

**ISRAEL'S KNESSET ELECTIONS AND ARAB  
POLITICAL PARTIES (1988 – 1996)**

*Dissertation Submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Award of the Degree of*

**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

**PRAKASH. S. DESAI**



**Centre for West Asian and African Studies  
School of International Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University  
New Delhi-110067 (India)**

**2001**



जवाहरलाल नेहरू विश्वविद्यालय  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY  
NEW DELHI-110067

Centre for West Asian and African Studies  
School of International Studies

23  
Date: 20/07/2001

**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, "ISRAEL'S KNESSET ELECTIONS AND ARAB POLITICAL PARTIES (1988-1996)" submitted by PRAKASH. S. DESAI in partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY has not been previously submitted for any degree of this or any other University and this is his own work.

We recommend that dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

  
DR. P.R. KUMARSWAMY  
SUPERVISOR

  
PROF. AJAY K. DUBEY  
CHAIRPERSON

Chairman  
Centre for West Asian and African Studies  
School of International Studies  
Jawaharlal Nehru University

***Dedicated to:***  
***My Parents & Brothers***

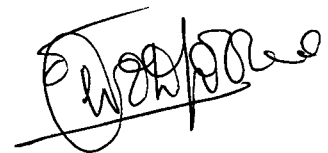
## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I am immensely grateful to my Supervisor Dr. P. R. Kumarswamy for his invaluable suggestions and constant encouragement for completion of this work, without his help my dream for dissertation may have become the day dream.

I am extending my heartiest gratitude to the authorities of J.N.U Library, IDSA Library, New Delhi whose constant help gave the final shape to my work.

In my research work I have been guided and assisted by friends, Prashant, Doni, Santosh, Basavaraj Bagewadi, Hanamant and I am thankful to Mr. Dev, who typed this dissertation.

I am also thankful to my friends, Basavaraj Banad, Govind Reddy, Basavaraj Nagoor, Nagendra M.P., Mallikarjuna, Shiv Kumar, Shivanand Bajantri for their support and inspiration to do a meaningful research.



**PRAKASH S. DESAI  
J.N.U NEW DELHI**

# **CONTENTS**

<b>TITLE</b>		<b>PAGE NO.</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>		
<b>CHAPTER-I</b>	Introduction	1-6
<b>CHAPTER-II</b>	Israeli Democracy and Arab Political Parties	7-42
<b>CHAPTER -III</b>	Profile of Arab Political parties.	43-73
<b>CHAPTER-IV</b>	Role of Arab Political Parties in Knesset Elections and Government	74-119
<b>CHAPTER-V</b>	Conclusion	120-131
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		132-138

# LIST OF TABLES

## CHAPTER 3

<b>Table No.</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. Important Social and Political Organisations of Arabs Prior to 1988 Knesset Election	50
2. Arab Participation in Knesset as Voters and Members.	50
3. Representation of Arabs in Knesset Election Results from 1965-1982	51
4. Some Prominent Leaders of Arab and Arab Oriented Parties.	71

## CHAPTER 4

<b>Table No.</b>	
1. The 1988 Knesset Election Results	79
2. Voting and Threshold Margin in 1984 and 1988 Election	80
3. Arab and Arab Oriented Parties View Over Important Issues in 1988 Election	81
4. Voter and Percentage of 1988 Knesset Elections.	82
5. Israeli Arab Voting	83
6. Results of the 1992 Knesset Election	92
7. The Arab Vote for Arab Parties in 1992 Knesset Election	93
8. Arab Vote for Zionist Parties in 1992 Knesset Election	94
9. The 1996 Knesset Elections	106
10. The Arab Vote for the Knesset 1996	107
11. Number of Arab Vote and Druze members at Knesset by Party in 1996 Elections	108
12. Vote for Knesset in Druze Sector, Large Villages, Small Villages and Towns in 1996 Election	109
13. 1996 Elections for Prime Minister	110
14. The Arab Vote for Prime Minister, 1996	111
15. Likud led Governments	112

# CHAPTER-I

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Arabs in Israel are a national, ethnic and religious minority who emerged from the establishment of the state. They became minority when most of the palastinian Arab population left the area where they had stayed. The area they had stayed (Palastine) became the state of Israel during 1948-49 Arab Israeli war. At the end of war Arabs consisted 18 percent of the total population.<sup>1</sup> Being a minority in new state was of deep social and economic significance to Arabs in Israel. Economically they were badly hurted when they became minority. During the early period of State formation, Arab minority was to a large extent rural and uneducated. It did not have active political and social experience beyond the boundaries of the villages. Very less percentage of population was in urban area but they too had to face problem of unemployment and economic hardship. Their cultural activity died, religious institutions ceased to function. Under these condition the quality of the official policy toward the Arab minority was of vital importance. After creation of the State, state granted citizenship to Arab minority but this Arab population of erstwhile palastine had to lose their majority status.<sup>2</sup> Israeli state not only granted citizenship to Arab minority but also imposed tight supervision over it and limited its activities in all spheres. This not only maintained but also widened the gaps in the quality of life and standard of living between the Jewish and Arab population.

---

<sup>1</sup> Most of the Arab population was in the villages of Galilee, Triangle in the Western Slopes of Samaria, Negev (Beduins).

<sup>2</sup> P.R.Kumarswamy "Political Legitimacy of the Minorities: Israeli Arabs and 1996 Knesset Elections" The Emirates occasional paper 1998 No. 20, (Abu Dhabi, UAE: The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research), p.1.



The national interest of Jews was given priority and Arabs were seen within the framework of security consideration over universal principles such as justice and equality. Main reason for security consideration was that state of Israel had emerged from a bloody war with the neighbouring Arab states, which had come to the assistance of the Palestinian Arabs. In the first phase of war (29 November 1947-1 April 1948) it was Palestinian Arabs who took the offensive, with the help of volunteers from neighbouring countries (Lebanon, Syria, Egypt). Many measures were taken to deal with the Arabs. They thought that Arab minority might pose further serious security challenge to the State. The military administration which governed the Arabs until 1966 divided Arab population by taking advantage of family, tribal and communal allegiances and limited their socio-economic progress. Above all it prevented the growth of independent political organisations that could represent the Arab population.

Military intervened in all spheres of life of Arabs. It confiscated economic resources owned by the Arab population. In 1948 Arabs were given civil liberties including the freedoms of assembly, expression, movement, worship, voting, and contesting elections. But many of these rights were violated during military administration. Israeli authority brought various laws and regulations to confiscate Arab lands without proper compensation. The Arab sector was excluded from non-official assistance, a major source of development in the Jewish sector. Thus such discriminations prevented Arabs from joining the civil service and most types of public institutions and private business. There is no constitution or bill of rights at par with common laws in Israel. Since

there is no as such bill of rights Arab civil liberties were also not properly safeguarded.

Following the establishment of the state, the Arab education system was continued but not destroyed and was separate from the Hebrew system. However in the early years when they were under military administration, the Arabs had no control over the goals of education, its standards and structure. Even now Arabic enjoys inferior status compared to Hebrew. Arabic language is not used along with Hebrew in public sphere. And it is not a compulsory language in Jewish schools.<sup>3</sup> But there is remarkable willingness on the part of Jewish public to learn Arabic. Even after fifty years the Arab population in Israel is unable to meet its own requirements for social and welfare services and to offer solutions for its social distress by means of voluntary and communal participation. Arabs are prevented from setting up their own fund raising organisations in abroad like United Jewish appeal.

Even health sector was also not properly maintained. Arab population suffered due to absence of adequate water and sewage system. There were few hospitals, and pharmacies. Such poor health facilities and environmental conditions was responsible for the gap in the quality of life. In the sphere of housing also Arab community suffered. Arab sector relied its own resources to finance construction for living.

Arab community's freedom was curbed from time to time. Authorities employed emergency regulations to restrict the movement, to refuse the

---

<sup>3</sup> Sammy Smooha "Minority status in an ethnic democracy: The status of the Arab minorities in Israel". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 13, No.-3 July 1990, p.404.

incorporations of associations. In 1985 an amendment to the election law was enacted, which prevented from participation in Knesset elections any list that denies the Israel as state of Jews.

The June 1967 war was of much significance for the Arab population in Israel. Until that time there was no interaction between the Arabs and rest of Israeli society. This war brought Arabs in Israel and palastinians on either side of greeline together. Arabs political organisation and activity were limited and confined at the local level. In 1966 the Military administration was abolished. Consequently it led to growing political awareness among the Arabs. From this period onwards life styles of Arabs have changed and standard of living has risen. The extended family type of living lost its socio-economic role. Youngsters started becoming prominent instead of older generation. By the end of 1970s traditional leadership disappeared, younger generation took the leadership. Arab community's relation with Israeli society and the palastenian society has also changed. Israeli Arab citizens became special group with some similarities and differences from each of two societies. They have increased their knowledge and familiarity with the Israeli society. Simultaneously with the greater integration into the society and framework, there also developed a greater consciousness regarding the realisation of civil rights and distributions of society's resources. Israeli Arabs were convinced that their integration in Israel served the palastenian interest, because it would enable them to influence the decision making within the Israeli political system.

The political orientations of the Arabs is result of their socio-economic condition and their dependence on the Jewish majority. Their attitude towards state and political organisations has changed both at local and national levels. Until 1966 there was no active political participation on the part of Arabs in Israeli politics. Only communist party was concern about them. After 1970 many Arab organisations came on the scene. The common motto of all these organisations was to express a separate Arab identity and demand for the realisation of civil equality. Except some organisations most of Arab organisations aspired for the integration into Israeli society.<sup>4</sup> These organisations facilitated new pattern of mobilisation and cooperation amongst different localities and regions.

When national awareness was developing, the sense of identity with Islam also strengthened. Consequently in 1970 this found expression in the form of religious organisation (Islamic Movement). This movement not only strengthened radicalism but also did not exclude itself from Israeli system. It made significant changes in the life of Arabs. It entered into electoral fray and succeeded (first Municipal elections later Knesset elections). The period after 1987 was characterised by growing self-confidence among Arabs in Israel. After *intifadah* they became politically more aggressive. Their changing behaviour found an expression in voting for Knesset and local authorities. The Jewish parties began losing their support in Arab sector. The eruption of *intifadah* in 1987 in occupied territories brought significant changes in political life of Arabs. In 1988 for the first time Arab party was founded. It represented a new direction in terms of political thinking. The palastenian authority also

---

<sup>4</sup> The sons of village, progressive list for peace opposed integration.

started to cooperate with Arab activists in the left wing parties of Arabs in Israel and encouraged the participation in the voting. The 1988 Knesset was marked with emergence of Arab party (Democratic Arab party), while 1992 Knesset elections were sharp turning point in the history of the Arabs in Israel. Arabs showed their desire to integrate into the Israel's society and opposed those groups that continued to oppose such integration. The Declaration of principles between Israel and the PLO was signed after 1992 election on 13 September 1993.<sup>5</sup> This agreement served as an encouragement to political stream supported by Yithzak Rabin that accepted the reality and supported Arabs integration in the Israeli society.

The period of 1992 to 1996 was of special importance for the Arabs in Israel. The Labour Party government gave them an unprecedented bargaining position without being the partners of coalition. In 1996 Knesset elections many new Arab list appeared and several old ones disappeared. For the first time Islamic Movement participated in Knesset elections by drifting away from its earlier stand of not contesting Knesset elections. In this election there was change in the manner of operation and content of propaganda. Arab parties used new means of mass communication and emphasized on the character of candidates. All political platforms of Arab parties gave prominent place to local affairs of Arab population.

---

<sup>5</sup> Declaration of principles on Interim self-government arrangements for the palasteniens signed by Israel and PLO as representative of the palastenian people.



# CHAPTER-II

## Israeli Democracy and Arab Political Parties

One of the most difficult question to answer satisfactorily is what is democracy? There are no agreed definitions on this concept. Democracy is complex form of politics. No political system has ever treated all its citizens equally and even has not given the chance to choose the government. In this case exercising governmental powers as part of government is highly impossible for such citizens. During different times and in different countries citizenship has not been granted to all people. It has been restricted on the grounds of age, sex, literacy, property and sometimes religion. Such restrictions have been based on prejudices, and these prejudices were taken for granted as truths. Until the end of the last century women were deprived of political rights. It is known that the term democracy includes wide range of political systems. Some of such political system are old and experienced and others comparatively new and inexperienced. In order to fulfill the requirements of a democratic system, modern democratic states have developed a number of complex institutions. Consequently modern nation-states are playing more and more important roles in national life. Therefore number of such institutions and their complexity continue to increase. "Regarded solely as a system of government, a democracy provides merely the means of achieving whatever ends the community seeks to achieve."<sup>1</sup> There must be possibility of dialogue in every democratic system, because it helps in promoting democratic spirit.

---

<sup>1</sup> Dorothy Pickles, *Democracy*, (London: B.T. Batsford Limited, 1970) p.17.

Many thinkers agree that the essential characteristics of a working democratic system are consent and dialogue. If that is the case then essential spirit of democracy depends on the conception of what constitutes the good life? Free expression of minority interests is essential to the democratic process. Clearly because verdict of public opinion is one of the desirable criteria to decide what is useful and legitimate in democratic state? If a free opinion is prevented, the picture which emerges would be different and distorted one. Of course no democracy is perfect, but for state to have effective democracy at the minimum state should atleast provide scope for dialogue. There must be sufficient argument among citizens on how to empower minorities. Then only minorities can believe that the methods adopted for them are democratic. Minorities should have reasonable chance of getting democratic rights, and system should never allow them to adopt extremist or antidemocratic ways to achieve their goals.

Israel is a major case of democracy in a deeply heterogeneous society. It is difficult to achieve democracy if there are clear ethnic and religious cleavages in the society. It is important to understand what kind of democracy Israel has managed to maintain and where the strength of its democratic culture lie. To begin with the distinction that Arend Lijphart makes between Majoritarian democracy and consensus democracy or consociationalism is useful in understanding Israeli democracy.<sup>2</sup>

Majoritarian democracy of west-minister model is based on the assumption that majority rule is the essential condition of democracy and it should not be

---

<sup>2</sup> Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative explorations*, (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1982) pp. 25-52.



weakened. Some of the characteristics of Majoritarian democracy are: British style of Parliamentarism, very small majority governments, absence of separation of powers because of its fused executive, and strong legislative power. It may also be characterised by non-proportional systems, by centralised as opposed to Federalised Government. All these arrangements help to ensure that the unrestricted will of the majority prevails. Consequently role of minority groups in decision making process is very less. They do not have any say in the major decisions regarding policies and programmes which affect their life.

In the case of Consociational democracy one could observe a different picture. Consociational democracy assumes that excluding minorities from all decision making process is undemocratic. Its main principle of proportionality is that of proportionality there is shared power or power is shared among different sections of the society. Arend Lijaphart identifies eight elements of Consociational democracy that stand in contrast to the Majoritarian democracy: executive power sharing among parties, checks and balances between the executive and legislative branches, a multiparty system, political division along socio-economic, ethnic and religious dimensions, proportional representation, decentralisation, two legislative houses to check each other and a written constitution that can not be changed by a simple majority.

### **IS ISRAEL AN ETHNIC DEMOCRACY?**

In deeply divided societies democracy is to be in the form of either Majoritarian or consociational.<sup>3</sup> But there is no hard and fast rule that

---

<sup>3</sup> Sammy Smooha, "*Minority status in an ethnic democracy: The status of the Arab minority in Israel*", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. (London) Vol. 13, No.3 July 1990, p. 389.

democracy should be either in Majoritarian or consociational form, it is people of that society should have major say regarding what type of democracy they would like to have. The state in both cases is ethnically neutral, but there are some countries which combine possible democratic institutions with institutionalised ethnic dominance.<sup>4</sup> The United States is one of the best examples of Majoritarian democracy. Ethnicity is completely privatised in that country. The state does not legislate or intervene in ethnic divisions. It executes policies for nation building by creating lasting relationship of a common language, identity, nationalism and national institutions for its citizens. The corner stone of the society is individual. Ethnic groups are also officially recognised and granted certain rights. They can have their own educational and cultural institution. The state does not favour any constituent groups. It tries to find a way to make ideas of people agree with each other when they actually seem to be in opposition. Ethnicity is thus institutionalised and ethnic identities and institutions are usually kept separate.

When it is compared between Majoritarian and Consociational democracies one could note that they have in common a set of democratic institutions and ethnically neutral state. In order to understand the operation and transition to democracy in ethnically divided societies Sammy Smooha suggests another type of democracy in plural societies which could be termed as an ethnic democracy.<sup>5</sup> According to him ethnic democracies combine the extension of political and civil rights to individuals and certain collective rights to minorities with institutionalised dominance over the state by one of the ethnic groups.

---

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 389.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 391.

Since Israel is a deeply divided society, its experience reveals the kinds of problems, tensions and contradictions that democracies have and how they attempt to deal with them. According to Smoocha Israel does not qualify as an open Majoritarian democracy, because Majoritarian democracy means transformation of Jewish state into an Israeli State. If Israel wants to become Majoritarian democracy, ethnicity should be privatised and Arabs and Jews should be allowed to merge and new all-Israeli Identity and nationalism should emerge.

For Israel to become a Consociational state he suggests it should become a binational state in which the status of Arabs and Jews is equal and resources are distributed proportionately. Here binational means Israel is a nation of both Arabs and Jews and has common characteristics which are common to both and decisions are made in the national interest i.e. for the benefit of the nation owned, controlled and financially supported by both communities in that state. He further says that Israel qualifies as a political democracy on many counts. Any nation state which is to be called politically democratic state it has to have universal voting rights, independent judiciary, professional press, civilian authority over the army. Israel does have all the above said qualities of political democracy. "But as a homeland of Jews, Israel claims to be the state of Jews".<sup>6</sup> In Israel Hebrew language is dominant while Arabic enjoys an inferior status. The institutions, official holidays, symbols and heroes are exclusively Jewish. The law of return allows Jews to enter freely and they can become Israeli citizens but this is not the case with Arabs. In many other ways the

---

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, p. 393.

state extends preferential treatments to Jews only who wish to preserve their Jewishness and Zionism of the state.<sup>7</sup>

### **IS ISRAEL CONSOCIATIONAL DEMOCRACY ?**

It is already discussed that what does Consociational democracy mean? If some of the characteristics are taken into consideration like multi-party system and proportional representation, Israel can be ranked as one of the Consociational system of government. If features like centralisation, unicameralism are taken into consideration, Israel becomes Majoritarian. This type of Majoritarian picture can be seen in only formal institutions in Israel. But unofficial power sharing in many levels can also be seen if Consociationalism is viewed broadly. Therefore one should not just look at the formal structures and powers of Israeli institutions. Definitely it misleads when interpreting the Israeli democracy properly. The Israeli Knesset may look like British legislature but its most important policy decisions are outcome of discussion with various social groups about policy's conditions and terms that is favourable to all. This discussion of terms and conditions of policies are involved not only at various branches of government but also at important Quasi-Governmental bodies. "In practice Israeli democracy has important power sharing Consociational features: grand coalitions, proportionality, mutual veto, pluralism and social bargaining".<sup>8</sup>

Israel is a nation of plural society and its plurality is in ethnic and ideological nature. Every group has its own socio-economic and political ideology. These

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 393.

<sup>8</sup> Alan Dowty, "Consociationalism and Ethnic Democracy: Israeli Arabs in Comparative perspective" in *Israel The Dynamics of change and continuity*, ed. David Levi – Four, Gabriel Shefer and David Vogel (eds) (London: Frank Cass, 1999) p. 170.

groups never allow any single issue without prolonged debate and discussion. This feature can be observed both in social and political sphere. Some of the segmental divisions are: socialists, religious groups and ethnic groups. The most striking principle in this ethno-ideological nature of Israel are proportionality and mutual veto. Mutual veto in Israeli context is the right of community to reject or forbid a decision of proposal of law making body if it is against the interests of that community. The electoral system is one of the most proportional systems in the world. Since the whole country is regarded as single constituency, even small parties can enter the Knesset. Recently Arab parties have started using their electoral strengths as a veto power with regard to most contentious issues like socio-economic inequality and their status in political system. Israel fulfills most of the conditions that are conducive to Consociational democracy. In spite of this some political parties do not follow the principle of power sharing.

In order to maintain democratic stability it is indispensable on the part of Israel to move towards Consociational policies. The other option of moving towards Majoritarian system creates and increases the feeling of deprivation among the Arabs, because it may hurt the minority under such system. It is wrong to think that there is no Consociationalism in Israel but it should expand that Consociational space further. The options faced by Israel have been very well articulated by Arend Lijphart. "The real choice of plural societies is not between the Majoritarian model and the Consociational model but between Consociationalism and no democracy at all."<sup>9</sup> "The task of introducing some Consociational policies in order to start a momentum of interethnic accommodation in Israel is particularly urgent as the already fragile Arab-

---

<sup>9</sup> Arend Lijphart "Democracy in plural societies", p. 238 (Note-2).

Jewish relations confront several new challenges such as the large scale Jewish emigration from the former USSR which has caused the displacement of many Arab workers, and the political aftermath of the Gulfwar".<sup>10</sup> Many times Israeli government has used a range of Consociational measures to provide accommodation to major Jewish ethnoreligious sects.<sup>11</sup> If such devices be extended to Arab community it would be conducive for stable democracy.

### ELECTORAL PROCESS AND DEMOCRACY

Present proportional representation system of the Israel has its roots in the institutions of the pre-state period.<sup>12</sup> For the purpose of elections to Zionist congress and latter representative assemblies of *Yishuv*, this system was introduced in 1897.<sup>13</sup> The basic rationale behind the introduction of proportional representation was to attract and to maintain widest support from Jewish political groups. It used to enable such factions to make an effort in applying some authority. By looking at such precedents, the election committee which was formed after the creation of state in 1948 recommended that the constitutional assembly, which later became the first Knesset should be elected on the basis of proportional representation system. However from the beginning this system was criticised. David Bengurion wanted to replace a nation wide party list system with a simple-majority system based on the British model.<sup>14</sup> In Israel now there is 120 member unicameral Parliament based on open and free elections since 1948. In Knesset elections any Israeli

<sup>10</sup> Oren Yiftachel "The concept of ethnic democracy and its applicability to the case of Israel". *Ethnic and Racial studies* Vol.15, No.1 January 1992, p.134.

<sup>11</sup> Israeli government has provided greater autonomy to ultraorthodox communities like Augdat Israel. These groups have their own courts, welfare institutions, religious authorities and independent schools.

<sup>12</sup> Avaraham Brichta "proposed electoral reform in Israel" *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, (London) Vol.33, No.2, December 1991, p.83.

<sup>13</sup> Elected assemblies of Yishuv in the Jewish settlement in palestine before formation of Israel.

<sup>14</sup> Avaraham Brichta "Electoral Reform" p. 84 (Note-12).

citizen who has reached eighteen years is eligible to cast his vote. Women have got right to vote from the very beginning. After every four year elections are to be held for Knesset for electing its representatives or members and for the formation of government. But the Knesset has got power to dissolve the house and it can call for early elections before the fixed term of four years.

Electoral reform was one of the controversial topic, on which political debate took place since after the establishment of the state. Many people advocated reforms for proportional representation system. According to them it would remove most of the existing drawbacks of that system.<sup>15</sup> While those opposed to any electoral change have claimed that such change would destroy the very foundations of the Israeli democratic system and it also destroys the pluralistic fabric of the Israeli society.<sup>16</sup> The reformers argument is that the proportional representation system with nation wide constituency of 120 members for the Knesset undermines political stability. According to them if there is a system of simple majority with country wide territorial constituencies it enhances the interests of people of particular locality and allows for meaningful interaction between the representative and represented. Since whole Israel is regarded as single constituency, citizens of any particular region cannot have interaction with any Knesset member as representative of their geographical area. Reformers viewpoint seems desirable as far as this nature is concerned because there is no provision for accountability or for responsiveness. Since there is proportional

---

<sup>15</sup> In the third session of the seventh Knesset, the Labour Party tabled in 1972 a private members bill which proposed a mixed constituency – proposal system. Ben-Gurion supported the idea of simple majority system of British model. In 1977, the National Religious party supported the idea of six constituencies electing a total of 80 members, while the remaining 40 would be elected from a central list. In September 1987, a group of professors from the faculty of law of Tel-Aviv University recommended a mixed electoral system. In 1992 then Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin supported electoral reforms. The leaders of DAP, PLP, DFPE supported to introduce a direct election of the Prime Minister including Labour Party.

<sup>16</sup> In 1954 Mapai withdrew from supporting the proposal for electoral system. In 1992 Likud party had vehemently opposed the idea of direct election of Prime Minister.

representative list system voter has to vote for party list rather than in favour of an individual. Proportion of votes casted in favour of respective party list is the criteria adopted for allocation of seats to parties.

Recently introduced electoral system had a significant impact upon Israeli government and politics. The 12<sup>th</sup> Knesset enacted a number of reforms in Israeli's electoral system that first came into effect with the May 1996 election for the 14<sup>th</sup> Knesset. Most important change made in these reforms was the direct election of Israel's Prime Minister with the simultaneous election for Knesset. These changes have distanced Israel's political system from the basic principles of parliamentary form of government. Generally in parliamentary system Prime Minister comes from the legislature and is responsible to majority of that house (usually lower-house). In most of the parliamentary democracies this principle is followed. When this direct election is adopted, it conveys different meanings in the sense that whether this new system should be called parliamentary by taking the principle of elections to the Knesset and its power in deciding the fate of the government or presidential because of direct election to the head of the government. According to Gregory S. Mahler this direct election of the Prime Minister suggests that the new Israel government should be called quasi-parliamentary or perhaps quasi-presidential.<sup>17</sup>

Elections for the Knesset are well stated in the basic law: The Knesset which states that Knesset shall be elected by general, national, direct, equal, secret and proportional elections. Striking feature of Israeli elections is that

---

<sup>17</sup> Gregory S Mahler *"The Forming of the Netanyahu government coalition formation in a Quasi-parliamentary setting", From Rabin to Netanyahu, Israeli's Troubled Agenda etc.* Efraim Karsh, (ed) (London: Frank Cass – Portland, 1996) p.3.



government tries to inform all the voters and encourage them to exercise their democratic right. Some of the procedures related with voting are voters can cast their vote in their permanent area of residence, voter cannot cast his vote by post as this is followed in most of the democratic countries elections. But soldiers, diplomats and emissaries of state organisations are exempted from the non permission of postal voting. Judges are not allowed to contest for elections. Basic reason behind this exclusion is that at every level the judiciary must be wholly divorced from partisan politics. Each party which wants to contest for Knesset election is allowed to present a list of candidates up to total membership of 120. Most of the major parties present such list. There is no as such symbols for the parties. Each party features one or more Hebrew or Arabic letters in all its electoral campaign that becomes its symbol. The threshold vote of parties in awarding seats is 1.5 percent (earlier it was 1 percent) of the total vote casted. If any party gets less than the fixed threshold, it is not considered in awarding seats and its votes are wasted.

As it is mentioned earlier, the major change in the new electoral system was direct election of Prime Minister. Previously, it was president who used to observe the out come of Knesset election and decide who should be the Prime Minister. It was very easy to decide as to who would be the Prime Minister because any party which gets majority of seats could grab the post. One of the reason for electoral reform was past tensions related to the forming and preserving the coalition governments. While forming coalitions smaller parties played very crucial role, because of their support it was possible for the major parties to form or unform the coalition governments. Consequently supporters of new system argue that direct election of a Prime

Minister would free him/ her from this type of hurdles or blackmailing influence of smaller parties.

Due to amendment of "The Basic Law: The Government" – direct election of the Prime Minister was approved by the Knesset in 1992. As one of the several proposals many Israeli law professors supported this concept of direct election of Prime Minister. By the end of 1980s this concept acquired much currency when Likud and Labour Party had to form unity coalitions. Such coalitions restricted the Prime Minister's power and ability to execute policies. The Likud party had vehemently opposed direct election of Prime Minister in 1992 elections, since it feared that the Arab vote would assure victory to Labour candidate. But Labour Party was all for the change. The Arab and Arab-Oriented Parties Democratic Arab Party, Progressive List for Peace, Democratic Front for Peace and Equality supported the direct election of Prime Minister because they felt that it would make the Arab Vote more significant and decisive. This debate regarding direct-election of Prime Minister in 1990s clearly showed that the Arab electorate was no longer irrelevant to the major debates and power struggles in Israeli politics.<sup>18</sup>

The new electoral law came into effect with the elections to 14<sup>th</sup> Knesset in May 1996. Voters had to cast two ballots one for Prime Minister and another for party list. Surplus votes agreement were signed by many parties well before the elections. In such agreements some parties agreed to pool their surplus votes to another party after the election.<sup>19</sup> The new electoral law formulated number of rules about how the election would actually work. The law indicated that if no candidate gets more than half of the valid votes, then another election would be held between the two candidates who have got

---

<sup>18</sup> Benyamin Neubarger *"The Arab Minority in Israeli Politics 1948-1992 from Marginacity to Influence"* (Jerusalem, Israel) Asian and African Studies, 27 (1993), p. 54.

<sup>19</sup> Herb Keinon "NRP UTJ Sign Surplus vote pact" Jevusalem Post 26 April 1996, p.1.

more votes compared to other candidates. After this election the Prime Minister who is elected will get 45 days to present list of ministers to Knesset. He should get confidence vote from the Knesset for formation of cabinet. If Prime Minister fails to do so within 45 days, special election for a new Prime Minister would be held within 60 days. But in such election candidate who failed to get confidence vote would not be eligible to run in the third round.

### **OUTCOME OF THE NEW ELECTORAL SYSTEM**

The proportional representation system enhances the importance of the Arabs. In 1996 Knesset elections percentage of the Arab electorate was 12 percent. Since whole country is regarded as single constituency electorate who are not concentrated in single area can easily elect representatives for pursuing their committed political, social and economic agenda.<sup>20</sup> Arab electorate now play more decisive role in the direct election of Prime Minister. Earlier electoral laws to eliminate non-serious groups from the election scene and to make electoral process easier had set some limitations. Major limitation for smaller parties was threshold margin. In 1992 threshold margin was increased from one to one and half percent. Since 1.5 percent threshold margin was retained in new electoral laws of 1996, Dr. Ahmad Tibi, advisor to the Palastinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat withdrew from 1996 Knesset elections.<sup>21</sup> Supporters of new electoral law hoped that these laws would stabilise the system and smaller parties. Now Knesset itself cannot elect another Prime Minister and is not able to employ no-confidence votes. New law helps Prime Minister of one party who heads the coalition of different parties in the way that now no confidence motion requires 80 member votes.

---

<sup>20</sup> P.R. Kumarswamy "*Political legitimacy of the minorities: Israeli Arabs and 1996 Knesset elections*" The Emirates Occasional paper No. 20, (AbuDhabi, UAE: The Emirates centre for strategic studies and research, 1998) p.4.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p.7

Earlier it was only through simple majority, that is more than 60 member can defeat and remove the government. Those who criticised the reform view that the voters now would enjoy under the new procedure the ability to split their vote. They can support a candidate for Prime Ministership who represents a major party like Labour and Likud and support a small and sometimes sectarian parties in the Knesset election. Consequently small parties play crucial role and they would try to pressure the major candidates. They pressure such candidates prior to elections because of the desire of the major prime ministerial candidates in mobilising as much public support as possible. They can also pressure the major candidates after the elections because of the need of elected prime Minister in winning a confidence vote. If at all there is possibility of the second round of the prime ministerial elections, smaller parties can exploit their political power.<sup>22</sup> While one of the reason for electoral reform in the 12<sup>th</sup> Knesset was that the small parties had too much power and were able to blackmail the larger parties during coalition formation periods. But what is remarkable and contrary in the new electoral system is that it has destroyed the power of the larger parties and increased the number and power of the smaller parties. After examining the outcome of new electoral system, it suggests that if old system had been continued in 1996 election Peres could have become the Prime Minister and formed the government, because old system only facilitated larger parties to come to power. Even voting pattern could have been different, had the old system been in place. New system allowed a double vote, which many Israeli voters criticised as split vote. It was split vote in the sense that voter used their vote as ideological preferences one vote for security issues and another vote for

---

<sup>22</sup> Abraham Diskin *"The New Political System of Israel"* Government and Opposition, (Houghtonstreet, London) Vol. 34, Autumn 1999, p. 501.

different issue. "This new system has catapulted the Arab segment of the population into mainstream Israeli politics and enhanced their role and importance. Any serious contender for Prime Minister will no longer be able to ignore minority votes"<sup>23</sup>

### DEMOCRACY AND PATTERNS OF ISRAELI ARAB PROTEST

Protest is one of the technique in democratic countries or even undemocratic regimes to bring the notice of government problems faced by any section of the society. Minority protest is one of such protest or demonstration against government and Majoritarian acts. Non-violent protest is one of the most commonly used vehicles for political change in the democratic regimes. If government is too inactive violence is also staged by the protesting community. But too much of violence or extremism is perceived as a threat to political systems especially which are in democratic nature. Violent protests include riots, assassinations etc. Protest activity is usually utilised by communities like minorities to mobilise people on political lines to challenge the discrimination and disparities in their respective states. It is quite natural to go for protest if there are gaps and disparities between minority and majority. There are many instruments of mobilisation in protests. Ethnicity is one of such instrument to mobilise people for civil struggles. In this context it is very important to understand the kind of protest instruments used by Israeli Arabs, and are these protests in democratic framework? What are the patterns of their protests? How Israeli authority has managed to curb such protests? Their protests were mixed of both peaceful as well as violent. So it would enhances the understanding of mixed type of protests.

<sup>23</sup> P.R. Kumarswamy "Israeli Arabs"



DISS  
324.95694  
D4512 Is  
TH9096

88

TH- 9096

Israeli Arab protest can be categorised into period from 1950-1975 and 1976 onwards.<sup>24</sup> During the first period that is from 1950s to 1970s there was low level of Arab protest. There were some factors behind this low level of activity in the Arab Sector. Leaders in Arab sector continued to function in traditional fashion with substantial local power. These leaders in one way helped Israeli authorities. So that there was no need to directly deal with the masses on the part of Israeli authority. All services of government were managed by local Arab leaders. So common Arab citizen did not come in any way contact with the Israeli authority. Under such circumstances people were unable to protest when it was most needed. There was necessity on the part of leaders to instruct people to press for more parity in governmental services. "For their part, the Arab leaders were hardly interested in rocking the political boat, as this might have been to their disadvantage. Overall then, the patron-client system which emerged on two levels (citizen/ local leader and local leader/ Israeli authorities) coupled with the Arabs traditional political culture strongly tended to dampen any overt expression of political discontent."<sup>25</sup> If there was willingness to protest, Israeli military government which was in the effect until 1966 to administer the Arab section did not allow to emerge. Eventhough military government was abolished in 1966, it was not enough for sudden emergence of Arab protest. Some more important changes were required in the matters of their political culture, human resources development to meet manpower and in internal organisation. These changes started taking place in the mid 1960s. But it took further 10 more years to result in sudden expression with great effect in 1970s.

---

<sup>24</sup> Sam Lehman – Wilzig "coping the master? Patterns of Israeli Arab protest 1950-1990. Asian and African Studies, p. 131, 27(1993).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 132.

Many of socio-economic and political factors were also responsible for the explosion of protest among Israeli Arabs. Modernisation was the first and foremost factor which caused several developments. Israeli Arab families started providing education for their childrens. Arab youth started seeking higher education consequently this higher learning changed the thinking of the youths. Urbanisation improved their economy.<sup>26</sup> Many Arabs started settling in urban centers by giving up their traditional livelihood like agriculture for business purpose. This process of urbanisation brought changes in the traditional values of Arabs.<sup>27</sup> Modern values like personal freedom, social equality, political democracy came in the place of hierarchy, elitism. These changes in education, economic condition, traditional values paved the way for Arabs contacting directly with main stream society.<sup>28</sup> Due to contact with mainstream society, Arabs started expecting more from the Israeli authority in the social, economic, political and cultural fields. When these expectations were not met or fulfilled, deep feeling of deprivation started.<sup>29</sup>

This socio-economic change had very greater implied suggestion for the authority structure within the Arab community, because the way in which it was organised was too traditional. Its pattern, procedures were based on the old notions. Earlier there was no alternative for rural people instead of working only in villages. That time local leaders had much control on rural people. Now because of large number of people earning outside the village led to break down of economic and political control of local leaders on their people.

---

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 133.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p.133.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p.134.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p.134.

Increasing numbers of High School and University educated Arabs generated a new source of political leadership. Moreover these educated youths were not tied to the Israeli establishment like old Arab leaders. (Old Arab leaders helped the authority in governmental services in the Arab sector). Hence youth leadership was not going to lose anything if they confront with authorities. The struggle in Arab Street was with double intentions. It not only exhibited its discontent with the Israeli authorities but also suggested lack of support for traditional local leadership. Arab mass weakened traditional leadership in the eyes of Israeli authority. Their anti-establishment protests of having two aspects could be observed in the results of various Knesset elections. Arab vote for Jewish-Zionist parties and Arab sister parties varied from decade to decade. It decreased from high percent to low percent for the Zionist parties. (In 1973 its percent was 63 while in 1977 it was 50 per cent) In 1977 Zionist parties got only 50 percent because this was the period when Israeli Arab protest increased dramatically. During this period Israeli communist party got remaining share of the Arab vote. This can be viewed as sign of increasing electoral protest against the mainstream Zionist parties. Over all activity which was outside the parliament started from the 1970s onwards.

Of course educational and economic development lead people to have their own organisations for further attainment in socio-economic fields. One could find several organisations in the Arab Community by mid-1970s. Some of the important organisations which came on scene were, The National Committee of Arab High School Students (1974), The National Student Union of Arab University Graduates (1975), The National Committee of Heads of Arab Local



Authorities.<sup>30</sup> These formed network of national social and political activity among Israeli Arabs. These organisations made activity outside the parliament possible to carry on. The first two organisations were responsible for weakening the traditional Arab leadership. Also these organisations broadened the outlook of common Arabs well beyond the narrow confines of local policy. The national committee consisting of heads of Arab Local Authorities proved to be most powerful organisation. For the first time it started opposing the dominance of Jewish power structure. It provided legitimacy for protest for the Arab community which was very powerless because of Jewish dominance. It rendered strong opposition to any control on the part of Israeli authority. Thus these organisations succeeded in advancing the cause of Israeli Arabs on all fronts like education, water, health, housing, industry etc. They managed to create their own national Institutes which appear to be something like parliament.

To facilitate the discussion the month and year of some of the Arab strikes are listed below in chronological order.

- March 1976: Land day (Protesting against land expropriation)
- September 1982: Strike in protest of the massacre in Sabra and Shatila (during the Lebanon war).
- June 1987: Equality day (Protesting against discrimination of Arabs in Israel).
- December 1987; peace day (striking in support of Palastenian uprising in occupied territories-the intifadah).

---

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 135.

- March 1988; 13<sup>th</sup> land day (protesting over Israel's treatment of Palasteniens during the intifadah).
- November 1988; Dwelling day (protesting against the demolition of unauthorised dwellings and against Israel's planning and land policies).
- March 1989; 14<sup>h</sup> land day (protesting against discrimination in municipal financial allocation, land expropriations and in support of intifadah).
- February 1990; strike against discrimination in municipal budgets.
- March 1990; 15<sup>th</sup> land day (protesting over intifada events and against land policy following arrival of mass Jewish migration from USSR).
- May 1990; strike in protest of killing of seven Arabs by a Jewish reserve soldier.
- October 1990; two day strike in protest over killing of 21 Arabs in Temple mount, Jerusalem.

**Source:** Chronology of these strikes is taken from Oren Yiftachel "Minority protest and the emergence of ethnic regionalism: Palastenian Arabs in the Israeli Ethnocracy", *Ethnic challenges to the Modern Nation State*, ed. Shlomo Ben-Ami, London Macmillan 2000, pp. 155-157.

In 1984 the Islamic Movement a new fundamentalist and ethnic movement appeared on the Israeli Arab scene. This movement is led by Sheikh Abdullah Darwish. This movement heralded new kind of mobilisation by carrying out Islamic oriented work. Islamic movement provided practical solutions to pressing hardships. Its community work filled a vacuum created by years of government neglect. Secular activists led only campaigns of verbal protest. But Islamic movement showed that people could do things for themselves. Even now this movement pursues many of the self-help programmes. There is no doubt about the striking achievements in the Arab sector but its self-help

approach remained secondary because Arab community was in need of massive help which single movement cannot fulfill. Sam Lehman-Wilzig viewed that post intifadah events within the Israeli Arab sector have made clear that there remained several critical issues of concern of Israeli Arabs which were not amenable to political circumvention of the self-help variety.<sup>31</sup>

Now situation has changed because Arab community would like to build an independent powerbase. For this they have to mobilise the Arab masses for protest and force the authorities to negotiate and make concessions. Arab community has realised the importance of active political participation. Now they are interested in coalition politics and in decision-making. In 1989 Labour Party member of Knesset, Abdal-Wahab Darwishe formed his own party after resigning from Labour Party. Formation of Democratic Arab Party by Darwashe clearly expressed its intention to achieve the goal by being partner in coalition politics. Moreover there is popular support for the inclusion of Arabs in power coalitions.<sup>32</sup> The Arabs have become in recent years increasingly organised and have staged a campaign for civil equality.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF ISRAELI ARAB PROTEST**

Only 20 percent of Israelis are Arabs. In spite of this they have strongly organised their protest. They were very much concerned about their ill treatment. Arab community is ethnically on the position of outside the boundary of Israeli society. Because of this they had to make use of something special and higher level of intensity in order to catch the attention

---

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p.145.

<sup>32</sup> Sammy Smooha "Minority Status", p.407 (Note-3).

of the political authority. Moreover Arab community did not have famous and countrywide mass media. They resorted to general political strike, because in this way they did not face much police attack on their strikes. Gradually this political strike became major weapon for the Arab community. Most significant characteristic of Arab protest from 1976 onwards has been celebration of annual land days. These land day celebrations paved the way for from localised demonstration of anger to less violent and more widespread organised mass demonstrations. These demonstrations were characterized by ethnonational pride. These demonstrations showed their solidarity. Israeli Arabs began to exploit these annual days for wider purpose. They turned these annual days into national remembrance, with general character. In other words by the mid 1980s, the entire Israeli Arab community was celebrating the day with act of remembrance. They remembered it as sign of both of increasing confidence and growing dissatisfaction with the Israeli authorities.

In more detail, the above analysis has highlighted the following.

1. The large amount of protest rapidly increased between 1976 and 1991.<sup>33</sup> More intensified protest took place after 1987.
2. Israeli Arab protests and pattern of protests of other minorities around the world resembled as far as their duration and higher level of intensity concerned.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Many Arab organisations came into scene in 1970s and these organisations were independent of hamullha leadership. In 1987 intifadah happened in occupied territories. Therefore all these Arab organisations, socio-economic improvement and intifadah caused increased protest in this period.

<sup>34</sup> Long duration and highly intensified protests could be seen in Scots of Britain, Qubecs of Canada, and Tamilians of Sri Lanka (Oren Yiftachel "Minority protest and the emergence of ethnic regionalism: Palastenan Arabs in the Israeli ethnocracy." *Ethnic challenges to the modern national state*. Shlomo Ben-Fmi, (Ed) (London Macmillan 2000), p.173.

3. Issues over which Arab minority protested were regarding national events, socio-economic deprivation and territorial issues.
4. National issues caused intense protests. All these protests of similar importance and large number of people participated in them.

The Israeli Arabs appear to be on the process of strengthening their political assertion. This intensified political activity is likely to be concerned about demands of land rights and territorial autonomy. Moreover they are also concerned closing of socio-economic gaps.<sup>35</sup> They are unlikely to accept the present discriminatory system. Oren Yiftachel views that Israeli Arab protest movement is not likely to demand separate state for Arabs. The movements are concerned about Arab rights and identity in the specific and confined spaces within Israel.<sup>36</sup> The norms of democracy are not merely those of freedom of expression and assembly. Democracy goes beyond such norms. If Israeli authority does not try to solve the overall problems of Israeli Arabs, then one can expect Israel Arabs would be turning away from the present framework of mere free vocal expression and justice in favour of more assertive underground political activity like violence and revolution. It should be noted that there are few instances where the problems were solved by violent revolution on the part of depressed section. Israeli democracy is on the process of maturity. It knows the ways how to solve the problems. Definitely Israeli democratic system is unlikely to consider such problems as hurdles.

---

<sup>35</sup> Oren Yiftachel "Minority protests and the emergence of ethnic regionalism: Palastinian Arabs in the Israeli Ethnocracy", *Ethnic challenges to the Modern National State*. Shlomo Ben-Fmi:, (Ed) (London Macmillan 2000), p.173.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, p.173.

## CONSOCIATIONAL DEMOCRACY AND JEWISH POLITICS

According to Alan Dowty power sharing in Israeli politics is rooted in the Jewish historical experience. Dowty says main elements of this experience were: a) struggle for survival at both community and individual levels in a hostile environment b) self regulation through well developed legal and Judicial institutions and development of legislative mechanism c) provision of a broad range of community services without reliance on the external factors d) tendency to have collectivist or cooperative model of social organisation.<sup>37</sup> These elements may not be democratic by modern standards but provided some sort of boost for the growth of democratic institutions. Such features can be seen in Consociational rather than majoritarian democracy. There was competition between various centres of authority in the Jewish political history. An important feature of traditional Jewish politics was that law and their politics was applied only within the community. These laws were applicable to all Jews. Non Jewish law was maintained for the relation between Jews and non Jews.<sup>38</sup> Jewish law treated outsiders or non-Jewish people on humanitarian ground. Humanitarian outlook was the essence of their law. Non-Jewish people were treated properly. On the other hand Jews in non-Jewish society harshly discriminated. Certainly Jews were most persecuted people in the world history.

Total percentage of the Arab minority in Israel is twenty. This community has presented a difficulty to Jewish Consociational politics. There were power sharing techniques in the Zionist movement. It could be seen over after

---

<sup>37</sup> Alan Dowty "Consociationalism" p.170 (Note-8).

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p.171.

foundation of Israel. Israeli Arabs have rights like citizenship, voting and access to the political system, but they were not included in the sphere of traditional Jewish power sharing. Arab community did not get enough power to look after their sphere of life. Until 1988 there was no independent nation wide Arab political party dedicated to the vigorous pursuit of Arab rights within the Israeli political system and speaking genuinely for the Arab community.

There are many critics on the subject of Israeli democracy and its functioning. They are not satisfied with the credentials of Israeli democracy.<sup>39</sup> They argue that Israel cannot simultaneously be Jewish and democratic state if it has considerable Arab population. According to them if it wants to become democratic state in real terms then it must give up its Jewishness. To remain Jewish it must exclude Arabs. The concept of ethnic democracy is already discussed in the beginning of this chapter. According to Sammy Smooha Israel belongs to category of ethnic democracies that include a dominant ethnic group with democratic rights for all citizens. In addition to majoritarianism and Consociationalism he states another category. As per his views this is a third democratic alternative for the ethnically heterogeneous societies. However according to Alan Dowty ethnic democracy by this definition does not represent a third type of the Majoritarian – consociational democracy.<sup>40</sup> Distinction can be made between consociational and majoritarian democracy to understand the question of strong majoritarian rule

---

<sup>39</sup> Ahmad H. Sa'di see his "Israel as Ethnic Democracy what are the implications for the Palastinian Minority" *Arab studies quarterly (USA)* Vol.22, No.1 Winter 2000.

As'ad Ghanem see his "The Palastinian Minority in Israeli the challenge of the Jewish state and its implications" *third world quarterly* (Basingstoke, Hants, UK) Vol.21, No.1, 2000.

Sammy Smooha see his "Minority status in ethnic democracy the status of the Arab Minority in Israel". *Ethnic and Racial studies* Vol.13, July 1990.

<sup>40</sup> Alan Dowty "Consociationalism" p. 173 (Note-8).

against a broader spreading of power in all directions. Sammy smooha's concept of ethnic democracy is insufficient in understanding of majority rule. In this regard Alan Dowty's account of ethnic groups and nation clarifies the matter.<sup>41</sup> Ethnic borders rarely corresponds to political borders. In most of the nation states national majority constitutes a dominant ethnic group. Most of nation-state have potential problem regarding minority rights. Though the exemption in the above case cannot be ruled out. But exceptional cannot be generalised with all cases. Dowty says Israel's link to ethnicity is not unique.<sup>42</sup> There are many nation states like New Zealand, France, Bulgaria which are associated with ethnicity. Very few states like Switzerland, Mauritius, Canada are sharing the power with minorities. Existence of Arab Minority in Israel does not make it unique case. There are Muslims in India, Arabs in Iran. These countries have not perceived these minorities as a threat just because they are minorities. Israel perceived its minorities as a threat to security. It is possible dual loyalties of Arab minority has made Israel to concern over this issue. In Israel Arab citizens have been exempted from compulsory service in the Israel defence forces due to their family, religious and cultural affiliations with the Arab world.<sup>43</sup> At same time, volunteer military service is encouraged, with some choosing this option every year. Exclusion of minorities from military is controversial. Even if they are allowed in military services there has been allegation on many countries that minorities are not trustworthy in defence matters connected with national security issues. When military and democracy is connected it is essential to give comparative account of position

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, p.174.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, p. 174.

<sup>43</sup> Hirsch, Ellen. Facts About Israel, (ed), (Jerusalem, Ahvapress: Israel Information Center, 1999), p. 121.



of minorities in military in some other democratic countries. "Among democratic nations Britain did not apply the draft to Ireland in world war I or to Northern Ireland in World War-II, while in Canada the conscription of French Canadians was a contentious issue in both conflicts."<sup>44</sup> Therefore it is difficult to say that exclusion of Arab minority in Israel is very unique and such position is not in any part of the world. There is no doubt that Smoocha's concept of the ethnic democracy is significant contribution to the discussion of structure of multi-ethnic societies. In order to better understand the dynamics of multi-ethnic societies, his typology should be related to the changing aspects of democratic process.

### **RAYS OF HOPE**

Due to deep ethnic division, facilitating consociationalism in Arab-Jewish relations appears inevitable. Israel Jews would like to maintain their distinct cultural identity. At the same time Israeli Arabs would not like to assimilate their own culture, language and identity with majority Jews. When non Democratic States have been able to solve the problem of instability because of ethnic and religious tensions, it is not difficult for the democratic governments (because in democratically elected governments comparatively there is wide scope for dialogue and solutions to problems). Some changes in value orientation may promote to create a wide ranging identity in Israel in the sense that identity which surpasses Jewish and Arab identity. The name of the Israel is Jewish in origin. Many time Arab citizens have expressed their interest in broadening the concept as a territorial label describing both Jewish and Arab cultural and geographical identity. If it is done according to wishes of

---

<sup>44</sup> Alan Dowty "*Consociationalism*", p.176.

Arabs on the part of Jewish citizens, definitely it would create the common pride in the citizens about their duties and responsibilities.

Both the communities perceive that recognition of Arabs as national minority is preferable. This will lead to of cooperation and integration. And Israeli Arabs can get rid of their dual loyalties by becoming citizen of Israel a nation for both Jews and Arabs. Then they can concentrate on their own problems and demands concerned with socio-economic development.

There are some factors which normalise the conflicts and tensions in the society. Factors like modern Globalisation, Modernisation, Westernisation, emergence of civil society strengthen the process of normalisation of conflicts. Israel is also one the country which has been influenced by such factors. Modernisation and westernisation have brought changes in the social life of people. Association of civil society are emerging to bargain with state regarding various policy matters which affect the various groups of the society. The impact of modernisation is generally understood that it creates more diversified political structure to widen scope of law and administration. Such extension of law and administration to all spheres makes spreading of power to various groups. The Arab community's separate existence in Israel is facilitated through the use of Arabic, Arabic mass media, literature, and theatre. Government has allowed maintenance of independent denominational courts which adjudicate matters of personal status. While customs of the past are still part of daily life, a gradual weakening of tribal and patriarchal authority, the effects of compulsory education and participation in Israel's democratic process are rapidly affecting traditional outlooks and

lifestyles. The status of Israeli Arab woman has been significantly improving because of legislation stipulating equal rights for women and prohibition of polygamy and child marriage.<sup>45</sup> The political involvement of the Arab sector is manifest in national and municipal elections. Arab citizens run the political and administrative affairs of their own municipalities and represent Arab interests through their elected representatives in the Knesset, who operate in the political arena to promote the status of minority groups and their share of national benefits.

### **SOME IMPERFECTIONS OF THE ISRAELI DEMOCRACY**

It would be wrong to say that democracy in Israel is matured in all sense. It is widely agreed that there have been some shortcomings in the way democratic principles were applied to Arab oriented political parties. There may be some differences among the Arab political parties but they have consensus on certain important issue of Arab Jewish relations. Such consensus has emerged during the seventies because of economic and political compulsions. The Democratic Front for peace and equality, the progressive list for peace, the Democratic Arab Party (which later joined this stream) are the parties who have subscribed to such consensus. Israeli Arabs make a distinction between Israel's existence as a state and its Jewish character. They accept the truth of Israeli's right to exist and respect its territorial integrity within the pre-1967 borders (Israel occupied some territories in 1967) they are ready to agree themselves to the status of a minority within Israel. At the same time they oppose Israel as Jewish State. The stand of communist party is important to be noted regarding Zionism. Israeli communist leaders view that Jews have

---

<sup>45</sup> Facts about Israel, p.121 (See Note-43).

developed over the year as a Israeli nation state, they should also have right to self determination. They can preserve and develop their Hebrew language and cultural institutions within the multicultural aspects of democracy. But racial aspects of Zionism are not tolerable to communist party.

Israeli Arabs supported the palestinian nationalism to show solidarity with Arabs of West Bank and Gaza Strip. Israeli Arabs believe that the most acceptable solution to Jewish Arab conflict are as follows: Israeli should accept pre-1967 borders, redivision of Jerusalem, (which is holy place for Jews, Muslims, Christians) negotiation with the palestine liberation organsiation, the formation of palastinian state on the West Bank and Gaza alongside Israel. As far as these issues are concerned Israeli rightist parties like *Likud*, *Moledet*<sup>46</sup> are not cooperating with Labour Party. Socialist parties are somehow ready to accept the demands which have legitimate reasons but right wing parties are different in their attitude.

Civil rights of the Arabs were violated may times. The most important legislation which violated the civil rights was amendment of the electoral laws in 1985. Amendment stated that any party which denies the existence of the state of Israel as the state of Jewish people and denies the democratic nature of the state or incites to racism are not allowed to participate in the Knesset elections. In the name of democracy thus that amendment attempted to curb the democratic right of freedom of expression which in any way goes against the democratic and secular principles of the nation-state. Israeli government tried to disqualify the progressive list for peace from participating in 1988 Knesset elections, because Progressive List for Peace denies Israel as the

---

<sup>46</sup> Moledet party quit the government following the beginning of the peace talks with the Arab states and the palastinians in 1991. It proposes transfer of the Arabs out of the West Bank and Gazastrip.

state of Jewish people. After careful considerations the central election committee approved the Progressive List for Peace when this issue was taken to the supreme court it gave its decision in a vote of 3:2 to allow the Progressive List for Peace to contest for the elections.

The Progressive List for Peace was accused with direct or indirect support for certain issues. Those issue are Israel is state of its all citizens and not for Jews only, it should be democratic – pluralistic state, there should not be any extra preferences to the Jewish community, there should be complete equality between Arabs and Jews. These views were wrongly interpreted and it was argued that they were threats to existence of Israel as a state.<sup>47</sup>

### **THE ARAB PARTIES CONSOCIATIONAL APPROACH**

Discussion of the democracy in the context of Israel goes in vain if one does not take into account the effort of the Arab political parties in the direction of bringing Consociational democracy. How these parties helped major parties in their coalition for success of democratic principles of dialogue and negotiation is also an important feature which should be taken into consideration. To the question of to what extent major parties like Labour Party reacted to Arab parties Consociational approach, answer is satisfactory one. Accommodative approach towards the Arab oriented parties began in 1970s. For the first time Labour Party got reverse results in 1977 elections, hence 1970s onwards this party began changing its policy towards the minorities. Labour Party was in need of Arab support because it wanted to achieve its political goals. Since 1977 Labour Party has been trying to get Arab support to defeat rightist Likud party and it succeeded to some extent. Due to support of Arab members of Knesset Labour Party succeeded in electing its candidate for the post of

---

<sup>47</sup> Sammy Smoocha "Minority status" p. 402 (Note-3).

president in 1983 and post of speaker in 1984.<sup>48</sup> In 1992 Arabs support forced then Prime Minister Rabin to express in the Knesset that there was much difference in the socio-economic status of Arabs and Jews in various fields even 45 years after the establishment of the state. Policy of then government emphasized the government's promise of ensuring equality to Arabs and respecting their cultural and religious differences between Jews and them. Government policy also emphasized on their backwardness in the various fields like education, industry, agriculture, housing, employment etc.

One of the significant fight Arab Parties had fought against government was elimination of the post of Arab Advisor to the prime minister. David Ben-Gurion who had created this post for the governance and implementation of Israel government policy towards ethnic minority. During the period of military rule in the Arab Sector, the Advisor had lot of executive powers which he used as weapon to curb the Arabs discontent against the government. Only Jews were appointed for this post because government indirectly wanted to facilitate Jewish interests in the Arab Sector. Government did not promote the welfare of Arabs in these sector rather they perceived that they might create problem against it by demonstration, strikes, and other means of protest. If promoting the Arab interest was the main reason government could have appointed non-Jewish person (particularly Arab) as an advisor, but they never did this. Arab community perceived this post inappropriate and considered it as tool for domination over Arabs. In the 1992 elections Arab parties demanded abolition of post and demanded equal treatment for Arabs in their election manifesto and while in campaigning. After the elections when Rabin became prime minister he did not take it as an impossible act, he abolished this post and did not take much time in establishing committee of directors general of various

---

<sup>48</sup> P.R. Kumarswamy "*Arabs in Israel*" p.21 (Note-28).

minister to administer the policies and programmes meant for betterment of the Arab sector, without having any security approach.

Arab political parties as a part of their further effort in the direction of bringing real democracy they supported many agreements of the government. The historic 1993 declaration of principle between Israel and Palestinian Liberation Organisation was supported by five members of Knesset belonging to the Arab oriented parties. Arab parties succeeded in changing the attitude of the government towards certain demands like recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, a separate state for the Palestinians. Previously these demands were exclusive demands of Arab parties but after 1992 election they became essential part of government policies. Arab parties helped Labour government in their diplomatic purposes and Arab Members of Knesset started to visit Arab countries on peace mission as delegates of Israel. For example in March, 1994 Democratic Arab Party leader Abdul Wahab Darwishe led first delegation to Damascus to meet with Syrian leaders.<sup>49</sup>

Arab political parties support was useful for Labour Party in the local council elections. When Labour Party tried to take away the chairmanship of Union of local authorities in January 1994, Arab local council heads decided to support the Labour Party candidate than Likud. There were other issues in which one could observe principles of Consociational democracy between government and Arab parties. The Arab Parties successfully utilised Rabin's condition of needing their support in showing majority. They got sufficient

---

<sup>49</sup> "In March 1994, within days after the Hebron massacre, the first Arab delegation led by MK Abdul Wahab Darawishe travelled to Damascus to meet with Syrian leaders, including president Hafez Assad and Foreign Minister Forouk Snara to convey condolences over the death of Assad's Son Basil who had died in an automobile accident in February (P.R. Kumarswamy "Arabs in Israel" p. 25 see Note-28).

amount of budget allocations for the Arab sector. But in certain security related issues like in forcing of over 400 suspected members of Hamas in December 1992 to leave the country, Arab parties opposed the move of government.<sup>50</sup> When Rabin tried to build new housing units in Har Homa in Southern Jerusalem to make his government's position strong by seeking support from the some center right parties, Arab parties seriously opposed his step. This time Arab oriented parties even tried to use a no-confidence motion over the issue and forced to withdraw the move. Thus Arab parties played both positive and negative role in bringing democratic frame work which was favourable to both Arab and Jewish community.

#### **DEMOCRACY AND ARAB POLITICAL PARTIES ROLE IN OPPOSITION**

Opposition is generally regarded as an integral part of the any democratic political system. In the case of Israel, opposition parties are playing very significant role in shaping the Israeli democracy. Arab political parties are playing significant role as opposition parties. One of the important principle of the democracy is there should be sufficient toleration of rival groups with different attitudes to allow one to other coming to power or otherwise influencing the governmental process. "The basis of opposition should ideally be a permanent party organisation, whose aim is to achieve power, whose principles and politics can be presented to the electorate as future government policies, and which can therefore carry on a permanent debate both within the legislature and within the country on how to complete the governments achievements and remedy its shortcomings"<sup>51</sup> Arab parties are

---

<sup>50</sup> Hamas are extremist Islamist group.

<sup>51</sup> Dorothy Pickles "Democracy" p. 156 (see Note-1).



debating the successive Israeli Governments programmes and policies and are on the path of solving the problems of Arabs through debate and discussion more over negotiation with major parties. They may not form the government on their own since they are small parties, but they can become coalition partners and influence the governmental policies. Opposition parties should have better prospects of coming to power. Longer periods of uninterrupted power exercised by one party is not good for both opposition and ruling party. If there is no criticism on the part of opposition to governmental policies, government can become inactive. Oppositions tend to become disunited if they do not get chances of coming to power. From 1948 to 1990 almost for four decades Arab parties were in opposition. For these four decades Israeli governments were almost inactive in addressing the Arab problems. Until 1990 all Arab oriented parties were not united not only in elections but also in negotiations with the government. Only recently they have realised the significance of unity in democracy.

If democracy is to survive in modern socio-economic conditions, democratic parties have to move close to each other. This development is not going to prevent the existence of effective opposition in any way. And it does not mean that parties are becoming ideologically nearer to each other but that they can hold similar view on some serious socio-economic issues. This is true with the Israel because to over come from socio-economic problems Arab parties have to close with like minded mainstream Israeli parties. Fortunately Arab political parties have already supported Labour Party over many issues for better deal.

No democracy assists those groups whose intention is to destroy the democracy. But suppression of revolutionary movements is not desirable as long as they are not using violence as a method to oppose. If any government tries to suppress such movements, it could harm democracy itself than opponents. Arab political parties had to face many restrictions on the part of Israeli government in their political activity but fortunately by institutions like Judiciary they escaped from such undemocratic acts. Moreover Arab political parties on their part have to be moderate in their method of party propaganda. Israel does not like to destroy its democratic structure by allowing extremist groups to operate. However Arab political parties have not followed the extremist path in achieving their political goals. These parties have played the role of constructive opposition and have taught the electorate how to choose between rival policies.



# CHAPTER-III

## Profile of Arab Political Parties

Political party is a modern phenomenon. It arose in response to the need to mobilise masses of citizens for voting and related political activities. Political parties emerged with the introduction of popularly elected legislatures and mass suffrage. In the early industrialising societies these developments occurred in nineteenth century. In societies that experienced socio-economic and political development in later years, the political party emerged later. In every case however parties developed with the emergence of mass politics. The political party is going to become reality when the tasks of recruiting political leadership and making public policy could no longer be handled by small number of men or women unconcerned with public sentiments. While forming political party masses must be taken into account by the leaders because masses have a right to participate and in determining the public policy. Even dictatorial leaders use organisations based on mass level as a means to assure stable control.

Lapalombara and Myron Weiner suggest that parties have four characteristics(1) continuity in organisation or longevity so that the party is not dependent on the life span of current leaders or regimes. (2) permanent organisation at the local level and an institutionalised relationship between the local and national levels (3) a conscious drive on the part of the leadership to seek governmental power, either alone or in coalition (4) concern on the part of the organisation for seeking followers at the polls or in some manner striving for popular support.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Joseph Lapalombara and Myron Weiner, (ed), *political parties and political development*, (USA: Princeton University Press, 1964), p.6.

Generally political parties are associated with democratic political systems. This may be true but there are exceptions to this. Since the emergence of political parties, the world has seen number of examples of political parties. Though many of them claim to be based on democratic ideals and values but it is difficult to call them democratic. Some of parties came to power not by democratic means i.e. through election. Some parties have operated secretly and have not hesitated to employ violent means to gain their objectives. Some times repressiveness of the regime has also been responsible employing undemocratic activities by the parties. There are some parties which are very much fond of violent tactics. They continue to practice such activities even though there is no hope of attaining power. However, whatever kind of parties they may be generally they claim to represent masses and say that they are working for the welfare of the mass. The manner in which parties function differ from system to system. In most democratic system political parties do follow practice of voluntary mobilisation. But authoritarian regimes follow practice of coercion or forceful acceptance of the membership of the party.

Political parties have played a major role in Israel's democracy. They have emerged well before the formation of the state within the Zionist-federation and Jewish community in Palastine as strong parties in terms of membership, organisational institutions, role expansion and ideology. Political parties have successfully maintained their leading role in Israeli politics but they have become weaker as institutions. They have turned from mass parties towards mere pragmatic electoral parties in the sense that they had always emphasized on electoral politics to come to power rather than working for the mass. The Israeli multiparty system is highly developed. It gives opportunity to political groups of different economic interests, political traditions and ideological approaches to express themselves.

Based on their political orientation as well as ethnic composition, the political parties in Israel can be classified into four distinct categories namely Zionist, non-Zionist, religious and Arab parties. Zionist parties in Israel have roots in the pre-state Jewish community in mandated Palestine Yishuv or in the world Zionist organisation. The Zionist parties include Labour Party, and Likud. The non-Zionist parties include Israel communist party, and progressive list for peace. Religious Parties are Augdat Israel, Shas Party. In terms of their ideology, composition and organisation the Arab Democratic Party or Democratic Arab Party, Islamic movement (this movement later entered into electoral politics in Knesset elections) and sons of village are solely Arab parties in the Israeli political arena. Non-Zionist parties like communist party and progressive list for peace can also be called Arab-oriented parties because of their sympathetic attitude towards Arabs and their repeated stress on Arab problems. Emergence of Arab Parties signalled not only growing politicisation among the Israeli Arabs but also the changing the nature of Israeli's political map. Until 1988 Zionist parties did not face any competition from Arab parties in the terms of ideology and elections. But now they have to face opposition not only from the Arab-oriented parties like Hadash, Progressive List for Peace but also from the purely Arab parties.

#### **ARAB POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS PRIOR TO 1988: (See Table One)**

It is important to know what kind of political organisations were there prior to 1988. (In 1988 for the first time Arab party emerged) Were there any obstacles to healthy growth of these organisations? How Arab Oriented Parties succeeded in articulating Arab problems? What is difference between Arab oriented parties and Arab parties? The answers of all these questions enhances the further understanding of Arab parties that is the main focus of this research work. During the first decades of the Israeli politics, the Arab minority did not play any meaningful role. Although Arab

minority enjoyed formal citizenship, legal equality and right to vote, it was effectively controlled by the Jewish establishment. Upto the 1970s, labour party (because continuously which was in power from 1948 to 1977), Jewish experts on Arab affairs in Arab Departments on the government ministries, and *Histardut* tightly controlled the Arab minority.<sup>2</sup> During the 1950s and 1960s, the rights of Arab citizens were severely curtailed. The military government which was in effect from 1948 to 1966 in the Arab sector limited the Israeli Arabs freedom of movement and their right of association. Former Prime Minister Menchen Begin prohibited the convention of a nationwide congress of the Arab masses in late 1980 on the advice of security services.<sup>3</sup> Until 1966 it was not possible for Arabs to use their rights of political participation because of military administration. The Israeli Arabs first were represented in the Knesset by *Maki* (earlier communist party) and since 1965 by *Rakah* (the new communist party) and the Arab lists aligned with *Mapa*; (*Mapai* became the Israeli Labour Party in 1968). Moreover many of Jewish parties had formed alliances with the leaders of hamulahas. (Hamulahas are clan or extended families of the Arab Community). These hamulahas helped Zionist parties in mobilising voters for the personal benefit. (Table three is about Representation of Arabs in Knesset from 1965-1984.

The police force was used when Arabs were demonstrating on 1958 may day. In these demonstration many Arab leaders were arrested. Against this action the popular front was founded by Arabs in May 1958. Unfortunately this front did not survive for long. Split took place in this front due to conflict between supporters of communist party and youngsters with nationalist tendency. Then these nationalist youngsters founded the *al-ardav* (land) movement and supported pan Arab philosophy of Egyptian Leader Gamal Abdel Nasser. In 1964 this movement was declared illegal and banned. The Israeli communist party was the only organisation

---

<sup>2</sup> Histardut is name of Israel Labour Federation.

<sup>3</sup> Benymin Neuberger "The Arab Minority in Israeli politics 1948-1992: From Marginality to influence" Asian and African studies 27 (1993) pp. 150-151.

which escaped from the harsh measures of authorities because of its moderate approach. It focussed on safeguarding the rights of the Arab minority and protesting against the policy of the regime towards them. But in 1965 Maki split due to the conflicts between the Arab minority and Jewish minority in its ranks. This party was split over issue of attitude toward the Arab national movement. The Arab majority formed the new communist list which is known as *Rakah*, while small Jewish minority remained in *maki* but it was vanished from the political scene after some years. *Rakah* was based on some ideological principles, which are as followings.<sup>4</sup>

- (1) It opposes Zionism and demands establishment of a palasterian state alongside Israel with mutual recognition.
- (2) It demands implementation of the right of return for 1948 refugees who wish to return.
- (3) It opposes war as a means of conflict resolution.
- (4) Eventhough majority of its members are Arabs it does not like to make it as a purely Arab oriented party. It wants to include Jewish players in the struggle to attain proposed solution.

**[Source: Idea of Fundamentals of the communist party are taken from Ori, Stendel, the Arabs in Israel, Sussex Academic Press, UK 1996 pp. 104-105].**

*Rakah* did not walk on plain political ground. It had to walk between slogans of nationalism and moderatism. It had to consider Nationalist slogans because it had to compete with more fundamentalist rivals and it had also to consider moderate slogans because it had to remain within bounds of the Israeli law. It tried with all its best to create the image of militant opposition. It also tried to be constructive opposition because it wanted to become an option for Arab voters who wished to

---

<sup>4</sup> Idea of Fundamentals of the communist party are taken from Ori, Stendel, the Arabs in Israel, Sussex Academic Press, UK 1996 pp. 104-105)



have an influence, who wanted to vote for parties within the Israeli consensus.<sup>5</sup> Significant character of *Rakah* is that it has surprising capacity to last for a long time and is utilising all its strength to avoid collapse. It has vigorously tried to win the support of the Israeli left. *Rakah* is very flexible in moving skillfully in the Arab street. Forceful expression has been made on the part of *Rakah* in supporting palastinian refugees.<sup>6</sup> It has attacked Israeli government and at the same time partially succeeded in preventing irresponsible actions of the extremists.

Democratic Front for peace and equality or *Hadash* is another political bloc and an electoral list attached with the New Communist list. It was formed in 1977 to enhance the list's electoral reach both among Arab and Jewish Voters. Other members of this Front include a Druze Committee, the democratic front for Nazareth. It included Jewish groups like faction of Black panthers and group known as Israeli socialist lett.<sup>7</sup>

### SONS OF THE VILLAGE

Sons of the village is purely Arabs movement which was born in 1972.<sup>8</sup> It came into existence to fill the gap in extremist Arab nationalist activity by the outlawing Al-Ard Movement. This movement challenged the sovereignty of the state and was associated with the Palastine liberation organisation, by following the positions of the Rejectionist Front organisations.<sup>9</sup> This movement wanted to establish a secular, democratic state throughout greater Palastine in its pre 1948 borders. After the outbreak of the *intifadah*, this movement had to face worst confrontations with the

<sup>5</sup> Ori, Stendel, *The Arabs in Israel*, Sussex Academic Press United Kingdom 1996 p. 108.

<sup>6</sup> New Communist list is known by its Hebrew acronym *Rakah*.

<sup>7</sup> Frank Tachan(ed), *political parties of the Middle East and North Africa*, Greenwood Press, Westport Connecticut, 1994, p. 235.

<sup>8</sup> DFPE is known as *Hadash* in Israel.

<sup>9</sup> Ori, Stendel "*Arabs in Israel*" p. 118 (Note-5).

security forces.<sup>10</sup> Though sons of the village decided to participate in elections in 1981 but it was unable to do so. In 1996 only it participated in Knesset elections. (Table two shows Arabs participation in Knesset elections as voters and members).

### THE PROGRESSIVE LIST FOR PEACE

The progressive list for peace appeared on the Israeli political scene just before the 1984 Knesset elections. From the beginning the Progressive List for Peace contested the sole authority of Israeli communist party as representative of nationalist aspirations of Israeli's Arabs. In 1988 Knesset elections the Progressive List for Peace emphasized its support for the *intifadah*. It took almost four years to build a strong base among the Israeli Arabs by continuous support of Palestine Liberation Organisation. It continuously indicated the faults of the *Rakah's* stand of Israeliness of palastinians.<sup>11</sup> It wanted *Rakah* to stress on Palastenianism compared to 1984 elections, its support base declined in 1988 elections. It contested for 1992 Knesset election but was unable in winning even single seat. Presently its base in Arabs is very slim.

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 121

<sup>11</sup> Israeliness means interaction between the Arab citizens and the state and between the Arabs and the Jewish public. The Israeli Arabs are involved in the Israeli system in many ways namely political participation, economic development, obtaining social services, abiding by the laws of the country and carrying out all duties required of them. Israeli Arabs use their citizenship status in order to improve their conditions. It is a interaction with a western dominated society and modern political and economic system. Political values of Arabs are affected by the democratic political system of Israel. Consequently number of changes have taken place to various degress in social values. These changes can be seen in interaction between men and women, style of life and political values related to the democratic process. Whereas palesterianism is Israeli Arabs belonging to their homeland. The palasterisation of Arabs is expressed in the form of sentimental attachment, pride, patriotism, sharing of national aspirations, hopes and pains and respect and admiration of national symbols. Israelisation is more interaction with the system and working within it to improve their conditions, it is devoid of any positive sentiment.

**TABLE - 1****IMPORTANT SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS OF ARABS PRIOR TO 1988 KNESSET ELECTION.**

Sl. No.	Name of the Organisation or Party	Year of Foundation
1.	Communist Party (Rakah)	1965
2.	Sons of the village	1972
3.	National Committee of Heads of Arab Local Authorities	1974
4.	National Student Union of Arab University	1975
5.	Democratic Front for Peace and Equality	1977
6.	Progressive list for peace	1984

Note: Data are taken from Sam Lehman Wilzig "Copying the Master? Patterns of Israeli Arab Protest 1950-90" Asian and African Studies 27 (1993) p. 135.

**TABLE - 2****ARAB PARTICIPATION IN KNESSET ELECTIONS AS VOTERS AND MEMBERS**

KNESSET	YEAR	% OF TOTAL VOTERS	% OF VOTER PARTICIPATION	NO. OF KNESSET MEMBERS
First	1949-51	-	79.3	3
Second	1951-55	-	85.5	8
Third	1955-59	8.19	91.0	8
Fourth	1959-61	7.73	88.9	7
Fifth	1961-65	8.34	85.6	7
Sixth	1965-69	8.34	87.8	7
Seventh	1969-73	8.35	82.0	7
Eighth	1973-77	8.35	80.0	6
Ninth	1977-81	9.19	75.0	7
Tenth	1981-84	9.75	69.7	6
Eleventh	1984-88	10.00	73.6	6

Source : Ori Stendel, The Arabs in Israel, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1996.

**TABLE - 3**  
**REPRESENTATION OF ARABS IN KNESSET ELECTION**  
**RESULTS FROM 1965-1984.**

Election year	1965		1969		1973		1977		1981		1984	
Eligible Votes (in thousands)	1500		1749		2037		2236		2490		2655	
% Voting	81.7				78.6		79.2		78.5		79.8	
List	No. Seats	% Vote	No. Seats	% Vote	No. Seats	% Vote	No. Seats	% Vote	No. Seats	% Vote	No. Seats	% Vote
Maki	1	1.1	1	1.1	1	1.4						
Rakah	3	2.3	3	2.8	4	3.4						
DFPE							5	4.6	4	3.4	4	3.4
PLP											2	1.8

Source : Frank Tachau(ed), *Political Parties of the Middle East and North USA*: Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut 1994, p. 258.

### **EMERGENCE OF ARAB PARTIES**

The *intifadah* that erupted at the end of 1987 in the occupied territories marked the beginning of a new stage in the political activity. *Intifadah* paved the way for making difference the Arabs in Israel and the rest of palastinian groups especially in the territories. It made difference in the sense that Arabs in Israel did not want to be completely associated with the direct involvement in the movement, but at the same time they did not want to be passive in these developments. Israeli Arabs gave material assistance to the Palastenians and protested the Israeli policy within the framework of Israeli law. Israeli authority reacted to such involvement by establishing special police unit to deal with Arab sector. They increased their effort to isolate the Arabs from the Jewish populations. At the same time authorities started seeking co-operation from Arab elites and succeeded in their effort and attained their aim to a large extent. The co-operative policy and new political atmosphere due to Intifadah created new situations. These situation caused significant results on the level of

political values and behavioural norms. The important change was a rethinking on the issue of the integration of the Arabs in the national life.

Solidarity demonstrations and strikes became more frequent. The response to *intifadah* was almost complete and the strike was observed not only in the Arabs localities in the Galilee and the Triangle area (in central Israel) but also among the Arabs Sectors of the mixed towns. The number of nationalist subversive acts increased considerably.<sup>12</sup> These acts included the display of Palestine Liberation organisation flags, the public chanting of Palestine Liberation Organisation anthem, and the circulation of inflammatory leaflets. There was a noted rise in the scope of damage inflicted upon property owned by Israeli Jews. The intensity of disturbances and disruption of public order has also increased and there was sharp escalation in terrorism.

As a result of *intifadah* and its influence several changes took place in the patterns of the political organisations of Arabs and their political activity organisations like sons of village were now further encouraged to believe in calling for the ultimate establishment of a secular democratic palastinian state over all of British mandatory Palestine. The Israeli communist party (Rakah) acting consistently with its past record made every effort to demonstrate its identification with the uprising and to serve as its mouthpiece in Israel. The political and ideological world of the progressive list for peace has been similarly filled with the actions of the *intifadah* since late 1987.

---

<sup>12</sup> Elie Rekhess, "The Arabs in Israel and the *intifadah*" Robert O. Freed Man (ed), *The Intifadah: Its impact on Israel, the Arab world, and the superpowers*. (US: Florida International University Press: 1991, P. 345.

Due to development of uprising Knesset member Abdal wahab Darwishe resigned from Labour Party in January 1988 and established Democratic Arab Party, the first independent Arab Party since the establishment of the state. Establishment of this independent political party led to mobilisation of political power to be used in order to advance individual integration in the mainstream political system and society.

### DEMOCRATIC ARAB PARTY

The Democratic Arab Party came into existence for the purpose of competing in November 1988 Knesset elections. Its founder Abdel Wahab Darwishe was elected to Knesset from 1984 to 1988 period from Labour Party. He resigned from Labour Party to support his palastinian nationality and the *intifadah*. But he did not give up the option of joining a future government. He gave his resignation, when demonstration was organised in Nazareth by Supreme Monitoring Committee.<sup>13</sup> He commanded Arab members to give back their membership cards to Labour Party.

Major difference between Democratic Arab Party and other Arab Oriented Parties is that for the first time it was a party with no Jewish membership. Further it has no Jewish candidates for elections as an intentional act. It did not seek support of Jewish voters as *Rakah* and Progressive List for Peace did great effort to get their support. Incidents of *intifadah* gave boost to Democratic Arab Party to glorify its fiery nationalist sentiments. Democratic Arab Party did not rely on combination of Arab-Jewish support like *Hadash* and Progressive List for Peace, it emphasized on Arabism. It took only Muslim members as candidates for the Knesset elections list.

As far as philosophy and ideology is concerned Democratic Arab Party is not very different from *Hadash* and Progressive List for Peace. It speaks publicly for the creation of palastinian state through out the occupied territories including eastern

---

<sup>13</sup> Ori, Stendel "Arabs in Israel" p. 130 (Note – 5).

Jerusalem. It emphasizes on the goal of equal rights for Arabs in Israel. Democratic Arab Party demands return of land which was taken by Israeli authority to its legal owners. It would like to develop relations with dispersed Arab and palastinian communities in pursuit of common goals. Democratic Arab Party displayed its all Arab characteristic in its election propaganda warning "the Arabs do not need Jews to represent them."<sup>14</sup> The Democratic Arab Party felt pride in recognising itself as party of Arabism and has conveyed message to its support base that its electoral success would represent a triumph for the palastinian people. Democratic Arab Party got major boost when president of Israel attended party's founding convention in April 1988 Democratic Arab Party<sup>15</sup> deep sympathy to palastinians could be seen when Redwan Abu Ayyash, secretary of the Association of Arab Journalists in the territories was invited to party's founding convention. In that convention he gave speech of deep-feeling. He said that he brought greetings from the land of intifada.<sup>16</sup> Audience observed a moment or silence in memory of victims of palasterian uprising in that convention.

Some of the important slogans of party are "we identify with our people's legitimate nationalist struggle, "No to occupation."<sup>17</sup> Democratic Arab Party asked believers of Islam to vote for leader who identity with Islamic traditions. Thus party stressed Muslim characteristic in propaganda. Democratic Arab Party would not like to be in opposition which does not produce any results, it would not boycott participating in government to have real political influence. In this regard it has used slogan of vote for influence and not for dissidence. But its Arab Oriented partners Hadash and Progressive List for Peace criticised Democratic Arab Party as satellite of Labour

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 130

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p. 131

<sup>16</sup> Elie Rekees, "Arab and Intifudah" p, 353 (Note – 12).

<sup>17</sup> Ori Stendel "Arabs in Israel" p. 131 (Note-5).

Party. Democratic Arab Party had to be cautious in avoiding these criticism. The occupation of Kuwait by Iraq: forces in 1991 made Democratic Arab Party to take very difficult stand. It understood the mood of its supporters and responded to their feelings by supporting Saddam Hussains forced unification.

In Democratic Arab Party there is no strong internal organisation like other political parties like Progressive List for Peace and Hadash. It needs solid organisation to expand its support base in the Arab sector. Democratic Arab Party is also relying on nationalist pulse and sometimes make various important developments like even being a partner in coalition governments with Zionist parties. In such situations it may face danger of destroying slowly by rival political streams.

### **THE ISLAMIC MOVEMENT**

This movement was the latest to join the political currents in the Arab Sector. This movement was started by Abdallah Darwish. He was born in Kufraqasim in 1948 and began his political career as a member of Israel Communist party. In 1966 he abandoned the philosophy of Marx and started believing the faith of Mohammad.<sup>18</sup> In 1969 he took admission in the Islamic institute in Nablus to study Sharia. After graduation he got a teacher's certificate for teaching Islamic subjects in his home village but was dismissed for failing to follow instructions. In 1979 he joined the usrutal-Jihad but was arrested from the Israeli authorities and was later released from prison in 1983.<sup>19</sup> when Darwish started his political and religious career he did not seek a confrontation with the authorities and not tried to impose his views on the Muslim community of Arab villages. Instead of that he made efforts to win Muslim hearts for a return to the Islamic roots by means of study and persuasion. He made

---

<sup>18</sup> Elie Rekhees "Resurgent Islam in Israel" Asian and African Studies 27 (1993) p. 193.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 194.



balance between two aspects of Islam one as a faith of personal, emotional and existential experience and other as a social force and political framework.

This movement started establishing Islamic associations or leagues in Arab localities. These organisations were not in institutionalised manner rather they worked in informal manner generally by following Darwish's guidelines. Within a short time this movement became popular in Arab villages and succeeded in changing the nature of Arab society. Movement asked its members to follow basic commandments of Islam. People also responded positively by regularly attending Friday noon services at the mosques. Darwish revived the old Islamic custom of paying an alms tax. For this purpose Alms Committees were created in villages and in Urban places to look after the proper collections and appropriate use of such funds. Here too public response was positive.

Movement's aims and objectives in one sense conveys the meaning that it was established to prevent spread of secular way of life among the Muslims in Israel.<sup>20</sup> Moreover Israeli Arabs readiness to return to the faith was facilitated by some of the following feeling of disappointment.

- (1) Some secular political bodies like Rakah, Progressive List for Peace came on the scene with great enthusiasm but lost their strength when they faced difficult political decisions. Thus Arabs in Israel were disappointed with these bodies. Also integrating with Zionist political stream seemed pointless to Arabs. So the only way left for them was passing through the Islamic political organisations.

---

<sup>20</sup> Ori, Stendel "*Arabs in Israel*" p. 135 (Note-5).

- (2) Arab states did not try to solve the palastinian problem and domestic problems of Arabs in Israel. This failure on the part of Arab State caused to look toward another organisation which fulfills their demands.
- (3) Israeli authority did not try to solve the problems of house building, education, employment and development of Israeli Arabs. These issues of inequality and discrimination made these people frustrated. Then they sought the movement's self help programme to overcome these problems.

Movement entered to fray in municipal elections of 1989 and got succeeded as break through in its political history. Movement's success was not only the result of religious appeal, for many it was a vote of confidence in a movement that successfully dedicated itself to the social, economic and cultural advancement of the Arab Sector.

## **VIEWS AND ATTITUDES OF THE MOVEMENT**

### **A. Source of Inspiration**

Various doctrines have influenced the religious world view of the movement. Traditional semi orthodox doctrine taught in Arab schools and colleges in the West Bank Gaza is one of such doctrine which influenced Movement. Darwish used to review these views regularly in al-sirat.<sup>21</sup> Ideas of nineteenth and twentieth century Islamic reformists and modernists are second which influenced the movement. Leaders and writers of this movement used various patterns of Islamic response to challenge west. Darwish viewed that the return to Islam was the most appropriate answer to the continuing ideological attack started by western imperialism on the Islamic Kingdoms.<sup>22</sup> Darwish reasoned that because of the absence of Islamic education Islamic nations were unable to prevent the western imperialism. Most importantly movement's social and

---

<sup>21</sup> Al-sirat is Islamic movement's monthlyorgan.

<sup>22</sup> Elie Rekhees "*Resurgent Islam*" p. 198 (Note – 18).

political views were influenced by Muslim Brethern, (Islamic movement in Egypt) though leaders of the movement rarely agreed that they were following its principles. Many times al-sirat has published writings of Hasan-al-Bana, founder of Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Movement has sucked the political spirit of the Muslim Brotherhood. It has highlighted brotherhood's commitment to the restoration of the caliphate and the establishments of a world Islamic state.<sup>23</sup>

#### **B. Movement's Dimension of the Palastinian Problem :**

The movement continuously expressed the distinctive Islamic character of the palastinian problem. Shaykh Kamal al Khatib, one of the important leader of the movement severally criticised secular nationalists. According to him the relation between Palastine and his land is that of holy Islamic bond. Darwish had to face many problems (already once he was imprisoned) over the issue of Palastine on the part of Israeli authority. He had to work as Islamic activists, member of Arab Minority in Israel and staunch supporter of the Palastine cause. He had to take very balanced stand on this issue. Radical stand could have caused likely action on the part of Israeli authority. So he gave pragmatic approach to a palastinian problem. He gave the principle of mutual recognition i.e. Israel should recognise the palastinian right of self determination and palasterian recognition of Israeli's right to live in peace.<sup>24</sup> As far as border between two states was concerned his view was that Israel should negotiate with the palastinian liberation organisation. He did not give the idea of Islamic state governed by the Sharia in the whole area of Palastine because call for Islamic state would convey the meaning of elimination of state of Israel. Darwish was careful in this regard because he had an experience of imprisonment. He did not try to face any reaction from the

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 198.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 201.

Israeli authority. Totally his suggestion was to act according to the principles of Islam without causing the disruption of law, without threatening the coexistence and without harming the state of Israel.<sup>25</sup> But the Shaykh Kamal Khatib's attitude concerning a palastinian state was not clear. According to him democratic state is not means for dividing the people, it is like communist state and thus an entity should be denied.<sup>26</sup>

### **C. Movement and Uprising in the Occupied Territories:**

Movement took the religious views on the events of *intifadah* in December 1987 on the occupied territories. It described these events as a Islamic revolution against suppression. The *intifadah* events inspired Islamic Movement in Israel and contributed to their victory in the 1989 municipal elections. The *intifadah* was seen by the activists as god supported and made references to the Israel's satanic nature in suppressing the *intifadah*.<sup>27</sup> The increasing sense of movements confidence did not lead to violent practices. On the question of direct involvement in the *intifadah*, it followed the line of communists. It asked its members to collect money and food for the Arabs in West Bank and Gaza. Therefore it seems that the movement was successful in organising helping programmes to the territories.

### **D. Movement and the Issue of Participation in Knesset Elections.**

The decision of the Islamic movement to enter the municipal system did not give rise to an ideological debate. It was very difficult to apply Islamic orientation to the Israeli parliamentary system. It is important to note that because it should be seen as significant debate regarding place of Islamic group in a non-Muslim, predominantly Jewish State. The movement was in confusion over the issue of whether to participate in Knesset elections or not.

---

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. p. 201.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. p. 201.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p.200.

There were two groups over the issue, one group was identified with Darwish which gave flexible approach. It supported the idea of participating in the elections either independently or within the framework of a united Arab front. Supporters of this viewpoint brought a set of practical reasons for why this line should be followed.

From a civil right point of view it was argued that voting is a citizens right and it does not go against the Islamic principles. They expressed that Arabs should have respectable, and just representation in the parliament. Their viewpoint was that Arab political power should not be wasted because it can be influential in various political matters. The practical and political logic behind the call to enter the kneset by this group was clear. But it was to be rationalised and legitimised with Islamic notions by this group. Here Sheikh Darwish gave three sets of arguments. First he relied on the experience of other Islamic movements which opted for participation in existing constitutional parliaments (Islamic Liberation Party in Egypt). Secondly he used classical interpretation of the Sharia. He stated that Islamic participation in parliament is legitimized as long as the Moslem minority has not been deprived of its basic rights of worship and free belief. Thirdly he depended on Islamic tradition and history. He took assistance of earlier case of Jafar ibn Abitalib, the cousin of the prophet Mohamad to forward his viewpoint that a moslem minority is having a right to live in a non-moslem state. Jafar emigrated to Abyssinia from Mecca by the order of prophet. Because he was harassed by prophets antagonists from among their tribe.<sup>28</sup> For present Israeli Islamist group it became a historical proof that a Moslem minority can live peacefully in a non-Moslem state on two conditions. One condition

---

<sup>28</sup> Elic Rekhees "To vote or not to vote" special election issue, The Jerusalem Post, June 12, 1992, pp. 6-7.

is that minority should maintain the prevailing law of the land and that the ruler – Abyssian Negus in Jaafar's time and presently Israeli government should serve the rights of the minority to practise its religion.<sup>29</sup>

Not all Islamic activists in Israel accepted Darwish's interpretation. There was opposite group which was formed in the northern part of the Triangle and within Galilee strongholds of the Islamic movement.<sup>30</sup> The controversy first came up on the eve of the 12<sup>th</sup> Knesset elections in 1988. But after prolonged discussion the movement decided not to participate in the elections independently. At the same time they remained neutral on the issue, neither calling for not to vote in election nor to vote. There were rumours after the elections that unofficially movement had asked its followers not to vote, but leaders such as Darwish strongly denied them.

With the 1992 election coming nearer the debate was reopened. This time also Darwish advised the movement to take part in the joint Arab list. He had to face strong reactions from the leaders of the movement such as Sheikh Raid Salah, the mayor of Ummal-Fahm and Sheikh Kmal Khatib of Kfarkana.<sup>31</sup> They argued that on such issues a collective decision must be taken and that Darwish had expressed his personal view. In September 1991 movement decided not to participate in 1992 Knesset elections. A month before the elections it was said that movement would later suggest regarding its stance about which candidates to support. According to opposite group participation in Knesset was not in harmony with legitimate Islamic conceptions. For them Knesset represented a form of legislation which stands in contradiction with Islamic principles. This opposite group assumed that Kuran is the fundamental constitution and source of legislation and it cannot be replaced by any

---

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p.7.

<sup>30</sup> Central part of the Israel is known as triangle.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p.7.

secular legislative system. Participation in the Knesset implied promising solemn allegiance to the state of Israel and its Jewish symbols, the star of David, the blue and white flag etc.

The image of the opposition leaders was much similar to that of the Palastenian Islamists in the territories. Both of them remain faithful to the basic principles that state and religion cannot be separated. Debates on various issues inside the movement shows increasing political and personal divisions. Over the matters of politics and ideology, Darwish's leadership has been challenged. Election controversy reflects a structural weakness of the movement. There is no institutionalised process of delision making.

The 1992 decision of not to participate in the election not only shows the weakness but also strength. Strength because idea of contesting elections was rejected to totally remain outside from the parliamentary scene. It was like a compromise formula which both sides accepted to maintain internal unity.<sup>32</sup> Had they insisted on their demands, organisation would have collapsed. Darwish remained comfortably with his formula of participation. By supporting this view he consolidated Arab vote and became unifying factor behind the scenes.

On the eve of the 1996 elections, the leadership of the movement once again decided not to participate in the elections in an independent list. However Sheikh Abdullah Nimr Darwish, who led pragmatic stream in the movement tried to bring about a change in this decision. The movement and its leaders were under great pressure imposed by the authorities and left-wing parties especially after the suicide attacks in Israel by the supporters of the Hamas in the beginning of 1996. The struggle in the Islamic movement over the issue of participation in election finally led

---

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p.7.

to a split, and members of the pragmatic stream took the decision to participate in the elections for the Knesset in list together with Democratic Arab party. Some interpreted this decision as an attempt of the movement to convince Israeli government and people that it is not in any way threat to the Israeli State.<sup>33</sup>

Revivalist movement came into scene as a result of several interlinked crises. Widening socio-economic gaps and political condition in which people were no longer properly organised made Israeli Arab to seek the assistance of movement. Movement gave substantial interpretation of worse situation with through set of values and norms. Popularity of movement at least for some years shows the depths of religious roots in Arab society. Movement has used Islam as historic and cultural identity and as a political and social cohesive force.

#### **DUVERGER'S ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND ARAB POLITICAL PARTIES.**

Political party is not an isolated institution. It operates in an environment (political, economic, social). A study of party politics requires study of parties in the context of all those forces, and institutions that interact with each other. It is essential to understand how the members of political party are organised on some principles and interest because it helps in distinguishing party from other organisations. It is also needed that how there is relationship among all members of party; how leaders of party struggle for maximising their base of popular support.

It is very difficult to classify the types of party structure found in various regimes which permit competitive elections. Nevertheless there is some possibility. Israeli political system is one of such regime which permits competitive elections and allows

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibrahim Hasan Abu Jaber "The Islamic Movement within the Greenline" Middle East Affairs Journal Vol.3 No. 1-2 Winter/ spring 1997, p. 42.



formation of political parties based on religion, ethnicity class etc. A study of the organisation and membership of a political party may be made on certain scientific lines. Maurice Duverger was the first person to analyse the party organisation . The contributions of Maurice Duverger have an importance of their own in analysing Arab Political Parties in Israel.

Duverger makes distinction between direct and indirect structure of political parties.<sup>34</sup> According to him direct party structure is composed of individuals who have signed a membership form, who pay a monthly subscription and who attend the local branch meetings more or less regularly. The Indirect structure party is made up of trade unions, cooperative societies, friendly societies and groups of intellectuals who had united to establish a common organisation. Among the Arab oriented political parties direct structure can be observed in communist party. This party has its own ideology. It follows most of the procedures of democratic centralism of former soviet Russia.<sup>35</sup> Some of the features of democratic centralism are individuals signing membership form, attending the local branch meetings. Islamic movement is another Arab party which joined electoral politics recently which has direct structure features. As a part of organising movement strongly, its founding member Darwish revived the old Islamic custom of paying an alms tax. Alms committees were established in villages and in urban neighbourhood to oversee the proper collection and appropriate case of such funds.<sup>36</sup> These payments enabled Darwish to finance new activities of the movement. This feature of paying an alms tax resembles a paying a monthly subscription to direct party structure. As far as indirect structure of parties is concerned communist party has features like group of intellectuals and trade unions as part of this party. Members of these groups are there in the communist party as

---

<sup>34</sup> Maurice Duverger: *Political parties: their organisations and Activity in the modern state*, translated from French into English language by Barbara and Robertivorth, London: Methuen 1964, p.5.

<sup>35</sup> democratic centralism is the idea given by Lenin. Democratic centralism means that higher party bodies shall be elected by the lower, that all instructions of the higher bodies are categorically and necessarily binding on the lower.

<sup>36</sup> 8 Elie, Rekhess "Resurgent Islam in Israel" *The Asian and African Studies* 27 (1993) p. 195.

supporters or members, but they are not merely members of component groups. In the case of Islamic Movement some group of Islamic intellectuals might have united to establish common Islamic organisation but membership of the movement is open for all members of the community. Thus Islamic movement and communist party have features of both direct and indirect structure.

### **THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF PARTY**

With respect to organisation Duverger has identified four kinds of what he termed basic elements.<sup>37</sup> Those elements are the *caucus*, the *branch*, the *cell*, the *militia*. Caucus can also be called as committee, a clique, or a coterie but he preferred the term caucus. It is a very small entity having a limited nature. Its strength does not depend upon the number of its key members but upon the quality they possess. It does not involve in any propaganda with view to extending its recruitment. Membership is achieved by formal nomination. Eventhough strength of membership of caucus is in less numbers, it wields great power. It is group of notabilities chosen because of their influence. Its area of functioning is very large corresponding to chief electoral division. The activity of the *caucus* varies with seasons, it reaches its peak at election times and is considerably reduced in the intervals between the ballots. Caucuses may be of direct and indirect types. The direct caucus is consisted of notabilities chosen for their individual qualities and personal influence. The indirect caucus is composed of experts in the art of fighting elections.

The element of caucus can be observed in Democratic Arab party. Basically this party was established for the purpose of 1988 Knesset elections. During the intervals between the Knesset elections and its activities reached peak in elections. Its political activity was considerably reduced compare to other parties in Israel. Democratic Arab party is party of direct caucus in the sense that it took only Arabs

---

<sup>37</sup> Duverger "*Political Parties*". p. 17, (Note-34).

as candidates for Knesset elections. It is notable for its Muslim complexion.<sup>38</sup> This party is minor entity having only Arabs as members and in its election propaganda it warned that the Arabs did not need Jews to represent them. So it prohibited other citizens from joining it. Democratic Arab Political Party's area of activity includes all part of Arab regions in Israel. Democratic Arab Political Party's selection of candidates for Knesset election shows its detailed knowledge of Arab political map. Thus its area of activity corresponds with the electoral division of Arabs.

The branch designates a basic element and is less centralised than a caucus. While the latter deliberately seeks to stay away from the masses, the former appeals to them and also appreciates its growing proximity with them. The branch is extensive and tries to enroll members to multiply their number and to increase its total strength. It does not contempt for quality, but quantity is the most important considerations. During elections it is very active, and remains regular in the intervals between the elections. As the *branch* is more numerous group it posses a more perfected internal organisation. Hierarchy of the branch is more definite and the division of duties are more precise. It comprises a committee to direct the mass of members, secretary to call meetings and draw up the agenda, a treasurer to collect individual subscription. Branch is by and large an invention of the socialist parties which desire to maintain their intimate touch with the people at large. It is found that the leaders of the socialist parties use to meet the *branch* members and talk about their problems and then a free exchange of ideas takes place. The branch organisations help in disseminating political education among the people. Therefore the branches of a political party become very important in the day-to-day functioning at the party. There are significant impact of branches upon the people because they see in politics a

---

<sup>38</sup> Ori, Stendel "The Arabs in Israel", p. 130 (Note-5).

means of bettering their position. Thus branches correspond to the needs of working class.

This element of branch can be identified in the communist party (Rakah) among the Arab oriented parties in Israel. The structure of this party was responsible for maintaining both the Jewish-Arab character and an organisational network unmatched by another Arab oriented and solely Arab party.<sup>39</sup> Even during military rule party managed to develop a successful grass root political activity in Arab localities. Activities of the party are not confined to Knesset elections only, it functions regularly even after the elections in its organisational level party follows elaborate structure like other communist parties in the world. In its organisational level the party congress, the Central Committee, the politburo and the control Committees are major national central bodies. The regional bodies are the regional congress, the regional committee, the district committee, the branch. Thus is hierarchy of branches both at the national and regional level in Israel communist party. Branches in Islamic movement are called as leagues. These leagues were founded in a number of Arab localities. However these branches were not incorporated into an institutionalised countrywide network. Rather they cooperated in an informal manner generally following Darwish's guidelines.

The basis of group and the number of members are fundamental features which distinguish *cell* from the *branch*. The *cell* has an occupational basis, it unites all party members who work at the same place. Such *cells* can be found in factory, workshop, office etc. As far as number of members are concerned, the *cell* is much smaller group than the *branch*. The *cell* has much greater hold on its members than the *branch* due to the its nature and size. Cells are usually set up at the very work place

---

<sup>39</sup> Ilana Kaufman, *Arab National Communism in one Jewish State*. (US: Florida University press 1997), p. 43.

so party members can meet daily in their work. There is constant contact between members apart from meetings. Usually at the beginning or at the end of working day the secretary of *cell* can easily circulate orders, share out the work and control the activity of each member. The cell can have very effective action for the average number of members. Increased occupational nature of *cell* gives concrete basis for factory problems, conditions of work and salaries. This is true with communist parties because these parties make constant effort to relate each particular claim to general principles of doctrine. The party solidarity is very strong in cells, and they are source of secret activities. Cells are an invention of the fascist and communist parties where the occupational units of the ruling party are scattered in very nook and corner of the country. In Israeli communist party there are very less number of occupational cells. This party lacks the means to build an economic base for a complete model of party-society. The model of party-society studies association of party with independent trade unions, cooperatives, writers association and such. The dominance of the Histdrut is responsible for lack of independents strong trade unions of communist party. However as part of the organisational structure. There are some cells in the party, which are controlled by the central committee, the highest unit of the party composed of real decision makers at the top. In Democratic Arabs party and Islamic movement, cells are not existed at all as an extended network of party organisation.

The Fascist Party of Mussoloni and Nazi Party of Hitler invented *militia* as the basis of their party's organisation. Members of these militia's are civilians but they are given military training. They wear prescribed uniforms, hold party flags and act at the behest of the party leaders working under supreme command of the chief of the organisation. It is like private army to combat and finish the enemies inside the country. Eventhough Islamic movement in Israel is not having private army and

fascist ideology, some activities of the movement seem like fascist. The movement has set up Sports Association, which organise courses for Karate and Judo.<sup>40</sup> The rationale of organising such courses may be recreation and constructive activity but its real intention of such activities is not yet known.

### **PARTY MEMBERSHIP**

The concept of membership has its own reference in a study of Arab political parties in Israel. Any political party of any part of world tries to have large number of members. But nature of membership varies from one system to another like democratic system to totalitarian system. In this regard Maurice Duverger suggests two types of parties: *Cadre Party* and *Mass Party*.

*Cadre Party* is grouping of notabilities who constitute the structure of a political party. These notables play important role in the formulating policies and programmes of the party. Nomination of candidates, prosecution of electoral campaign, collection of funds for the party are done by these notabilities. Cadres of communist parties all over the world are examples of such groupings. The Israeli communist party is not as such party of notabilities but its organisational nature resembles cadre. The backbone of this party was always cadre. Although their absolute number was small, it is marked with professionalism. All these cadres were depending upon the parties financial assistance. Career of party cadre begins in the youth organisation, Banki to socialise according to party norms to prove organisational ability. Men of letters and university students were taken as cadres of the party. Thus party created a cultural milieu in the Arab sector. But closed nature of the organisational structure limited new recruitment into the party. While desiring to increase the cadre of activists, it feared contamination of its ideological purity and penetration by informers. Admission into the party was preceded by a long process of careful screening. Information of

---

<sup>40</sup> Elie Rekhees "Resurgent Islam" p. 195 (Note-18).

membership on total number and social background was kept secret by the party.<sup>41</sup> In Islamic movement there is no as such cadre type of mobilisation. Voluntary membership was taken for Islamic leagues. Many Israeli Arabs joined such leagues. Socialisation of members in such leagues was done according to Islamic norms and values. Its members called for complete observation of the basic commandants of Islam. Movement's greatest success was in mobilising cadre members (league) for active Islamic oriented work in their immediate home environment. Members were called to organise local volunteer labour camps.

The growth of franchise is responsible for becoming cadre parties into mass parties to a great extent. Mass party believes in the principle of general elections. It allows more and more members to take part in party activity and acts with their confidence and consultation. Those who subscribe to basic policy of the party can become member of such parties. Source of finance of mass parties is regular subscription. The Democratic Arab party can be placed in the grouping of mass party, because this party came into Israeli political scene with sole purpose of competing Knesset elections in 1988. As far as its based is concerned democratic Arab party is mass party of Arabs, because of its stress on Arab and Muslim nature.

Strength of the communist party has been its ability to mobilise members. In 1950s there were fourteen branches in the Arab localities but in 1985 and 1990s it had ninetyfive and sixty respectively. This sudden reduction of branches in the 1990s was because of disintegration of the soviet union.<sup>42</sup> The party youth movement (Ashbal) and the communist youth organisation were main branches concerned with party activity. Regular meetings held among the members after every two weeks to

---

<sup>41</sup> Ilana, Kaufman "*Arab National Communism*" p.50, (Note-34).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, p. 54.

discuss national political and local events. Demonstration rallies, leaflet distributions and election campaigns were the activities in which party members took part.

**TABLE – 4**

**SOME PROMINENT LEADERS OF ARAB AND ARAB-ORIENTED PARTIES.**

Party	Leaders
DAP+	Abd-el-Wahab Darwishe, Shukriel-Abd, Ahmad Abu'Isba
Islamic Movement	Sheikh Abdallah Nimr Darwish, Sheikh Kamal al-Khatib, Sheikh Raid Salah
Rakah*	Emil Habibi, Tawfiq Tubi, Hashem Mahomid
PLP	Muhamad Miari, Kamel ed-Daher, Dr. Rashid Salim
Sons of the Village +	Muhamad Tawfiq Keywan, Hasan Ahamad Jabbarin, Muhamad Salama Mahajna, Ghassan Fawzi Eghbaria, Rija Muhammad Eghbaria.

**+ Arab Party.**

**\* Arab Oriented Party.**

**PARTY LEADERSHIP**

Officially the party leaders are almost always elected by the members and given a fairly short period of office in accordance with democratic roles. The Fascist parties only openly reject this procedure and replace it by appointment from above. Maurice has laid down the doctrine of inner circle.<sup>43</sup> The doctrine of inner circle is that which deals with role of ruling class within political parties. This inner circle plays crucial role in working of the parties. Scrutiny of inner circle leadership helps in drawing distinction between democratic and non-democratic party systems. The non-democratic parties are highly centralised with the result that their leadership remains strongly established and those who occupy the inner ring can not be replaced unless

<sup>43</sup> Duverger "Political Parties" p. 151.



there is some violent revolt or a coup. The supreme leaders vacates either because of their death or when there is a major shake up in the ranks of the inner circle. Different from this democratic parties stand on the principle of decentralisation as a result of which inner circle remains in a state of frequent renewal.<sup>44</sup> The most evil dimension of leadership may be seen in its personalised variety.<sup>45</sup> Not only in a totalitarian system but also in a system committed to democratic model, the fact of personalised leadership may be said to have its impression in most of the cases.

There had been certain balance between Jews and Arabs in ruling inner circle leadership both in Maki (1948-65) and Rakah up to the 1980s. Jewish leaders had considerable influence in the party. Over the issue of Palestinian Arabs there were certain difference between Arab and Jewish factions of the communist party. In 1965 two separate conventions were held. New communist list known as Rakah created by Arab faction after 1965 convention. After the split in 1965, Rakah came under predominantly Christian-Arab leadership. Until the 1980s, the decisive influence in the Rakah leadership was held by Christian-Arab leaders. Eventhough their proportion in the Arab population is less compare to Muslims, they formed an absolute majority in the Arab communist leadership. In 1990s party leadership was formed by then members of Knesset such as Hashem Mahamid.<sup>46</sup> Another leadership group in the party is composed of leading Rakah activists in the trade unions. Thus frequent changes in the party leadership endorses the fact that communist party of Israel is not a non-democratic party.

Sheikh Abdullah remained uncontested as supreme guide and spiritual leader of Islamic movement, but his political authority eroded by the emergence of prominent

---

<sup>44</sup> Ibid p. 157.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid p. 177.

<sup>46</sup> Ori Stended "*Arabs in Israel*" p. 102 (Note-5).

young *shekhs*.<sup>47</sup> Now Islamic movement is under collective leadership and takes its decisions by majority vote. Sheikh Abdullah is now just member of the leadership like other so there is no personalised variety of leadership in Islamic Movement.

As far as Democratic Arab party is concerned it was established by Abd-al-Wahab Darawishe but its leadership consisting of people like Shukrid-Abd and Ahamad Abu, Isba apart from Drawishe. Thus Maurice Duverger's analysis of political parties on the lines of party structure, membership and leadership helps in understanding of Arab political parties and Arab oriented parties.

---

<sup>47</sup> Raphel Israeli: *Muslim fundamentalism in Israel*. (UK: Brassey's, 1993), p.120.



# CHAPTER-IV

## **Role of Arab Political Parties in Knesset Elections and Government**

---

For a long time Israeli Arabs did not have much possibilities to choose political parties. Whatever choices they had were very limited. It was because of the conservative nature of the system and security reasons. Arabs had only two choices namely Zionist parties and communist parties. In modern liberal democratic countries consisting of various ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, political rights of these communities are usually recognised through giving adequate representation to them in political institutions like parliament and local government institutions etc. Nomination is one of the method but not sole criteria to give representation to minorities. In Israel there is no as such tradition of nomination, minorities like Arabs, Druze and Christians are elected and not nominated. Since the first Knesset elections in 1949, Israeli Arabs have been elected continuously and have been represented in ruling coalition in one or otherway.<sup>1</sup> The *Maki* (The Israeli Communist party), *Rakah* (because of split in communist party new communist list was formed in 1965), and *Mapai* (which became the Israel Labour Party in 1968) were the first to give representation to Israeli Arabs in Knesset. During the 1950s and 1960s Arabs could not become members of Zionist parties. The left socialist *Mapam* was the only Zionist party that opened its ranks to Arab members.

The proportional representation system helped *Mapai* to bring into operation the idea of minority lists.<sup>2</sup> Intention of bringing such lists was that candidates who can help party and state could be selected for the list and giving Arab electorate the option of choosing the lists linked to party. Most of the time

---

<sup>1</sup> P.R. Kumarswamy. "Political legitimacy of the minorities: Israeli Arabs and 1996 Knesset elections", the Emirates occasional papers, 1998 No.20 (AbuDhabi, UAE: The Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research 1998), p.15.

<sup>2</sup> The social-democratic Mapai was formed in 1930 and was leading party in the Yishuv and in the state of Israel until 1968. In 1968 it became Labour Party.

members who got elected on minority lists were sidelined and brought back by the parties as a candidates for list in next Knesset elections. In 1951 for the first time *Mapam*<sup>3</sup> included Arab candidate on its lists and Rustum Bastuni became first elected member of the Knesset.<sup>4</sup> For political and pragmatic reasons *Mapai* / Labour party gave representation to Arab members in their Knesset list. Political reason was that they wanted to show they are different to *Likud* / *Herut*<sup>5</sup> in ideology by giving representation to Arabs. Pragmatic reason was that to get Arab support in coalitional politics. Arab Knesset members were under different tight controls, their freedom of action was limited in the political arena. Until 1966 because of military rule Arab support to *Mapai* was not of a free choice. They had to act according to directions of *Mapai* to which they represented. Though unwilling to grant choices, parties were not ready to refuse Arab population, because in electoral terms Arab support was essential for them. Until 1988 there were less options for the Arab minorities, it was only in 1988 after the formation of Democratic Arab party, the Arabs in Israel did have a political party of their own. Therefore for long time, the communist party of Israel was the only non-Zionist Political option open to the Arab electorate. Otherwise their choice was limited to the *Mapai* and *Mapam*.<sup>6</sup> More importantly communist party was the only party which was concerned about cause of equality for Arabs in Israeli politics and society.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Mapam was founded in 1948 by a merger of workers party and unity of labour movement.

<sup>4</sup> Kumarswamy P.R. "*Political legitimacy of minorities*" p. 18, (Note-1).

<sup>5</sup> Herut or Freedom party was formed in 1948. It became the center of a wider political bloc, the Likud in 1973.

<sup>6</sup> Mapam was initially a leftist Zionist party but in 1951 declared itself as Marxist – Leninist without disavowing Zionism.

<sup>7</sup> Kumarswamy P.R. "*Political legitimacy of minorities*" p. 20, (Note-1).

## THE ISRAELI GENERAL ELECTION OF 1988

The Israeli elections of November 1988 were the most critical for a generation. These elections were remarkable not only for the importance of the issues but also for the political creativity. The *intifadah* or uprising of palastinian Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza that erupted in December 1987 had united all Israeli Arabs behind one goal. The clearest expression of this unity was seen on 23 January 1988 when leaders from the various political groupings as well as many thousands of Arabs from Galilee, the Triangle and the Negev participated in an impressive demonstration to show solidarity with their compatriots in the occupied territories. This demonstration was sponsored by the regional committee of the committee of heads of Arab councils. Supporters of Israeli communist party, the progressive list for peace, Islamic movement participated in that demonstration. Surprisingly in that demonstration Abd-al-Wahab Darwishe tendered his resignation to Labour party because of its policies regarding occupied territories. Rabin was called as murderer by Darwishe because of his government's repression on palastinians. He said he could not continue to stay in cruel party. According to comments of many observers Darwishe's resignation was not related to the *intifadah* events. They felt that his place was not safe in the party for next elections and therefore he left the party with having hopes of establishing his own party, aspirations which Darwishe did not deny.<sup>8</sup> And this prediction became true when Darwishe entered the race of 1988 elections with his new Democratic Arab party.

---

<sup>8</sup> Daoud Kuttub "*Arab Israelis Unite*" Middle East International, 6 February 1988.

The *intifadah* dominated the election overshadowing most other issues. *Intifadah* directed attention on important questions of peace, security, territory and relations with Arabs. According to pre-election polls all these issues were high on the list of public concerns.<sup>9</sup> Other issues were silent in the public consciousness in 1988 elections. Even the serious issue of state of economy could not get much importance. But after the election this problem of economy again arose as a major threat to stability. Issue of *intifadah* was their in the minds of the people nearly for one whole year before the elections. Its impact could be seen in various fields, for example palastinian workers from the occupied territories did not sweep the streets, work in factories and on constructions sites stopped because of labour shortage, and palastinians boycotted Israeli products.

### **ARAB PARTIES AND 1988 ELECTION**

For the first time Arab electorate did have Arab party namely Democratic Arab party in this election. Democratic Arab Party was very optimistic about its prospects. Supporters noted that the party had fought hard and done various campaigns in short time and despite limited means.<sup>10</sup> Darwishe said "I hope that we have succeeded in gaining popularity in the Arab sector and I hope this will be translated into votes. It had not been able to conduct any surveys due to lack of funds."<sup>11</sup> There was stiff competition between Democratic Arab Party and other Arab-oriented parties like Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, Progressive List for Peace in getting support in Arab sector. In this election, Progressive List for Peace refrained them concluding a surplus vote agreement with the Democratic Arab Party. Because both of these parties were targeting same vote bank. Moreover Progressive List for Peace, in order

---

<sup>9</sup> Don Pertez and Sammy Smooha "Israel's Twelfth Knesset election: An All-Loser Game" Middle East Journal (Washington D.C.) Vol. 43, No.3 Summer 1989, p. 388.

<sup>10</sup> "Parties sum up their campaigns and hopes." November 1 1988, Jerusalem Post, p.10.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p.10.

to deny Democratic Arab Party the national approval it did not have surplus vote agreement.

The Democratic Arab Parties deployment of its candidates reflected its common sense and detailed Knowledge of its political base. This party sought to fill the gap that had not been properly represented by Progressive List for Peace or the *Hadash*. Democratic Arab Party turned to Muslim sector which had not been cared by other parties. Ahmad Abu Isba, the former teacher and academician from the Galilee village was placed in number two slot on the list of Democratic Arab Party.<sup>12</sup> Abu Isba was an intelligent selection by the Democratic Arab Party. Because Abu Isba was experienced and eloquent person, he had fought in struggle for equality as a member of the committee of Arab Local Council Heads. The Democratic Arab Party also directed its attention towards Bedouin Community, which had been unrepresented in the Knesset since the murder of Member of Knesset Hamad Abu Rabia.<sup>13</sup> The Democratic Arab Party selected one Bedouin lawyer from the Quderiates-sane tribe in the third slot and he brought in 6,000 Bedouins votes to party and 43 percent of the Arab votes in the Negev. Representation was given to other small localities which were usually out of other parties lists.

### **The Results**

Israel has high participation rate in the elections compared to liberal democracies in the west. In 1984 the electoral turnout was 78.8 percent and in 1981 it was 78.5 percent, but in 1988 election electoral participation was more than earlier numbers. In all 2,305,567 Israelis went to the polls out of a

---

<sup>12</sup> Ori, Stendel *"The Arabs in Israel"* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 1996) p, 131.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p.132.



total electorate of 2,894,267. The number of spoiled ballot papers increased to 22,444. The number of votes required for the parties to cross 1 percent threshold and qualify for a share of the Knesset seats was 22,831; the quota of votes needed for each seat was 18,563. The results showed a continuing decline in the number of seats shared by the two major parties, the Labour Alignment and the *Likud*, they had 79 seats in twelfth Knesset compared with 85 in the eleventh Knesset. Table one shows position of the various parties in 1988 Knesset election whereas table two is about threshold margin for the parties.

**TABLE-1**

**The 1988 Knesset Election Results**

<b>Party</b>	<b>No. of Seats</b>
Likud	40
Labour	39
Shas	6
Augdat Israel	5
National Religious Party	5
Citizens Rights Party	5
<i>Hadash</i>	4
Tehiya	3
Mapam	3
Degel Hatorah	2
Moldet	2
Shinui	2
T Zomet	2
Democratic Arab Party	1
Progressive List for Peace	1

**Source: Middle East International 18 November 1988.**

TABLE-2

**Voting and Threshold Margin in 1984 and 1988 Election.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Voted Ballots</b>	<b>Spoiled Ballots</b>	<b>Threshold Margin</b>
1984	2,023,321	18,081	20,733
1988	2,305,567	22,444	22,831

**Source: David Capitanchik "The people fail to decide the Israeli General Election of 1988" Government and Opposition, Spring 1989.**

When the results were announced in night after the balloting, results were interpreted by Democratic Arab Party founder Darwishe as a victory for Arabism. Darwishe announced in public his set of beliefs showing superiority to others He said "We have made history in the state of Israel. This is the first time that a nationalist Arab party has succeeded in entering the Knesset as an independent list not as a satellite of Zionist parties. We have accomplished this eventhough the Zionists and the communists spent many months fighting us. Our party with one mandate will be far active and effective than older parties with five mandates. We are true victors and our Arab people is on the right path."<sup>14</sup> During election time the Labour Party feared that it might lose up to two Knesset seats as result of Arab defections. Party selected Nawab Masalha, a Muslim from a small village in the Triangle, as candidate number 35 on its list. But selection of Masalha brought more resentment among the supporters of the party. As one party official noted "Masalha is well liked by Jews in his own party. Many Israeli Arabs resent him because of that."<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 132.

<sup>15</sup> Don Pertz and Sammy Smoocha "Israel's Twelfth Knesset Election; An All-Loser Game" Middle East Journal Vol. 43, No. 3, Summer 1989, p. 402.

**OVERVIEW OF ARAB AND ARAB ORIENTED PARTIES FOCUS ON IMPORTANT ISSUES.**

Most important feature of 1988 election was Democratic Arab Party and other Arab Oriented parties attitude over certain important issues like Zionism, religion, territories and formation of the government. Basically all these parties are Non-Zionist except *Hadash* which it is anti-Zionist. Table three is about these parties view over certain issues. To know about Arab parties total votes and percentage of total votes see table four. The Progressive List for Peace is secular whereas Democratic Arab Party is ethnic (Arabic/ Islamic) in its nature *Hadash* is anticlerical because of its communist ideology. All these parties pressed for withdrawal of Israeli authority from the occupied territories in 1988 election. There were factions with which neither *Likud* nor Labour would form coalition. These factions were Democratic Front for Peace and Equality and Progressive List for Peace. But Democratic Arab Party made it clear that it would not boycott the government resulting from the elections. Because Democratic Arab Party wanted to obtain real political influence.

**TABLE-3**

**ARAB AND ARAB ORIENTED PARTIES VIEW OVER IMPORTANT ISSUES IN 1988 ELECTIONS.**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Zionism</b>	<b>Religion</b>	<b>Territories</b>	<b>Coalition</b>
DAP	Non-Zionist	Ethnic* (Religious)	Withdrawal	Labour
<i>Hadash</i>	Anti-Zionist	Anti-Clerical	Withdrawal, Would support labour	Unacceptable
PLP	Non-Zionist	Secular	Withdrawal	Unacceptable

\*Although Democratic Arab party is an ethnic party, it is also religious since it stresses muslim identity.

**Source:** Don Pertz and Sammy Smooha "Israeli's twelfth Knesset Election: An All-Loser Game". Middle East Journal, Vol.43, No.3, Summer 1989.

Darwishe aspired to become a first Arab minister in the government. He even argued that a government without an Arab representative is not a government representing whole people. The Progressive List for Peace leader Muhamad Miari was more nationalist than Darwishe in this regard. He was against compromising his principles by joining a Labour Government. He favoured supporting government by becoming part of block majority. Block majority is that majority which would block the *Likud's* way to come to power. But Darwishe's point was that he was elected by Arabs not by Jews so he wanted to join government to help Arabs by influencing the government policies.<sup>16</sup>

**TABLE-4**

**VOTE AND PERCENTAGE OF 1988 KNESSET ELECTIONS**

<b>LIST</b>	<b>VOTES</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Democratic Arab Party	27,012	1.18
Progressive List for Peace	33,695	1.48
Democratic Front for Peace and Equality	84,032	3.68.

**Source: David Capitanchik "The people fail to decide: The Israeli General Election of 1988" Government and opposition, Spring 1989.**

**THE ARAB VOTE**

In 1984 Knesset elections it became clear that Israeli Arab voters were going away from the Zionist parties. In 1988 election results in the Arab sector

<sup>16</sup> Benymin Neuberger *"The Arab minority in Israeli politics 1948 – 1992 – From Marginality to Influence"* Asian and African Studies, Vol.27, No.1-2 (1993).

showed a further marked shift towards the parties with an Arab or Arab Jewish identity. In 1984, 48.75 percent of voters casted their vote in favour of Zionist parties and 51.3 percent favoured the Arab-Jewish lists. In 1988 Knesset elections 59.3 percent voted for the Jewish Arab and Arab parties, while the Zionist parties share of the Arab vote fell to 40.7 percent. Table five gives comparative account of Arab voting for various political parties in 1984 and 1988 elections. Among the Bedouin community there was a more dramatic change.

**TABLE-5**

**ISRAELI: ARAB VOTING**

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>% ARAB VOTE 1988</b>	<b>% ARAB VOTE 1984</b>
Likud	7	5
Maarch	17	31
<i>Hadash</i>	34	32
PLP	14	18
DAP	11	--
Shinui	2	4
Ratz	4	1
Mapam	4	--
Mafdal	3	4
Others	4	5

**Source: Don Pertz and Sammy Smooha "Israel's twelfth Knesset Election: An All-loser Game", Middle East Journal, Vol. 43, No.3, Winter 1989.**

Only 45.5 percent of voters voted for the Zionist parties compared to 90 percent in 1984. The labour Alignment had been the main party which suffered due to the change of political support from the Arab community. Its

share of Arab vote reduced from 25 percent in 1984 to 16.25 percent in 1988 election.

As mentioned earlier, Democratic Arab Party was the first Arab list which emerged in 1988 elections parties like *Hadash* and Progressive List for Peace are very careful about stressing their joint Jewish and Arab character. They selected both Jews and Arabs as candidates in their list to Knesset election. However this was not the character of Democratic Arab Party because there were no Jews among the list of candidates put forward by that party in the 1988 Knesset election. Because of Israeli Arabs feeling regarding the year long *intifadha*, it could be viewed as a long-term move towards a severe palastenian nationalist tendency. It is widely known in Israel, that Arabs had fully supported their fellow palestenians in the territories.

Israel's Arabs however were by no means homogenous, neither in their political affiliations nor in their attitude.<sup>17</sup> The Jewish Arab and Arab parties had total six seats in the twelfth Knessel. Had are Arabs supported one party, their voting potential might have resulted in the success of more seats. But hostility between these various parties made them difficult even to have surplus vote agreements. So they wasted lot of votes and ultimately some seats in Knesset. (Surplus vote in Israeli electoral process is that well in advance to the election any two parties may agree to pool their surplus votes).

As far as attitude towards Israel as a Jewish state is concerned there is a difference between young educated Arabs and older Arabs. The young

---

<sup>17</sup> David Lapitanchik *"The People fail to decide: The Israeli General Elections of 1988"* Government and opposition Spring 1989, p.1 52.

educated Arab is major bulk of the Arab electorate. Their views and attitude about Jewish state, palastenian nationalism are similar to view and attitude of Democratic Arab Party, *Hadash* and Progressive List for Peace. Older Arab people remain more practical and they prefer to be an Arab minority and seek best possible life. It is important to note that even after *intifadah* 40 percent of *Israeli* Arabs still supported Zionist parties. In 1984 elections there were 270,000 eligible Arab voters while in 1988 there were 345000 voters, an increase due to young people voting for the first time. Most of the young Arab voters voted for Arab parties, this is one of the reason related with voting for Democratic Arab party in 1988 elections<sup>18</sup> other reasons are; in many villages of the Arab sector one rumour was spread that Democratic Arab Party leader Darwishe had made a deal with the Labour Party and that the creation of the Democratic Arab party was trick.<sup>19</sup> Village people intended to vote for the Labour Party through Darwishe, because in this way they would have a representative to whom they could bring their problems.<sup>20</sup> Another reason for voting Darwishe is related to Bedouin community's dissatisfaction with the Labour Party's policies, but is not related with palastenian issue. Ministry of Agriculture encroached the land of this community and perhaps it was their feeling of deprivation which caused them to vote against Labour Party. It was hardly concerned with the *intifadah*. This dissatisfaction with Labour Party was beneficial for the Democratic Arab Party because Bedouin Community had to vote against Labour party but on the other hand it was difficult for them to give their vote to the *Likud* (because *Likud* was in no way favourable to

---

<sup>18</sup> Joseph Ginat "The elections in the Arab sector voting patterns and political behaviour". The Jerusalem Quarterly, (Jerusalem, Israel) No.-53, Winter 1990, p. 29.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 29.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p.29.

development of the Arab community). They even did not vote for the non-Zionist parties, if they had voted it could have been interpreted as an act against the state therefore they remained cautious in not voting non-Zionist parties like Democratic Front for Peace and Equality and Progressive List for Peace.

Only two Arab candidate i.e. Nauaf Maslha, a Muslim from Kafer Quara in the triangle, placed on the labour list and Fares Hussein, who was placed on *Mapam* list got elected.<sup>21</sup> There were other Zionist lists which got Arab votes without having a single Arab candidate in their list (for example *Likud* party).

There was no significant change in the voting patterns of Arabs of Israel in 1988 elections. And some percentage of the votes decline for the Zionist parties cannot be seen that as some, sort of radicalisation in the political behaviour but of course it could be interpreted as an expansion of the protest over the improper treatment. Significant change in the 1988 elections was that Islamic Movement declared that its members and supporter could vote in the Knesset elections. Members and supporters of Ansar, a group of the sons of village, which split from the sons, of village, al-Nahada did not vote in the Knesset elections until 1988 election as an expression of non-recognition of Israel's existence. But in this election they voted and supported the progressive list for peace.<sup>22</sup> Some kind of political immaturity could be observed on the part of Israeli Arabs in failing to conclude surplus vote agreement. Also there was low voting turnout. Though there were three

---

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, p. 32.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*, p.48.



parties in competition for the election, but there was low motivation to exercise the right to vote.

### **1988 ELECTIONS AND COALITION FORMATION**

In 1984 labour party considered the idea of forming a minority government backed by the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality and Progressive List for Peace. But labour party did not form such government because it feared the negative reaction of Jewish-Israeli public opinion. Labour party also thought about practicability of narrow coalition based on a host of tiny parties. But Arab parties succeeded in preventing all attempts of rightwing to establish a narrow coalition. Situation of 1984 emerged again after the 1988 election results. It was almost like draw between the left and right wing parties. This time Democratic Arab Party, a new party with new hopes was ready to enter the coalition. But Labour Party once again considered the formation of government by taking outside support of Arab parties. The Arab and Arab oriented parties were ready to support the deal only if Labour government would commit itself to an international peace conference on foreign policy and policy to close socio-economic gaps.<sup>23</sup> Ultimately labour party went for National Unity Government with mutual deals between *Likud* and itself. Arab parties on their part indirectly helped the labour party to share power by preventing narrow right-wing coalition led by *Likud* with the help of other rightist parties.

---

<sup>23</sup> Benyamin, Neuberger "The Arab Minority in Israeli politics 1948-1992 – From Marginality to Influence", Asian and African Studies 27 (1993), p. 164.

When national unity government collapsed in March 1990, Labour Party for the first time started negotiations with Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, Democratic Arab Party, Progressive List for Peace. All these parties asked president Chaim Herzog to nominate Peres as a Prime Minister. Democratic Front for Peace and Equality and Progressive List for Peace did not like to join the government but they were ready to give outside support. Democratic Arab Party announced its willingness to join the coalition on certain demands. Those demands were government's support to peace process, the Cairo talks between Israeli and Palestinian delegations and an egalitarian policy with regard to the Israeli Arabs.<sup>24</sup> At last in April 1990 a written agreement was signed by Labour Party and Arab and Arab oriented parties. Labour party agreed to follow policy of peace and equality. It also gave assurance that it would cancel the law prohibiting Israeli citizens from meeting Palestine Liberation Organisation representatives. Unfortunately, Labour Party failed to form a narrow government because religious parties withdrew their support to Peres and *Likud* formed a narrow right-wing government. But this plan was realised after the 1992 elections.

### **THE 1992 KNESSET ELECTIONS**

The Israeli general election of 1992 was an event that marked an important change in the country's political history. As in all previous elections, participation was high in 13<sup>th</sup> Knesset election. There was however some three percent fall in the participation compare to last election. In 1988 election 80 percent of electorate voted, but this time there was only 77 percent turnout.

---

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 65.

In all twentyfive political parties contested the elections but 15 parties failed to cross new 1.5 percent threshold in order to qualify for a share of seats in the Knesset. *Likud* party was the major loser in the 1992 election. It had lost its dominant position which it had enjoyed in the past. Two factors which radically changed the situation in 1992, one was the influence of threshold cross from one to one half percent and another was loss of bargaining power of smaller parties.

As a result Labour party emerged as the only party which was able to form government and this was similar to past situation.<sup>25</sup> The elections to thirteenth Knesset changed various aspects like domestic issues and foreign affairs. In 1992 election the dynamic leadership of the Yitazhak Robin played an important role in success of Labour Party.

### **ARAB PARTIES AND 1992 ELECTION**

The three parties the Democratic Arab party, progressive list for peace, and *Hadash* participated in 1992 Knesset elections, but these parties remained divided in this election. Most of the left-wing Zionist parties were united and they were confident about the success of Labour Party. The Democratic Arab Party led by Abd-al-Wahab Darwishe, the Progressive List for Peace led by Muhammad Miari a Democratic Front for Peace and Equality led by Tawfiq Zayyad failed to unite into single bloc. From the beginning the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality was unlikely to join the other two parties because it was firm on its stand about being an Arab-Jewish coalition.

---

<sup>25</sup> David Capitanchik "A New beginning? The 1992 Israeli General Election" Karsn, Efraim and Gregory Mahler (eds) *Israel at the cross roads: The challenge of peace* (London: British Academic Press 1994). P.130.

Eventhough Progressive List for Peace was a party which was based on Arab Jewish coalition it tried to settle matter with Democratic Arab Party leader Darwishe regarding united list in this election. However both these parties could not agree as to who would lead a united list? The Progressive List For Peace members refused to accept Darwishe's leadership in leading the list, because in 1988 Knesset elections their party had got more votes than Democratic Arab Party and they did not like to be led by a former member of a Zionist party. But Darwashe was ready to give Progressive List for Peace the number two and three places on the list, but this move failed to convince the supporters of the Progressive List for Peace. In this election Democratic Arab party was more organised in its party machinery and succeeded in getting Palestine Liberation Organisation backing.<sup>26</sup> The Islamic movement did not decide about to which parties it would support. Both Progressive List for Peace and Democratic Arab Party were hoping that Islamic leaders would support them. But there was split among the leaders over the issue of voting in general election in movement. Supporters of the movement voted whichever party they wanted to vote. Because two opposing camps, those for Knesset participation and those who are against reached a compromise formula. They agreed that movement would not enter the elections but would urge followers to vote. In the villages of Bara in Central Israel and Ummalfahm, where movement is strong, voting was 52 and 62 percent respectively in this elections.

---

<sup>26</sup> Daoud Kuttab *"Israel's Arabs remain divided"* Middle East International 29<sup>th</sup> May 1992.

## RESULTS

In 1992 election rate of abstention was very high. There were 390,000 eligible Arab and Druze voters but only 70 percent of them voted. This was lower than the total Israeli average of 79 percent. Also it was lower than 1988 election, when it was 75 percent. To have information about position of various political parties in 1992 election see Table Six. Table seven is about Arab votes to Arab parties, whereas Table eight gives picture of Arab vote for Zionist parties in 1992 election. There was significant drop in voting for the Democratic Front For Peace And Equality and the Progressive List for Peace and rise for the Democratic Arab Party. The Democratic Front for Peace and Equality lost almost one-third of its Knesset strength compared to with the 12<sup>th</sup> elections. In 1988 it got 33.4 percent of the Arab vote but in 1992 only 23.2. Ofcourse Democratic Front for Peace and Equality maintained its position as the strongest political organisation within the Arab minority but its voters share declined. Of the three Democratic Front for Peace and Equality members elected only two were Arabs: Tawfiq Ziyad and Hashim Mahamid.

In this election Progressive List for Peace failed to pass the minimum threshold. In 1992 it got only 9.2 percent of the Arab vote compared with 14.3 percent which it got in 1988. There were several reasons for Progressive List for Peace's poor performance. It suffered from poor organisation, it did not try to recruit members and establish branches.<sup>27</sup> Its contact with support base was not in good terms and many members joined other blocs and parties.<sup>28</sup> There was a problem of the leadership in the Progressive List For Peace.

---

<sup>27</sup> As'ad Ghanem "The limits of parliamentary politics: The Arab minority in Israel and the 1992 and 1996 elections". Israel Affairs (Jerusalem, Israel) Vol. 4, No.2, Winter 1997, p.80.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

Mohamad Miari had been accused of acting without consulting the other leaders of the party.<sup>29</sup> Progressive List for Peace did not come up with new issues, this led to lack of interest among its potential voters. It raised only the banner of palastenian national identity of the Arabs in Israel. In making serious effort to deal with this issue, it ignored day-to-day domestic problems.<sup>30</sup>

### Results of the 1992 Knesset Election.

**TABLE-6**

PARTY	SEATS
DAP (Democratic Arab Party)	2
PLP (Progressive list for peace).	0
<i>Hadash</i> (Democratic Front for peace and equality)	3
Mertez	12
Labour	44
Likud	32
Shas	6
National Religious Party	6
United Torah Judaism	4
Tsomet	8
Moledet	3
Tehiya	0

Source: Gregory Mahler "The Rabin Coalition and its implications for future reform" Karsh Efrain and Gregory Mahler (eds) *Israel at the crossroads: The challenge of peace* (London: British Academic Press 1994), p. 174.

The Democratic Arab Party did well in this election, it got two seats. It won 15.2 percent of the Arab vote in 1992 while it got 11.3 percent in 1988 elections. Some of the reasons for Democratic Arab Party's success were: it not only stressed palastenian cause but also every day matters. Its emphasis on continuous discrimination in education, health, municipal development etc

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

helped the party acquiring real hold on Arab sector. Before the election Democratic Arab Party had expressed its interest in creating large Arab block, but it failed to achieve. The Democratic Arab Party at last succeeded in creating mini union with some group of independents.<sup>31</sup> It took assistance of prominent Arab activists to place responsibility for the failure of United Arab list on Progressive List for Peace.

**TABLE-7**

**The Arab vote for Arab parties in 1992 Knesset Election.**

<b>Party</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
DFPE	60,073	23.2
DAP	39,766	15.2
PLP	23,222	9.2

**Source:** Frisch, Hillel "The Arab Vote: The Radicalisation of Politicisation" Israel Affairs, Vol.4, No.1, Autumn 1997, p.105.

### **THE ARAB VOTE**

There were four major reasons for the lower turnout of vote among Arabs in 1992 Knesset elections<sup>32</sup> First was that some political parties ignored the idea of voting. They opposed voting on ideological perceptions. The sons of village was one of such group which boycotted the elections. Second reason was that some groups like Islamic movement questioned the usefulness of Knesset elections for Arabs. According to them for 44 years Arabs had achieved less in parliament as far as question of equality and palastenian problem was concerned. Islamic movement suggested that Arabs should

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p.81.

<sup>32</sup> Rekhees, Elie "The Arab Minority and the 1992 election: Integration or Alienation" Israel at the Cross roads (See Note-25).

concentrate on extra-parliamentary institution like local councils, because Arabs had direct control over financial resources in municipal sphere. Third reason was the sole role of Islamic movement. It contributed to the decline in the rate of participation. Fourth and final reason was disappointment of Arab community about inability of Arab parties to create joint Arab list. For months leaders of Arab parties discussed about united list, at last no such list was formed. Inter personal rivalries, religious differences, geographic division were responsible for failure of the creation of united list.<sup>33</sup>

**TABLE-8**

**Arab vote for Zionist parties in 1992 Knesset Election**

<b>Parties</b>	<b>Votes</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Labour	48,440	20.3
Mertez	23,787	9.7
Likud-Gesher, Tzomet and Religious Parties	42,450	18.1
Others	9,953	4.3
<b>Total vote cast for Zionist Parties</b>	<b>124,970</b>	<b>52.4</b>

**Source:** Frisch Hillel "The Arab Vote: The Redicalisation of politicisation" Israel Affairs Vol., 4, No.1, Autumn 1997, p.105.

The lack of unity among Arab camp helped Zionist parties to get more support from Arab community. More Arabs voted for Zionist parties than Arab and Arab oriented parties. The Labour party, *Mertez*, *Likud*, the National Religious Party and Shas gained 52.4 percent vote from the Arab community. In 1988 Arab voting percentage to Zionist parties was only 40 percent. This change in the pattern might be because of certain beliefs like only with cooperation of

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid*, p.155.



Zionist establishment equality would be achieved.<sup>34</sup> The labour party got 20.3 percent compared to 17 percent in 1988 elections. One Arab candidate was elected to Knesset on the Labour List. Moreover labour party emphasized its willingness to reach settlement with palastenians and equality for Israeli Arabs during 1992 elections. The left-wing Mertez got 9.7 percent of the Arab vote and maintained its earlier share of 1988 elections. Arabs might have voted for this party due to Mertezs willingness to provide equal civil rights. *Mertezs*. An Arab candidate Wahid Sadiq was elected on *Mertez's* list. *Likud* party got 9 percent of the Arab vote, while its share was only 7 percent. This time it increased its share by 2 percent. Shas party got 5 percent of Arab vote compared to 1 percent in 1988 elections. Due to Interior Minister Rabbi Aryeh Deri's popularity in Arab sector, Arabs have voted for this party. Thus large amount of vote for Zionist parties showed the practical approach of Israeli. And this voting behaviour of the Arabs has highlighted the following features:

- (a) There has been rise and fall of Arab vote from 1981 Knesset election to 1992 election. In 1981 68 percent of Arabs voted whereas it was 74 and 70 percent in 1988 and 1992 elections respectively.<sup>35</sup>
- (b) Zionist parties got more votes from Arab community than Arab parties. This was due to their effort to win Arab votes in 1992 election.
- (c) Decrease in the share of communist party might be due to decreasing popularity of communist ideology and loss of political backing of communist regimes. Problems of centralism and internal

---

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 154.

<sup>35</sup> As,ad Ghanem "Arab Minority", p.77 (Note-27).

democratisation in communist party also affected voters.<sup>36</sup> Too much stress on the issue of Palestine on the part of Progressive List For Peace alienated Arab voters from the party. Effort of Democratic Arab Party in creating Broader bloc was assumed by Arab voters as Democratic Arab Parties real interest in Arab problem.

- (d) Scattering of the Arab votes to various parties especially major portion to Zionist parties prevented the Arab parties to claim themselves as representatives of Arabs.<sup>37</sup>

### **ARAB PARTIES AND GOVERNMENT FORMATION AFTER ELECTION**

As far as coalition formation was concerned, 1992 elections brought major changes. Arab parties got much importance with regard to coalition politics. Arab members of Knesset were able to play a crucial role in the formation of Labour Party government. The status of Arab parties changed from group of opposition to members of blocking majority.<sup>38</sup> Had Democratic Arab Party and *Hadash* not supported Rabin, he would not have been able to form the government. In spite of this Rabin did not include the members of Democratic Arab Party and *Hadash* in the coalition. Identification of Democratic Arab Party and *Hadash* with Palestine Liberation Organisation prevented Rabin to take them as coalition partners. Rabin was able to form government because of Democratic Arab Party and *Hadash's* support. But they demanded a rewards and opportunities for support of the government. As a result Labour

<sup>36</sup> As,ad Ghonem "*Arab Minority*", p.79 (Note-27).

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p.81.

<sup>38</sup> Rekees, Elie "*1992 Election*", p.159 (Note-25).

Party signed a memorandum of understanding with Democratic Arab Party and *Hadash*.<sup>39</sup> The memorandum promised long list of demands and actions.

One more important step on the part of the Labour party regarding Arabs was appointment of Member of Knesset Nawaf Masalha as deputy minister of Health. Other coalition partner Mertz appointed it Member of Knesset Walidsadiq as deputy minister of Agriculture.<sup>40</sup> This new policy of government was warmly welcomed by Arab population. But there were some people in the Arab sector who were cautious about government's genuine interest in Arabs. They doubted the seriousness of the government. This doubt about government became true over certain issues, because high expectation of most of the Arabs soon disappeared. Some of the demands put forward by the Democratic Arab Party and Democratic Front for Peace and Equality did not receive attention of national decision makers.

Real logic behind the support of Arab parties to Rabin's coalition was that they had no alternative to that. In many ways Rabin's government provided possible chances for the Arabs during that time. Arab parties had to support this government because its fall was perceived as threat to the peace process. Arab parties did not like to undermine the peace process by bringing pressure on the government over other issues. During May 1993 Shas Party created problem to government. Shas Demanded the replacement of Mertz minister of education and culture and they gave threat of leaving the government. This time Democratic Arab Party and Democratic Front for Peace and Equality supported the government. In October 1995 the government got support of narrower margin 61-59 votes in endorsing the

---

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p.159.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, p. 160.

OSLO-II, accord in Knesset with the support of five Members of Knesset of Arab Oriented parties government managed simple majority. Thus Arab and Arab oriented parties succeeded in supporting the government over issues which were indirectly helpful to Arabs but they failed in fulfilling Arabs high expectation of equality in education, health and development.

### **THE 1996 KNESSET ELECTIONS**

Israel's Fourteenth Knesset election in 1996 was important in Israeli's history. Under Netanyahu's prime ministership many fundamental changes took place in domestic and foreign policies. In this election Netanyahu, a unknown figure defeated Shimon Peres an internationally reputed two time prime minister. This election was conducted under new system in which for the first time voter had to cast two ballots: one for Prime Minister candidate and another for party list for Knesset. Elections of Knesset and Prime Minister were conducted at the same time, but they were independent of each other. In 13 previous elections voters casted their vote for only a list of party candidates and leader of the party receiving largest number of Knesset seats became Prime Minister. The shift to a prime minister regime was like a structural change in sense of change from parliamentary to quasi parliamentary form of government.<sup>41</sup>

During the early months of 1996 one fifth of the electorate had not made decision to which candidate to support in prime ministerial race. Two thirds of voters had centrist or right wing political attraction. These voters were doubtful about Peres's winnability, so they became target of Netanyahu. In January 1996 Labour Party in its poll survey mentioned about Netanyahu's rhetoric

---

<sup>41</sup> Don Pertz and Gideon Doron "Israel's 1996 elections: A second political Earthquake?" Middle East Journal Vol. 50, No.4, Autumn 1996, p. 530.

skill.<sup>42</sup> By taking this survey into account *Likud* campaign leaders decided to devise tactics that would improve Netanyahu's chances of getting the undecided vote. Tactics of *Likud* party included: portrayal of Labour party as more concerned with the welfare of Arabs than of Jews, Peres's willingness to surrender the Golan Heights to Syria and division of Jerusalem.

Impact of new electoral reform could be observed on the political parties when both Labour and *Likud* parties concentrated on the race between Peres and Netanyahu. Both parties understood that victor would form the new government. They were confident on getting support of smaller parties to form coalition. Labour party's platform strongly emphasized on secularism and its commitment to the peace process. It mentioned that security was to be achieved through international cooperation. Party platform also said that it would reject the palastenian right to return and support the settlement of the palastenian refugee problem outside the borders of Israel. But *Likud's* platform repeated its traditional theme. It emphasized on the right of Jewish people to the land of Israel not subject to dispute. Party platform highlighted that it would strengthen Jewish settlements in the territories. As far as agreements on peace process were concerned it said that it would honour those agreements and continue the diplomatic process to achieve a just and lasting peace. Thus in 1996 Knesset elections choice before the Israeli voters was not a choice between Peres and Netanyahu but between one who was in favour of peace and one who was not.<sup>43</sup> In the contest for fourteenth Knesset,

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, p. 533.

<sup>43</sup> P.R. Kumarswamy "*Arabs in Elections*" p.27, (Note-1)

20 parties were registered. Beside the two larger parties, a multitude of smaller parties were competing for the attention of the voters.

### **ARAB PARTIES AND 1996 KNESSET ELECTION**

In 1996 Knesset elections one could observe significant change among the Arab parties. They showed that cooperation and coordination can give the positive results. There was a much talk on United Arab list including communists, conservatives and nationalists just before the elections. But it did not materialise. Because these parties were not ready to take risk and sacrifice their ideologies. As a significant step in March 1996 the Islamic movement after a series of internal debates decided by a 49-47 vote to plunge into the Knesset race.<sup>44</sup> It was a victory for Shikh Darwish, who for many years had privately and then publicly argued that the 15 years old Islamic Movement would disintegrate unless it was fully involved in Israeli politics. That meant entering the Knesset. In 1992 Knesset election, movement had decided not to field its candidates but had asked its followers to participate in the elections. Due to this Arab participation declined.

The willingness of Islamic movement to participate in Knesset election paved the way for Arab unity. An important development took place in this regard when Democratic Arab Party leader Darwishe put-forwarded the top slot in the United Arab list to Islamic Movement.<sup>45</sup> Though for the first time Movement participated in national elections, Democratic Arab Party gave six out of the

---

<sup>44</sup> Steven Rodan and Jacob Dollal *"The Arab non-alliance"* Jerusalem Post, May 10, 1996, p.9.

<sup>45</sup> The United Arab list was a combine list of DAP and moderate group of Islamic Movement in 1996 election.

ten seats to the Movement. Another important development was that *Hadash* and United Arab List agreed in this election to coordinate their political activities. They signed a surplus vote agreement and plan to make a joint recommendation regarding the Prime Minister election. Their main concern was to try and make sure that surplus votes were not wasted. They wanted to ensure that every vote counts and give the United Arab List and *Hadash* the chance to have more Arab representatives in Knesset. Absence of such arrangements costed the Arab oriented parties one or two seats in the last elections. So this time these parties were careful about not to repeat the earlier failure. Both UAL and *Hadash* had issued a joint call for the lists headed by Dr. Ahmad Tibi and Mohamad Zeidan to withdraw from the election campaign in order not to waste thousands of precious Arab votes.<sup>46</sup> The other matter agreed was a call to supporters of both parties (*Hadash* and United Arab List) to refrain from violence and any negative interaction on the street level. They wanted to maintain a respectable, cultured and high standard campaign that will serve in better manner the interests of the Arab community. One of the points that both parties were emphasizing was that there had been no animosity between United Arab List and *Hadash*. They did not view each other as competitors, but rather considered the Zionist parties their main rivals. The agreements between the United Arab List and *Hadash* were seen as a major break through in the Arab sector in the light of past animosity between the fundamentalists Islamic Movement and the secular *Hadash*.

---

<sup>46</sup> Mohamad Zeidan headed the progressive coalition another Arab party. Zeidan and his followers had split off from the DAP and formed progressive coalition. This party contested 1996 Knesset election.

One more important factor in 1996 election was Dr. Ahamad Tibi's threat to United Arab List. He had earned public and media attention because of his ability to articulate Arab positions and his close relation to the centers<sup>47</sup> of power in Israel and the palastenian establishment. He was thinking of unifying various Arab factions and he wanted to compete elections by presenting a joint list. He showed his interest to align with Islamic Movement in the elections. Due to last minute alliance of Democratic Arab Party with movement, Tibi's joint list planned did not materialise. Democratic Arab Party had offered Tibi fourth slot in the United Arab List, but Tibi refused it and decided to run an independent list called the Arab Movement for renewal. As election date came nearer Tibi identified the real position of list. Various opinion polls had showed likely failure of Tibi's list fulfilling the 1.5 percent threshold. Tibi's failure to get elected would have been an insult to Arafat, because he had worked with him as an advisor.<sup>48</sup> Therefore Dr. Tibi announced just a week before the election that his party was withdrawing from the race. He said that he did not want to be responsible for wasting thousands of Arab votes. Pulling out of the race, Tibi urged his followers to vote for parties that back the Israeli. Arab peace process. He also requested his followers to vote for Shimon Peres in Prime Ministerial race.

---

<sup>47</sup> P.R. Kumarswamy "*Arab in elections*" p.28, (Note-1).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, p.29.



**PLATFORM OF THE UAL IN 1996 ELECTION.**<sup>49</sup>

## a) OSLO/ Settlements

Terms of OSLO-II must be fulfilled and palastenian state established with east Jerusalem as its capital. Jewish settlements over greenline must be dismantled.

## b) Golan

It demanded for returning Golan height to Syria as part of comprehensive agreement including full normalisation and economic ties with Damasscus. United Arab List was for security arrangements but peace was the best guarantee of security according to it.

## c) Economy

Free Market economy; lower taxes; protective tariffs, increase in health and National Insurance benefits, improved pensions, new institutions to meet needs of unemployed property tax on purchased land should be based on realistic property assessment but inherited real estate should be exempted.

## d) Education

Free education at all levels including higher education; developing technological education especially in the Arab sector; build classrooms in Arab localities and disadvantaged Jewish neighbourhoods, creation of Arab University to serve the Arab sector and provide work for Arab lectures.

## e) State and Religion

Each religious sector should choose its own mechanism for deciding personal status; independence for Sharia courts in matters of religion

---

<sup>49</sup> Jerusalem Post, special issue on 1996 elections, May 29, 1996.

and personal status. Each religious sector must manage its own holy sites. Overall United Arab List's platform demanded for independence in religious matters and state should not intervene in religious sector.

#### Immigration and Absorption

United Arab List opposed automatic opportunities and benefits for immigrants without first guaranteeing equality to current citizens. Support for immigrant should be by private organisations and not by state. It opposed land confiscations especially in the Arab sector for immigrant housing.

Inclusion of new groups in broader list had changed the platforms of both United Arab List and *Hadash*. Azmi Bishara's Democratic National Bloc became partner in Democratic Front for Peace and Equality broader alliance. Bishara has been known for the cause of a state for all its citizens.<sup>50</sup> He vowed to combat Israelisation of Arabs. His point of view was that Israeli should be state for its all citizens (Arabs) instead of recognising Arabs as national minority. This view of Bishara was incorporated in the platform of Democratic Front for Peace and Equality in 1996 Knesset elections. Platform made clear that Israel should be democratic state and a state for all its citizens to ensure national and civil equality for the citizens of Israel, Jews as well as Arabs. Same Ideas appeared in the United Arab List's platform also. The United Arab List's platform emphasized on the Arab masses in Israel are proud that its glorious and powerful cultural and national

---

<sup>50</sup> State for all means state in which both Arabs and Jews to be treated equally in socio-economic and political field.

roots are same of the Arabs. Arab citizenship in the state of Israel is the true citizenship. Any idea of law that tries to consider Arabs as strangers in Israel is racist and unjust and has no business for remaining in the legal code.<sup>51</sup> The principles on the two list agendas were similar. Other mutual emphasis were on exercising the palasteniens right to return to the villages from which they emigrated in 1948, placing endowment land and income under an independent committee of Muslim Arab Citizens. Thus there was little difference between the political platforms of the various Israeli Arab parties. They all gave importance to the drive for equal rights, a two state solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

## **RESULTS**

Results of this election were not clear because electorate punished the bigger parties and strengthened the smaller parties. Two larger parties labour and *Likud* got 34 and 32 seats respectively. Other 54 seats went to the smaller parties. The strength of left-wing parties was 56 seats, but this time they reduced to 38 seats. See Table mine for parties position in 1996 election. The election resulted in close vote for Netanyahu but it produced a more factionalised parliament than the previous one. The Arab and Arab-Oriented Parties increased their position by winning 9 seats. For the first time Arab parties got considerable number of seats.

---

<sup>51</sup> Hilel, Frisch "The Arab Vote: The Radicalisation of Politicisation" Israel Affairs, Vol. 4, No.1 Autumn 1997, p.111.

**TABLE-9**  
**The 1996 Knesset Elections**

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>VOTES</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>SEATS</b>
Labour	818,570	26.8	34
Likud – Geshet – Tsomet	767,178	25.1	32
Shas	259,759	8.5	10
National Religious Party	240,224	7.8	9
Mertez	226,257	7.4	9
Yisrael Ba'aliya	174,928	5.7	7
Hadash	129,455	4.2	5
United Torah Judaism	98,655	3.2	4
The Third Way	96,457	3.1	4
United Arab list	89,513	2.9	4
Moledet	71,982	2.3	2
Other parties	78,550	3.0	--
<b>Total</b>			<b>120</b>

**Source: P.R. Kumarswamy "Political Legitimacy of the minorities: Israel Arabs and the 1996 Knesset Elections, the Emirates Occasional Papers 1998 No. 20, (UAE:, Abu Dhabi The Emirates Centers for Strategic Studies and Research)p. 36.**

There was increased turnout in Arab sector in 1996 election. No other sector in Israel displayed a similar increase in participation. This rise reflected the Arabs desire to have real influence. Throughout the campaign, the media as well as Jewish and Arab political leadership emphasized on Arab electoral power in this election, because they could determine who would head the government. Right wing parties played on Jewish fears of the Arab's power and sought to delegitimise the Arab vote. Participation of Islamic movement with Democratic Arab Parties list and sons of the village movement with Democratic National Bloc influenced high turnout.

In this election Arabs significantly changed their voting patterns. This time 63 percent of Arab electorate voted for Arab and Arab oriented parties. In 1988 the figure was 58 percent and in 1992 only 47 percent. The Democratic Front

for Peace and Equality – Democratic National Bloc got 37 percent in 1996 from 23 percent in 1992. The United Arab List received 25.4 percent of the Arab vote, but in 1992 Democratic Arab Party got only 15 percent. See Table ten for details about Arab vote in 1996 election. For party wise representation of Arab and Druze members in Knesset in 1996 election see table eleven.

**TABLE – 10**

**The Arab vote for the Knesset 1996.**

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>VOTES</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
<b>Non-Zionist Parties</b>		
DFPE – DNB	113,773	37.0
UAL	78,104	25.4
AFPC (Tibi)	2087	0.6
SADAM	1,351	0.4
The Progressive Coalition	13,983	3.2
Total Votes cast for Non-Zionist Parties	204,944	66.6
<b>Zionist Parties</b>		
Labour	51,045	16.6
Mertez	32,287	10.5
Likud-Gesher-Tzomet and Religious Parties	15,989	5.2
Other	16,297	5.3
Total votes cast for Zionist Parties	102,503	33.4

**Source:** Hillel, Frisch "The Arab Vote: The Radicalisation or Politicisation" *Israel Affairs*, Vol. 4 No.1, Autumn 1997, P. 105.

Arab parties got more percent of vote because Jewish parties failed to retain their support in Arab electorate. Labour party which received 20 percent of Arab vote in 1992, declined to 16.6 percent. Mertez preserved its support at 10 percent because of its positive policies towards Arabs. This time support for rightest parties almost disappeared. In 1992 they had got about 20 percent but this time they received only 5.2 percent. This decline was caused by right

wing parties positions regarding Arab sector and with peace process between Israel and the palastenians.

**TABLE-11**

**Number of Arab and Druze members of Knesset by Party in 1996 elections.**

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>SEATS</b>
DFPE – DNB	4+1*
UAL	4
Labour	2
Mertez	1
Likud	--
Total Sets	11+1*

**\*Jewish Member**

**Source: Hillel Frisch "Arab Vote: The Radicalisation of Politicisation" Israeli Affairs Autumn 1997, p. 104.**

It is important to analyse how there was correlation between social groups and voting pattern in the Arab sector in 1996 elections. Voting pattern of Bedouin community radically different from others in Arab Sector as a whole. In Israel, 80 percent of Arab Community are Muslim while 10 percent are Christians. Religion was not a key factor in voting for either the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality - Democratic National Bloc or United Arab List.<sup>52</sup> The triangle a Muslim area near the West Bank and Eastern Galilee, comprises of 15 percent Christian population. Major percentage of voters in this area voted for Democratic Front for Peace and Equality- Democratic National Bloc than in Eastern Galilee.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p.116.

**TABLE-12**

**Vote for Knesset in Druze Sector, large villages, small villages and towns in 1996 election.**

<b>PARTY</b>	<b>DRUZE SECTOR 58 Precincts</b>	<b>LARGE VILALGES 244 Precincts</b>	<b>SMALL VILALGES 60 Precincts</b>	<b>TOWNS 278 PERCENTS</b>
Labour	40.3	13.8	25.8	12.9
NRP	7.0	1.3	1.7	1.1
Yahadut HaTorah	0.5	--	--	--
DFPE (DNB)	14.3	37.3	21.8	47.1
Likud	11.7	1.1	2.3	1.5
Mertez	12.1	11.3	16.7	7.4
UAL	5.1	27.7	23.3	24.6
Progressive Coalition	0.5	5.0	4.0	2.7
SHAS	4.2	1.1	2.7	0.6
Thirdway	2.5	--	--	--

**Source:** Hillel Frisch "The Arab vote: The Radicalisation or politicisation" Israel Affairs vol.4, No.1, Autumn 1997,p.105.

Voting pattern in the settlement areas like large, small villages and towns revealed a complex political behaviour. The share of Labour in large villages, small villages and towns decreased from 1992 to 1996 elections. While Democratic Front for Peace and Equality-Democratic National Bloc and United Arab List have increased their share of vote in these settlements in 1996 elections. (See Table 12) compared to 1992. In 1992 United Arab List's share was 17.8, 13.8, 14.1 percent in large, small villages and towns respectively.

#### **THE ELECTION FOR THE PREMIERSHIP**

There were only two candidates, Benjamin Netanyahu and Shimon Peres for the premiership from *Likud* and Labour Party. This race did not offer Arab

voters much of choice. Moreover voting for Netanyahu was not considered proper option. Because rightwing parties positions on domestic and external issues were important to Arabs. Arab voters did think that it was better not to vote for Netanyahu. They had to either vote for Peres or choosing not to vote. Surveys conducted during just some months before the election showed mass support for Peres in this election.<sup>53</sup> Two incidents which happened after those pre-election surveys caused rapid change in Arab mood of supporting Peres for premeiership. The first incident was suicide bombings by Islamic groups. After this incident west Bank and Gaza district were closed by the Israeli authority as a measure against palastenians living there. The second incident was the grapes of wrath operation.<sup>54</sup> These two incidents were observed as an attempt by Peres to increase his security credentials. Peres was charged by the opposition that he was compromising in the war against extremists. But closure of West Bank and Gaza district and Grapes of Wrath angered Arab community. During the elections even some of the young leadership threatened to boycott the election for prime ministership.<sup>55</sup>

**TABLE-13**

**1996 Elections for Prime Minister.**

	VOTES	PERCENTAGE
Benjamin Netanyahu	1,501,023	50.4
Shimon Peres	1,471,566	49.5
Number of valid votes	2,972,589	
Number of invalid votes	148,681	
Total number of votes cast	3,121,270	

**Source: P.R. Kumarswamy "Political Legitimacy of the Minorities; Israeli Arabs and the 1996 Knesset Elections. The Emirates occasional Papers 1998, No.20, The Emirates Center for strategic studies and Research" Abu Dhabi, UAC.**

<sup>53</sup> As'ad Ghanem "*Parliamentary Politics*" p.87. (Note-27)

<sup>54</sup> Operation started by Israeli authority in southern Labnon in response to Hizbullah attacks on northern Israel. The operation created a new stream of palastenian and Lebense refugees moving north and led to the Killing of 102 refugees near the village of Kafraqana by Israeli Shelling.

<sup>55</sup> As'ad Ghanom "*Parliamentary Politics*" p.88, (Note-27).



Thus in the month of April and May Jewish people hoped that this time Arab may not vote for Peres. Because of such hypothetical erosion of Arab vote, Labour party did many attempts to get back Arab support. As an election came nearer Arab leaders withdrew their threats and asked followers to vote for Peres. Election result showed that only 5.2 percent Arabs voted for Netanyahu while rest of the 94.8 percent voted for Shimon Peres. (See Table 14) Thus massive support of Arabs to Peres reflected political dilemma of Arabs in Israeli political system because even after closure of the territories they voted for support. They did not have an alternative to Israeli Labour party against the *Likud*. Total number of votes casted in favour of Netanyahu and Peres is shown in Table 13.

**TABLE-14**

**The Arab vote for Prime Minister, 1996.  
(Percentage of all ballots cast).**

<b>OF THE TOTAL VOTERS</b>	<b>VOTES</b>	<b>%</b>
Shimon Peres	276,370	88.0
Benjamin Netanyahu	15,072	4.8
Blank Votes	19,016	7.2
<b>Of Valid votes:</b>		
Peres		94.8
Netanyahu		5.2
<b>Of Total Arab Electorate:</b>		
Total Arab Electorate	407,923	
Arab Voters in 1996 election	310,458	
Valid Arab votes	291,442	

**Source:** Hillel Frisch "The Arab Vote: The Radicalisation of Politicisation" *Israel Affairs*, Vol.4, No.1, Autumn 1997, p.103.

### **COALITION OF 1996 AND ARABS POSITION TO OPPOSITION.**

Since Israeli's independence there has never been a majority government in the parliament. No party has succeeded in winning 50 percent of seats in Knesset. The coalition government created after 1996 elections was Israel's 27<sup>th</sup> government and *Likud* led 7<sup>th</sup> Government. Table 15 gives account of all *Likud* governments from the period of 1977 to 1996. *Likud's* coming to power led to fall of Labour Party, as a result Arabs and their representatives had to lose their power and influence. When election results were declared many politicians blamed Arabs for defeat of Peres.<sup>56</sup> According to them if Arabs had voted in much larger number Peres would have won the election. To some extent Nataneyahus victory was due to the some Arab votes he got. Netanyahu's coalition government highlighted the ignorance of other parties related to problems of Arabs. As a strange gesture or development government emphasized the need to aid members of he minorities.<sup>57</sup> However in fourteenth Knesset, all Arab parties Democratic Front for Peace and equality, Democratic National Bloc, United Arab List had to sit in opposition and they had no power to influence the policies of the government.

**TABLE-15**

#### ***Likud* Led Government.**

PRIME MINISTER	KNESSET	FROM (YEAR)	TO (YEAR)
Menhem Begin	IX	1977	1981
Menhem Begin.	X	1981	1983
Yitzhak Samir	X	1983	1984
Yitzhak Shamir	XI	1986	1988
Yitzhak Shamir	XII	1988	1990
Yitzhak Shamir	XII	1990	1992
Benjamin Netanyahu	XIV	1996	1999

**Note:** In 1990 Unity Government by Shamir collapsed. After this he formed *Likud* led coalition government.

**Source:** P.R. Kumarswamy "Political legitimacy of the Minorities: Israeli Arabs and the 1996 Knesset Elections" The Emirates occasional paper: 1998, No.20, a (UAE Abu Dhabi, The Emirates Centre for strategic studies and Research), p.10,

<sup>56</sup> As'ad Ghanem "The limits of Parliamentary Politics" p.89 (Note.27).

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p.89.

### **ARAB VOTING PATTERNS: GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS FROM 1988 KNESSET ELECTION TO 1996 ELECTION**

Voting patterns among Israeli Arabs reflect their socio-economic problems from variety of standpoints. Israel Arabs call year of election as year of promises by the parties.<sup>58</sup> Afterwards these promises are not fulfilled. Arab influence in the Knesset was negligible compare to their population. There is about nearly 20 percent Arab population in Israel. But their representation in Knesset was very less in proportion to their population. In 1988 and 1992 elections they had very less number of seats. This is because of following factors.

1. The percentage of Arabs eligible to vote was very less.
2. Administrative errors in the Arab voter list were more than the Jewish and there was less feeling of urgency to correct mistakes in the voter rolls on the part of Arabs.<sup>59</sup>
3. Extremist groups like sons of village, progressive National Party, boycotted Knesset Elections, only in 1996 many extremists groups started participating in election.
4. Until 1996 elections Arab parties did not try to have surplus vote agreements. There was lot of rivalry among Arab parties to get Arab votes.
5. The Zionist parties received almost half of the Arab vote until 1996 elections. This went against the interest of the Arab parties.

---

<sup>58</sup> Ori, Stendel *"Arabs in Israel"* P. 147, (Note-8).

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, p. 148. (Administrative errors means deliberate mistakes made by the authority in Arab voters list to make Arab voters not eligible for voting).

6. Arabs participated more enthusiastically in the Municipal election because they could have more power in the Municipal administration. Such hope is not with the Knesset elections. Moreover, Knesset elections and Municipal elections are not conducted at the same time. If simultaneous elections are conducted, Arab participation could increase.

#### **REASONS FOR MORE ARAB KNESSET MEMBERS IN 1996 ELECTIONS.**

1. A constant increase in the share of young Arab voters has expanded electoral weight of Arab.
2. Participation of Islamic Movement in election has increased the Arab vote and resulted in election of more Knesset members.
3. In 1996 election Arab parties agreed to have surplus vote agreement. It brought extra number of votes to Arab parties.

#### **MICROSCOPIC DIMENSION OF ARAB VOTING**

1. Share of Arab vote to Arab parties and Arab oriented parties increased in 1988 Knesset elections. Developments of intifadah could be attributed to the increase in Arab voting.
2. Influence of Islamic Movement among Arab community could be traced to decrease in voters participation in 1992 Knesset elections. Even though it activated its members to participate, large number of followers did not vote.
3. Religious differences and geographical divisions among the Arab voters influenced their voting.

4. The Desire to have real influence in politics made Arab's increasing participation in 1996 Knesset elections.
5. Influence of Islamic movement was once again witnessed, when it directly contested 1996 Knesset elections, many followers voted.

The Arab vote in Israel is for more than protest vote and unpredictable. The protest vote in the sense that it underlies social and political processes such as struggle among Arab in Israel to achieve real civil equality. Like Israeli citizens, Arab voters have basic right to decide whether or not to participate in the electoral process. Their non participation shows that Arab electorate are either ignorant of the electoral process or they deliberately refrained from voting to express hostility to the state and its institutions.

Far from voting uniformly Arab voters voted half of their votes to Zionist parties. The left parties still appeal to Arab electorate despite the rise in nationalist emotion on both Jewish and Arab side. There has been competition between the Arab oriented parties and Zionist left parties in targeting the Arab electorate.

### **JEWISH RESPONSE TO ARABS AND THEIR PARTIES**

The response of different Zionist parties towards Arabs reflected their ideological orientation. While the Right was neither hostile or indifferent towards the minorities, for the parties of left and centre the Arabs presented an electoral challenge in the sense that these parties were trying hard to get support from Arab electorate. During the early years after state formation, *Mapai* had introduced the idea of minority lists to provide representation to

minorities.<sup>60</sup> Arab electorate had to vote these minority lists in Knesset elections. Some rightist parties did not allow Arabs (Tsomet, Moledet are rightist parties which prohibited membership to Arabs) as members of their party. When Arabs were not accepted as members in their party, it was unthinkable to include Arabs in Knesset elections list.<sup>61</sup>

The response of Labour Party towards Arabs and their parties was not like right wing parties. It adopted accommodative approach with Arabs and sought the help Arab parties in preventing the rightist parties to come to power. In 1996 elections Labour party had campaigned in the Arab sector. Labour party tried its level best to seek Arab support. Party used its leaders to campaign in the Arab sector and to meet Arab oriented parties and Arab leaders. This change was occurred because Arab vote was already crucial in determining what coalition would emerge. However nationalist parties did not change their attitudes. Rightist parties challenged the labour government about its dependence on Arab party Members of Knesset.<sup>62</sup> These parties did not made even little effort to get the support of Arab voters and Arab parties. *Likud* party used the slogan of "Bibi is good for Jews" The attitude of Israel Ba'aliya and third way was similar to *Likud* party. Israel Ba'aliya emphasized on welfare of the immigrants who come from Soviet Union. The third way focussed on golan heights and it stressed in retaining Israeli control in any peace agreements with Syria.<sup>63</sup> Nationalist Religious party on their part promised to give protection to Arab heritage and culture unlike the other religious right wing parties in 1996 elections.

---

<sup>60</sup> P.R. Kumarswamy "Arabs in elections" p.32 (Note-1).

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p.29.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, p.32.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p. 33.

The attitude of right wing parties in 1988 elections was too worst regarding Arabs than in 1996 elections. *Likud* leader Yitzak Modai asserted that if *Likud* comes to power it would curb the uprising in a week. The secular nationalist group *Tehiya* claimed that all that was necessary was to deport 1,200 Arab leaders and activists and then the Intifadah would die.<sup>64</sup> After the uprising General Rehavam Ze'evi formed a new extreme right wing nationalist faction called *Moldet* in 1988. *Moledet* party in its 1988 election campaign literature called for the transfer of all Arabs from the territories. Party leader Rehavam said that this step should not be a forced departure but it should be negotiated with the Arab inhabitants.

Discrimination towards Arabs became obvious when in a document circulated by *Tzomet* activists just before the 1992 Knesset election. It was argued that Israeli Arabs were enemies like all other Arabs, because they did not perform national service. The Israeli Arabs did not choose Jews as rulers but situation turned Arabs to become citizens of Israel.<sup>65</sup> This document was further endorsed by party leader Rafel Etan. He said that every word in document was truth.<sup>66</sup> That time Yossi Sarid of *Mertez* party criticised the *Tzomet's* documents, he said it was even worse than *Moledet's* advocacy of mass deportation.<sup>67</sup>

Two – state solution of Arab parties regarding palasteniens problem was considered as an act of disloyalty. Some Jews took an opposing view on palastenian nationalism. They considered it illegitimate and some aspects of it

---

<sup>64</sup> Jerusalem post September 11, 1988.

<sup>65</sup> Mathew Seriphat "How the Israeli Arabs voted" Middle East International, (London) 10 July 1992.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

as illegal.<sup>68</sup> They were against the display of any sign of identification with the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Most Jews viewed that Arab parties support to Arab claim to western Palestine was a challenge to their exclusive right to the entire area.<sup>69</sup> It was also interpreted that the shift in Arabs voting from the Jewish parties to predominantly Arab parties as a non-confidence vote in Arab-Jewish Co-existence.<sup>70</sup> Arab parties stand on Palestinian nationalism and their challenge to status quo of Arab-Jewish relations is viewed as confrontation. In 1988 most of the Jews exhibited their ethnocentric stand on the issue of Arabs. According to one survey in 1988, 74 percent of the Jews said that the state should prefer Jews to Arabs, 43 percent favoured the denial of right to vote to Israeli, Arab citizens, and 45 percent supported the outlawing of the Israeli communist party.”

### **POST ELECTION VIEW ABOUT ARAB POLITICAL PARTIES**

The Israeli general election of 1988 did not produce any solutions to solve the urgent problems being faced by the country during that period. Many Israelis felt after elections that it was time for Israel to have a strong opposition. It was argued that with the support of Arab oriented parties Labour-left can make life of *Likud's* narrow based coalition very difficult.

After 1992 Knesset election Arabs hoped that they could do something for Jewish reaction. The dependence of Rabin government on Arab Knesset members as blocking majority infused the Arab leaders with the sense of self-

---

<sup>68</sup> Sammy Smooha “*Minority status in an ethnic democracy: The status of the Arab Minority in Israel*” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 13, No.3, July 1990, p.399.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid*, p. 399.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, p. 399.



confidence. Result encouraged Arab parties to adopt more responsible stance and embark on more productive initiatives.

But 1996 election result was different in the sense that it increased the strength of Arab parties by more seats but weakened their power in influencing government policies. Most Arab Knesset members were opposed the Netanyahu government. It was argued that Arabs could determine the race for Prime Minister in future elections. They could bring real influence only in the presence of a real alternative to left.

# CHAPTER-V

## CONCLUSION

The ethnic division between Jews and Arabs poses a basic challenge to Israel as a Jewish state. Arab minority constitutes twenty percent of the population in Israel and their place is quite different from that any part of the Jewish population in the world. Israeli Arab population enjoys the formal rights of citizenship, right to vote and they have access to the political system but they stand outside the sphere of traditional powersharing Jewish politics. Though Israeli Arabs have made considerable progress, there is no proportionate distribution of economic gains, government services or other public goods. From early period that saw overwhelming suspicion and domination on the one-side and overwhelming alienation and realisation on the other, the overall trend has been towards gradual liberalisation. The military government in Arab areas were phased out by the early 1970s. The expropriation of land beyond legitimate public need came virtually to halt after 1976. By the 1980s little use was made of emergency regulations in Arab sector. In 1990s, there was visible representation of Arabs in some fields of public life specifically health, education, media, arts. The new labour led government in 1992 did not take Arab parties into the coalition but it was more active in development of Arab sector than earlier governments.

Israel is one of the major cases of democracy in a deeply divided society. Israel clearly ranks among the more consociational regimes as per the Arend Lijphart's ideas on consociational democracy. But elements of centralisation, unicameralism and unwritten constitution makes Israel as majoritarian democracy. Such majoritarian characteristics can be observed on the level of

formal institutions. Israel is consociational democracy if it is viewed in terms of broader concept of consociationalism. Grand coalitions, proportionality, pluralism, social bargaining are some features which endorse the credentials of Israel as consociational democracy. Deep ethnic division has facilitated Israel to move towards consociationalism. Differences between Arabs and Jews can be observed in the fields of culture, identity etc. Both communities would not like to compromise on these issues. It is only through power sharing and dialogue democratic governments can solve ethnic problems to bring long term stability, and Israel is already in this direction. Some changes in value orientation, and wide ranging identity which goes beyond the division into Jew and Arab may foster the already on going process of consociationalism. Israel is also one of such country which has been influenced by forces like modernisation and globalisation. This has caused change in attitude of both communities. A civil society is growing strongly and playing significant role to create more diversified power structure.

Protest is one of the technique which has been used by Arab minority to mobilise people to challenge the discrimination and disparities in Israel. The socio-economic change in Arab community was responsible for the explosion of protest. This change made them aware of widespread disparity and consequently demanded for proportional treatment. They protested on specific issues like land expropriation, demolition of unauthorised dwellings, municipal financial allocation, intifadah events etc. To create an independent power base they had to mobilise the Arab masses for protests and force the authorities to negotiate and make concessions. Arab protests were both peaceful and sometimes violent. National issues caused intense protests.

Protests of Arab community shows their political assertion for demands of land rights and territorial autonomy as well as the closing of socio-economic gaps. It is going to attempt for Arab rights and identity in the specific and confined spaces within Israel.

Political parties have played an important role in Israel's democracy. Emergence of Arab political parties not only signalled growing politicisation among the Israeli Arabs but also changing the nature of Israeli political map. Emergence of these parties paved the way for drifting away from protest activity outside the parliament. Until 1988 there was no tough competition to Zionist parties from Arab parties. Now they have to face opposition from Arab parties. Prior to 1988 there were no strong Arab political organisations in Israel. Effective control on the part of Israeli authority over Arab minority rights was the reason for retarded growth of Arab political organisation. It was *intifadah* that erupted at the end of 1987 in the occupied territories marked the beginning of new stage in the political activity. One of the major result of *intifadah* was establishment of Democratic Arab party by Abdal Whab Darwishe after resigning from Labour Party. Democratic Arab party is first Arab party because until then Arabs in Israel did not have a political party of their own and Maki / Rakah and progressive list for peace were only non-Zionist option open to the Arab electorate. Democratic Arab political party has succeeded in articulating the problems of Arab masses both inside and outside the parliament.

The Islamic movement was the latest party to enter the political currents in Arab sector. Islamic movement emerged in Israel with two aspects of Islam

one as a faith of personal, emotional and existential experience and other as a social force and political framework. Movement succeeded in organising volunteer camps for Islamic oriented work for mass who face daily hardship. Deep religious roots in Israeli Muslim community facilitated the consolidation of Islamic movement. As far as participation in Municipal elections was concerned it was a major step. They entered the Israeli political arena as one of the legitimate Arab players and accepted its rules. Islamic movement emerged as a bright new star in the political constellation of the Arab sector in Israeli municipal elections. Most important and break through decision on the part of movement was its decision to enter the race for Knesset elections of 1996. From the standpoint of relations between the state authority and the country's Arab minority, the Islamic Movement's participation in Israeli public life will effectively contain the spread of the sense of alienation. For Islamic movement politics is not horse trading it is responsibility and loyalty, politics is not game and amusement but it is service and building, politics is not divisiveness that has to be accepted but unity and fraternity.

The role of Arab – Oriented parties was also an important in Israeli politics especially in representing the Arab population until creation of Arab parties in 1988. Communist party (Maki/ Rakah) was one of such party played very significant role. There were some problems in the party. Party got into leadership crisis as a result of the death of Tawfiq Zaid, who had great personal charisma. Great pressures on the party from within for renewal and democratisation shows existence of undemocratic working of the party especially in the election of candidates for Knesset list. Progressive list for peace and Sons of Village are other Arab oriented parties. They strongly

emphasized on palastinian nationalism than domestic problems of Arab community in Israel that is why their popularity decreased compare to Democratic Arab party and Islamic movement.

Recently introduced electoral system in 1996 had a significant impact upon Israeli Arab political parties. Single constituency nature of System helped Arab electorate who are not concentrated in single area. Because that nature of constituency facilitated them to elect their representatives for pursuing their political, social and economic agenda for the prosperity of the community . New electoral system was developed with the aim to reduce the number and power of the small parties but it eroded the power of larger parties. Such reverse impact can be observed in 1996 election that time Arab political parties got substantial number of seats in Knesset. Direct election of Prime Minister has made candidates who compete for this post not to neglect the minority vote. These electoral reforms enhanced the importance of Arab Voters and Arab political parties.

Both Arab and Arab oriented parties contributed to the effort of bringing more consociational nature of democracy. Reaction of Labour Party to the effort of Arab parties towards consociational democracy is satisfactory one. Labour party accommodated wishes of the Arab parties to the some extent. On their part Arab parties also helped labour party in various matters. Arab parties succeeded in changing the attitude of Israeli government with respect to Arab issues. Due to Arab parties pressure government policy emphasized on backwardness of Arab community and tried to improve their position in

various fields. Even in many of the foreign policy matters and various agreements Arab parties helped labour government. Opposition as an integral part of democratic political system has been very best utilised by Arab political parties when they were in opposition and thus have enhanced the importance of Israeli democracy. Arab parties have succeeded in debate and discussion of governments policies which affect Arab community. Both Arab and Arab oriented parties have realised the significance of unity in pursuing government to implement programmes meant for Arab community. Thus despite the internal differences between various Arab political streams, a consensus has emerged on key issues related to Arab community in Israel. Arab political parties are pursuing rigid ideology which directly helps the betterment of Arab community by the way of pressure on government, and indirectly helped the growth of consociational democratic principles like bargaining, mutual veto etc.

It is wrong to say that democracy in Israel is healthy in all sense. There were some shortcomings in the way democratic principles were applied to Arab oriented political parties. Even after fifty years of its formation Israel right wing parties regularly would not like to accept Arabs as the members and have not given place for Arabs on their Knesset lists. But Mapai/ Labour and Mapam/ Mertez have elected Arabs as members of Knesset on their party lists. There is need of improvement in the social and economic conditions of the Arabs Mapai/ labour party has strategy of minority lists but none of the right wing and other religious parties are willing to place Arabs on their Knesset lists.



This attitude of right-wing parties resulted in overwhelming rejection of right wing prime ministerial candidate Netayanyahu in 1996 Knesset elections.

Election to the Knesset are important to Arabs it is the moment in which they have to decide about government which makes policies on their social and economic life. In 1988 Knesset election Arab voters were optimistic because that was the election in which they did have party of their own (DAP). In this election the results in the Arab Sector showed a marked shift towards the parties with an Arab or Arab Jewish identity. Effect of intifadah on Arab voters was not so significant because in some regions like Negev people voted for Arab parties not because of intifadah but because of their discontent towards government over some domestic issues. Thus 1988 Knesset election for Israeli Arabs not completely connected with palastenian issue. 1988 Knesset elections did not see any significant change in the voting patterns of Arabs of Israel. It would be wrong to argue that some sort of decline in votes for Zionist parties as radicalisation in the political behaviour but definitely in this election Arabs expanded the protest over the improper treatment through ballot. In this election Arab political parties exhibited their political immaturity by not signing surplus vote agreement which could have increased their share in Knesset in the form of getting some more seats.

In 1992 election there was low turnout of vote among Arabs. Ideological perceptions and ignorance of the idea of voting has caused low voting in this election. Scepticism over the less achievement in parliament by Arab representatives on socio-economic issues has also caused low turnout. Lack of unity among Arab Political parties paved the way for Zionist parties to get

more support from Arab electorate. 1992 Knesset election brought major changes in the political role of Arab and Arab oriented parties. The status of Arab parties changed from mere opposition group to members of blocking majority in Knesset. Support of these parties became very crucial for Rabin to form government. Arab parties decided to support Rabin Government because they had no alternative. Its fall was perceived as a dangerous to the peace process. Arab parties did not want to undermine the peace process. Arab parties did not succeed in influencing the government over more programmes for Arab Community.

There was significant change among the Arab parties in 1996 elections. Cooperation and coordination among these parties gave positive results in this election. Again there was no broader Arab list but parties agreed to coordinate their political activities and they concluded surplus vote agreement. In this election there was significant change in the voting pattern of Arab electorate. Voting pattern of communities like Bedouin community radically differed from other in Arab sector. Religion was not key factor in voting for either Hadash or United Arab list. In prime ministerial race Arab electorate did not have an alternative to Labour party. They had to vote for Labour Party even after its some harsh decisions over the issue of closure of the territory. When Peres got defeated by Netanyahu, his failure was blamed on Arab electorate.

Voting pattern among Israeli Arabs has reflected their socio economic problems from variety of standpoints. Absence of surplus vote among Arab political parties exhibited rivalry among these parties and failed to get more

Arab votes. More enthusiasm can be seen in Arab electorate in municipal election than Knesset election. Islamic movement's influence in Arab electorate was significant in 1988 and 1992 Knesset election. The Arab vote in Israel is for more than protest vote and changing quickly from one mood to another.

In 1999 Knesset election Arab parties issued a call for Barak's election for prime minister post. Arab's support for Barak was not based on affirmation of his policy positions, but by a desire to terminate Netanyahu's tenure. Barak received 94.8 percent of the Arab vote. Balloting for Knesset seats in the 1999 election produced the change in the party system. The greatest shock was decline of two major parties. The united Arab list won 5 seats in this election. The shift of Arab votes from Democratic Front for peace and Equality to United Arab List was perceived by many observers as evidence of growing Islamic fundamentalist influence among Israel's Arab citizens. United Arab List won support of Arabs through the extensive welfare system it established in disadvantaged Arab communities. The 1999 election results led many to rethink on reforming the reforms brought in 1996 election. After the 1999 election some proposals have been introduced in the Knesset raising threshold to 3 percent was one of such proposal. It means that a party would have to win at least 4 seats for Knesset representation.

In 2001, prime ministerial election Arabs changed their stance of supporting left-Zionist candidate. Just before the election Ehud Barak apologised for his handling of the October riots of 2000 in which 13 Arabs and Jews were killed. Arab leaders welcomed this decision but they said it came too late. United

Arab list adhered its decision to urge supporters to boycott the election. *Hadash* also said that apology of Barak was too late. But it called its supporters to exercise their democratic right to vote, but to cast blank ballots as a form of protest. This decision was taken in the party with a narrow majority of the leadership. There was low Arab voting turnout in that election. The call for boycott by most Arab parties succeeded in low voting. Less than 25% of Arab voters came to the polls compared with 70% in 1999 election. After this 2001 prime ministerial election both Likud and Labour parties started thinking of reforming the electoral system. Because changes in election procedures did not meet their goals intended to strengthen the prime minister. Thus 1999 election and 2001 prime ministerial election made major parties leaders either to change the system or not to neglect the minority votes especially Arab votes.

In March 2001, after Ariel Sharon was sworn in as Prime Minister, Knesset decided to scrap the system of direct Prime Ministerial election and restore the one vote parliamentary system. The vote was held as part of the deal between one Israel (Labour Party and its allies) and the Likud before Prime Minister A.Sharon sworn in . The Knesst approved a reformed version of the nation's original Basic Law: the government . The main changes are that 61 members of kneset are needed to topple a government in a no-confidence motion, and they must also declare support for an alternative candidate. The Prime Minister may also dissolve the Knesset in conslutation with the president. Since earlier system of proportional representation to Knesset election has been retained, Arab parties will not face any electoral problem. With surplus vote agreement they can increase their number of seats.

During the time of government formation and selection of prime minister they may support the candidate he who protects their interests.

Viewed from a perspective of nearly five decades one could see changes in Arabs connected with Israeli society. This has come about through a combination of economic forces and democracy. Arabs now compose 13 percent of the electorate. Political mobilisation has been a major means for gaining influence and resources for other Israeli minorities (Middle Eastern Jews and Orthodox religious groups are notable examples) and Israeli Arabs may be able to follow the same path. The Knesset recently passed laws that are meant to strengthen civil rights and Supreme Court has taken an activist position in disqualifying discrimination. These changes may bring the effect of increasing equality between Jews and Arabs. Skillful and successful Arab politicians may bring real changes to their communities and legal rulings may also open the system more widely to minorities. Israel is still one of the best democracy. It is around 80% Jewish voters and 75% of Arab voters cast their votes. The performance of Israeli electorate is all more impressive when one considers non-democratic background of very large part of the population. The overwhelming majority of Jewish immigrants come from Czarist, communist or authoritarian East European System or from the military or authoritarian regimes of Arab and Muslim world. The Israeli Arabs stem from a political culture to which democracy is foreign. Until now, the Arab minority and Jewish majority have managed to live together through five Israeli-Arabs war, the palastinian intifadah and countless violent incidents and crises. The patterns established during the past five decades may be strong enough to withstand the conflict still to come. Here both Jewish political parties and Arab

political parties role is important in not furthering the conflicts by propagating extremist ideologies. It is better to emphasis on developmental activities on the part of both parties in the socio-economic field than field of violence and crises. The outlook is uncertain, but not without hope. Final conclusions of this research work are as following.

- Multiparty system has promoted competition among both Zionist and Arab political parties and has played the role of checks and balance.
- State's initiative in the form of new electoral laws has helped parties based on ethnic and communal grouping.
- Proportional Representative system of Israel has facilitated number of representatives of Arab parties.
- The emergence of Arab political parties has changed the direction of Israeli democracy.
- Except Mapai/ Labour and Mertez no other non-Arab party has accommodated political aspirations of Arabs.
- Presence of Arab parties has enhanced the Arab interest.
- Arab political parties have tried to some extent in bringing equal status to Arabs.
- Presence of Arab political parties has strengthened the Israeli consociational democracy.
- Maurice Duverger's analysis of political parties has its own importance and to some extent relevant in analysing Arab political parties in Israel.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### BOOKS

1. Arien, Asher. *Politics in Israel: the second generation* (New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, INC Chatham, 1989).
2. Ben Fmi, Shlomo (ed) *Ethnic Challenges to the Modern Nation State*, (London: Macmillan, 2000)
3. Choueri, Youssef M. *Arab Nationalism: A History, Nation and State in the Arab World*, (UK: Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 2000)
4. David Lev: Four, Gabriel Sheffer and David Vogel (eds). *Israel the Dynamics of Change and continuity*. (London: Frankcass, 1999).
5. Duverger, Maurice: *Political parties; their organisation and activity in the modern state*. (London, Methuen 1964).
6. Elie Kedowrie and Sylvia G. Haim (ed) *Zionism and Arabism in Palastine and Israel*. (London: Frankcass, 1982).
7. Eva Etzioni-Halvey and Rina Shapira. *Political Culture in Israel: Cleavage and Integration among Israeli Jews*, (New York: Prager Publishers, 1977).
8. Garfinkle, Adam. *Politics and Society in Modern Israel: Myths and Realities*. (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1997).
9. Heraclides, Alexis. *The self-determination of Minorities in International politics* (London: Frankcass, 1991).
10. Horowitz, Dan and Lissak, Moshe. *Trouble in Utopia: The overburdened polity of Israel*. (USA: State University of New York Press, 1989).
11. Karsh, Efraim (ed) *From Rabin to Netanyahu: Israel's Troubled Agenda* (London: Frankcass, 1996).

12. Karsh, Efraim and Mahler, Gregory (eds) *Israel at the crossroads: The challenge of peace* (London: British Academic Press, 1994).
13. Kaufman, Edy. Abed, Shukri.B. and Rothstein, Robert L. (eds), *Democracy, Peace, and the Israeli – Palestinian conflict.*, (London; Lynne Rienner publishers, Boulder, 1993).
14. Kedourie, Elie and Haim, Sylvia G. (eds) *Zionism and Arabism in Palestine and Israel* (London: Francass, 1982).
15. Kumarswamy, P.R. Political Legitimacy of the minorities: Israeli Arabs and 1996 Knesset elections, the Emirates occasional papers, 1998, No.20 (AbuDhabi UAE: The Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research, 1998).
16. Layne, Lindal, (ed) *Elections in the Middle East Implications of Recent Trends*, (London: Westview Press, 1987).
17. Likhovski, Eliahus. *Israel's Parliament: The Law of the Knesset*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).
18. MacDowal, David *Palestine and Israel: The uprising and Beyond*, (London: I.B. Tauric and Co. Ltd. Publishers, 1989).
19. Peleg, Ilan and Seliktar, Ofria (eds). *The emergence of a Binational Israel: the second republic in the making* ( London: Westview Press, Boulder 1989).
20. Perlmutter, Amos. *Military and Politics in Israel: Nation-Building and Role expansion* (London: Frankass, 1977).
21. Pickles, Dorothy. *Democracy*, (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd., 1970).
22. Safran, Nadav. *Israel the Embattled Ally* (Harvard University Press, 1978).
23. Schnall, David J. *Radical Dissent in contemporary Israeli politics: Cracks in the Wall*. (New York: Prager Publishers, 1979).



24. Schulze, Reinhard. *A Modern History of the Islamic World*, (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1995).
25. Shapiro, Yonathan. *The Formative years of the Israeli Labour Party.*, (London: Sage Publications Ltd., 1976).
26. Shimshoni, Daniel. *Israeli Democracy: The Middle of the journey.* (London: The Free Press Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1982).
27. Stendel, Ori. *The Arabs in Israel* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press 1996).
28. Sullivan, John L, Shamir, Michal, Walsh, Patric and Roberts, Nigels. *Political Tolerance in context: support for Unpopular Minorities in Israel, New Zealand and the United States* (London: Westerview Press, Bounder, 1985).
29. Tachau, Frank. *Political Parties of the Middle East and North Africa* (ed) (USA: Greenwood Press, West Port, Connecticut 1994),

## ARTICLES

1. Al – Hai, Majid. "Kinship and Local Politics among the Arab in Israel". Asian and African Studies Vol. 27, No.1-2, 1993. Pp.47-60.
2. Azam, Kousar J. "Muslim Minorities in the world today." Islamic Culture, (Hyderabad, India) Vol. 68, No.4, October 1994, pp. 81-86.
3. Ben-Elizer, Uri. "Meaning of political participation in a non-liberal democracy: The Israeli experience." Comparative politics, (The city University of New York) Vol. 25, No.-4, July 1993, pp. 397-412.
4. Bichler, Shimson. "Political power shifts in Israel, 1977 and 1992: Unsuccessful electoral economics of long range realignment?" Science and society, (New York, USA) Vol. 58, No.4, Winter 1994-95, pp.415-39.
5. Blondel, Jean. "Political opposition in the contemporary world." Government and opposition, Vol. 32, No.4 1997, pp. 462-486.
6. Brichata, Avraham. "Proposed Electoral Reform in Israel." The Jewish Journal of Sociology, (London) Vol. 33, No.2, December 1991, pp. 83-95.
7. Brinner, William M. "Arabs and Muslims as Minorities: An Historical overview." Asian and African studies, Vol.27, No.1-2, 1993. Pp. G.23.
8. Capitanchik, David. "Israeli general election of 1996: Another upheaval?" Government and opposition, Vol. 31, No.4, Autumn 1996, pp. 449-66.
9. Diskin, Abraham. "The New Political System of Israel." Government and Opposition, Vol. 34, No.4, Autumn 1999, pp. 498-515.
10. Don Pertz and Gideon Doron. "Sectarian politics and the peace process: The 1999 Israel Elections" Middle East Journal, (Washington D.C.) Vol. 54, No.2 Spring 2000, pp.259-273).
11. Doron, Gideon. "Israel: The nationalists return to power." Current History, Vol. 96, No. 606, January 1997, pp. 31-35.
12. Dowty, Alan. "Israel's first fifty years." Current History, (Philidelphia) Vol. 97, No. 615, January 1998, pp. 26-31.

13. Edelman, Martin. *"The New Israeli Constitution."* *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 36, No.2 April 2000, pp. 1-27.
14. Ethan Bueno de Mesquita. *"Strategic and Non Policy voting: A coalational analysis of Israeli Electoral Reform."* *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 3, No.1, October 2000, pp. 63-80.
15. Etzioni – Halevy, Eva. *"The Religious Elite connection and some problems of Israeli Democracy."* *Government and opposition*, Vol. 29, No.4, Summer 1994, pp. 476-493.
16. Frisch, Hillel. *"The Arab vote: The Radicalisation of Politicisation"*. *Israel Affairs*, Vol. 4, No.1 Autumn 1997. Pp. 103-118.
17. Gerner, Deborah J. *"Palasfinians, Israelis and the Intifadah: The third year and beyond."* *Arab studies quarterly*, Vol. 13, No. 3-4, Summer/ Fall 1991, pp. 19-64.
18. Ghanem As'ad. *"The Limits of Parliamentary politics: The Arab Minority in Israel and the 1992 and 1996 Elections."* *Israel Affairs*. (Jerusalem, Israel) Vol.4 , No.2, Winter 1997, pp. 72-92.
19. Ginat, Joseph *"The Elections in the Arab Sector: Voting Patterns and Political Behaviour."* *The Jerusalem Quarterly*, (Jerusalem, Israel) No.53, Winter 1990, pp. 27-55.
20. Goldscheider Calvin *"Arab Israelis: Demography, Dependency and Distinctiveness"*. *Asian and African Studies* (Jerusalem, Israel) Vol.27, No.1-2, 1993, pp.61-85.
21. Hareven, Alouph. *"Toward A shared civility."* *Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 27, No.1-2, 1993, pp. 207-123.
22. Kook, Rebecca. *"Dilemmas of ethnic minorities in democracies: The effect of peace on the Palastenians in Israel."* *Politics and society* (London) Vol. 23, No.3 September, 1995, pp. 309-36.
23. Leca, Jean. *"Opposition in the Middle East and North Africa."* *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 32, No. 4 1997, pp. 557-577.
24. Morris, Benny. *"Israel's elections and their implications."* *Journal of palastine studies*, Vol. 26, No.1, Autumn 1996, pp. 70-81.
25. Neuberger, Bonymin *"The Arab minority in Israeli politics 1994-1992: From marginality to influence"* *Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 27, No.1-2, 1993, pp. 149-169.

26. Pappé, Ilan. "Israel at a crossroads between civil democracy and Jewish Zealotocracy." Journal of Palestine studies, Vol. 29, No.3, Spring 2000, pp. 33-44.
27. Paz, Rehven. "The Islamic Movement in Israel and the Municipal Elections of 1989." The Jerusalem Quarterly, No. 53, Winter 1990, pp. 3-24.
28. Pertz, Don and Smooha, Sammy. "Israel's Twelfth Knesset Election: An All-Loser Game." Middle East Journal, Vol. 43, No.3, Summer 1989, pp. 388-405.
29. Rekhess, Elie. "Arab nationalist challenge to the Israeli communist party, 1970-1985." Studies in comparative communism, (Jordon Hill, Oxford) Vol.22, No.-4, Winter 1989, pp. 337-50.
30. Rekhess, Elie. "Resurgent Islam in Israel." Asian and African Studies Vol. 27, No.1-2, 1993, pp.189-206.
31. Rouhana, Nadim. "Accentuated Identities in Protracted Conflicts: the Collective Identity of the Palastenian citizens in Israel." Asian and African Studies, Vol. 27, No.1-2, 1993, pp. 97-127.
32. Rouhana, Nadim. "Intifadah and the palastenians of Israeli Resurrecting the greenline." Journal of Palestine studies, Vol. 19, No.(3) (35) Spring 1990, pp. 58-75.
33. Rouhana, Nadim. "Israel and its Arab citizens: Predicaments in the relationship between ethnic states and ethnonational minorities." Third world quarterly, (Basingstoke, Hants, UK), Vol. 19, No.2, 1998, pp. 277-96.
34. Sahliyah, Emile. "The PLO and the Israeli Arabs." Asian and African Studies, Vol. 27, No.1-2, 1993, pp. 85-96.
35. Sandler, Shmuel. "Israeli Arabs and the Jewish State: The Activation of Community in Suspended Animation". Middle Eastern Studies, (London) Vol.31, No.4, October 1995, pp. 932-952.
36. Shahak, Israel. "Israeli elections of 1992:An analysis." Middle East Policy, (Washington D.C.) Vol. 1, No.3, 1992, pp. 74-87.
37. Shain Yossi and Barzilai, Gad "Israeli Democracy at the crossroads: A Crisis of Non-Governability". Government and opposition, (Houghton Street, London) Vol. 26, Number-3, Summer, 1991, pp. 345-367.

38. Sheffer, Gabriel. "Has Israel Really Been a Garrison Democracy? Sources of change in Israel's Democracy." Israel Affairs, Vol. 3, No.1, Autumn 1996, pp. 13-38.
39. Smootha, Sammy. *Minority status in an ethnic democracy: The status of the Arab minority in Israel*" Ethnic and Racial Studies (London) Vol. 13, no.3, July 1990, pp. 389-411.
40. Stellman, Henri. "Electing a Prime Minister and a parliament: The Israeli election 1996." Parliamentary Affairs. (Oxford University Press Oxford). Vol. 49, No.4, October 1996, pp. 648-60.
41. Stepan, Affred. "Democratic opposition and Democratisation Theory." Government and Opposition, Vol.32, No.4 1997, pp. 657-673.
42. Tessler, Mark. "Intifadah and political discourse in Israel." Journal of Palastine Studies, (Washington D.C.) Vol. 19, No. (2) (74) Winter 1990, pp. 43-61.
43. Toubi, Towfiq. "Israel Electoral achievements and new horizons." Party Life, (New Delhi, India) Vol. 27, No.8, August 1992, pp. 25-32.
44. Waterman, Stanley. "The non-Jewish vote in Israel in 1992." Political Geography, (Jordon Hill, Oxford) Vol.13, No.6, November 1994, pp. 540-558.
45. Wilzing, Samlehman. "Copying the Master? Patterns of Israeli Arab protest, 1950-1990." Asian and African Studies, Vol. 21, No. 1-2, 1993, pp. 129-137.
46. Yiftachel, Oren, "The Concept of ethnic democracy and its applicability to the case of Israel." Ethnic and Racial Studies, Vol. 15, No.1 January 1992, pp. 125-134.