such as the PFLP, which dissented in 1974 from the PLO's new two-state approach in its earliest phases, have now accepted it.

### *The Political Statement of the 19th PNC*

The Declaration of Independence does more than contradict the National Charter on this fundamental point. It effectively supersedes the Charter as the basis of Palestinian legitimacy. This is clearly apparent when one turns to the Political Statement of the 19th PNC. The Political Statements of all the previous sessions of the PNC had always referred explicitly to the Palestine National Charter as the basis of the resolutions adopted by that session. This obligatory reference was invoked in the preamble even if the resolutions that followed were in blatant contradiction with the letter and spirit of the Charter, as was increasingly the case from 1974 onwards.

In contrast, the Political Statement of the 19th PNC, for the first time in nineteen sessions held over twenty-four years, does not even mention the Charter, either in its preamble, or elsewhere in the text. Instead, it explicitly roots the legitimacy of its decisions in the Declaration of Independence and the Palestinian uprising. Thus the Charter, whose importance and significance has been largely defined in American public discourse by the opponents of Palestinian nationalism, has clearly ceased to be the touchstone of Palestinian legitimacy. It is worth noting that this major shift by the PNC provides a sound textual and legal basis for PLO

Chairman Arafat's statement in Paris in May 1989 that the Charter was "caduc," or lapsed.<sup>9</sup>

The crucial reference in the declaration to the 1947 partition resolution, together with the absence in both the Declaration of Independence and the Political Statement of any mention either of the National Charter or of the content of "armed struggle," mark the 19th PNC's sharpest and most significant departures from traditional Palestinian political discourse as it has developed since the watershed of 1948. Although the remainder of the Political Statement—which is divided into an introductory section followed by sections on the intifada, the political arena, and the Arab and international arenas—contains the most explicit and comprehensive statement to date of the PLO's views on a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, there is nothing in it as dramatic or as significant as these three major departures.

The significance of the elimination of the term "armed struggle" from the 19th PNC's Political Statement cannot be overemphasized. This concept was central to the theoretical thrust that had marked the emergence of the Palestinian resistance movement: under the new approach, the Palestinians would liberate their homeland not by waiting for the Arab regimes but only through armed struggle and their own efforts. Indeed, the assumption of the PLO leadership in the late 1960's by the armed commando groups of this resistance movement was symbolized by the inclusion of the concept of armed struggle in the 1968 amendments to the Charter. Armed struggle had a prominent place in succeeding resolutions of the PNC, and in most Palestinian political rhetoric thereafter.

However, as time went on and circumstances changed with the closing of the Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian fronts to commando activity, the commitment to armed struggle, and the practice of it, waned, and its prominence in PLO terminology was gradually watered down. Thus, while the amended National Charter of 1968 stated categorically: "Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine," the resolutions of the 11th session of the PNC held in Cairo in January 1973 described armed struggle as "the correct, the inevitable, and the *main* method of liberating Palestine" [emphasis added], clearly implying that it was no longer seen as the only means. This inching away from the centrality of armed struggle reached the point that the 18th PNC in April 1987 called only for "continuing the struggle in all its forms: armed, mass and political." Finally, in 1988 the term "armed struggle" simply disappeared, along with any reference to the Palestinian National Charter, from the resolutions of the 19th PNC.<sup>10</sup>

A number of other points in the Political Statement deserve mention. There is a stress, both explicit and symbolic, on the continuity between the inside and the outside, and between earlier phases of the Palestinian struggle and the uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip through linkage between what are called "the children of the RPGs" (rocket-propelled grenades; the youngsters who helped defend the besieged Palestinian camps in Beirut) and "the children of the sacred stones" in occupied Palestine. Special attention is paid to democratic and progressive Israeli forces and Jewish groups all over the world who support Palestinian self-determination and an end to occupation. Also referred to is the fact that the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, as represented in the Popular Committees, now control the situation on the ground.

The most important remaining points in the Political Statement, however, come in the section dealing with political issues. Here the PNC offers its clearest enunciation of the PLO's peace plan, as it has been elaborated in a series of increasingly explicit forms over the last several sessions of the PNC. Proceeding from the Declaration of Independence and the search for "the settlement of regional conflicts by peaceful means," the PNC affirms "the determination of the PLO to arrive at a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and its core, which is the question of Palestine . . . in such a manner that safeguards the Palestinian Arab people's rights to return, to self-determination, and the establishment of their independent national state on their national soil, and that institutes arrangements for the security and peace of all states in the region."<sup>‡</sup>

This passage expresses the PNC's full, explicit, and exclusive commitment to a political solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and to acceptance of security and peace for Israel in the context of this solution. The next paragraph specifies that this should take place through an international conference including the PLO and all other parties to the conflict on the basis of UN Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and Palestinian national rights (which are not mentioned in either of these two UN resolutions), "in accordance with the principles and provisions of the UN Charter as they pertain to the right of peoples to self-determination and the inadmissibility of the acquisition of others' territories by force or military conquest, and in accordance with UN resolutions relating to the Palestine issue." In three places in these passages relating to the nature of a Middle East peace settlement, the language used is derived from the UN Charter,

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<sup>‡</sup>Text of the Political Statement, as quoted throughout, may be found in JPS 70, Winter 1989.

which in turn was the basis of the formula used by Lord Caradon in the drafting of 242 in November 1967.

Succeeding passages calling for Israeli withdrawal from the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967 make it clear that this is the only area claimed by the Palestinians for their state. This belies the contention of critics that reference to the 1947 partition resolution in the Declaration of Independence means that the PLO is claiming the partition plan boundaries for the Palestinian state: in fact, the Palestinian Declaration of Independence, like that of Israel, makes no reference to boundaries, frontiers, or borders. It is only in the Political Statement that this issue is addressed, in an unambiguous fashion referring only to the West Bank and Gaza Strip occupied in 1967.

The statement continues with a call for UN trusteeship over the occupied territories for an interim period before a final settlement is reached and for Security Council guarantees for the security of all states in the region, including the Palestinian state. The document repeats the PLO's preference, expressed in the resolutions of the four PNC sessions since 1983, for a confederation between an independent Palestinian state and Jordan. This section ends by announcing the PNC's rejection of terrorism in all its forms, including state terrorism, but upholding the right of peoples under occupation to resist and to fight for their independence.

The concluding Arab and international section of the Political Statement is remarkable only for dropping the long-standing PLO demand for the freedom of Palestinian military action against Israel from bases in Lebanon. In the resolutions of the 13th, 14th and 18th PNCs in 1977, 1979, and 1987, respectively, this requirement was expressed in terms of adherence to the 1969 Cairo Agreement between the PLO and the Lebanese state, which guaranteed the PLO's freedom of action in and from Lebanon. In the resolutions of other PNCs, such as the 16th and 17th in 1983 and 1984, respectively, the formula used was "the right of the Palestinian revolution's forces to conduct military action against the Zionist enemy from all Arab fronts."<sup>11</sup>

In contrast, the Political Statement of the 19th PNC emphasizes only "the importance of consecrating the right of Palestinians in Lebanon to engage in political and informational activity and to enjoy security and protection; and of working against all the forms of conspiracy and aggression that target them and their right to work and live; and of the need to secure the conditions that assure them the ability to defend themselves and provide them with security and protection." While the statement expresses solidarity with the Lebanese struggling against Israeli occupation in South

Lebanon and condemns Israeli attacks on Lebanon, there is no explicit or implicit mention of Palestinian military activity directed against Israel from Lebanon.

Also notable, thought not unprecedented, is the statement's expression of "appreciation of the role and courage of Israeli peace forces . . ." and its confirmation of earlier resolutions calling for "reinforcement and development of relations with these democratic forces." This formulation leaves the door open for contacts with a wide variety of Israeli political currents, unlike resolutions of some earlier PNC sessions, which had attempted to restrict such contacts to anti-Zionist Israelis.

## *A Final Assessment*

In assessing such documents, it is important to see the new elements and the extent to which the uprising and the political input of the newly galvanized population of the occupied territories has contributed to Palestinian political discourse. At the same time, however, it is necessary to see the elements of continuity. The roots of every major departure in these documents of the 19th PNC—the moving away from the uncompromising line of the National Charter, the decreasing stress on armed struggle, the commitment to a two-state solution negotiated within the framework of a comprehensive international conference—can all be found in resolutions adopted by the 12th through the 18th PNCs. Thus, while the outcome of this session was in large measure the result of the appeal—indeed the demand—of the Unified National Leadership of the Uprising in the occupied territories to the PLO leadership outside to produce a clear political program, it resulted as well from a long-standing commitment of the central PLO leadership to a political program along these lines. This commitment is evidenced in the leadership's ongoing political struggle in successive PNC sessions ever since the 12th in 1974 to win over a rejectionist minority to their point of view.

Indeed, it could be argued that the uprising in effect provided the PLO leadership with the silent votes of the PNC members from the occupied territories (who are barred by Israel from attending) that it needed in order to overcome the objections of the minority. Thus, the wishes of the population under occupation, expressed in the clear political line taken in the Unified National Command's communiqués, gave added legitimacy to the already large majority; as a result, the minority that had walked out after the PLO first embarked on its present course back in 1974 this time voted

for the Declaration of Independence and in loyal opposition to the Political Statement, and has remained within the PLO since then.

In conclusion, a closer reading of the texts of the 19th PNC—which formed the basis for the dramatic shifts in what had seemed to be entrenched positions by the PLO—confirms that the Palestinian political initiative does not represent a sudden change in direction by the PLO, or an action taken arbitrarily by its leadership. Rather, it is the result of the mature deliberation of seven sessions of the PNC, held over a decade and a half by the highest representative body of the Palestinian people and reinforced by the clear wishes of the 1.8 million Palestinians under occupation, as expressed in dozens of communiqués issued by the Unified National Command of the Uprising. This political initiative, which unfortunately has not received the attention it deserves, was intended as a serious basis for negotiation. Much, of course, must be negotiated. And while there is no guarantee against a revision of PLO policy in the future, it is highly unlikely—notwithstanding the alarmist predictions of some—that the organization will precipitately change a course of action it took over fifteen years to develop fully.

The question remains as to whether or not a negotiation will begin on this basis—a basis that offers the possibility of a historic compromise between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples. But the answer to this question does not lie mainly with the Palestinians, who have already made the decision that has so long and so insistently been asked of them and have put forward a serious initiative for a just peace. It lies rather with the Israelis. It is now their turn to decide whether they want a historic compromise based on the partition of Palestine into two states for two sovereign peoples, and relations of peace and equality with all their neighbors, or whether they prefer to continue the imposed inequality based on the precarious foundation of superior might grounded in external support. Attractive though such a status quo clearly is to some Israeli leaders, it cannot last forever, as the intifada has already begun to show.



1. Since the fourth meeting in the United States-PLO dialogue on 14 August 1989, there has been a spate of reports in newspapers and periodicals close to the PLO, such as *al-Yawm al-Sabi'* and *Al-Bayadir al-Siyasi*, and in Kuwaiti papers such as *al-Watan* and *al-Qabas*, complaining bitterly that the U.S. side in the dialogue had completely ignored the Palestinian proposals based on the PNC resolutions. Several of these articles included sections of what purported to be the verbatim texts of statements made by both sides during the fourth session of the talks. For an earlier expression of PLO dissatisfaction, see the interview with Yasir 'Abed Rabbo, head of the PLO delegation to the talks, *al-Yawm al-Sabi'*, 21 July 1989.
2. This was the pro-Israeli Washington Institute for Near East Policy's Presidential Study Group report *Building for Peace: An American Strategy for the Middle East* (Washington, D.C.: Washington Institute, May 1988). The core of the "Shamir plan," and the intellectual rationale for it, can be found in skeletal form on pp. xi-xvii of the Executive Summary of the Report, and in more detail in Part I. Among the signatories are several of the top members of the Bush administration foreign policy team, including Lawrence Eagleburger, Co-Chairman of the Study Group and now Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Haass, now Director of Middle East Affairs at the National Security Council, and Dennis Ross, now head of Policy Planning at the State Department. Ross is credited (p. ix) with having offered "detailed input" for Part I of the Report.
3. The *New York Times* published an ungrammatical, inaccurate and very heavily excerpted translation of part of the Political Statement after the PNC session that was virtually worthless due to its omission of several key passages, among them several elucidated in this article. It was described as an unofficial U.S. government translation.
4. The most easily available English translations of the resolutions of the 12th through the 19th PNC's are published in the *Journal of Palestine Studies*. Although of uneven quality, these translations are generally accurate. For resolutions of earlier PNC's, refer to the annual series, *International Documents on Palestine*, published by the Institute for Palestine Studies beginning with the year 1967 and until the year 1981, and to Leila S. Kadi, *Basic Political Documents of the Armed Palestinian Resistance Movement*, Beirut: PLO Research Center, 1969.
5. The best account of the internal Palestinian debate is in Alain Gresh, *The PLO, The Struggle Within: Towards an Independent Palestinian State*, 2nd ed., (London: Zed Books, 1988). See also Helena Cobban, *The Palestinian Liberation Organization: People, Power and Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.
6. Texts of the resolutions of the 19th and earlier PNC's cited can be found in the *Journal of Palestinian Studies*.
7. This is the language of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, dated 28 June 1919, cited in J.C. Hurewitz, ed., *The Middle East and North Africa in World Politics: A Documentary Record*, Vol. 2, 1914-1945, (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp. 179-80. The Mandate for Palestine, which flagrantly contradicted Article 22 of the Covenant, is cited in *ibid.*, pp. 305-9.
8. The Palestinian National Charter (commonly mistranslated Covenant for reasons which can only be surmised at) can be found in Leila S. Kadi, *Basic Political Documents*, pp. 137-42, and in excerpted form in H. Cobban, *The Palestinian Liberation Organization*, pp. 267-68.
9. The *New York Times*, 3 May 1989. [For the text of Arafat's interview in Paris, see document B2 in this issue.—ed. note.]
10. The final statement of the fifth Fateh congress, held in Tunis in August 1989, endorsed the resolutions of the 19th PNC point for point in every significant detail, and also omitted all reference to the National Charter. Referring to the intifada, the final statement declared that "what determines change finally is the organized action of the masses with a clear program," a striking change from the declarations of earlier Fateh congresses, which placed pri-

mary emphasis on armed struggle as the motor of change. Armed struggle is mentioned in the statement only as one of several means of struggle which international legitimacy allows to all peoples, and distinguished it from terrorism, which the statement condemns. For the text, see *Jour-*

*nal of Palestine Studies* 19, no. 1 (Autumn 1989), pp. 134–39.

11. "Final Resolutions Adopted by the Palestine National Council at its Sixteenth Session, Algiers, February 14–22, 1983," in *Journal of Palestine Studies* 12, no. 3 (Spring 1983), p. 250.