

אגף המנצעים
חטיבת דובר צה"ל
סוף קשרי צינור ומידע



תאריך: 14.10.2000 שעה: 14:00

The Violence in the Territories 29 September - 13 October 2000

The disturbances that put the region in turmoil over the last two weeks began on the eve of the Jewish New Year. On Friday, 29 September, Palestinian rioting began on the Temple Mount. Following Friday morning prayers, Palestinians attacked Israeli police with rocks and firebombs, compelling the police to forcibly disperse the crowd. Dozens of Israeli police were injured, seven Palestinians were killed and scores of others were injured.

This incident sparked massive disturbances throughout the territories, as well as among Moslem Arabs within Israel, under the slogan of "saving" the Al Aksa mosque.

The Palestinians claim that the disturbances were triggered by a visit by Likud leader Ariel Sharon to the Haram e-Sharif, also known as the Temple Mount, on 28 September. This visit, according to Palestinians claims, was a provocation. However, before this visit there had been a marked rise in tensions. These tensions had previously manifested themselves in attacks on Israelis for several days.

Actually, the root causes of underlying hatred, dissatisfaction and frustration can be traced back for a much longer period of time. Over the months preceding the disturbances, there was a growing sense of frustration among the Palestinian public, a sense exacerbated by an extended period of economic and political stagnation. Particularly disgruntled were the grassroots members of Yasser Arafat's Fatah organization and a paramilitary subgroup within Fatah, known as the Tanzim. These groups felt they were not receiving adequate treatment from Arafat and the Palestinian Authority. That is to say, they were not included in the Palestinian security apparatus and were not given positions within the Palestinian Authority.

Following the Camp David talks, when the Palestinian delegation presented its uncompromising position on final status issues, the position of the Palestinian Authority vis-a-vis its public became even more untenable; the Palestinian people saw neither a final status agreement nor any improvement in their day to day lives.

אגף המבצעים
חטיבת דובר צה"ל
מוקד קשרי ציבור ומידע



תאריך: 14.10.2000 שעה: 14:00

Upon this backdrop, a Palestinian ambush took place on 27 September against an IDF patrol at the Netzarim Junction in the Gaza District. An Israeli soldier was killed in the incident. The next day another ambush was launched against an IDF patrol, but no one was injured. In fact, throughout the month of September, there had been warnings by the IDF's Southern Command regarding a deterioration in the security cooperation with the Palestinians, especially at the Netzarim Junction. This location later served as a focal point of heavy fighting between IDF soldiers and Palestinian gunmen, including IDF soldiers coming under heavy fire from two adjacent buildings overlooking the junction. On 29 September, a Palestinian policeman on a joint Israeli/Palestinian patrol in Kalkilya opened fire without provocation and for no particular reason on his Israeli counterparts, killing an Israeli border policeman.

Following the 29 September disturbances on the Temple Mount, and due to mounting Palestinian casualties, disturbances quickly spread throughout the West Bank and Gaza, as well as in Arab towns within Israel (such internal incidents are handled by the Israel Police). This recent outburst of violence is the worst the territories have known since the beginning of the peace process. It represents a blatant and fundamental violation of the Oslo Agreement, in which the Palestinian Authority undertook to prevent violence in areas under its control.

An especially severe occurrence during these disturbances was the rampant use of automatic weapons by the Palestinians. This includes the use of weapons held illegally, ones that the Palestinian Authority pledged to collect as part of their agreements with Israel. In addition, weapons issued to the Palestinian police by Israel were used in attacks. *These weapons were meant to assist in keeping public order and not to attack Israel.* In a number of cases, Palestinian gunners fired automatic weapons directly into Jewish civilian areas.

Almost as blatant in undermining of the peace agreement in letter and in spirit was the relentless incitement to violence against Israel in the Palestinian media. The Palestinian media has made great use of disinformation to incite its populace to violence.

Repeated agreements and understandings to stop the violence were broken by the Palestinians. Yasser Arafat met with Prime Minister Ehud Barak and U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright in Paris, where the Palestinian leader committed himself to implementing a cease fire - but this was not done. Almost daily, understandings were reached between Israeli and Palestinian

אגף המבצעים
חטיבת דובר צה"ל
מוף קשרי צינור ומידום



תאריך: 14.10.2000 שעה: 14:00

commanders in various sectors – but these were not upheld by the Palestinian side. For example, OC Southern Command Maj. Gen. Yom Tov Samia announced on Friday, 6 October, that a cease fire had been reached. By that evening, the Palestinians denied any such understanding.

Israeli settlements were subject to unprecedented levels of Palestinian gunfire. These attacks disrupted access to many Jewish villages, frequently forcing the IDF to block off main routes to Israeli traffic for their own safety.

During the course of the disturbances, 12 Jewish settlements came under direct Palestinian gunfire. In Psagot, near Ramallah, there were times during the day and night when residents were ordered indoors so as to avoid casualties. Efrat, Hebron, Rachel's Tomb north of Bethlehem and Joseph's Tomb (which was later to become a main battleground) in Nablus came under fire. In Gaza, Palestinian mobs attacked the IDF outpost at the Netzarim Junction, where throughout the last month there had been a continuing deterioration in the security situation. Food and supplies had to be airlifted into the settlement of Netzarim itself. Other Gaza strip settlements that came under fire included Dugit, Morag, Neveh Dekalim, Kfar Darom, Katif, as well as the Gush Katif District Coordination Office (DCO) in violation of the Oslo Accords.

The overall violence has continued more or less unabated for two weeks. In numerous cases (such as in the Netzarim Junction on 30 September and 2 October), Palestinian police actively participated in firing on IDF soldiers. Another characteristic of Palestinian "weapons" employed in the attacks has been the cynical use of women and children placed among the rioters, exposing them to potentially life threatening situations, thereby compromising Israel's image. A blatant example occurred on 1 October, when a Palestinian boy and his father were caught in a crossfire between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian gunmen. Unfortunately, the boy was killed in the exchange of fire.

Despite these events, the IDF employed maximal restraint. Standing IDF orders stipulate that the use of fire is called for only when fired upon, or in life-threatening situations. Furthermore, despite the repeated attacks, IDF forces remained stationary within their defensive positions. It must be stressed that under the agreements, Israeli forces are primarily located outside of Palestinian populated areas. The Palestinians (civilians and police) are purposely seeking and engaging Israeli soldiers and border police who are maintaining defensive positions within their compounds.

אגף המבצעים
חטיבת דובר צה"ל
מגף קשרי צינור ומידע



תאריך: 14.10.2000 שעה: 14:00

This passive approach was employed by the IDF during the first two weeks of hostilities, with the aim of not escalating violence. Only following an upsurge in violence which spread into Israel on 10 October, did the IDF choose to adopt a more active policy. In addition, during the first ten days of violence the IDF did not impose a closure or other types of restrictive measures on residents of the Palestinian Authority. This was done in an effort to allow the Palestinians to continue to earn their living in as normal a manner as possible and so as not to create further pressures on them. Following the flare-up of violence, on 9 - 10 October, the closure of the territories (which takes place annually on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur) was extended and Palestinian villages were for all practical purposes sealed off. This may have contributed to the reduction in tensions that was felt on 10 October.

One of the most disturbing incidents, one which seriously undermines any remaining Palestinian credibility, was what took place at Joseph's Tomb in Nablus. The tomb is a Jewish holy site and, as stipulated in the Oslo Accords, is under Israeli control. With the outbreak of violence, the Tomb compound came under heavy Palestinian fire. An Israeli border policeman was wounded and due to Palestinian fire he could not be evacuated, eventually bleeding to death at the site.

As the situation became more severe, on 7 October the IDF decided to evacuate Joseph's Tomb. The Palestinian police in Nablus promised they would guard the site. Instead, when the IDF forces left, a Palestinian mob ransacked and burned the compound as the Palestinian police looked on. The following day, the Palestinians began to rebuild the site - as a mosque. Hilel Lieberman rabbi who lectured at the Yeshiva at Joseph's Tomb was later killed as he approached the site. This incident, as well as the burning of the compound provoked unprecedented domestic violence within Israel.

After Yom Kippur, as the Palestinians failed to curb the violence, Prime Minister and Defense Minister Ehud Barak authorized the IDF to use more active measures, particularly to tighten sanctions on the Palestinian Authority, in an attempt to exert pressure on the Authority to bring an end to the violence.

On 12 October, two Israeli reserve soldiers driving in a car on their way to their base mistakenly turned into a Palestinian controlled area near the city of Ramallah. The two found themselves surrounded by a Palestinian mob, were dragged out of their car and beaten. They were eventually brought by Palestinian police to a Ramallah police station. Shortly after, a Palestinian mob

אגף המבצעים
חטיבת דונר צה"ל
מוף קשרי ציבור ומידע



תאריך: 14.10.2000 שעה: 14:00

took over the police station and viciously murdered the two reservists, mutilating their bodies. The body of one soldier was then dragged from the back of a car through the streets of Ramallah.

In response to the attack on the reservists, the IDF carried out five limited helicopter attacks against strategic targets in Ramallah and Gaza. These actions were carried out only after a prior three hour warning was delivered to the Palestinians in an effort to reduce the number of possible casualties.

The Northern Border

While all of the events in the territories were taking place, there was a hostage-taking incident on 7 October in which three IDF soldiers were abducted along the Lebanese border by Iranian backed, Hizballah terrorists. According to debriefings and an initial investigation, the vehicle was ambushed by a force of some 15 –20 Hizballah fighters. The soldiers may have been wounded. The Hizballah has made repeated demands to obtain prisoners held in Israeli jails before they would release any information concerning the kidnapped soldiers.

Prior to the kidnapping incident, hundreds of Lebanese, mostly of Palestinian decent, were involved in violent demonstrations along the border near the village of Zarit. Stones and Molotov cocktails were thrown at IDF troops and attempts were made to break through the border fence.

Appendix: Statistical Review of Casualties – 29 September– 13 October (14:00)

	Israeli Security Forces	Israeli Civilians	Palestinians*
Wounded	123	35	1500*
Killed	5	3	90*

*Estimate

From: imra@netvision.net.il
To: "IMRA Newsletter" <imra-l@lyris.vcix.com>
Subject: [imra-l] Document:
"Distribution of Martyrs by Age Group Until 25/10/2000" Official PA
figures
Date sent: Thu, 26 Oct 2000 14:34:31 +0200
Send reply to: imra@netvision.net.il

Document: "Distribution of Martyrs by Age Group Until 25/10/2000"
Official PA figures

Aaron Lerner Date: 26 October, 2000

Dr. Mussa Abu Hmed, Director General of Hospitals in the West Bank for
the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Health provided the following
table to IMRA by fax:

Distribution of Martyrs by Age Group (West Bank) Until 25 October 2000

Below 5:	Number 01	Percent 01.2%	Cumulative Percent 01.2%
5 - 9:	Number 01	Percent 01.2%	Cumulative Percent 02.5%
10-17:	Number 15	Percent 18.5%	Cumulative Percent 21.0%
18-18:	Number 03	Percent 03.7%	Cumulative Percent 24.7%
19-29:	Number 50	Percent 61.7%	Cumulative Percent 86.4%
30-49:	Number 09	Percent 11.1%	Cumulative Percent 97.5%
50+:	Number 02	Percent 02.5%	Cumulative Percent 100.0%
Total:	Number 81		

Note: Dr. Hmed advised IMRA that a breakdown of the 10-17 age group
into finer gradations is not available. IMRA was unable to receive
similar data for the Gaza Strip from the PA Ministry of Health.

Dr. Aaron Lerner, Director
IMRA (Independent Media Review & Analysis)
(mail POB 982 Kfar Sava)
Tel 972-9-7604719/Fax 972-3-548-0092
INTERNET ADDRESS: imra@netvision.net.il
pager 03-6750750 subscriber 4811
For free subscription = Website: <http://www.imra.org.il>

...
You are currently subscribed to imra-l as: blang@hadassah.org.il
To unsubscribe send a blank email to
leave-imra-l-243967K@lists.virtualjerusalem.com