

The British Army and Jewish Insurgency in Palestine, 1945–47

David A. Charters

*Director, Centre for Conflict Studies,
The University of New Brunswick*

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For Mary, Stephen and Jennifer

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Foreword

David Charters covers an important but under-researched period when Britain began her withdrawal from the Empire in the immediate post-war years. It was hardly an auspicious start but, as is clearly portrayed, the political, strategic and economic factors which determined the course of events in Palestine, were largely outside the control of the British Government.

As is also eventually conceded, having just finished fighting a world war, it was hardly surprising that the British army was intellectually, organisationally and professionally unprepared to conduct a subtle politically orientated anti-terrorist campaign. That is not to say, however, that avoidable errors of judgement were not committed.

Though those who were present during the last vicious years of the Mandate would not necessarily agree with some of his academic strictures, David Charters' analysis merits close attention. As he says, the lessons learnt were later applied successfully in other theatres. They remain as relevant today as ever.

This is not just a book for the specialist but also for anybody who is interested in the genesis of the state of Israel.

General Sir Nigel Bagnall, GCB, CVO, MC, ADC, Gen.

Preface

This book traces its origins to the first military history seminar at the University of New Brunswick, 1970–1. Conducted against the backdrop of the Vietnam War and Canada's 'October Crisis', the seminar's focus on civil–military relations directed my interest in military affairs towards the study of what is now widely referred to as 'low-intensity conflict'. I became fascinated by the problems encountered by governments and military forces when they confront the unconventional political–military challenge posed by revolutionary war. That fascination continues to ignite my curiosity. It was the source of inspiration for this volume.

The frequent and often simplistic comparisons between the American 'defeat' in Vietnam and the British 'victory' in Malaya persuaded me that the British experience of 'counter-insurgency' might prove to be a fruitful subject for exploration. I was struck by the extent to which the Malayan Emergency 'model' had come to dominate British theory, practice and historiography of counter-insurgency in the post-war period. Yet, the campaign in Palestine, which preceded that in Malaya and had involved a much larger commitment of British troops, had been all but ignored by British military historians and strategic analysts. The reason for this asymmetry was abundantly clear. American President John F. Kennedy, reflecting ruefully on his debacle at the Bay of Pigs, is said to have quoted Count Ciano to the effect that, 'Victory has a hundred fathers, but defeat is an orphan'. Malaya was a British victory; Palestine was a defeat and in every sense an orphan. Believing nonetheless that there is often more to be learned from failure than from success, I chose to make the Palestine campaign the focus of my doctoral dissertation.

It proved to be a fortuitous choice. First, it provided insights into the ways in which men's minds are changed by the interplay of politics and violence. Second, and more significant for this study, it shed light on the manner in which an army – as an institution –

learns to adapt to a new operational environment. Thus, the study proved to be enlightening not only for its intrinsic historical value in respect of Palestine, but also for its relevance to the study of contemporary low-intensity conflicts and the performance of armies, as social and professional institutions, in those conflicts. These matters have been at the heart of the research I have undertaken at the Centre for Conflict Studies for the past seven years. They provide the intellectual perspective which informs this book.

This volume sets out to answer two questions. First, to what extent did the British army adapt effectively to the counter-insurgency environment and missions of the Palestine campaign between 1945 and 1947? Second, to what extent did the operations of the army, in concert with those of the other security forces, determine the outcome of the conflict? The answers will be explored in six chapters. Chapter 1 examines the nature of insurgency and the political and military implications of that form of conflict for planning and directing counter-insurgency operations. The second chapter establishes the political setting in which the campaign was fought. In respect of the British, it explains the historical roots of the conflict and the place of Palestine in British Middle East policy, against the backdrop of post-war domestic and foreign policy, particularly Anglo-American relations. It also describes the state of the Zionist movement in the wake of the Holocaust: its organisation, objectives, and its ability to use its political strength in the United States. Chapter 3 shows how Zionist policy was translated into an insurgency within Palestine. It explains the origins, organisation and strategy of each of the insurgent groups. Then it demonstrates these strategies in action, by showing how violent operations and propaganda worked together to 'destabilise' the British position in Palestine.

The next two chapters focus on the British response to the insurgency. The organisation, strategic direction and operations of the security forces are discussed in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 identifies and analyses the sources of the operational problems manifested in the previous chapter. To this end, it explores the development of the army's strategic thought and 'doctrine' of counter-insurgency, the institutional and organisational obstacles to tactical innovation in the areas of command and control, training, unit manpower stability and readiness. Finally, it examines critically intelligence and counter-propaganda activities. The final chapter addresses the two questions the book sets out to answer and attempts to place the

Palestine campaign in the historical context of the British counter-insurgency experience since 1945.

More than six years have passed since this study was completed as a dissertation. In this its revised form, it benefits, I hope, from the time I have had to reflect on these matters in different and wider contexts. That reflection and the process of revision have benefited as well, I believe, from the considerable expansion of relevant literature on terrorism, on intelligence activities and on the Palestine problem itself. In some respects, Palestine is no longer the historiographical orphan it was once. At the same time the story remains, in my view, incomplete. For Palestine there still is no companion volume to Charles Townshend's excellent history of the British campaign in Ireland, or to Anthony Short's authoritative study of the Malayan Emergency. This modest effort will, I hope, go some way to redress the balance.

D.A.C.

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This book would not have been possible without access to various archives and their permission to use the papers cited herein. The staff of the Public Record Office deserve commendation if only for copying the sheer volume of my document requests. Crown-copyright material in the Public Record Office and other archives is reproduced by permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Copyright material from the *LHI Bulletin* is reproduced by permission of the British Library. Lady Kathleen Liddell Hart was most gracious in permitting me to use her late husband's papers during the time when the collection resided at their home, States House,

Medmenham, Buckinghamshire. When the collection moved to King's College, London, Miss Patricia Methven handled my requests with pleasant efficiency. Mr John Briance and General Sir Rodney Moore were also helpful in providing copies of documents from their own private collections. Thanks are due as well to the staffs of: the British Library; the Harriet Irving Library, University of New Brunswick; the Imperial War Museum; the Jabotinsky Institute, Tel Aviv, Israel; the Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford; the Rhodes House Library, Oxford; the Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, London; the Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University; and the Wiener Library, London.

While, as author, I must take sole credit and responsibility for the contents, this book represents the combined efforts of many persons for whose support and assistance I am grateful. Mr Scot Robertson took valuable time away from his doctoral research to locate documents in the Public Record Office that I had missed during my initial trawl. Mr Yisrael Medad, of the National Studies Institute, Jerusalem, was a fount of insight and information concerning the Jewish underground movements. Mr Brent Wilson was kind enough to read the manuscript and to offer his comments. Mrs Thelma Clarke tackled the typing of the manuscript with vigour and good cheer, all the while keeping a watchful eye on my grammar and punctuation. Mrs Deborah Stapleford, of the Centre for Conflict Studies, the University of New Brunswick, handled the extensive correspondence and other typing that publication of this study entailed. Mr Simon Winder and Miss S. Kemp, my editors at Macmillan, were both helpful and patient. Mrs. Linda Hansen rendered valuable assistance in reading and correcting the proofs.

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Finally, I must conclude with a personal note of thanks. This book owes its existence to the support of my family. My parents and grandparents provided the encouragement and assistance which allowed me to study the subject that interested me. My wife, Mary, and the two children were more than patient when the task of revising the dissertation into a book consumed many evenings and weekends. Any credit for perseverance must go to them.

Dr David A. Charters
July 1987

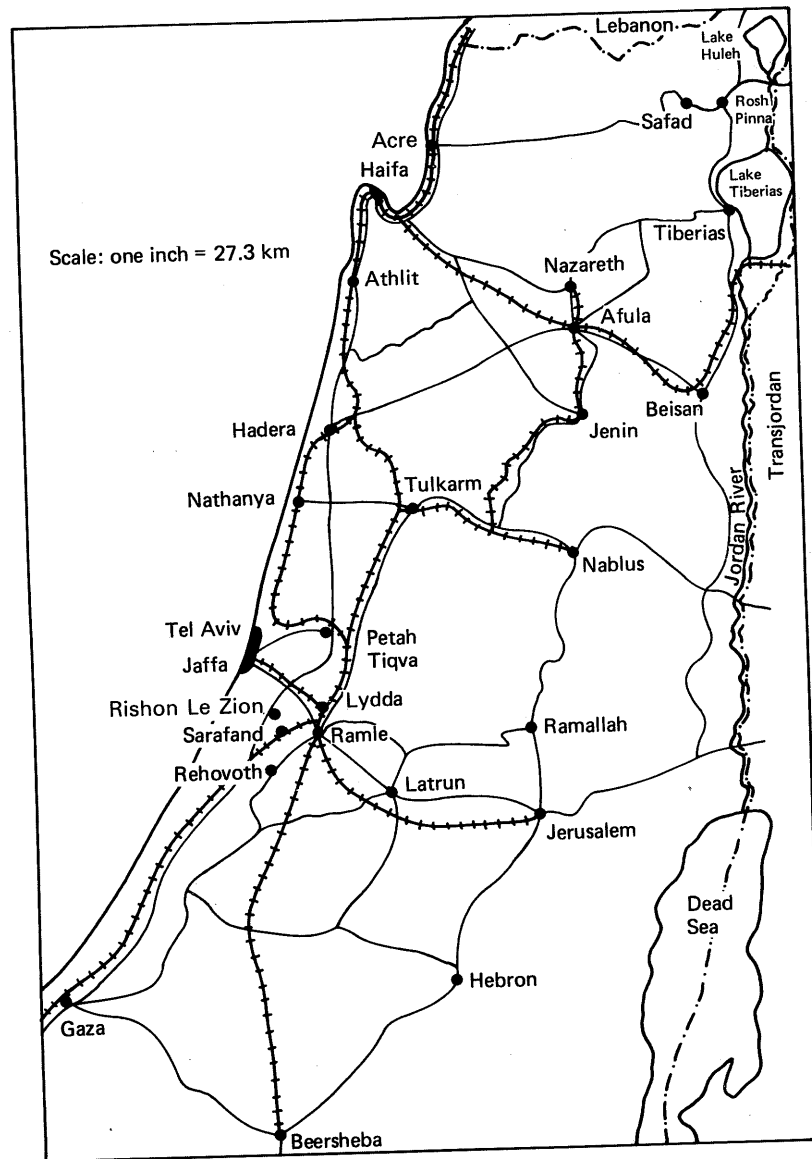
List of Abbreviations

AIG	Assistant Inspector-General
ALFP	American League for a Free Palestine
Armd	Armoured
AZEC	American Zionist Emergency Committee
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BGS	Brigadier, General Staff
BIS	British Information Services
CAB	Cabinet (Papers)
CDC	Cabinet Defence Committee (see also DO)
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CIGS	Chief of the Imperial General Staff
CINC	Commander in Chief
CM	Cabinet Minutes
CO	Colonial Office (Papers)
COI	Central Office of Information
Col.	Colonel
col.	Column
COS	Chief(s) of Staff
COSC	Chiefs of Staff Committee
COSINTREP	Confidential Situation Intelligence Report
CP	Cabinet Paper
CSDIC	Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre
DIV	Division
DO	Defence/Overseas (see also CDC)
DP	Displaced Person
DOS	Defence Security Office
DSP	District Superintendent of Police
f.	File/folio
FIN	Fortnightly Intelligence Newsletter
FIS	Fortnightly Intelligence Summary
FO	Foreign Office (Papers)
GHQ	General Headquarters

GOC	General Officer Commanding
GS	General Staff
GSI	General Staff, Intelligence
HC	House of Commons (Command Paper)
HMG	His Majesty's Government
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
HQ	Headquarters
IG	Inspector-General
INF	Ministry of Information (Papers)
Inf.	Infantry
IPD	Information Policy Department
IS	Internal Security
ISUM	Intelligence Summary
IZL	Irgun Zvai Leumi
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
JP	Joint Planning (Staff)
JRUSI	<i>Journal of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies</i>
MEF	Middle East Forces
MELF	Middle East Land Forces
MOI	Ministry of Information
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
OI	Operational Instruction
OO	Operational Order
OPC	Overseas Planning Committee (See MOI)
PIO	Palestine Information Office(r)
PMF	Police Mobile Force
RA	Royal Artillery
RAC	Royal Armoured Corps
REME	Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
Sqn	Squadron
UN	United Nations
UNSCOP	United Nations Special Committee on Palestine
VCIGS	Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff
WCP	War Cabinet Paper
WIR	Weekly Intelligence Review
WIS	Weekly Intelligence Summary
WMIR	Weekly Military Intelligence Review
WO	War Office (Papers)
WZO	World Zionist Organisation
ZOA	Zionist Organisation of America

*I earnestly trust that the Government will,
if they have to fight this squalid war,
make perfectly certain that the willpower
of the British State is not conquered by
brigands and bandits*

Sir Winston Churchill, House of Commons, 31 January 1947



Palestine Operational Area, 1945-47

1 On Armies and Insurgency

The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgement that the statesman and commander have to make is to establish . . . the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to turn it into, something that is alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.¹

Clausewitz's dictum, written in the early nineteenth century, retains its validity today and is particularly relevant to the problem of counter-insurgency. As a form of warfare it is manifestly different from that for which armies are normally organised and trained: conventional war between formed armies of national states. If they are to prevail in an insurgent war, armies must learn to adapt to that form of warfare; in order to adapt effectively, they must first understand the nature of the war. Hence, the continuing importance of Clausewitz's principle, which armies can ignore at their peril.

Adaptation to change is not a new problem for armies; they have been adapting to changes in tactics, technology, leadership and control since the dawn of time.² But professional armies, as Samuel Huntington has observed, are traditionally conservative in their strategic thinking,³ often for perfectly sound reasons. War is a dangerous, high-risk undertaking; it makes sense to err on the side of caution, to plan on the basis of known quantities and proven principles and practices. This tends to make armies, as institutions, resistant to change. Moreover, some – the British army among them – have not been very good at developing the kind of 'institutional memory' that would facilitate learning from experience – both good and bad – and transmitting the appropriate 'lessons learned' to the next generation of soldiers.⁴ This, too, hinders adaptation.

Maurice Tugwell identifies two types of adaptation. The first, he feels, is 'innovative adaptability', the product of military genius. The second and more common form is 'reactive' adaptation, which is required whenever new or unforeseen events or conditions disrupt existing military doctrine.⁵ It is in the nature both of professional armies and of insurgency that in such conflicts reactive adaptation is the rule, not the exception. The counter-insurgency campaigns of the twentieth century have not been remarkable for their demonstration of military genius.

So what is it in the nature of insurgencies that poses unique problems for a regular army? There is no commonly agreed definition of insurgency, and many tend towards the simplistic: 'some kind of uprising against an incumbent government . . . a form of armed insurrection',⁶ or 'a localized armed conflict between the forces of a constituted government and other forces originating within the same national territory'.⁷ Even a recent study of armies and counter-insurgency did not expand upon these definitions in a significant way. It described insurgency as 'a politico-military campaign waged by guerrillas with the object of overthrowing the government of a state'.⁸ This author finds the definition offered by Bard E. O'Neill the most comprehensive and persuasive: 'a struggle between a non-ruling group and the ruling authorities in which the former consciously employs political resources (organizational skills, propaganda, and/or demonstrations) and instruments of violence to establish legitimacy for some aspect of the political system it considers illegitimate . . .', in short, 'a political legitimacy crisis of some sort'.⁹ Dennis C. Pirages notes that 'there is little agreement on what constitutes legitimacy or how to measure it',¹⁰ but the very elusiveness of the concept, like that of insurgency itself, seems to enhance its significance. Legitimacy, Eqbal Ahmad argues, 'is not just a matter of beliefs and sentiments . . . It refers to that crucial and ubiquitous factor in politics which invests power with authority'.¹¹ Timothy Lomperis goes on to assert that 'Every government or political regime lives on a grant of legitimacy from its populace'.¹² Ahmad notes that the erosion of legitimacy, and hence authority, 'generally marks the increasing shift of citizens from obeying authority to rebelling against it'.¹³ Social scientists have identified numerous possible causes of the loss of legitimacy that need not be enumerated in detail here; suffice to say that regime performance – even where it is repressive, or fails to fulfil expectations – is not the only possible factor.¹⁴ Indeed, as Harry Eckstein points out, internal wars – of

which insurgency is one form – may arise from a host of plausible sources of conflict.¹⁵ The importance of this approach to understanding insurgency is that it shifts the focus of attention from the military to the 'political' dimension of the conflict. Classical strategic thought about conventional war places the 'centre of gravity' in the military forces of the opposing powers.¹⁶ The soldiers on the battlefield – those units in direct contact with the enemy – need concern themselves only with the military objective: defeating the enemy's armed forces. The 'politics' of the war is left to the 'frocks' (the politicians) and the 'brass', the military high command. In insurgency, the 'centre of gravity' is political.¹⁷ The insurgent transfers the locus of conflict to the political and social structure and concurrently to the realm of political ideas and agitation. It is the social/political order – its future shape and direction – rather than territory, that is the contested ground.¹⁸ In this sense insurgency is both more than just a 'legitimacy crisis' or an armed struggle between opposing groups within the same state; it is, first and foremost, a *battle* for legitimacy, for political power and authority, between rebel and incumbent, insurgent and counter-insurgent.

Yet, this clearly is not the entire picture. Implicit in the notion of legitimacy is the idea of 'control'. If legitimacy represents the *right* to exercise authority, control represents the *ability* to do so. The link between the two is obvious. A government which lacks or loses legitimacy may be able to survive if it has the appropriate means of control at its disposal and is able to use them effectively against opposition. Often this means escalating the levels of coercion. But a government which either lacks the means of control that ensure stability and public security, or uses them in an ineffective or inappropriate manner, may very quickly lose whatever legitimacy it otherwise might have had. Moreover, if by contrast the insurgent is able to demonstrate a capability for effective operations and the ability to enforce his writ within the political/social structure, then the mantle of legitimacy is likely to shift in his direction.¹⁹ So it is possible to advance the concept of insurgency – and counter-insurgency – as a 'two-front' war: a 'strategic' battle for legitimacy, and a 'tactical' battle for control.

To conduct this type of war, insurgents organise themselves to use both political techniques and violence, orchestrated to reinforce each other. The political resources are mobilised for the battle on the legitimacy front where, as O'Neill points out, 'organization is the critical dimension'.²⁰ He identifies two organisational models:

the elite conspiracy, and the 'mass' organisation in which a significant proportion of the population is mobilised in support of the insurgents' cause and struggle. The latter is particularly suited to a predominantly rural society, while the former is usually characteristic of an urban campaign.²¹ But the distinction is not wholly clear-cut, since a 'conspiratorial' network may be instrumental in the villages and hamlets of a rural-based, mass campaign. Moreover, as the Palestine case will demonstrate, a conspiratorial elite movement may be sufficient in itself in situations where the key population component is already predisposed to the insurgents' cause, even if it does very little to support it with demonstrative mass actions. Merely protecting the elite may be sufficient.

Regardless of the specific form of organisation, the insurgent is attempting to win and retain legitimacy through the creation of a viable rival centre of authority. Depending upon the strength and situation of the insurgents, this may take the form of a 'parallel hierarchy' or a 'rival state', which challenges the incumbent regime's legitimacy, authority and control by duplicating or even usurping the functions of government, and providing these to the insurgents' supporters. Simultaneously, the insurgents may penetrate and subvert the existing administrative structures, either to divert them to serving their cause, or at least to prevent them from working effectively for the government. Establishing a parallel hierarchy is often easier in a rural mass-based campaign, where the government's authority and means of control are usually weak. There the insurgents can develop a secure base within the population, and gradually extend their influence outwards in all directions. This process is not usually suitable for urban areas, where governments traditionally concentrate their administrative structures and security forces. A different form of organisation is called for – what might be described as a 'vertically-integrated conspiracy'. This type of organisation often combines an overt political 'front', whose task is to promote the insurgents' cause and legitimacy in an open, legal fashion, and thus to attract supporters to the movement, with a covert, clandestine secret society which directs the whole campaign, exercises authority, and conducts the armed violence that is necessary to enforce its writ while undermining the legitimacy and control of the government.²²

The central aspect of insurgency as a legitimacy battle is the struggle to win and retain allegiances, and ultimately to integrate them into the rival structures discussed above. Psychological warfare, including the use of propaganda, plays a major role in this aspect

of insurgent conflicts. Insurgent organisations characteristically are politically and militarily small and weak, especially at the outset of their campaigns. It is essential, therefore, for them to develop, to portray and to reinforce an image of strength, legitimacy and authority beyond their numbers, as well as omnipotence, cleverness, threat to their enemies, magnanimity towards the common man and, most important, a manifest destiny to victory.²³ Propaganda alone would not normally be sufficient to persuade people to switch allegiances and support the insurgents' cause and struggle. The insurgents' propaganda themes must exhibit at least the appearance of being founded on verifiable empirical evidence, particularly on results that demonstrate the viability of the insurgency and some prospect of success. The insurgents' ability to organise as described above, and to sustain that organisation against counter-action, would be one measure of effectiveness. Another would be the ability either to inflict punishing attacks on the regime and its security forces, or at least to demonstrate that the actions of the regime are ineffective against the insurgency, incapable of arresting its march to inevitable triumph. Government repression, even if it has been provoked deliberately by insurgent actions, can be turned to the insurgents' advantage as a mobilising weapon. Intangible factors – such as charismatic leadership – also play a role in the psychological battle for legitimacy. The ultimate objective is to produce a cohesive insurgent movement that is united in purpose, effective in operation, able to attract and retain allegiance, and strong enough to survive government counter-measures with its capabilities, legitimacy and authority intact, if not enhanced.²⁴

Given its objectives, organisation and relative weakness, an insurgent movement cannot hope to inflict a military defeat on the security forces, at least in the early stage, if ever. Insurgencies do not have the resources, either in manpower or firepower, to engage in conventional combat with the counter-insurgent. Rather, they tend to rely on a mix of unconventional methods, not necessarily constant: military tactics (raids and ambushes), paramilitary (bombing and sabotage), and criminal techniques (assassination, kidnapping, hijacking, hostage-taking and rioting). The range of targets might also extend well beyond the purely military to include politicians and administrators, police and intelligence services, rival ethnic or political factions, the business community, and the administrative and economic infrastructure and other vital, vulnerable points such as transportation and communications.²⁵

These methods and targeting choices can serve a number of purposes. First, they often force the government to disperse the security forces on a wide variety of defensive duties, tying down large numbers of men at great cost, preventing them from being concentrated for effective, offensive operations. This denies the initiative to the security forces, making them look ineffective or helpless – unless they do a very good job of protecting all of the targets, which is not usually the case. Second, by relying on flexible, irregular tactics, mounted in secrecy with the advantage of speed and surprise, the insurgents are normally able to deny the security forces a viable target for conventional counter-measures. This also helps to make them appear ineffective because their superior training, technology and firepower is rendered irrelevant to the conflict. Third, selective attacks on the police and intelligence services facilitate the breakdown of public security, and hamper effective counter-measures by ‘blinding’ the security forces so they cannot locate the insurgents. They will appear to be losing control of the country while the insurgents appear to be omnipotent. Security forces thus frustrated might be further provoked into excessive overt repression, or illegal, covert vigilante actions, either of which might serve to alienate the population and shift legitimacy from the government to the insurgents. Attacks on politicians, particularly moderates, and rival ethnic or political factions may serve to polarise the conflict and force individuals to choose sides for fear of being caught in the middle or on the losing side. Terrorism may be particularly effective in producing an atmosphere of anxiety and distrust. Finally, attacks on the administrative and economic structure might bring about a combined disruption of public services and economic crisis that heralds a ‘climate of collapse’ – the apparent loss of control by a government which seems unable to administer effectively or to enforce its policies. If, by contrast, the insurgents can demonstrate a capacity for competent ‘counter-organisation’, administration and enforcement of authority, they may fairly be said to have won the two-front war.²⁶ Of course, it must be emphasised that insurgencies only rarely achieve that goal; the successful insurgency, such as occurred in Ireland, Palestine and Algeria, is the exception, not the rule.

The implications for the army as counter-insurgent are clear. First, the political dimension dominates all military considerations and activities down to the lowest level. The symbiotic relationship of political and military facts means that even relatively minor military

actions could have significant political impact – either positive or negative – even if only locally. This means that the officers, NCOs and the other ranks must be made aware of the political dimension of their actions and the potential consequences of ill-advised or excessive applications of force. It usually translates as well into strict – if rarely consistent – political control of operations, necessitating a close, and not always comfortable, working relationship with the civil power, and the application of political constraints on the use of violence: the weapons and tactics that may be used, and the circumstances in which their use would be considered appropriate.²⁷

Second, operations need to be directed towards breaking up the insurgents’ organisational structure and limiting their freedom of action, in order to reduce their capacity to function as a rival source of effective power and legitimacy. This places a premium on accurate and timely intelligence activities since, without intelligence, security force operations against the insurgent forces and their political infrastructure will be futile, even counter-productive. The ability to collect, assess correctly and exploit intelligence usually marks the difference between victory and defeat; as Frank Kitson has observed, the task of defeating the insurgent ‘consists very largely of finding him’.²⁸ Army operations thus normally take on a ‘policing’ character. The capture or arrest of insurgents, the collection of evidence, and bringing the insurgents to trial becomes more important than killing them which, in any case, may be politically unacceptable. Political and legal constraints often leave the initiative in the hands of the insurgent, who may strike at will, while the army must wait until the ‘crime’ has been committed before being permitted to act. This surrender of the initiative to the enemy violates a fundamental principle of war and is an anathema to the professional soldier. Taken together with the fact that the final outcome is likely to be determined by political and other intangible factors and not by military action alone, it understandably produces frustration for the soldiers and a degree of friction between them and the civil authorities.²⁹

That said, insurgency remains a form of warfare, and its military aspects can be ignored only at the peril of the counter-insurgency forces. Indeed, it is the ‘low intensity’, irregular features of insurgency that mark its third distinctive characteristic. Insurgent organisation and tactics and the political constraints normally applied to the amount of violence the security forces may apply means that the number of troops engaged in ‘combat’ at any one time is usually

measured in dozens or less, and only rarely in scores or hundreds. 'Pitched battles' involving battalion-size or larger forces occur infrequently. Counter-insurgency campaigns have been described aptly as 'platoon commander's wars'.³⁰ On the other hand, they tend to require large contingents of troops. This apparent paradox is neatly summarised by Kitson's rule-of-thumb that 'the number of troops required to control a given situation goes up as the amount of force which it is politically acceptable for them to use goes down'.³¹ These unorthodox situations demand some adjustment in the thinking of army officers normally oriented to preparing for conventional war. With all the resources at their disposal, they may find it difficult to resist the temptation to mount large-scale multiple unit conventional operations. In his account of the Malayan Emergency, Richard Clutterbuck observed caustically that 'the predilection of some army officers for major operations seems incurable'.³² At the same time, they should not become so oriented to 'policing' that they abandon entirely basic, small-unit tactical skills. Moreover, there is an important place in counter-insurgency campaigns for small-scale, discriminate, offensive, unconventional operations that allow army units to engage the insurgent on equal terms on his own ground.³³

Several implications flow from these observations. First, the need for the soldier to be able to adapt, during the course of a campaign, from mounting a traditional ambush in circumstances where he could 'shoot to kill', to acting as a 'peace-officer' enforcing the law in other circumstances, puts a premium on the professionalism and discipline that can come only from proper training to a high standard. In this regard Major-General Anthony Deane-Drummond makes a telling point:

The change in role from conventional military operations to internal security and para-military duties is neither rapid nor easy. Intense – and time-consuming – periods of training are required to prepare troops tactically and psychologically for a role which although less lethal in terms of overall casualties than conventional war is equally demanding and stressful.³⁴

The nature of such combat as there is and the manpower requirements that arise from the 'policing' aspects shape these campaigns primarily as infantry operations, with a relatively small contribution (sometimes in an infantry role) from the other two principal combat arms.³⁵ The Vietnam War aside, air power generally has been used sparingly.

This and Deane-Drummond's observation on the reduced lethality of low-intensity operations point to one positive aspect: both insurgent and counter-insurgent casualties tend to be light in comparison with those incurred in protracted, conventional high-intensity wars.³⁶ Unfortunately, as the Vietnam and Lebanon conflicts demonstrate graphically, this good fortune is not always shared with the civilian population caught in the middle of the conflict.

Finally, the importance that the political/propaganda dimension of insurgency gives to 'appearances' places the onus on the counter-insurgents (government and security forces) to respond to the insurgents at the psychological warfare level, since the battle lost here – over the central issue of legitimacy – may render victories on the other front irrelevant. Not surprisingly, this is one of the most difficult and controversial aspects of counter-insurgency. Outside total war situations or sophisticated dictatorships, few governments are comfortable with or equipped to conduct the kind of psychological warfare that insurgency demands. Even where governments make extensive efforts at 'public relations', the existence of multiple channels of information communication and a mixture of public apathy, dissent or ignorance, usually precludes the kind of unified, purposeful effort on the part of the government that so characterises the insurgent's campaign.³⁷ Moreover, it is usually easier for the insurgent to exploit for political/propaganda purposes the real and perceived grievances that give rise to rebellion than it is for governments to solve them. A government which is weak, poorly directed and administered, corrupt or under-financed and under stress, starts the counter-insurgency campaign with most of the cards in the psychological/legitimacy battle dealt against it. It is on the defensive from the outset and regaining and retaining popular allegiance sufficient to go over to the offensive may take more resources, patience and time than the government has at its disposal. In some campaigns – and Palestine was one of these – the counter-insurgents never gain the upper hand, and the psychological battle for legitimacy is lost almost by default.

Generally speaking, such efforts as are made tend to be mounted, appropriately, by the civil authorities. They are not always notable for great skill, enthusiasm, or results. In some campaigns, the armed forces do become involved directly in 'offensive' psychological warfare operations.³⁸ More often than not, however, an army's principal concern in this field is learning to cope with constant and

usually critical scrutiny by the domestic and foreign news media. Its every action, its every mistake, failure, or disproportionate measure will provide ammunition to the critics and to the insurgents' propagandists. Under the circumstances the army's options are limited. It may provide the media with such access to the operational arena as is consistent with safety and security. It can endeavour to provide rapid, accurate, factual information about its operations and those of the insurgents, through regular briefings and both on- and off-the-record interviews with responsible officers. A further option is to develop a capability to analyse, anticipate, and pre-empt insurgent propaganda techniques and themes.³⁹ But perhaps the most effective weapon in the arsenal of the professional army can be its ability to perform its operations competently, with discrimination and absence of malice. This brings the discussion back to the first principle: making the soldiers aware of the political ramifications of their actions. With this in mind it may be fair to suggest that for the counter-insurgent, and especially for the security forces, there is more than a grain of truth to the adage that 'winning is mostly a matter of not screwing up'.⁴⁰

The foregoing analysis shows clearly how much insurgency differs from conventional war, and places in perspective the nature of the challenge confronting the British army and its political masters in Palestine. With the benefit of hindsight, it is tempting to assume that all of this should have been obvious to those decision-makers. It must be borne in mind, however, that these characteristics and implications have been identified in retrospect, from a series of campaigns, the study of which has allowed principles, mistakes, 'turning points', and 'lessons' to emerge more clearly from the historical landscape. They were not necessarily apparent in 1945. This is an essential corrective to both the exaggerated claims of the counter-insurgency 'enthusiasts' and the equally misleading observations of some of their critics.

Writing in 1965, Lieutenant-General Sir Kenneth Darling stated: 'We do not want to allow ourselves to be persuaded by upstarts such as Mao Tse-tung that he has produced some original thought in this field. In fact, we British in some degree or another have been promoting insurgency all around the world for centuries.'⁴¹ Richard Clutterbuck echoed these sentiments the following year, when he drew a comparative analogy between comments about the Malayan Emergency and those regarding the American Revolution with a view to showing that 'the British have been learning the same

lessons about counter-insurgency for nearly 200 years'.⁴² Both men were correct – up to a point. The problem with such broad-brush statements is that they do not explain the failures, such as Palestine. The critics of the British experience are more pointed, less flattering, and equally guilty of ahistorical analysis. Anthony Verrier, writing at about the same time as Clutterbuck and Darling, criticised the army for failing to develop a 'strategic doctrine' for counter-insurgency.⁴³ To the extent that it ignores the fundamentally non-doctrinaire nature of the British army and the very real progress that had been made by that time in studying insurgent campaigns and extracting useful 'lessons' for counter-insurgency,⁴⁴ this criticism appears both unjust and surprisingly ill-informed. J. Bowyer Bell went further. He suggested that the British response to the Palestine insurgency established a consistent pattern for the post-war period, wherein the British invariably were taken by surprise, failed to understand the nature of the conflict, and thus applied counter-insurgency methods that merely aggravated the situation and did little to resolve it.⁴⁵ Again, even a cursory survey of Britain's post-war campaigns demonstrates the inadequacy of this generalisation.

In so far as the British experience in Palestine is concerned, the truth lies somewhere between these extremes. What should emerge from the following chapters is a picture of policy-makers and military leaders grappling with an unfamiliar strategic problem the implications of which they understood but imperfectly, and ultimately failing. Yet it is also a 'textbook' example of reactive adaptation. The British army entered the Palestine campaign ill-prepared intellectually, organisationally, and with little experience of dealing with insurgency. But it adjusted its thinking and procedures during the campaign, in so far as political and operational constraints permitted, and not without some success. The 'why' and the 'how' of this process involves the unravelling of an intricately woven fabric of politics, personalities, procedures and problems that both reinforced and contradicted each other. That the British did not ultimately prevail in Palestine can be attributed to many factors, the military among them. This study should go some way to show how much weight and significance ought to be ascribed to the latter, by clarifying the extent to which the British army took Clausewitz's dictum to heart and acted accordingly.

2 The Political Setting

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

On 26 September 1947, British Colonial Secretary, Arthur Creech-Jones, informed the United Nations General Assembly: 'I have been instructed by His Majesty's Government to announce . . . that in the absence of a settlement they must plan for an early withdrawal of British forces and of the British administration from Palestine.'¹ This decision had not been taken lightly. Barely two years earlier the idea that Palestine represented an important strategic asset in the Middle East had commanded widespread support within the British government.² What could account for this dramatic turnaround? Clearly, the major factors included Britain's economic crisis, and the frustration of being unable to reconcile British strategic interests and the contradictory Arab and Jewish claims to Palestine within a single solution acceptable to all. Yet, there is also a general consensus that the deterioration of the security situation within Palestine persuaded the British government that its interests would be served best by abandoning the Palestine Mandate.³ In spite of the presence and operations of British security forces, which at their peak numbered some 100 000, a handful of Jewish insurgents had within two years transformed Palestine from the status of strategic asset to political liability.

This was hardly the outcome anticipated by the British politicians who had drafted the Balfour Declaration in 1917 and who had accepted a League of Nations Mandate to administer Palestine in 1920. In order to place in perspective the 1945-47 period, it is essential to understand the evolution of the Palestine situation to that point. Britain acquired control of Palestine through military conquest during the First World War, but before the conquest was complete the British government made three separate and conflicting commitments with regard to the future of the Middle East and of Palestine in particular.

First, in 1915 Sir Henry McMahon, High Commissioner for Egypt, promised Sharif Hussein of Mecca that, in return for Arab assistance in the war against the Turks, the British would recognise his claims to an Arab empire at the end of the war. Although the pledge probably gave Palestinian Arabs the impression that Palestine was to be included in the promised area of Arab independence, the British government apparently had no intention of ceding control of it once the conquest was complete. Instead, in 1916 the British entered into a secret treaty with France and Russia which would partition the Middle East into British and French protectorates and an independent Arab state. Finally, in 1917 the British Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, committed the British government to the establishment in Palestine of a 'national home' for the Jewish people.⁴

Elizabeth Monroe has since concluded that, solely in terms of British interests, the Balfour Declaration was 'one of the greatest mistakes in our imperial history'.⁵ In the context of the agreements and understandings undertaken before 1917, she is undoubtedly correct. The terms of the original mandate for Palestine were framed to emphasise the mission of creating the Jewish national home. The British government accepted responsibility for generating the social, political and economic conditions conducive to establishment of the national home and for facilitating Jewish immigration and settlement in Palestine. At the same time Britain was to safeguard the civil and religious rights of the indigenous population, and to ensure that Jewish immigration and settlement did not prejudice 'the rights and position of other sections of the population'.⁶ The mandate thus implied a dual obligation open to conflicting interpretation. It was challenged virtually from its inception.

The problem was that, quite apart from the special circumstances surrounding Palestine, the creation of mandates accorded neither with the wishes of the indigenous populations nor the wartime promises of independence to the Arabs; this discrepancy contributed directly to the outburst of violence in the area in 1920, and tends to lend weight to the view that Britain had ignored or underestimated the strength of Arab nationalism.⁷ Between 1921 and 1923, however, the British government responded to the disorder by belatedly honouring its obligations to the Arabs. Feisal was installed as King of Iraq, and Trans-Jordan became an independent entity within the Mandate, under the rule of Amir Abdullah. Of greater significance for this study, in June 1922, Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill

issued a White Paper on Palestine policy which modified the final terms of the Palestine Mandate in such a way as to de-emphasise the idea of the Jewish national home as a 'state-in-the-making' and to reassure the indigenous Arabs that they would not be assimilated by a large influx of Jews. The Arabs were informed that they would not be subordinated to the Jews, whose rate of immigration would be limited by the economic absorptive capacity of the country.⁸ However slight, the semantic changes in the language defining the terms of the Mandate were significant; they convinced the Arabs that they had a British guarantee that Palestine would not become a Jewish state.

Arab fears were thus assuaged and while Jewish immigration slowed to a trickle in the 1920s, communal conflict subsided. This was a satisfactory state of affairs for the British who, D. E. Knox argues, had never been motivated by purely altruistic concern for the Jews or the indigenous Arabs. Rather, a pacified Palestine served strategic interests; it secured the lines of communication to the Eastern Empire by denying an exposed flank to any other power.⁹

Hostility flared again in 1929, however, over the question of religious rights in old Jerusalem. Although the Royal Commission sent to investigate concluded that the violence was the product of frustrated nationalism and revived fears of assimilation,¹⁰ British policy began to waver. First, in 1930 the government issued a new White Paper which stated that Britain's dual obligations were of equal weight but not irreconcilable, yet also recommended restrictions of Jewish immigration and land purchases. At the same time the British government advised the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations that communal conflict made Palestinian self-government based on cooperation between Arabs and Jews impossible. Then, under pressure from the pro-Zionist lobby, the government reversed in 1931 its policy of the previous year and renounced any restriction on Jewish immigration or land acquisitions. The policy remained uncertain because the government did not withdraw or replace the 1930 White Paper.¹¹

In the next five years, particularly after the Nazi seizure of power in Germany, Jewish immigration increased substantially, exceeding 60 000 in 1935 alone. Once again Arab fears surfaced and manifested themselves in violence; this time the resistance was organised and included a general strike. The Arabs set out to stop Jewish immigration and settlement completely, and to establish an indepen-

dent Arab state. The British responded with a ponderous, though ultimately successful, counter-insurgency campaign and another Royal Commission. The commission recommended, in 1937, partition as a permanent solution to the Palestine problem, and the government concurred. An intense debate ensued and a second commission was sent to Palestine to examine the practical and technical aspects of partition. The Jews cautiously accepted partition while the Arabs rejected it out of hand and continued their armed revolt. The debate, the intractability of the problem, the Arab resistance and the developing crisis in Europe combined to produce yet another change in British policy. In November 1938 the government rejected partition.¹² Instead, it convened, in February 1939, a conference in London attended by representatives of all parties to the dispute. The British government advised all concerned that if the conference failed to resolve the issue, the government would impose its own solution; in the event, that is what occurred. In May 1939 the British government proclaimed a new Palestine policy, in what became known as the White Paper. Its two main clauses provided for: evolution towards an independent Palestinian state within ten years; and restrictions on Jewish immigration – 75 000 over the subsequent five years – and on land purchases.¹³

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the White Paper represented yet another exercise in appeasement, a practice so characteristic of British foreign policy in the pre-war period.¹⁴ That it was also a genuine attempt to resolve the contradictions of Britain's First World War diplomacy cannot be denied. In that sense at least, its roots were longer and of a substance different from those of appeasement. Moreover, as Elizabeth Monroe has observed, the White Paper policy was a success; it secured that flank of the empire for the duration of the war.¹⁵ The Arab revolt subsided, its political objectives very nearly achieved, and Britain was able to turn its attention to the crisis in Europe, secure in the knowledge that the lines of communication to the empire, particularly the Suez Canal, were safe – at least from internal threats. But this security was purchased at a price, and appeasement by any other name is still appeasement.

The White Paper policy produced grave consequences for Anglo-Jewish relations. At a time when developments in Europe threatened Jews in particular and Palestine possessed a thriving Jewish community apparently beyond the reach of the Nazis, the White Paper not only rejected the idea of a Jewish state; the immigration

restrictions denied to European Jews fleeing persecution a relatively safe refuge. The Holocaust, of course, lay in the future and for the time being the Jews had little choice but to ally themselves with Britain against the Nazis. But the lesson of the Arab rebellion was not lost upon certain extreme elements of the Palestinian Jewish community: Britain had capitulated to coercion and the Arabs had achieved their objectives; if the Arabs could succeed by using violence, the Jews could as well. Some of these Jews were sufficiently frustrated by the White Paper to consider armed revolt. Once the Holocaust began the White Paper's immigration restrictions would be regarded by the Jewish extremists as connivance and complicity in genocide. Ultimately, they came to conclude that British rule in Palestine would have to be destroyed.

The White Paper notwithstanding, the Jews still had many allies in the British government, not the least of them the new Prime Minister, Winston Churchill. But as Michael Cohen points out, once involved in directing the war, Churchill did not feel free to impose his views on the ministers directly involved with Palestine policy, or to oppose the opinions of civil and military authorities in the Middle East who warned almost unanimously of the dangers inherent in diverging from the White Paper policy.¹⁶ Churchill, nonetheless, made his own views very clear in notes to Cabinet in April 1943:

I cannot agree that the White Paper is 'the firmly established policy' of His Majesty's Government. I have always regarded it as a gross breach of faith . . . in respect of obligations to which I was personally a party . . . It runs until it is superseded.¹⁷

He felt he could not contemplate any absolute cessation of immigration into Palestine at the discretion of an Arab majority whose demands had been met by the British in 1939, but who had been of no use during the war and thus had created no new claims upon the allies.¹⁸ Against a background of a receding German threat to the Middle East and increasing Zionist agitation in Palestine, Britain and the United States in opposition to the existing policy, the Cabinet appointed in July 1943 a sub-committee to consider and report to Cabinet on a new long-term policy for Palestine. Taking the 1937 Royal Commission report as a starting point, the committee recommended in December 1943 that the British government adopt partition as the solution to the problem. While granting that the Arabs might oppose the scheme, the committee recommended that the government accept the risks involved and implement partition

whatever the opposition. The committee felt their scheme met to the utmost practical extent the conflicting claims of Arabs and Jews.¹⁹

The Cabinet endorsed the report in January 1944, but the committee did not commence work on a final scheme until August. In the interim all the British representatives in the Middle East, with the exception of the High Commissioner of Palestine, advised against partition in view of the likely effect on Anglo-Arab relations. Once again the government began to vacillate. In June, Churchill, influenced perhaps by his advisers and the knowledge that an American election was shortly to occur, agreed that the Cabinet should postpone a decision on Palestine policy. When Jewish terrorists assassinated Lord Moyne, Minister Resident in the Middle East, in November 1944, Churchill directed that the committee's second report, concerning the technical details of partition, be held over to a more appropriate moment.²⁰

In February 1945, the Colonial Secretary, aware that the White Paper immigration quota would be exhausted before the end of the year, urged the Cabinet either to approve partition or to produce a better option. But the balance of opinion now opposed partition, the new High Commissioner and Lord Moyne's replacement adding their voices to the opposition. Sir Edward Grigg, the new Minister Resident, took up Colonel Stanley's challenge and presented a proposal for an international trust scheme in which Arabs and Jews would share power in governing a unitary Palestine, while an international body representing the major powers and the Arabs and Jews would decide immigration policy. The Foreign Office, moreover, would take responsibility for Palestine.²¹

Whatever their merits or faults, neither plan was adopted by the government for, in July 1945, Churchill was defeated in a general election. The Labour party formed the new government and commenced to examine the Palestine policy afresh.

THE BRITISH POLICY ENVIRONMENT

During the Second World War the Labour Party had consistently supported the Zionist cause; in May 1945 the party conference endorsed resolutions calling for abrogation of the White Paper policy and favouring unlimited Jewish immigration into Palestine. Ninety members of parliament, of whom only 26 were Jewish, went on

record supporting the Zionist movement. Once in power, however, the Labour Party ascertained very quickly, as John Marlowe has observed, that 'the future of Palestine was no longer a matter in which H.M.G. was a free agent'.²² The new government, as Matthew Fitzsimons notes, had fallen heir to a complex series of arrangements which could not be scrutinised all at once; each commitment involved others.²³

The Labour government had come to power in July 1945 united on three principles: full employment, public ownership of the main sectors of the economy and the establishment of a welfare state.²⁴ Opposition to colonialism and imperialism was also a common thread. Alan Bullock has noted the cruel irony that at the very moment when Labour had at last been given the opportunity to govern, with a clear mandate to carry out their programmes, and with the expectations of their supporters at their highest, they were forced to expend so much effort fending off economic collapse, and devoting a much higher than anticipated proportion of Britain's limited resources to foreign policy and defence. For the first time in its history, Britain was insolvent.²⁵ The war had cost Britain about half of its foreign investments (more than one billion pounds) and a third of its earnings, and its foreign debt had risen to over three billion pounds. Altogether, Britain had lost about 25 per cent of its national wealth.²⁶

Prospects worsened almost immediately, with the American cancellation of 'Lend Lease' deliveries on 21 August 1945. Without American economic aid, Britons would face a living standard of even greater austerity than during the war. Negotiations for a loan were opened in Washington in September. The circumstances were inauspicious and the negotiations proved difficult. The American public was demanding a return to normalcy and prosperity. The Truman administration, moreover, favoured free trade and was opposed to protectionism, while the British government was committed to retaining its wartime system of controls in order to ward off economic collapse. American negotiators clearly recognised the weakness of Britain's bargaining position, and used the opportunity to force Britain to accept the American approach to international economics. Agreement was reached on 6 December 1945. Britain received a \$3.75 billion loan, but at the price of agreeing to American conditions.²⁷

The loan staved off immediate disaster, but recovery remained sluggish. In 1946 both industrial and economic production remained

below the 1938 level, and world commodity prices rose to levels that severely reduced the purchasing power of the American loan. Consequently the loan was expended at a much faster rate than had been anticipated. A premature export drive at the end of 1946 was poorly received by the Americans; losses were estimated at £200 million. The harsh winter of 1947 dealt yet another blow; fuel and food stocks dwindled, and rationing was more stringent than during the war. Major industries were forced to shut down. Unemployment rose briefly to two million. Finally, in July 1947, the government made sterling 'convertible', in accordance with the conditions of the American loan. But the weakened economy and currency could not absorb the pressure that ensued, and convertibility was suspended barely a month later, with British economic policy in tatters.²⁸

These inescapable economic facts cast a pall of gloom over all British policy-making efforts, domestic and foreign. They set strict limits on what Britain could do in managing its imperial commitments, not least those in the Middle East and Palestine. In respect of the latter, Britain's economic weakness and dependence upon American goodwill, together with the sheer intractability of the Palestine problem, reduced British room for manoeuvre to almost nil. The Labour government, which had come to power deeply committed to a pro-Zionist policy, simply found that for largely domestic reasons it could not afford to give force to its professed ideals.

At the heart of the problem lay a clash of requirements and perspectives. On the one hand, the need for domestic economic recovery was vital. Prime Minister Clement Attlee favoured the rapid reduction of Britain's overseas commitments, both to reduce costs and to release men and women for work in the domestic economy. In this he was consistently supported by Hugh Dalton, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade.²⁹ The dimensions of the problem were significant indeed; in 1945, while peacetime British industry was starved for workers, more than five million men and women were deployed on military duty around the world. In Britain, nearly four million more were working in defence-related industries.³⁰ On the other hand, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, ably supported by the Chiefs of Staff, argued forcefully that for reasons both of economic and military security, Britain could not afford to liquidate its imperial commitments with undue haste.³¹ While much of this debate focused on the British position in Europe, *vis-à-vis* the emerging 'cold war',³² it unavoidably extended to the Middle East as well. There, the

debate over defence versus reconstruction became entangled in the Palestine question, itself part of a larger debate over the place of the Middle East in post-war imperial defence.

Traditionally, the Indian Empire had provided the focus of Britain's eastern policy and strategy. In this respect Phillip Darby has observed that:

Although at times the protection of the routes of communication, the defence of the Far Eastern territories, or the maintenance of Britain's position in the Middle East became the focus of attention it was generally understood that the security of India was Britain's overriding concern. In this sense the protection of India was part of an ingrained pattern of thought. It was above politics: it went beyond the issue of the moment. It was the touchstone to which policy must return: the ultimate justification for a defensive system which spanned half the world.³³

The centerpiece of Britain's imperial role, a commercial and strategic asset, India had been seen as valuable in and of itself. Defence of the lines of communication to India had become second only to defence of the United Kingdom in Britain's strategic priorities. It was the perceived need to secure those routes to India that had involved Britain in the Middle East in the first place, Palestine being a case in point.³⁴

By the war's end, however, the Middle East had acquired a strategic significance of its own in the eyes of Bevin and the Chiefs of Staff. Two factors dominated their thinking: oil and the Soviet Union. Bevin was convinced that the region was vital to Britain's economic recovery. In April 1946, he told the Cabinet Defence Committee that 'without the Middle East and its oil . . . I see no hope of our being able to achieve the standard of living at which we are aiming in Great Britain'.³⁵ In fact, he was prepared to go further and argue that the Middle East was important for maintaining Britain's status as a 'Great Power'.³⁶ To the extent that the Soviet Union was perceived to be the principal threat to Britain's position in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, Bevin shared common ground with the Chiefs of Staff. They agreed that it was essential for British security that Russia be denied access to the region.³⁷ Where they differed was on the best means to secure the British position. The Chiefs buttressed their traditional notions about the importance of bases to protect the imperial lines of communication with the argument that such bases could be used in a future war to

strike by air at the Russian heartland.³⁸ Bevin, with one eye on the need to go some way to meet the nation's domestic manpower requirements, and the other on the risks of becoming dependent for bases upon reactionary 'pashas', sought alternatives to the existing arrangements of treaties and bases. To pre-empt political disorder, he wanted to reduce the number of British troops in the region. He had a vision of what he called an 'informal empire' based on an economic partnership with the Arabs. In return for promoting economic development, which would raise the living standards of the people of the area, Britain's strategic position would be enhanced by the creation of a regional defence system. Such bases as Britain did have would rest on the consent of the governed, rather than on the goodwill of corrupt rulers who might be swept away by popular revolution.³⁹ It was a notion both idealistic and perceptive, but was beyond Britain's capabilities to put into effect. In any case it was totally at odds with British attempts to achieve a just and humane solution to the Palestine problem.

Attlee, on the other hand, was more inclined to accept a diminished role for Britain on the world stage, and was sceptical of the idea that Britain needed to retain a significant presence in the Middle East. Early in 1946, Attlee had persuaded the Defence Committee to accept a military manpower ceiling of 1.1 million by the end of the calendar year. Bevin concurred in this, if somewhat reluctantly. The Prime Minister had fended off the Chiefs of Staff's objections by convincing the committee to accept his assumptions that there was no risk of war during the next two to three years, no possibility of war with the United States, and there was no fleet capable of presenting a threat during the same period. He also called for a re-examination of the assumption that it was vital to keep open the Mediterranean in wartime. Then in March, Attlee presented to the committee a paper which argued that Britain should cease to think of itself as strategically linked and bound to the Eastern empire, and thus should abandon attempts to defend those links in the Mediterranean and Middle East. The Mediterranean, he felt, was too vulnerable to air power to make it militarily vital or useful in wartime. Instead, Britain should withdraw from the Middle East and pull back to a 'line' running across Central Africa. In this he had Dalton's support, as well as that of some prominent critics of British Middle East policy outside of government.⁴⁰

In their April appreciation, however, the Chiefs of Staff argued that it was essential for Britain to maintain a presence in the

Mediterranean in order to preserve access to Middle Eastern oil, to ensure political influence in southern Europe, and to protect Britain's main support area in southern Africa. They believed that new developments in warfare (such as nuclear weapons) would not alter radically the fundamental principles of British strategy as they applied to the region. These arguments won over Bevin, who was otherwise attracted to the idea of an African base, and a number of his key advisers: Permanent Under-Secretary Sir Orme Sargent and Assistant Under-Secretary Gladwynn Jebb. The latter skilfully played the 'Russian card', suggesting that the Prime Minister's strategy would result in the accession to power of pro-Soviet governments in the Middle East and southern Europe.⁴¹ Out-maneuvred and out-voted in the Defence Committee, Attlee lost that round.

Nevertheless, it was clear to all concerned that something had to be done about the existing Middle East base in Egypt. The 1936 Treaty had run its course, and the Egyptian government was agitating for total removal of the British military presence, even though the existing treaty permitted Britain to maintain a reduced garrison in the Canal Zone.⁴² The wartime British base area was a vast enclave, stretching from the Nile Valley to the Suez Canal, and from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. During the war its installations and transportation facilities had supported the equivalent of 41 divisions and 65 air squadrons. At the close of the war some 200 000 British troops were based there, making it the largest concentration of British military strength outside India. The Anglo-Egyptian Treaty permitted only 10 000.⁴³ The British government was slow to respond to initial Egyptian demands for withdrawal, for several reasons. Not the least of these was complacency; British politicians and soldiers alike had misread or underestimated the depth and intensity of Egyptian nationalist feeling, for which the bases provided a convenient focus.⁴⁴ Bureaucratic inertia was yet another factor. The sheer scale of effort required to move British installations out of Egypt proper and into the Canal Zone, combined with a shortage of building materials and what Attlee described as 'the military capacity for delay',⁴⁵ postponed the evacuation. Attlee's frustration at being unable to get results from his commanders there found an echo in the observations of an unidentified observer who had visited the base area in mid-1946. He described GHQ Middle East under General Sir Bernard Paget as 'a madhouse of muddle. The Marx Brothers in old school ties'.⁴⁶

Finally, there was the matter of finding a viable alternative location. The British and Egyptians entered into negotiations in the spring of 1946, but as Elizabeth Monroe points out, Bevin was handicapped by the weakness of the British position. Britain needed concessions without being able to offer money or goods in return; all that Britain could offer was a revision of the old arrangements.⁴⁷ In the event, the negotiators reached agreement on a draft treaty in October 1946. Under its terms the British would have withdrawn from Cairo, Alexandria and the Nile Delta by 31 March 1947, and from the rest of Egypt by 1 September 1949, while retaining the right to reoccupy their Suez bases in time of war. Influenced by nationalist sentiment, however, the Egyptian parliament rejected the proposed treaty. In January 1947, the Egyptian government broke off negotiations, and in July took its case to the United Nations. There the Egyptian gambit failed; the UN Security Council rejected Egypt's claim that post-war circumstances had nullified the existing (1936) treaty. So the British were able to retain their military presence in the Canal Zone.⁴⁸ In the meantime, British attention had been focused on Palestine as an alternative or complement to the Egyptian military bases. This brought Britain face to face with the Zionist question and the Arab-Jewish impasse, which together scuttled Britain's evolving Middle East policy.

Palestine was one of several alternatives considered by the Chiefs of Staff. Among the others were Cyrenaica (eastern Libya), Cyprus, the Sudan and Kenya. For a variety of reasons relating to location and facilities, the others were rejected. This is not to suggest that Palestine was the perfect solution to the problem. Although its climate was conducive to garrison life, and it had other important attributes: Haifa port, Lydda airfield and relatively easy transportation links to the Canal Zone, Palestine was in many respects underdeveloped as a base area in its own right. It lacked sufficient permanent accommodation for a large garrison, its internal lines of communication were poor, and even the ports could not handle the required volume of activity. By May 1946, the Chiefs of Staff had concluded that Palestine was not the required viable alternative to Egypt, at least not by itself, especially for war reserves. But their arguments in favour of Palestine the previous July had already carried the day. At that time, the apparent freedom of action Britain enjoyed under the Mandate made Palestine very appealing as an alternative to Egypt. A Joint Planning Staff Paper emphasised that 'Palestine is the only territory between Malta and Aden in which

we can confidently expect to have facilities for the stationing of troops or the establishment of installations'.⁴⁹ In September 1945 the 6th Airborne Division was sent to Palestine to form the core of the proposed Imperial Strategic Reserve.⁵⁰

Elizabeth Monroe argues that when in the spring of 1946 Bevin offered to pull troops unilaterally out of Cairo and Alexandria even before negotiations with Egypt began, it was because the British were confident that alternative bases were already available in Palestine and Kenya.⁵¹ Yet, given the limitations of Palestine noted above, and its uncertain political future in the spring of 1946, it is hardly surprising that Bevin's offer caused British military leaders some consternation.⁵² By this time, however, Palestine had acquired a strategic significance which, even if undeserved, the Foreign Office and the Chiefs of Staff felt obliged to defend. Consequently, from the summer of 1945 until the eve of the British decision to withdraw, it was an article of faith among the British Middle East policy-makers that nothing should be done with respect to Palestine that would disrupt British-Arab relations or otherwise undermine Britain's position in the Middle East.⁵³ Britain had never been in Palestine out of conviction; as a Mandate it had never exerted the emotional pull of a major colony such as India or Malaya. Neither had Palestine conferred significant direct material benefits upon Britain. So little, in fact, that shortly before leaving office in July 1945 Prime Minister Churchill, one of the architects of the Mandate, felt moved to observe: 'I am not aware of the slightest advantage which has ever accrued to Great Britain from this painful and thankless task'.⁵⁴ Nor, in 1945, was Britain committed to Palestine from a position of strength. Rather, it was from a position of weakness, uncertainty and an absence of alternatives. Thus it was that a circumlocutious logic of perceived economic and strategic necessity ensnared Britain in a Middle East policy which Palestine could do little to enhance and everything to disrupt. It was hardly an auspicious position for a confrontation with the Zionist movement.

ZIONIST POLITICAL OBJECTIVES

So long as British policy and the Palestine administration had supported the efforts to create the Jewish national home, the Jewish community inside and outside Palestine had cooperated with the British and Palestine governments. The changes in British policy

from 1930 onwards, however, gradually had pushed the Jews into opposition. The 1939 White Paper was the breaking point: they felt they had been betrayed. David Ben-Gurion, leader of the Labour-Zionists, vowed that while the Jews would cooperate in the war against Hitler, they would 'fight the White Paper as if there were no war'.⁵⁵ He advocated a policy of applying combined political, economic and military pressure upon the British government in order to dissuade it from adhering to the White Paper policy. Ben-Gurion's programme involved, first, non-cooperation with the Palestine authorities and violation of laws relating to the White Paper policy and, secondly, the creation of a 'state within a state' – a Jewish administration in Palestine with its own military forces – to take power in Palestine if Britain did not change its policy. While this programme formed the basis for Zionist policy after 1939, Yehuda Bauer has observed that, in reality, it was difficult to put it into effect in Palestine at that time. Political energies were directed instead toward the creation of Jewish military units to serve in the war.⁵⁶

The political struggle against the White Paper continued mainly in the United States, producing in 1942 a political programme which would become the Zionist Movement's principal political weapon once the war was over. The 'Biltmore Program' called for: abrogation of the White Paper; the creation of an independent Jewish army fighting under its own flag and command; vesting the Jewish Agency (the movement's executive arm in Palestine) with control of immigration and development of Palestine; and the establishment of Palestine as a Jewish commonwealth; in short, an independent state.⁵⁷

With the exception of the demand for a Jewish army, the Agency presented this programme to the British government in May 1945, coupled with a demand for an international loan and other assistance to transfer the first million Jewish refugees to Palestine. Churchill replied that the Palestine question would have to be dealt with at the peace conference, but shortly thereafter the Labour Party came to power. By this time, the scale of the Holocaust was widely known, and it had added a sense of desperate urgency to the Zionist demands. Alan Bullock suggests that the failure of the British and Palestine governments to comprehend the impact of the Holocaust and thus to admit more Jews to Palestine than the White Paper allowed made the British appear to be accomplices – *ex post facto* – in the 'Final Solution'. This, Bullock goes on to say, had two

consequences: first, a growing conviction amongst the world Jewish community that the only way to save the Jewish people was to establish a Jewish state in Palestine; and second, Zionist determination to defy the British limits on Jewish immigration into Palestine. These two factors, he feels, virtually ruled out the possibility of a peaceful solution to the Palestine problem. When it became apparent that despite its pro-Zionist pronouncements the new government was not going to implement the Biltmore Program, the Jewish Agency decided to authorise its paramilitary arm, the Haganah, to use a limited degree of force to pressure the British government into meeting Zionist demands, particularly those regarding immigration.⁵⁸ Ben-Gurion's programme of combined political and military pressure had been revived. Thenceforward, Zionist strategy would consist of diplomacy and resistance. This would present the British with the classic strategic dilemma: a 'two front war'. This conflict also had a dual geographic dimension. The Holocaust had left two principal centres of active Zionism in the world: Palestine and the United States.⁵⁹ The armed struggle would be carried on in the former, the political battle in the latter. The Zionists recognised that British dependence upon American goodwill left Britain vulnerable to American pressure, and they sought to exploit that 'weak link'. Through the skilful exercise of influence on American politics and policy-making, the Zionists effectively sabotaged Anglo-American efforts to devise policies for Palestine that could reconcile Jewish and Arab aspirations and preserve British strategic interests in the Middle East.

THE WILD CARD: THE UNITED STATES AND THE PALESTINE QUESTION

Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, was as new to his job as Attlee and Bevin were to theirs. Yet he was even less well-prepared for the responsibilities of his office. He was a 'provincial' politician, completely inexperienced in the field of foreign affairs. During his vice-presidency, he had been excluded from Roosevelt's diplomacy which, in respect of Palestine, had navigated a tortuous course between support for Zionism and countervailing assurances to the Arabs. Truman himself was inclined to support the Zionist cause. His advisers, however, upon whom he depended greatly, were divided on the Palestine question. The State Department,

particularly the Office of Near Eastern Affairs under Loy Henderson, put American interests in the Middle East before everything else, and this inevitably put them on the side of the Arabs and in opposition to Zionism. This position was ably defended by Under-Secretary Dean Acheson who, in the often prolonged absence of the Secretary of State James Byrnes, became the department's 'point man' on the Palestine question. The Joint Chiefs of Staff also favoured an American posture which would not alienate the Arabs.⁶⁰

Truman's relations with the department, however, were poor. Dependent as he was upon their expertise – or perhaps because of his dependence – he resented the professional diplomats, and the sentiment was returned. Instead, the President relied on his White House advisers. Michael Cohen argues that the most influential of these were Clark Clifford, Special Counsel to the President, and David Niles, an administrative assistant with responsibility for minority affairs. Both were pro-Zionist, and neither shrank from exploiting domestic politics to further the Zionist cause and *vice versa*. Truman was an unpopular, unelected president, and thus was sensitive to his political fortunes. This left him vulnerable to manipulation by his aides, who frequently warned of the damaging political consequences of antagonising the 'Jewish vote'.⁶¹ Alan Bullock says that Bevin was indignant that the President would let such partisan considerations influence his policy on Palestine, and that Bevin was naive in this respect; politicians, after all, have to win elections, and in the United States Jews, not Arabs, provided the votes.⁶² This is not the place to debate whether or not the 'Jewish vote' was, in fact, politically significant. What matters is that some of Truman's key aides, prominent politicians and representatives of the American Jewish community were prepared to argue that it was important, and the President was influenced by their arguments.

By 1945, the American Jewish community was well organised to lobby on behalf of the Zionist cause. Between 1945 and 1947 it became the dominant force in Zionism and was remarkable for its militancy. In October 1939, at the instigation of Chaim Weizmann and David Ben-Gurion, the American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs had been formed, with the specific objective of 'politicising' American Zionists. It consisted of American members of the Jewish Agency and representatives of the four major Zionist parties: the Zionist Organisation of America (ZOA), the men's organisation; Hadassah, the women's group; Mizrahi, the religious

Zionist movement; and the socialist Labour-Zionist parties. The ZOA and Hadassah claimed a combined total of 280 000 members in 1945; by 1948, the four groups together accounted for more than 700 000 people. Reorganised in 1943 under the banner of the American Zionist Emergency Council (AZEC) and led by firebrand Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, these groups represented the mainstream of American Zionism. In Palestine they were associated with the Jewish 'shadow government' – the Jewish Agency – and its paramilitary arm, the Haganah.⁶³ Their lobbying strategy in the US between 1945 and 1947 was direct, militant and partisan; Silver and other AZEC representatives applied their pressure and influence directly on the Oval Office, in person and through Congress.

Surprisingly, however, it was a much smaller group, using a more indirect strategy, that forced the pace of American Zionist militancy. The minority Revisionist Zionist movement, often referred to as the 'right wing' of Zionism, chose to act independently of the Zionist establishment. Led by Hillel Kook (Peter Bergson), who was closely associated with the dissident underground movement Irgun Zvai Leumi (IZL) in Palestine, the Revisionists compensated for their smaller numbers with a higher visibility. They used full-page newspaper advertisements, plays, rallies and a string of 'front' organisations to whip up mass support. Unlike the establishment Zionists, who excluded Christians from their organisations, the Revisionist approach was non-sectarian and bi-partisan, winning over many American Jews and attracting a large following in Congress. Zvi Ganin argues that the main contribution of the Bergson faction was to force the AZEC leadership into a progressively more militant stance for fear of losing their constituency.⁶⁴ Together, the American Zionist organisations fulfilled two functions. First, as will be discussed shortly, they exerted influence on the Anglo-American policy-making process with respect to Palestine. Second, they provided moral, political, propaganda and financial support to the insurgents in Palestine.⁶⁵

During the subsequent two years, Truman came to resent the Zionists for the pressure they placed on him. He was especially irritated by their crude and blatant exploitation of partisan politics to further their cause.⁶⁶ Yet, he allowed himself to be persuaded by his advisers that the Zionists' political influence was a factor to be reckoned with. Thus buffeted from all sides by contradictory advice, Truman's approach to the Palestine question was erratic, consisting of – in Michael Cohen's words – 'crude, direct intervention,

alternating with awkward vacillation, or total withdrawal'.⁶⁷ To the British – Bevin especially – unaccustomed to Truman's political inconsistencies, the President's ill-timed decisions in respect of Palestine seemed calculated deliberately to sabotage any reasonable effort to reach a compromise. Up to a point, the British were correct; what they never fully understood was that in respect of the timing and content of his decisions, Truman was not entirely a free agent. To the extent that he was hostage to the American political process, so were Anglo-American efforts to fashion a workable Palestine policy.

ODYSSEY TO FRUSTRATION: THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

'I will stake my political future on solving the problem', Bevin told the House of Commons in November 1945.⁶⁸ However unwise in respect of Palestine, Bevin's self-confidence was characteristic of the man. Barely four months into the job as Foreign Secretary, he clearly had not yet grasped the full extent of the forces conspiring against him: Britain's economic weakness, strategic overcommitment and assumed dependence on the Middle East; Zionist militancy and Arab intransigence; and the domestic political context of American foreign policy. Because of these factors, the Palestine problem would come to frustrate Ernest Bevin as no other issue did during his tenure as Foreign Secretary.

Although the Colonial Office, through the Palestine government, exercised day-to-day responsibility for the administration of Palestine, in matters of policy, the Foreign Office took the lead during the 1945–47 period. The two departments often disagreed, the former favouring partition as the lesser evil of several options. The Foreign Office, its Middle East section most particularly, was strongly pro-Arab,⁶⁹ and for the reasons noted earlier they quickly brought Bevin around to their way of seeing British interests in the Middle East. Bevin had entered the job, Alan Bullock says, determined to retain his prerogative in decision-making and highly suspicious of the aristocratic stature of the senior Foreign Office officials. But he soon came to appreciate their advice. It was a natural development, since 'short of a revolution . . . every minister has to come to terms with his department'.⁷⁰ Harold Beeley, one of his principal advisers, described the change thus:

... a process took place which can be called the 'absorption' of a minister by his department. He read our material and within the first few weeks he came to the conclusion, ... that the traditional Labour Party policy was wrong. It's not true that Bevin was 'got grip of' by the Foreign Office. But it was only by becoming a minister in charge of a department that he could become fully informed of the issues.⁷¹

Beeley himself may have been one of the most influential; Sir John Martin, then a Colonial Office official, remarked in an interview, 'One wondered how much of the thinking was Bevin and how much was Harold Beeley'.⁷²

Be that as it may, Bevin's opinions carried considerable weight in Cabinet, on Palestine as on other foreign policy issues. He was, in his biographer's estimate, second in influence only to the Prime Minister in the important Defence Committee of Cabinet. He sought and usually received Attlee's support, and his position was often strengthened by his ability to produce bi-partisan support on foreign policy. 'Bevin himself,' writes William Roger Louis, 'was the architect of Britain's Palestine policy'.⁷³

As Bevin took up the position of Foreign Secretary, pressures were mounting for a British policy initiative on Palestine. The Zionists were one source of this pressure; the Colonial Office was another. The latter took the view that a solution should be produced as soon as possible in order to prevent or contain the violence it regarded as almost inevitable. To this end the Colonial Office favoured partition of Palestine, although not to the exclusion of any other promising suggestion.⁷⁴ The third source of pressure was the United States. In July 1945, during the Potsdam conference, Truman had asked Churchill to lift the restrictions on Jewish immigration into Palestine. The succeeding Labour government fended off Truman's request pending the opportunity to consider the Palestine problem. Upon his return to the United States, the President told a press conference that he had asked the British to admit to Palestine as many Jews as possible. Shortly thereafter, he received a report on displaced persons (DP) in Europe prepared by Earl G. Harrison, who had visited the DP camps at Truman's request. Harrison recommended that the British grant an additional 100 000 immigration certificates for displaced Jews to enter Palestine. At the end of August, Truman forwarded the Harrison report to London with his endorsement and a personal plea for a rapid transfer of European

Jews who so wished to Palestine. Michael Cohen notes that although there were only about 50 000 Jewish DPs in Europe, 'The 100 000 was now adopted by Truman, for whom it was to serve as a ready palliative in lieu of a comprehensive solution to the Palestine problem'.⁷⁵

In retrospect, Alan Bullock has suggested that British agreement to admit the 100 000 in 1945 on a 'once-and-for-all' basis might have been the wiser course.⁷⁶ It would have satisfied Truman, who could show his political constituency that his efforts had achieved results. It would have relieved the British of pressure from that quarter. What the Arab reaction would have been, and whether such a British initiative merely would have emboldened the Zionists to try again, Bullock does not address in any detail.⁷⁷ Whatever hopes Truman might have had in persuading the British on this point were probably dashed at the end of September when the President's appeal to Attlee was leaked to the American press. In violation of private undertakings between the two men, and without prior warning to London, the White House then issued a press release which covered the substance of the Truman letter of 31 August and included portions of the Harrison report. The British government responded by publishing its own version of events and by quietly expressing their displeasure to the US government. Bevin was particularly piqued when Secretary of State Byrnes told him that the decision to make the matter public had been taken as a result of pressure from Democratic Party leaders eager to influence the forthcoming mayoral election in New York.⁷⁸

Angry as he was at this American breach of etiquette, Bevin was enough of a realist to recognise that the US government was going to continue to be a factor in the Palestine question. His solution to the problem this posed was to involve the Americans further, to force them to bear some of the responsibility for resolving the issue. On 4 October, he proposed to Cabinet that the Americans be invited to participate in a joint committee to study the problem of DPs in Europe and immigration into Palestine. The proposal was referred to the Palestine Committee for discussion, and approved in revised form by Cabinet a week later.⁷⁹ The terms of reference of the proposed committee were: to examine the position of Jews in British and American occupied Europe; to estimate the number who could not be resettled in their countries of origin; to examine the possibility of relieving the situation in Europe by immigration into countries outside Europe; and to consider other means of

dealing with the situation.⁸⁰ Given his public pronouncements on the Palestine issue, Truman could hardly refuse the British proposal. But the Americans did demand concessions. They insisted, and the British accepted reluctantly, that the second item be considerably expanded and include a commitment to make estimates of those who wished or would be forced by circumstances to migrate to Palestine. The British also acceded to US demands that commission deliberations be limited to 120 days, and that announcement of the commission be delayed until after the New York election. On 13 November the two governments announced the establishment of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, which would consult all concerned parties and make its recommendations to the two governments and ultimately to the United Nations. Bevin stated that the British government would abide by the recommendations of a unanimous report.⁸¹

Through the winter of 1945–46 the commission of six British and six American representatives held hearings and received evidence in Washington, London, Europe, Palestine, Cairo and elsewhere in the Middle East. American Zionist groups, the Jewish Agency, the Arab League, British officials in the area, the Palestine government and other interested parties testified before the commission. The British government extended the Jewish immigration quota by 1500 per month following expiry of the White Paper limit, but illegal immigration and terrorism continued. The main recommendations of the commission's unanimous report, released on 30 April 1946, were: first, that 100 000 Jewish refugees be allowed to immigrate into Palestine as soon as possible; second, that the mandate be converted into a United Nations trusteeship which would prepare Palestine for independence as a unified binational state; and finally, that Jewish official institutions resume cooperation with the Palestine government in the suppression of terrorism and illegal immigration.⁸² Reaction to the report was mixed and these responses played a significant role in the sequence of events which determined the outcome of this phase of policy-making.

The release of the report provided yet another instance of awkward relations between Britain and the United States. On 18 April, Bevin had asked the Americans not to publish the report until the two governments had consulted together on the matter. Truman agreed, but later reversed himself under pressure from American Zionists. On 30 April, without consulting the British, he publicly endorsed the immigration recommendation, urging that the transfer of the

100 000 Jewish refugees be carried out 'with the greatest dispatch'.⁸³ Moreover, at the instigation of David Niles and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he explicitly avoided committing the United States in respect of any other aspect of the report.⁸⁴

Truman's duplicity outraged the British, Bevin particularly. A British interdepartmental committee had studied the report and had concluded that its implementation would have 'disastrous effects' on the British position in the Middle East and might destabilise the Indian sub-continent. The ensuing disorder in Palestine would necessitate military reinforcements, of which Britain had none to spare. Influenced perhaps by the report's details on the Jewish underground, and by the news of the murder of seven British soldiers by Jewish insurgents in Tel Aviv on 25 April, the committee's deliberations placed singular emphasis on the security aspects of the report. Field-Marshal Viscount Alanbrooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS), probably summarised accurately the prevailing attitude when he described the report as 'a futile document, which puts us in a more difficult position than ever. If they had made any further immigration dependent upon their surrender of arms and abolition of the Jewish army there might have been some sense in their recommendations.'⁸⁵ The committee urged the British government to reject the recommendations of the Anglo-American Commission.

Attlee too was pessimistic about the course of action proposed by the commission. But Bevin, determined to keep the Americans involved, rallied the Cabinet behind him. He told the State Department's Director of the Office of European Affairs that he was prepared to admit the 100 000 Jewish immigrants provided, first, that the entire number were not admitted immediately and, second, that the United States was prepared to share the financial and military burden.⁸⁶ Truman's selective endorsement of the report on 30 April, unaccompanied by any offer to assist in its implementation, stopped this initiative cold. Under the circumstances, Bevin's anger and frustration were understandable.

On the following day, 1 May, Prime Minister Attlee told the House of Commons that the government could not implement the commission's recommendations, particularly those regarding large-scale Jewish immigration into Palestine, until the 'illegal armies' were disbanded. Truman's apparent foreclosure on the matter notwithstanding, Attlee made it clear that the British government intended to continue efforts to secure American assistance in carrying

out the recommendations.⁸⁷ Predictably, the British announcement pleased neither the Arabs nor the Jews. Further large-scale immigration was unacceptable to the Arabs and they rejected that proposal out of hand. Jewish reaction ranged from outright denunciation by the extreme Zionist factions because the recommendations did not include the creation of a Jewish state, to cautious acceptance by moderate Zionists who were pleased by the immigration recommendation. They took exception, however, to the British government's insistence on disbandment of the insurgent organisations; despite assurances from the Foreign Office that this did not mean Britain had rejected the commission's proposals, the insurgent organisations regarded it as proof of British duplicity – Britain was not abiding by its promise to implement a unanimous report. Consequently the insurgents refused to surrender their arms.⁸⁸

Certainly, from a Zionist viewpoint, subsequent British actions could be interpreted as a betrayal of Bevin's earlier undertaking to abide by the recommendations of a unanimous report. On 15 May the Foreign Office announced that decisions on the commission's report would be deferred until Jewish and Arab leaders had made known their views on the report. Thereafter, a team of British and American 'experts' would study the implications of the report. The delay enraged the Jewish community in the United States, and drew criticism from the Labour Party membership at the annual party conference at Bournemouth in June. Bevin answered his critics by emphasising that because of the existence of the 'illegal armies' in Palestine, if the 100 000 refugees were to be admitted Britain would have to send another army division there, and he was not prepared to do so. His frustration with the United States manifested itself in the notorious observation that Americans were agitating for admission of the 100 000 'with the purest of motives. They did not want too many Jews in New York'.⁸⁹ In Palestine, the insurgents responded to the delay and to Bevin's speech with a series of attacks culminating in the kidnapping of five British officers. The British replied in turn with a large-scale internal security operation intended to break up the 'illegal armies'.⁹⁰ The situation was rapidly becoming polarised and militarised. The High Commissioner, General Sir Alan Cunningham, warned London in June of the deteriorating situation and the need for a quick political solution:

The sands are running out. I am now definitely of the opinion that the only hope of getting a peaceful solution of the Palestine

problem is to introduce a plan for partition. If this is not done *at once*, I can see no hope for a peaceful solution.⁹¹

Ritchie Ovendale argues that the situation 'on the ground' in Palestine persuaded the British government to search for an alternative to implementation of the commission's report.⁹² They were not long alone in this. Truman's reassurances to American Zionists notwithstanding, the President was quickly retreating from further American commitment on the matter. The immigration issue was still 'on the table' when the British and American delegations met in London on 17 June. By the end of the month, however, both sides had agreed to defer a decision on that matter. The American negotiators, who in any case lacked experience on the Palestine issue, soon had their room for manoeuvre narrowed considerably. On the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Truman told his 'experts' that the United States would not use its troops to implement the commission's recommendations; nor would the US act as a trustee or co-trustee.⁹³ Thus, for different reasons, and by different routes, the two governments had reached the same conclusion: the commission's report was unworkable, and some other solution would have to be found.

Convinced that Britain could not afford – financially or politically – to give force to the Anglo-American Commission's recommendations, Colonial Secretary George Hall recommended to Cabinet on 8 July an alternative: 'Provincial Autonomy'. This plan envisaged a federal state under trusteeship with two provinces, one predominantly Arab, the other mainly Jewish, and a separate trusteeship over Jerusalem. There would be a central government responsible for all common services, as well as foreign affairs, defence and internal security. This central authority would consist of the High Commissioner and a small executive council. Each province would have its own legislature, and would be able to determine its own level of immigration. Ultimately, the state would evolve to independence as one state or two. The Chiefs of Staff 'emphatically' endorsed Hall's conclusions about the risks to the British position in the Middle East arising from implementation of the commission report, but they also had doubts about the feasibility of the 'Provincial Autonomy' plan. Bevin, too, had his doubts; his thinking was now directed towards some variant of partition. Nonetheless, on 11 July the Cabinet authorised Sir Norman Brook, Secretary to the Cabinet and head of the British negotiating team, to discuss Hall's plan with the Americans.⁹⁴

British persuasion worked; on 19 July Henry Grady, the chief American delegate, recommended to Secretary of State Byrnes that the US agree to support the 'Provincial Autonomy' plan. Byrnes, in turn, forwarded this recommendation to the President with his endorsement. Truman was inclined to accept the proposal. But on 25 July the American press published details of the plan, and the Zionist lobby again began to put political pressure on the administration. They played the 'electoral card' blatantly, and Truman's political advisers succumbed. The President resisted Zionist pressure and remained committed to the plan until the cabinet meeting of 30 July, at which the final decision was to be made. There, according to Louis, a telegram from Byrnes reneging on his earlier endorsement because of the domestic political repercussions apparently swung the balance of cabinet opinion against Provincial Autonomy. The next day, when the British government presented the plan to the House of Commons, Truman announced the recall of the American delegation for further consultation. Finally, on 12 August, Truman informed Attlee that, owing to intense public opposition, he could not give formal support to the plan. So although it remained the centrepiece of British policy-making efforts for the next six months, as a joint Anglo-American venture Provincial Autonomy was stillborn.⁹⁵

If the defeat of Provincial Autonomy represented a victory for the Zionist movement, it was nonetheless a somewhat hollow one. By mid-summer 1946 the Zionists had overplayed their hand. In Palestine, the armed struggle had resulted in many British casualties, but this had not produced the desired political results; if anything, incidents such as the bombing of Jerusalem's King David Hotel with massive loss of life had strengthened British resolve. The Zionists were no closer to achieving their objectives. Worse still, implicated in the insurgents' June offensive, the Jewish Agency had been occupied and searched by British forces and many of its leaders detained. Deeply embarrassed by the excesses of violence and the exposure of its collusion with the illegal underground, the Agency ordered the Haganah to suspend military operations, and to concentrate solely on illegal immigration.⁹⁶ In the United States, Cohen writes, there was a growing realisation among the Zionist movement that their combined tactics of 'agitprop' and partisan politics had engendered deep resentment on the part of the President, who was now inclined to wash his hands of the entire matter.⁹⁷ Moreover, having stymied every British policy-making initiative, the

Zionist movement had yet to come up with a viable alternative policy of their own. The Biltmore Program and even the demand for 100 000 immigrants had been overtaken by events. A new initiative was called for, and it materialised in August 1946. It had the appearance of capitulation to British *force majeure*, but it was more than that. It was the consequence of what Nahum Goldmann of the Jewish Agency believed was 'a military, moral and diplomatic crisis' of Zionism.⁹⁸

As early as March 1946 the leading Zionist figures (Weizmann, Ben-Gurion and Moshe Shertock) had conceded to British Commissioner Richard Crossman, in confidence, that they were prepared to accept partition. But they were unwilling to follow through with official, public declarations to that effect; instead, the Zionist leadership had clung to the Biltmore Program and refused to reveal the 'irreducible minimum' they were prepared to accept. This dilemma led Goldmann to write to Ben-Gurion in June, suggesting a meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive in order to resolve the problem. 'Here you see again how necessary it is for us to have a certain line of policy; otherwise we have no program and cannot discuss major policy intelligently and with any chance of success'⁹⁹ Shortly thereafter, events in Palestine reached a climax and the British struck at the Agency. Thus, it was a chastened 'rump' executive that met in Paris on 2 August 1946. Weizmann declined to attend on grounds of ill-health, although political considerations undoubtedly played a part in his decision. More than any other leading Zionist, Weizmann had been gravely embarrassed by the violent events culminating in the King David Hotel atrocity. At a meeting with Colonial Secretary George Hall on 7 August, Weizmann indicated that he was prepared to accept conditionally the provincial autonomy plan. At the Agency Executive meeting Goldmann too favoured the plan, and in sessions of 4 and 5 August he clashed with Ben-Gurion, who favoured partition. The result was a compromise partition proposal which, taking provincial autonomy as a starting point, envisaged 'the establishment of a viable Jewish State in an adequate area of Palestine'.¹⁰⁰ This represented a significant retreat from the Biltmore Program, but it was also a step in the direction of a negotiated settlement.

The next day Goldmann flew to Washington, where he quickly won support from the administration. In order to do so, he had actually overstepped his mandate in his discussion with Dean Acheson. Nonetheless, it was sufficient to convince Acheson,

Henderson, Truman, and even the British Ambassador to Washington, that at least there was a basis for realistic negotiation. Truman suggested to Attlee that the Jewish Agency proposal be included at the forthcoming conference on Palestine to be held in London.¹⁰¹ Attlee replied that although provincial autonomy would be the centrepiece of the conference, the Arab and Jewish delegations would be able to suggest amendments or to offer counter-proposals. The London conference, however, was a failure. The Jews refused to attend unless their detained leaders were released and allowed to represent them at the conference table. The British government refused to permit this, so the conference opened on 9 September without Jewish representation, and the Agency's plan was never discussed. The Palestinian Arabs also boycotted the talks, for similar reasons. The delegates representing several Arab states and the Arab League rejected the provincial autonomy plan and presented their own proposals for an independent Arab state. The conference adjourned after one week, having accomplished nothing.¹⁰²

The end of the conference brought this phase of policy-making virtually to a close. It remained only for President Truman to bury the joint Anglo-American initiative on 4 October with one more public statement on immigration and the Jewish Agency's partition plan. Attlee responded angrily, convinced that Truman's statement was little more than a cheap ploy to win votes at British expense.¹⁰³ According to Cohen, Truman's statement was the result of both pre-election political pressure and a possibly misinformed belief that Anglo-Zionist talks on the eventual participation of Jewish Agency leaders in the next round of the London conference had reached a deadlock, and thus could not be compromised by a presidential statement. In fact the talks had only just begun, and it was hoped that these would lead to an agreement concerning Agency cooperation in maintaining law and order in Palestine. This would permit the government to release the detained Agency leaders. Jewish delegates could then join the conference.¹⁰⁴ In the event, the talks continued, culminating in the release of the detainees at the beginning of November. This had no effect on the situation in Palestine, which continued to deteriorate. But policy-making efforts were effectively frozen in place. Bevin believed that in the event of a failure to reach a negotiated settlement, Britain had three unilateral options left: to impose a settlement acceptable to one of the two communities in Palestine; to surrender the mandate and withdraw from Palestine; or to propose a partition scheme in which Trans-

Jordan annexed the Arab portion of Palestine.¹⁰⁵ None of these was particularly palatable and, pending further talks with the Americans, the treaty negotiations with the Egyptians and the outcome of the Zionist Congress, the Palestine question was set aside for several months while the British Cabinet dealt with other matters.

In the interval the Zionist movement changed course dramatically. Largely as the result of internal political rivalries, particularly between Ben-Gurion and Silver, over the leadership of the Zionist movement, the moderate faction was defeated at the Zionist Congress in December. The price of unity had been to push the movement into a more activist frame of mind. Participation in the London conference was rejected, and a possible resumption of armed struggle endorsed.¹⁰⁶

The London conference reconvened at the end of January 1947. The Zionist movement was not represented officially, but Arthur Creech-Jones, Colonial Secretary since October 1946 and sympathetic to Zionism, arranged for an unofficial delegation to be in London, available for consultations, during the conference. British proposals laid before the conference represented the government's improvised efforts to 'square the triangle' of its strategic interests, Arab demands and Zionist aspirations. Bevin had intended only to present a scheme which would merge the provincial autonomy and Arab plans of 1946, producing an independent Arab state with several Jewish cantons. Increased Jewish immigration would be permitted for a limited period. The Cabinet, however, revived partition which was also submitted to the conference. Not surprisingly, the Arabs rejected partition once again, and the Jews refused to agree to the cantonment plan. Bevin then redrafted a variation of the cantonment proposal: local autonomy for Jewish and Arab areas under British supervision and independence after five years; 100 000 Jewish immigrants during the first two years of trusteeship, after which immigration would depend upon Arab consent; and after independence, safeguards to protect the Jewish minority. Both sides rejected the plan and the conference ended shortly thereafter. On 18 February, Bevin announced that the British government intended to refer the Palestine problem to the United Nations.¹⁰⁷

On 15 May 1947, the United Nations General Assembly, acting at British request, appointed an eleven-nation Special Committee on Palestine. UNSCOP travelled to Palestine, Lebanon, and Europe, where it received testimony from many of the same organisations and persons who had spoken to the Anglo-American Commission.

Trans-Jordan and the Arab Higher Committee – which represented the Palestinian Arabs – declined to appear. UNSCOP presented its report on 31 August 1947. The committee agreed on certain basic principles: that Palestine should become an independent state as soon as possible; that it should have a democratic political structure and should constitute a single economic entity. There was, however, considerable disagreement on the manner by which these principles should be implemented. The result was a majority report recommending partition, and a minority report favouring a federal state plan.¹⁰⁸ Unwilling to be saddled with the enforcement of a solution that might involve further cost in lives and money without gaining any advantage for Britain, the British government had refused to commit itself in advance to accepting or enforcing UNSCOP's recommendations. In view of Arab opposition to the majority recommendations, it was reluctant to so commit itself now. On 26 September 1947, therefore, the British government announced its intention to surrender the mandate and withdraw the administration and security forces from Palestine.¹⁰⁹

With the February decision, concerted British efforts to formulate a solution which would accommodate British, Arab and Jewish aspirations within a single policy were effectively at an end. Bevin's biographer concurs with Abba Eban's assessment that the Foreign Secretary's announcement meant that the British government was prepared to surrender the mandate.¹¹⁰ The manner and the timing of that surrender would be determined largely by factors over which Britain exerted only partial influence: diplomacy at the United Nations, and within Palestine, the interaction of the insurgents and the security forces. Handing the Palestine issue to the UN amounted to an abdication of responsibility, but Creech-Jones asserts that it was at least consistent with the government's assumptions about British interests in the region at the time.¹¹¹ Had the British government been able to consider the Palestine question in isolation, on moral grounds alone it would have come down clearly in favour of a Jewish state. But it was not free to do so. Instead, it was hostage to conflicting factors and pressures: economic weakness, imperial defence requirements, Zionist objectives and American partisan politics. The first two pushed British policy towards a pro-Arab stance, while the latter two pulled it in a Zionist direction. Once it became obvious that the two tendencies were irreconcilable, the British government did what comes naturally to most govern-

ments: it put national self-interest first, abandoned the untenable middle ground, and chose the course of least resistance.

The British government's inability to forge a clear policy exerted a significant influence on the course of the conflict in Palestine. First, the British refusal to adopt a policy acceptable to the Jews – at the very least substantially increased immigration – undermined the moderates in the Zionist movement and allowed the extremists to predominate. It contributed directly, therefore, to the increase in violence in the 1945–47 period. Second, the absence of a policy forced the civil administration to rely almost solely on coercion to retain control of Palestine. It also denied the security forces a clear strategic objective in their counter-insurgency campaign, and left them to 'maintain order' in a hostile environment and a political vacuum. It was an untenable position. The Zionists knew it, and so did many leading British figures. Labour's electoral mandate in 1945 did not extend to the unbridled repression of the Jewish people, whose suffering was being laid bare daily before the conscience of the world. Neither the Labour Party, the British public, nor Britain's critics in America would tolerate it for long. Just as economic and strategic considerations narrowed Britain's policy options on Palestine, so Labour's commitment to social justice and opposition to colonialism set limits on the vigour of Britain's response to the Jewish insurgents. Sir Winston Churchill alluded to this problem in 1947 when he remarked that there was 'no country in the world . . . less fit for a conflict with terrorists than Great Britain . . . not because of her weakness or cowardice; it is because of her restraint and virtues'.¹¹² Eloquenty put, as a broad generalisation, it was nonetheless a perceptive observation in respect of Palestine. Under the British mandate at that time Palestine was, as J. C. Hurewitz observed, 'a police state with a conscience'.¹¹³ It could not be governed as such indefinitely. The insurgents recognised this and, as will be shown in the following chapter, designed their strategies and tactics to exploit this all-important factor.

3 The Insurgent Challenge

Writing in 1920 on the nature and components of successful rebellion, T. E. Lawrence offered the following assertion on the relationship between the insurgent and the civilian population on whose behalf he was fighting: 'Rebellions can be made by 2 percent active in a striking force and 98 percent passively sympathetic.'¹ Drawn from his own limited experience of fomenting rebellion in Arabia, this and Lawrence's many other generalisations remain controversial, and cannot be accepted at face value. Rarely, if ever, have insurgents acquired the passive sympathy of the entire population; even in the great national liberation struggles, such as in Algeria, sympathy was not universal, and insurgents often had to enforce the passive cooperation of the people.² At first glance, the Jewish insurgency in Palestine appears to have been the exception that proves the rule. It would be easy to gain the impression from pro-Zionist sources that the Jewish community supported the insurgents wholeheartedly. A more critical appraisal suggests otherwise; that throughout the period the use of violence remained a divisive issue of significant proportions within the Zionist movement, and within the Jewish community in Palestine and elsewhere. That said, the Jewish insurgency exceeded Lawrence's formula in one respect; the insurgent movements collectively comprised substantially more than 5 per cent of the Jewish population in Palestine. Like that larger community, however, the Jewish underground was divided on the issues of methods and legitimacy of violent rebellion. These divisions were reflected in the different organisational structures, strategies and tactics of the three 'illegal armies'. Moreover, these different approaches to rebellion exerted a significant influence on the course of the insurgency.

ORGANISATION AND STRATEGY OF THE INSURGENT GROUPS

Three separate insurgent organisations were involved in the campaign: the Haganah (Defence); the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organisation) and the Lochmei Heruth Israel (Fighters for the Freedom of Israel) or Lechi. The Haganah was the largest of the three, with some 45 000 members in 1946.³ Although the Haganah traced its historical roots to the self-defence units formed before 1914 to protect Jewish settlements, it was formally established in 1921, at the instigation of the Histadruth (the General Jewish Federation of Labour). Some units engaged in active operations against Arab rebels in 1938. During the Second World War the Palmach (Striking Companies) were created to assist the British in the event of a German invasion of Palestine. Once the threat receded the Palmach was retained on active service by the Haganah, being based on the kibbutzim (collective agricultural settlements) where it could continue military training in conjunction with farming. Other members of the Haganah were trained by the British for service with special forces in Europe and North Africa; some later served in the Jewish Brigade which fought in Europe in 1944-45.⁴

Although created initially by the Histadruth, the Haganah had evolved by the end of the war into the military arm of the Jewish Agency, which had been created under the Palestine Mandate to advise and cooperate with the Palestine administration in matters related to establishment of the Jewish national home.⁵ During the Second World War a new command structure was established for the Haganah, in which the Histadruth, which dominated politically the Jewish Agency Executive, shared command and control with the Political Department of the Agency. The Haganah's security committee was responsible for general policies and finances, but delegated some of its political and all of its administrative authority to the National Command. Moshe Sneh of the Agency was Commander-in-Chief, with seven command members as his assistants. The general staff, responsible for technical and educational affairs, reported directly to Sneh. Funds raised in Palestine or abroad for the Haganah were held in the Keren Hayesod (Palestine Foundation Fund). By 1945 it appears that strategic command of the Haganah rested solely with the Agency's political department, which issued orders directly to the Commander-in-Chief.⁶

The Haganah was organised as a territorial militia. Most served in the Him (Guard Force), a poorly trained force intended solely for protection of rural settlements. The smallest formation was a post of three to six men. Four to eight posts constituted a sector or platoon; two or more sectors a region or company; and from two to nine regions, a district or battalion. The Him had basic intelligence, communications and medical services, as well as arrangements for mutual support of adjoining settlements. The Hish (Field Force) included 4600 men in mobile formations controlled by district commanders. The Palmach, the elite force of the Haganah, totalled by early 1945 some 1500 men, also deployed on a territorial basis: individual platoons were based on a kibbutz; adjoining platoons formed companies; and adjoining companies, battalions. The conventional military structure notwithstanding, the Palmach was a guerrilla army, and this was reflected in its training in sabotage, covert operations and rigorous physical and weapons training. Promising members were put through the NCO's course which covered small unit leadership, urban combat, resistance techniques, international politics and the opposition in Palestine (the security forces and the other underground groups). After a minimum of six months service as a section or deputy platoon commander, an NCO attended the officer's training course. This training system, combined with a reserve organisation, was designed to allow the Palmach to expand rapidly in an emergency. By the end of the war it had four battalions.⁷ After 1945 the organisations expanded considerably; the Haganah expanded to 43 000–45 000, including 8000 in the Hish. The Palmach increased to 2000–3000. The Palmach and the Hish played the most active role during the Haganah's period of opposition to the government.

The political attitudes and objectives of the World Zionist Organisation (WZO), as expressed through the Jewish Agency, determined to a large extent the strategy of the Haganah. During 1945–46 the Haganah operated according to a strategy it called 'Constructive Warfare'. It was designed to persuade the British government to change its Palestine policy, especially immigration policy; it was not intended to be a strategy for a war of independence. It was, moreover, a compromise. It was supposed to satisfy both the militant elements in the Haganah and the Zionist movement, who wanted to take action against the British, and the moderates, who were opposed in principle to the use of terrorism. The strategy involved three related tactical techniques, with distinct but mutually

supporting political objectives. First, the Jewish Agency and the Haganah would carry out illegal immigration operations, to save the remnants of European Jewry and to increase the Jewish population of Palestine. These operations would serve also as a propaganda weapon in the political battle to terminate the White Paper policy. Secondly, illegal settlements would be established in prohibited areas, to ensure footholds in strategically vital areas and, again, to expose the injustices of the White Paper. Finally, the Haganah would conduct military operations called Maavak Tzamud (Linked Struggle). They would be carried out either to protect directly the landing and dispersal of illegal immigrants, or would be directed at any branch or aspect of the Palestine administration involved in the prevention of illegal immigration. This allowed a wide variety of military targets: roads and bridges, patrol boats and naval vessels; police stations, radar stations and airfields. Such attacks also would undermine the security of the British position in Palestine, precluding its effective use as a military base.⁸

The strategy had obvious weaknesses, largely the product of the Agency's reluctance to sanction the use of force. Inclined to be cautious, the Agency leaders, according to one critic, tended to test British reactions after each incident to see if they had been pressured sufficiently; consequently, there were long periods of inaction between many operations. The Haganah took pains to reduce casualties, often to the extent of giving warnings of impending attack in order to allow British personnel to evacuate intended targets.⁹ The British, of course, just as often refused to evacuate, or chose to defend the target, so casualties on both sides were inevitable. Some critics found artificial the distinction between the Haganah's 'constructive' operations and the 'destructive' acts of the Irgun and the Lechi, observing, 'One cannot draw the line between various kinds of violence'.¹⁰ Such distinctions were even harder to draw so long as the Haganah was cooperating with the more violent Irgun and the Lechi, as was the case in 1945–46. The British government, in any case, would be unable or unwilling to see in the Haganah's actions anything less than a terrorist campaign to overthrow the government of Palestine. As Elizabeth Monroe has observed: 'Armed resistance instinctively produces in an imperial power an unwillingness to capitulate to violence'.¹¹ From the very first Haganah action the British government demonstrated just such tenacity. But for nearly a year the strategy of constructive warfare allowed the Zionist movement to apply military pressure to the

British government in concert with political pressure without having to acknowledge responsibility for the military dimension of the campaign.

The Irgun Zvai Leumi had an estimated strength in 1945 of approximately 1500.¹² It shared the same historical origins as the Haganah, but was created in 1931 when a group of Haganah members left the parent organisation in a dispute over the issue of socialist politicisation in the Haganah. They seized an arms cache and founded Haganah B, which became subsequently associated with the right-wing Zionist-Revisionist Party. It remained a politically unstable organisation throughout the decade: in 1937 as many as half of its members returned to the original Haganah and in 1940 the leadership split over the issue of cooperation with the British during the war. A minority opposed to cooperation left to form a new group, which became the Lechi. The Irgun languished until Menachem Begin became commander in late 1943.¹³ He immediately reorganised the Irgun into a secret revolutionary army. He severed the group's connexions with the Revisionists to ensure both security and the Irgun's ability to determine its own political programme. Begin was the head of the High Command, which controlled both the political and military policies and activities of the Irgun. A general staff was responsible for administrative functions: planning; intelligence; ideology and propaganda; regional commands; secretariat; quartermaster; finance; and medical services. The operational forces came jointly under the planning section and the regional commanders, and consisted of squads, platoons, companies and divisions. According to Begin, the organisation never had more than 30 or 40 full-time members, relying heavily on part-time volunteers, who eventually numbered in the thousands. Eitan Haber estimates that by 1947 the Irgun had 600 to 1000 'operational' members, with some 5000 in reserve. The Irgun financial section, Keren Habarzel (Fund for Iron), collected funds from sympathisers, as well as authorising 'expropriations' (robberies). By 1946 the Irgun had also created some ten front organisations in the United States to generate financial assistance from the wealthy American Jewish community. In 1946 the Irgun also established a headquarters in Europe to carry out recruiting, fund-raising and operations. Although small in size in comparison with the Haganah, the Irgun played a major role in the insurgent campaign; some historians would ascribe to it a decisive role.¹⁴

The principle political objective of the Irgun was the establishment

of an independent Jewish state, incorporating both Palestine and Trans-Jordan. The Irgun's ideology rested on three assumptions: first, that every Jew had a natural right to enter Palestine freely; second, that the creation of a Jewish state presupposed the existence of an armed Jewish force; and third, that every Jewish group and every foreign power supporting the Jewish right to independence would be considered an ally. A majority Jewish population, created by large-scale immigration, was also an essential precondition to independence.¹⁵

The Irgun's military strategy was to initiate a 'Liberation War . . . a just war, which is conducted by an oppressed people against a foreign power that has enslaved it and its country'.¹⁶ This liberation war was to prepare the Irgun for the 'opportune moment' to seize power: when the British had been defeated either in the insurgent campaign or in a war with another power.¹⁷ Eitan Haber states that Begin followed the Clausewitzian maxim that war is politics by other means, and the Irgun's strategy bears this out: the continuous liberation war would be accompanied by political action, propaganda, economic warfare, and would be 'internationalised' in order to win the support of foreign governments.¹⁸ The Irgun regarded this strategy as one of total war, requiring the mobilisation of the whole Jewish people, using political as much as military weapons:

Total War does not mean only bearing arms. We will not honour the rules of His Majesty's Government. We will not obey its laws. We will not pay taxes. We will not recognize the authority of British officials. We will ignore the dictates of their courts. We will set aside the injunction prohibiting us from settling on the land We will create a provisional Jewish Government which will direct this war, integrate all our activities, and embody our aspirations.¹⁹

Begin states that his liberation strategy was based on the assumption that the British government, owing to political tradition and Britain's situation in 1945, would be unwilling and unable to rule Palestine by excessive force in the face of determined opposition. Drawing on the current example of the rebellion in Greece, an Irgun pamphlet concluded: 'The English commander is not free to suppress the rebellion in a sea of blood.'²⁰ Convinced that the British attached great importance to political and moral factors in governing their colonies, the Irgun concluded that it could defeat the British by humiliating them:

The very existence of an underground, which oppression, hanging, torture, and deportation fail to crush or weaken must, in the end, undermine the prestige of a colonial regime that lives by the legend of its omnipotence. Every attack which it fails to prevent is a blow to its standing. Even if the attack does not succeed it makes a dent in that prestige, and that dent widens into a crack which is extended with every succeeding attack.²¹

Begin believed that once the revolt began Palestine would come to resemble a 'glass house'; the world's attention would be focused on Palestine and the events within. This close and constant scrutiny would allow the Irgun to disseminate its political message through its actions while protecting the Irgun from an extreme British response. Thus the military and political roles of the Irgun were inseparable; the Irgun would act as its own political spokesman. J. Bowyer Bell has accurately described this as a strategy of leverage.²²

The Irgun's strategy shared some common aspects with that of the Haganah: both employed military and political action to put pressure on the British government; in both cases raising the political and military costs of law enforcement in Palestine was central to the application of leverage. The Irgun commanders felt that 'each operation should be planned with an eye to major effects and to this end we should make Britain itself our central objective'.²³ The strategies diverged on the matter of the means to achieve independence. The Haganah's strategy envisaged a negotiated solution, in which constructive warfare was simply a pressure tactic and not the sole means of achieving the desired objective. The Irgun rejected a negotiated settlement; its aim was to achieve independence by inflicting a political/military defeat on Britain, forcing her to withdraw from the Mandate, and seizing power upon that withdrawal. Inevitably then, the Irgun's strategy required a higher level of violence and intensity of conflict.

This crucial difference in the two strategies was reflected directly in the participation of the two groups in acts of violence. During the period of cooperation, 1945-46, the Haganah and the Palmach were directly involved in conducting eight military operations. The Irgun and the Lechi together carried out more than 30 during the same period. Once the cooperation ended, the latter groups executed more than 280 operations between September 1946 and July 1947.²⁴

The Lechi was the smallest organisation, numbering some 250 to 300 in 1944.²⁵ The group had carried out operations almost from

the moment of its break with the Irgun in 1940. By 1942 most of the members, including their leader Abraham Stern, had been arrested or killed by the police and those who remained alive, both in and out of prison, began to reorganise the group. They adopted the structure of a secret terrorist society: members were grouped in cells of three with vertical lines of communication and command from a three-man central committee. Recruitment was very selective to ensure loyalty and security: prospective members sponsored by two established members were subjected to lengthy covert surveillance and interrogation in secrecy. Once accepted they returned to the large cities where they lived under assumed identities. To protect itself from informers, the Lechi established an intelligence service which penetrated the Palestine police and built up a file on police anti-terrorist agents. It also extended into the British army and the administration. The 'Fighting Division' included personnel, training, planning and logistics branches. There was also a propaganda department and a separate radio station. The Lechi financed itself by means of door-to-door fund-raising campaigns, protection racket extortion and bank robberies. Initially the Lechi established cells in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa, but branches were eventually extended to Cairo, Britain and Europe, with front organisations in the United States. At the end of October 1943, 21 members of the Lechi escaped from Latrun detention camp, putting the group on a solid footing. Although never officially appointed, Nathan Friedman-Yellin was recognised as the head of the central triumvirate, responsible for propaganda and external contacts and negotiations. Yitzak Yizernitsky took over administration, organisation and operations. Dr Israel Sheib was the ideologist, giving lectures to the members and running the underground newspaper.²⁶ The Lechi was very active in the insurgent campaign. It demonstrated a capability for inflicting casualties and damage far out of proportion to its size.

In his study of the Lechi, Gerold Frank has stated that the group had no political line or ideological consistency save for a single political objective - an independent Jewish state.²⁷ The evidence suggests that this is an over-simplification. Granted that the Lechi's political programme was abstruse, it does not defy explanation; rather it must be examined in relation to the influence of the Lechi's founder Abraham Stern, both before and after his death. Even before he died Stern had come to view the Lechi's struggle for national independence as part of a larger war against British imperialism in the Middle East.²⁸

Stern emigrated to Palestine from Poland in the early 1920s. A brilliant scholar at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, he later studied in Italy where, according to one analyst, he became captivated by Mussolini's fascism and returned to Palestine with an ambition to recreate not just the state of Israel in Palestine, but to build a vast fascist Hebrew empire from the Euphrates to the Nile. Stern was not a Zionist in the strictest sense of the word: he believed that the Jewish state had never ceased to exist; it would be recreated by massive Jewish immigration from the diaspora and a war of national liberation by the combined forces of Zionists outside Palestine and a 'Hebrew Liberation Front' fighting inside Palestine. Although Stern's colleagues in the Irgun agreed that a Jewish state would have to be created by force, they were not as fanatical as Stern and it was this that led to the split in 1940: Stern believed that with Britain at war the Irgun should push for independence.²⁹ J. Bowyer Bell writes:

When the split came in the summer of 1940, few were surprised. It had been obvious for years that Stern would not wait on events, could not compose his soul, and sought a means to act. He attracted about him impatient, driven, desperate men who also distrusted politics and believed in deeds.³⁰

From a political point of view this impulse to action was self-defeating. According to Geula Cohen, a former member of the group, 'Lechi never had a chance to formulate its beliefs into a systematic program'.³¹ The Lechi launched into operations immediately, and Cohen feels that when Stern was killed in 1942 much of the group's political direction died with him: 'Of all the principles he set down on paper only the purely tactical ones – those committing us to an all-out struggle against British imperialism in the Middle East . . . remained part of our program. The visionary aspect of Yair's thought faded into the background.'³² When Friedman-Yellin took over in 1943, independence remained the primary objective, but the struggle was increasingly couched in anti-imperialist terms. Lechi doctrine stated that the British remained in Palestine to protect their own economic interests, particularly those related to oil. The Lechi, therefore, would render the military bases useless by constant threat of attack and undermine the economic interests by sabotage of the oil refineries and the pipeline. There is no question that this frankly Marxist-Leninist interpretation was intended to appeal to the Soviet Union; according to Cohen, Stern

himself had believed that the Lechi should ally itself with the Soviets in removing British influence from the area.³³ By 1947 the Lechi's 'foreign policy' favoured neutralisation of the Middle East, thereby removing both the British imperialist threat to the Soviet Union and the cause of communal strife. The Lechi emphasised that Britain was the common enemy of both Jews and Arabs, and that all who struggled to expel the British were natural allies. Peaceful cooperation and economic development would follow expulsion of the British.³⁴ Eitan Haber has suggested, nonetheless, that the Lechi's leaders were not as doctrinaire as this policy might suggest, and Y. S. Brenner goes further by highlighting differing views within the organisation: the left hoped to achieve a radical socialist state, while the right tended to regard the anti-imperialist line as an expedient tactic for acquiring external support.³⁵ The Soviet Union, however, apparently took no notice, and supported the mainstream Zionist movement.

While ideology thus determined the selection of major targets, the Lechi's methods were the product of Stern's own attitudes and examples. Even before he left the Irgun he had urged the adoption of tactics of 'indiscriminate terrorism'. He felt that if the Irgun was at war it should attempt to inflict maximum damage for minimum losses. Once the Lechi was acting on its own Stern advocated 'individual terrorism', a technique borrowed from the writings and experience of the European anarchist movements, whereby the assassination of key individuals was supposed to bring down the whole government structure.³⁶ Stern's death apparently reinforced this concept: Brenner says that the Lechi became obsessed with revenge for his death, which they vented against policemen and, convinced they would meet the same fate if captured, they carried arms at all times so as to avoid capture by killing as many policemen as possible, dying in the attempt.³⁷ Freidman-Yellin defended these tactics in an interview published in 1946, pointing out that since the British used every means to combat the Lechi, they had to use every means to fight back.³⁸ The Lechi believed that such actions would serve also to dramatise their cause, the battle of the weak against the strong:

Such acts will render the government weak and ineffectual. Such acts will have powerful echoes everywhere. Such acts will prove to the authorities that they cannot enforce law and order in Palestine unless they keep vast forces here at the cost of thousands of pounds.³⁹

The Lechi shared with the Irgun only the objective of creating an independent Jewish state by force of arms. Furthermore, the Lechi's strategy did not lend itself to cooperation with the Haganah. Deliberate personal violence was antithetical to the doctrines of the Jewish Agency leaders. It may be for that very reason that Brenner feels the Lechi gained respectability from the period of unified struggle since, however the Agency leaders felt, the Haganah used methods which appeared indistinguishable from those of the Lechi. Moreover, on its own, this very small organisation could not hope to achieve its objectives; in cooperation with the Haganah and especially with the Irgun, the Lechi's strategy contributed to the deterioration of the security situation in Palestine, to what one author called 'the dialectic of repression, resistance, terror and reprisal'.⁴⁰

THE UNITED RESISTANCE MOVEMENT, 1945-46

Given the differing political and military perspectives of the three groups then, a united front against the British was not inevitable. In fact, from September 1944 to May 1945, the Haganah made a concerted effort to reduce the effectiveness of, if not to eliminate, the other two organisations. From February through November 1944, the Irgun and the Lechi had conducted a joint terrorist campaign which culminated in the assassination of Lord Moyne, the British Minister Resident in the Middle East.⁴¹ The campaign alarmed the Jewish Agency. Coming at a time when the British government was considering a settlement of the Palestine question favourable to the Jews, the offensive was ill-timed. Chaim Weizmann, President of the WZO and a moderate who believed in close cooperation with the British, felt that the terrorist campaign caused a major setback for the Zionist movement:

The harm done to our cause by the assassination of Lord Moyne and by the whole terror . . . was not in changing the intentions of the British Government, but rather in providing our enemies with a convenient excuse and in helping to justify their course before the bar of public opinion.⁴²

It was noted in Chapter 1 that after the murder of Lord Moyne the partition plan was shelved and British support for the idea of a Jewish state waned. Furthermore, the Jewish Agency felt the Irgun

and, to a lesser extent, the Lechi constituted threats to the Agency's leadership of the Jewish political community. The Irgun encouraged activist members of the Haganah to defect and join the Irgun. The result of this anxiety was a power struggle, known as 'the Season', in which the Jewish Agency and the Haganah cooperated actively with the British security forces in identifying, locating, arresting and interrogating members of the Irgun. The Lechi succumbed very quickly to pressure and agreed to suspend operations on the understanding that in the absence of a favourable settlement the Haganah and the Lechi would launch a joint campaign. The Irgun suffered significant losses in 'the Season' and conceded defeat in April 1945, when it called for an end to 'fratricidal strife' and the creation of a united front against the Palestine and British governments.⁴³

The real impetus for a united resistance campaign came from the Jewish Agency and the Haganah. Seeing the Agency's proposals rebuffed by the British government in the spring of 1945 and a British policy decision postponed by the new government in the summer, Haganah militants, disillusioned with the negotiating process, urged the Agency to allow active opposition to the government. Once again, members of the Palmach began to defect to the Irgun. A formal truce was arranged between the underground groups and the Jewish Agency proposed amalgamation for a campaign to extract concessions from the British. The Irgun agreed readily to the concept of a united front but rejected amalgamation with Haganah; Begin feared the Irgun would be unable to renew the revolt if the Agency or Haganah decided to cease operations. The three groups reached a general agreement by mid-October, although it was not formally ratified until 1 November, after the first joint operation. Under the agreement the Haganah took command of the Tenuat Hameri Ha'ivri (United Resistance Movement), but each group retained its independent existence. The Irgun and the Lechi could propose operations, which would be approved in general terms by a three-man high command representing each of the groups. Joint conferences were to be held every fortnight, and operations officers would meet before every operation. The Irgun and the Lechi were permitted to carry out 'expropriations' without prior approval. Samuel Katz observed later: 'The limitations were blatant, but the great object had been achieved. The whole people was at war.'⁴⁴

Although most Israeli historians are loathe to admit it, the United

Resistance Movement's campaign manifested all of the features of political terrorism as it is now defined:

... the threat or use of violent criminal techniques, in concert with political and psychological actions, by a clandestine or semi-clandestine armed political faction, whether government or non-government, with the aim of creating a climate of fear and uncertainty, wherein the targeted opposition will be coerced or intimidated into conceding to the terrorists some political advantage.⁴⁵

As noted earlier, the Haganah's adoption of such methods was controversial, and not without its political costs. It tended to undermine the otherwise unassailable moral position of the Haganah and its political sponsors by involving and associating them with reprehensible acts of violence. This dilemma was to come to a head in July 1946 with the Irgun's bombing of the King David Hotel. For the duration of the campaign, the real beneficiaries – politically and strategically – were the Irgun and the Lechi. Lacking the powerful overt political organisations which 'fronted' for the Haganah, they could not have exerted by themselves the kind of coordinated political and military pressure that was possible in alliance with the Haganah. Moreover, the alliance conferred a measure of respectability and legitimacy upon the two groups, who in fact represented unpopular political minorities within the wider Zionist movement. Far from being the united 'people's war' acclaimed by Samuel Katz, it was an uncomfortable marriage of political and military convenience that barely survived its first joint operation.

The first 'armed propaganda' operation of the United Resistance Movement took place on the night of 31 October/1 November 1945. The Palmach damaged two police launches with limpet mines at Haifa and sank a third at Jaffa. The Haganah attempted to sabotage the railway system at hundreds of locations across Palestine. The Irgun attacked Lydda railway junction damaging locomotives and buildings and causing thirteen casualties among members of the security forces and railway staff. A Lechi bombing caused serious damage to the oil refineries at Haifa.⁴⁶

The political objective of this 'single serious incident' was to warn the British government that further violence could be expected if it did not deal satisfactorily with Jewish demands. It was also meant to raise the morale of Palestinian Jews. According to Nicholas Bethell, the operation had the desired effect on the Jews of Palestine,

although some Agency leaders were concerned that the British might respond with an all-out attempt to disarm or disband the Haganah.⁴⁷ The British were certainly warned by the operation but it did not dissuade the government from its intended course. Upon receiving reports of the incidents Bevin met with Weizmann and Moshe Shertock (from the Agency's headquarters in London) and warned them that he regarded the violence as a declaration of war. If that was what the Agency intended, he advised them, then the British government would cease its efforts to find a solution; it would not negotiate under the threat of violence. George Hall, the Colonial Secretary, issued a public statement along similar lines, if more moderate in tone: unless the violence ceased, he warned the underground, 'progress in relation to Palestine will be impossible, and the further steps we had in mind in our endeavour to settle this difficult problem will be brought to nought'.⁴⁸ So the operation succeeded in angering the government but did not affect its policy decisions: arrangements went forward to establish the Anglo-American Commission. The military response in Palestine was low key: a road curfew and some small-scale searches. Owing to the government's desire for a peaceful settlement, the Chiefs of Staff advised against instituting a major search for arms or attempting to disarm the Haganah. For similar reasons no action was taken against the Jewish Agency.⁴⁹

The most significant effect of the operation was its impact on the resistance movement itself. The first operation had taken place without Agency approval because the Executive had refused to allow the Political Department to act. They did not cancel the action, however, and insisted only that in future the Executive should be advised of forthcoming operations in order to be able to exercise a veto. The Agency's caution produced confusion. Begin states that the Irgun's operation at Lydda had been approved on the understanding that the guards were to be overcome without using weapons. The Haganah, however, apparently failed to coordinate their plans with those of the Irgun; the railway sabotage was carried out before the Irgun arrived at Lydda, so the guards were alerted and the Irgun encountered resistance. Thirteen members of the security forces and the railway staff were killed or wounded in the attack. The Lechi operation, on the other hand, was not approved by the United Resistance Movement because it went beyond the strategic objectives of the front. The Lechi refused to cancel the operation, however, because it had been planned long

before the establishment of the resistance movement; agents and explosives had been planted at the refinery, so the operation had to be carried out before they were discovered. In the event the Lechi team bungled the operation, inflicting as much damage on themselves as on the refinery. The resistance command blamed the Agency Executive for the mistakes of the first coordinated operation, claiming that if they had approved the resistance agreement the casualties at Lydda, and the refinery attack itself, could have been prevented.⁵⁰ Nearly a month passed before the Haganah carried out another operation. Although the machinery of coordination remained in place – the high command continued to exercise approval of Irgun and Lechi operations – the Haganah never again attempted a coordinated strike with the other two groups. So the resistance movement was united in name only. Independent operations continued through the winter.⁵¹

On 25 April 1946 between 25 and 30 members of the Lechi attacked the 6th Airborne Division car park in Tel Aviv. They killed seven soldiers and stole twelve rifles before escaping. Geula Cohen says the objective of the raid was solely to steal the rifles and equipment, but the British felt that murder was the first priority and the capture of arms only a secondary consideration. Cohen might well be correct: under the terms of the resistance agreement the Lechi was permitted to carry out 'freelance' raids for arms. But it is hard to ignore the fact that Lechi doctrine condoned and even encouraged the premeditated killing of members of the security forces, and the Lechi had officially 'declared war' on the Palestine Administration in February 1946. Eyewitness accounts of the attack, moreover, indicated that there was no attempt to avoid inflicting casualties even when no resistance was offered.⁵² If the attack was intended to generate a harsh British response it had a measure of success. Troops searched part of the city and placed it under curfew. Major-General Cassels, the divisional commander, publicly rebuked the mayor of Tel Aviv for alleged complicity of the Jewish community in the attack. Small groups of soldiers engaged in reprisals on two Jewish communities.⁵³

The Lechi attack produced several significant effects. First, it hampered peaceful resolution of the Palestine problem by reinforcing British intransigence at the diplomatic level: as noted in Chapter 2, the incident may have swayed official opinion against implementation of the Anglo-American Commission report, and prompted Attlee to insist on disarming of the Jewish 'illegal armies'. Second, it

contributed to the deterioration of the security situation by souring relations between the security forces and the Jewish community. Finally, it enhanced the credibility of insurgent propaganda by provoking reprisals which could only bring the security forces into disrepute. In short, the attack was a success. That success probably persuaded the insurgents to respond in kind to the British diplomatic and military moves by escalating the level of violence. But it is not at all clear that the Haganah or its political masters had foreseen the possible consequences of escalation.

Between 10 and 18 June 1946, the insurgents launched a major offensive. On 10 June the Irgun mined three trains. The Palmach sabotaged eight road and rail bridges along the Palestine border on the night of 16/17 June. The following day the Lechi destroyed a locomotive and several buildings in a raid on the Haifa railway workshops. On the 18 June the Irgun kidnapped six army officers in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.⁵⁴ Army headquarters attributed the attacks to a series of events: the escape of the Mufti of Jerusalem (the Palestinian Arab leader) from France to the Middle East; Bevin's Bournemouth speech; the death sentences pronounced against two Irgun members; and the alleged discovery of British plans to liquidate the Haganah. *Kol Israel's* (*Voice of Israel* – the Haganah's underground radio station) broadcast on 18 June referred to Bevin's speech and Begin later confirmed that the kidnappings were carried out on his orders to prevent the execution of his men. His explanation is credible; it coincides with Irgun doctrine. The Lechi attack on the railway workshops was in keeping with their strategy of striking at British economic targets. The explanation of the Haganah's operations, however, requires closer scrutiny. The destruction of railway bridges could not be related directly to British efforts to prevent illegal immigration. Rather, as Moshe Brilliant suggested in a 1947 article, the operations were intended as a warning to Britain not to transfer troops or installations to Palestine from Egypt or elsewhere in the Middle East. There is considerable evidence to support this interpretation. First, on 7 May the British had announced their intention of moving the Middle East base to Palestine. Second, rendering Palestine untenable as a military base was central to the Haganah's strategy. Third, on 12 May *Kol Israel* issued a warning that the resistance movement would make every effort 'to hinder the transfer of British bases to Palestine and to prevent their establishment in the country'.⁵⁵ Fourth, the operation showed every indication of detailed planning: sabotage on such a

scale was a major operation and the damage inflicted suggests that the bridges were properly reconnoitred in advance to determine where charges should be placed and how well each bridge was protected. The attacks involved many men – 30 in the attack on the Allenby bridge alone. Diversionary attacks were carried out in some areas and roads were blocked by mines. Intelligence analysts suspected that the assault teams might have travelled some distance to reach their targets and would have required local guides, medical support, food and refuge. They concluded that the operation against the bridges bore the hallmarks of ‘major planning on a country-wide scale’.⁵⁶ Finally, in a rare display of prescience, British intelligence estimates had predicted before the end of May that terrorism was likely to resume in June, on a larger scale than before. All the information at their disposal pointed to a resumption of terrorism, and they correctly identified the bridges as possible targets.⁵⁷ It is clear, therefore, that the Haganah had planned the attack on the bridges long before the Mufti’s escape, Bevin’s speech, or the discovery of the British plans, all of which appear to be unnecessary justification after the fact. Nonetheless, GHQ Middle East Forces were probably correct in concluding that the revival of terrorism could be attributed also to:

a steady increase in anti-British feeling and a growing belief among the terrorists that their recent inactivity, far from aiding the Zionist cause, was bringing disaster upon it . . . the terrorists feel, and probably rightly so, that the temper of the Yishuv is more propitious to such terrorist activity now . . . due to the increasing fear that the Anglo-American Commission’s report will not be implemented.⁵⁸

The June offensive produced serious consequences: on 29/30 June the security forces raided the headquarters of the Jewish Agency and arrested several hundred members of the Agency and the Haganah. The resistance movement responded with the sabotage bombing of the King David Hotel, the headquarters of the administration, on 22 July. Ninety-two people were killed and 69 people injured in the explosion and large sections of the administration were damaged or destroyed. The British replied with another large search, encompassing the entire city of Tel Aviv.⁵⁹ Considerable controversy has surrounded the bombing of the King David Hotel. The Irgun accepted responsibility for the operation, yet it is clear now that the Haganah approved the bombing in general, if not

specific, terms as an action of the United Resistance Movement. Begin says the Irgun had first proposed the attack in the spring of 1946 but it was not approved by the resistance high command until 1 July, after the British search operation. He says the attack was both a reprisal for the British action and an attempt to destroy documents captured by the British during their search of the Jewish Agency headquarters. Israel Galili, at that time the Haganah operations officer, refutes Begin’s interpretation. He claims that the Haganah had planned long before the British search to destroy the King David as a political gesture. He concedes that Operation AGATHA triggered the action, but rejects as ‘nonsensical’ the idea that the bombing was intended to destroy documents that might embarrass the Jewish Agency. Both explanations are plausible. Galili is probably correct that the documents were not the prime concern, since the British had already spent three weeks examining them. But whether the attack was a direct reprisal for Operation AGATHA or a deliberate act of ‘propaganda of the deed’, the King David Hotel was a legitimate target under the terms of the United Resistance Movement.⁶⁰

The bombing, however, produced severe repercussions in the Zionist movement. The moderates had been reasserting their influence since the British operation against the Agency. Shortly thereafter Weizmann met with Zionist leaders and threatened to resign, making public his reasons for doing so, if they did not suspend all armed actions by the Haganah and the Palmach. The Haganah succeeded in getting the Irgun to postpone the King David operation several times, but it was not cancelled. In the wake of the disaster the resistance movement collapsed in confusion and recrimination. After the Irgun publicly claimed responsibility for the attack, leaders of the Agency and other bodies called the operation ‘a dastardly crime perpetrated by a gang of desperadoes’ and urged the Jewish community to ‘rise up against these abominable outrages’.⁶¹ Begin claims that despite the incident joint resistance planning continued, but from August 1946 the Haganah confined its activities solely to illegal immigration and, as Samuel Katz observes, ‘took no further part in the armed struggle against the British’.⁶² The British had not completely crippled the Haganah’s military capability, but the Haganah’s military retreat was accompanied by a political one on the part of the Jewish Agency. At meetings in Paris in August they rejected the British provincial autonomy plan, but countered with a proposal for the creation of

a Jewish state in a partitioned Palestine. This significant departure from the Biltmore Program was nothing short of a concession to British force.⁶³

The Irgun was damaged by the sequence of events as well. Quite apart from having to accept the blame for the King David bombing, the Irgun was outflanked strategically and politically by the collapse of the United Resistance Movement. J. Bowyer Bell states that Begin recognised that Ben-Gurion stood to gain the most from the Irgun's activities:

He could now hold firm as the British produced one unsatisfactory solution after another, confident that the Irgun would continue to engender chaos within the Mandate. The political benefits of the Irgun's military campaign would then fall into the lap of the Jewish Agency, fast becoming a state-in-waiting.⁶⁴

In other words, the Irgun had unwittingly become the military arm of the Jewish Agency. With the Haganah out of the war, the Agency could continue the deal with the British with a clear conscience. Yet if the Irgun's strategy of leverage succeeded, the Agency – not the Irgun – would inherit the political victory.

TERRORISM UNLEASHED, 1946–47

Following the collapse of the United Resistance, insurgent activity escalated: 286 incidents during the next 11 months (up to 31 July 1947) compared with 78 during the United Resistance period.⁶⁵ Freed from the constraints imposed by the Jewish Agency and the Haganah, the Irgun and the Lechi compensated for their lack of political strength with sheer volume of activity. Every action tended simultaneously to render Palestine ungovernable by normal means, and to demonstrate that fact to the world. The actions of the Irgun and the Lechi thus represented a combined assault on Britain's ability to control Palestine and the legitimacy of its efforts to do so.

During this period the insurgents concentrated their attacks mainly on the security forces. Consequently, most of the more than 600 casualties suffered by the British in Palestine occurred between September 1946 and July 1947. Road mining was the most common and lethal form of attack. It almost invariably inflicted casualties upon the occupants of the vehicle, since precautions and counter-measures were never completely successful. The insurgents who

planted the mines usually escaped undetected.⁶⁶ The increased attacks were the result of a conscious shift in strategy by the Lechi leadership, who concluded that it would be more cost-effective to attack members of the security forces, since policy-makers like Lord Moyne could be replaced from other parts of the empire. Nathan Yalin-Mor (Friedman-Yellin) claims that the road mining broke the morale of the British army in Palestine:

They were afraid to leave their barracks so they had to stay there night after night, month after month. It was very bad for morale. And the casualties spread unrest among British families in England. They started demanding the evacuation of British troops. It had a political effect. That was the purpose.⁶⁷

Yalin-Mor's self-serving claims are exaggerated. There is no evidence to support his assertion that soldiers were afraid to leave their barracks. There is no question that the attacks and casualties made the soldiers angry, but not all formations reported low morale. Of those that did, confinement to barracks – which was never a permanent condition – was only one factor; suspension of leave programmes and disruption of mail service from Britain were also important aspects of the problem.⁶⁸

The Irgun and the Lechi supplemented this general war of attrition with selective attacks on the intelligence and security apparatus. Military and police intelligence officers were assassinated and police stations attacked and bombed. Quite apart from raising the human and financial costs of law enforcement, these attacks helped to neutralise the intelligence services. By December 1946 insurgent attacks had driven the police from foot patrols on the streets, forcing them to patrol in armoured cars, further alienating them from the public and their sources of information and cooperation. The attacks also produced reprisals which served to undermine the legitimacy of the administration by lending credibility to insurgent propaganda claims that Palestine was a police state.⁶⁹

The Irgun abducted members of the security forces and other British personnel on three occasions between December 1946 and July 1947. In December a military court had sentenced two Irgun members to receive, in addition to their prison sentences, 18 strokes of the cane. The Irgun warned that they would retaliate in kind if the sentences were carried out. After the first flogging the Irgun abducted and flogged a British army major and three sergeants. The Irgun warned that the next time they would respond with

gunfire. On the orders of the High Commissioner the Chief Secretary remitted the second flogging sentence. Then on 24 January 1947 Cunningham confirmed the death sentence on Dov Gruner, an Irgun member captured in an attack on a police station in April 1946. The Irgun warned that it would carry out executions in reply, turning Palestine into 'a bloodbath' if Gruner was hanged. To give credibility to their threat they kidnapped Tel Aviv District Judge Ralph Windham and a British businessman. The cabinet in London refused to set aside the sentence but Cunningham postponed it, ostensibly pending an appeal to the Privy Council. Judge Windham and the businessman were then released.⁷⁰

Although it did not involve kidnapping, the Irgun's attack on Acre Prison on 4 May 1947 bears mentioning here, since it was carried out in response to the execution of Dov Gruner and three other insurgents on 16 April. Forty-one Irgun and Lechi members, along with 214 Arabs, escaped in the daring rescue operation, but four of the freed insurgents and four attackers were killed and 13 captured. According to Begin, the Irgun carried out the floggings because it regarded the sentences of the court humiliating and degrading to the Jews. The other hostages were seized simply to stop the hangings. When this failed in April because strict British security measures precluded capturing British personnel, the Irgun carried out the dramatic prison raid. Begin regarded this last operation as a failure because of the casualties and arrests of his own men: 'It was our duty to pay the hangman in precisely his own coin. And we did not succeed.'⁷¹ The British did not believe the Acre operation had been planned and executed in the brief period following Gruner's execution and Eitan Haber suggests that the Irgun had more than just retaliation in mind. He notes that in the latter half of April the rebellion was at a standstill and Begin, convinced that the British would cave in under slightly more pressure, insisted on more activity. The operation against Acre would serve both the immediate needs of releasing men from prison and the long-term strategy of leverage against Britain.⁷²

Finally, in July 1947 the Irgun captured Sergeants Martin and Paice of Field Security and held them as hostages against the death sentences passed on three insurgents. Searches failed to locate the sergeants and their captors and on 29 July the Palestine government carried out its executions. Two days later the two sergeants were found hanging from a tree near Nathanya. They were booby-trapped and an officer was wounded as the bodies were recovered. An Irgun

poster explained that Martin and Paice had been executed not in reprisal but following a trial by an underground court, which found them guilty of illegal entry into the Jewish homeland, membership in a criminal organisation – the British army – illegal possession of arms, espionage and conspiracy.⁷³

Although Begin never states it in his book, the intention to undermine the law enforcement process was implicit in all of these actions. Twice in the space of one month the Irgun could claim that it had forced the government to retreat from enforcement of the decision of its courts in Palestine. Moreover, it appears that these incidents contributed in a significant way to the asset-to-liability shift which eventually persuaded the British government to leave Palestine. Remission of the second caning sentence caused considerable controversy within the government and Creech-Jones conceded that the government was humiliated by the successful kidnappings and other terrorist acts. An editorial in the *Daily Telegraph* concluded that the evacuation of non-essential personnel in February 1947 which followed the kidnappings was a tacit admission that terrorism had succeeded in making Palestine ungovernable and raised the status of the Irgun's campaign to that of an armed revolt, which it could claim as a victory.⁷⁴ Colonel Gray, Inspector-General of Police, later confided to an Israeli journalist that he felt the floggings, the Acre Prison break and the hanging of the two sergeants were the events which shook the government sufficiently to persuade them to think about relinquishing the Mandate:

In 1947 Britain was still an empire, and an empire . . . cannot allow itself one thing: to lose prestige and become a laughing-stock When the underground killed our men, we could treat it as murder; but when they erected gallows and executed our men, it was as if they were saying, 'We rule here as much as you do', and that no administration can bear. Our choice was obvious. Either total suppression or get out, and we chose the second.⁷⁵

The insurgents also carried out more than 90 attacks against targets of economic importance. Most of the operations consisted of attempts to mine the railway, resulting in damage or derailment of more than 20 trains. Five major railway stations were bombed or attacked. Railway traffic was disrupted and delayed to a considerable extent from October 1946 to August 1947, with a resulting loss of commercial revenue, and higher costs imposed by damage inflicted

by the insurgents. There were 12 attacks on petroleum industry targets, consisting mainly of sabotage of the oil pipeline. The Lechi carried out the most costly single operation on 30/31 March 1947 when they destroyed 16 000 tons of petroleum products in the Shell Oil Company installations at Haifa. These attacks were, of course, an important element in the Lechi's anti-imperialist strategy and they achieved a measure of success. First, they increased the already heavy financial burden of the Palestine government by raising both the direct and indirect costs of security. Second, the attacks forced the security forces to divert troops from offensive operations to defensive tasks which posed no threat to the insurgent organisations themselves.⁷⁶ Tactically, then, this form of economic warfare was very efficient.

Simultaneously with escalation of the campaign inside Palestine, the Irgun extended its terrorist operations to Europe. On 31 October 1946, the Irgun planted a large 'suitcase bomb' at the British Embassy in Rome, causing extensive damage. The Irgun claimed that the embassy was bombed because it was directly involved in preventing Jewish immigration into Palestine. Furthermore, the Irgun warned that the attack on the embassy was the beginning of an international campaign against the British. Certainly the bombing marked the commencement of a major propaganda offensive obviously intended to gain support for the Irgun around the world and to bring the threat of terrorism closer to the British domestic audience, heretofore isolated from the direct effects of the war in Palestine.⁷⁷ However, the immediate consequences were disastrous for the Irgun. Following the attack, British and American security forces assisted the Italian police in the search for the terrorists while the two governments exerted diplomatic pressure on the Italian government to exercise greater control over the refugee camps thought to be the centre of resistance activity. By the end of December 1946 the Italian police had arrested 21 members of the Irgun, including the chief of international operations, Ely Tavin. The actual perpetrators of the crime, however, had escaped. The Irgun was forced to regroup and in March 1947 moved its international headquarters to Paris. The Irgun conducted only one other international operation of a similar scale, an unsuccessful attempt in April 1947 to blow up the Colonial Office in London.⁷⁸ The Lechi also carried out international terrorist operations, in the form of a variety of attempts to kill senior British politicians such as Bevin. However, apart from a series of letter bombs mailed from

Italy to Britain in June 1947, most occurred in the post-independence period, and thus fall outside the scope of this study.⁷⁹

'CIRCLE BEYOND CIRCLE': INSURGENT PROPAGANDA

The Jewish insurgent groups assigned considerable importance to the role of propaganda in furthering their strategies. As will be shown, insurgent propaganda had three tasks: first, to promote the political objectives of the insurgents; second, to undermine the legitimacy of British rule in Palestine; and third, to protect the insurgents from severe repression. Many insurgent military operations were undertaken specifically to produce these propaganda effects. This is now recognised as a central aspect of all effective insurgent strategies, particularly those which rely upon terrorism. Insurgent groups invariably are small and weak relative to the power and resources of the state they confront. If they are to succeed, they must appear to be stronger, better organised and more widely supported than they are in fact.⁸⁰ 'Avner' of the Lechi conceded this in respect of his group: 'With the feeble reserves at the disposal of the Lechi, a continual bluff was necessary.'⁸¹ Propaganda alone could not have altered the 'correlation of forces' in Palestine. It was necessary to combine the insurgents' message with insurgent actions – the technique called 'propaganda of the deed'.⁸² Inevitably, this meant increasingly violent insurgent actions for, as Brian Jenkins has observed:

The publicity gained by frightening acts of violence and the atmosphere of fear and alarm created cause people to exaggerate the importance and strength of the terrorists and their movement. Since most terrorist groups are actually small and weak, the violence must be all the more dramatic and deliberately shocking.⁸³

By Jacques Ellul's criteria, the Jewish insurgents were trying to achieve the impossible: to influence outsiders – onlookers, not participants. He has defined propaganda as 'a set of methods employed by an organized group that wants to bring about the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals, psychologically unified through psychological manipulations and incorporated in an organization.'⁸⁴ In other words, propaganda's task is essentially internally directed: to bind people to a movement and to commit them to action on its behalf. In a revolutionary

situation, it can be employed in this way to induce individuals to endure sacrifices for a cause. This is obviously important in the context of insurgency, and the Jewish underground was no exception. Both the Lechi and the Irgun employed internally directed propaganda, such as oaths and rituals to bind the new recruit, speeches, exhortations and calls for personal bravery and sacrifice or martyrdom to maintain morale in the face of difficult circumstances, such as trials and executions.⁸⁵ Yet, there was considerably more to insurgent propaganda than that. Where Ellul's definition appears to fall short in respect of the Jewish underground is his assertion that propaganda is largely ineffective when directed to a foreign country or against the enemy. At the very least, he suggests that it may not be possible to judge its effectiveness in a revolutionary situation, in a police state or in a foreign country, owing largely to the lack or imprecision of feedback to the propagandist.⁸⁶ If the Jewish insurgents were aware of such limitations they did not show it. Starting with their own members, they spread their message outward to a variety of audiences. In fact, their approach appeared to mimic that described by T. E. Lawrence in his account of the Arab revolt in the First World War. He assigned an order of priority to the task of propaganda, starting with his own soldiers:

We had to arrange their minds in order to battle just as carefully and as formally as other officers would arrange their bodies. And not only our own men's minds, though naturally they came first. We must also arrange the minds of the enemy, so far as we could reach them; then those other minds of the nation supporting us behind the firing line, since more than half of the battle passed there in the back; then the minds of the enemy nation waiting the verdict; and of the neutrals looking on; circle beyond circle.⁸⁷

In Palestine each of the insurgent organisations maintained its own propaganda branch, which included an illegal radio station and at least one underground newspaper.⁸⁸ One correspondent described the extensive propaganda effort:

Thousands of copies of secret, illegal Jewish leaflets and bulletins issued by clandestine organizations, are distributed every day in Palestine Secret literature floods the post, leaflets are pasted surreptitiously on hoardings and vacant wall spaces, 'pamphlet bombs' . . . explode in busy streets at night and shower their printed pamphlets far and wide in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa.⁸⁹

The insurgents could rely on a measure of moral support from the legal Palestine press. The news media deplored violence but there was little disagreement on the basic objective of Zionism: the creation of an independent Jewish state. Even the two English language newspapers, *The Palestine Post* (daily) and *The Palestine Tribune* (weekly), were Zionist in editorial content. The Jewish population was served by 11 Hebrew daily newspapers, 18 weeklies and 45 others which appeared fortnightly or less frequently. These tended to be affiliated with particular political parties or groups within the Jewish community and thus were divided along the same political lines as the insurgents themselves. So each group had its sympathisers and detractors in the legal press.⁹⁰

The insurgents also carefully cultivated close relations with the international news media, particularly that of the United States, where the large, wealthy and influential pro-Zionist Jewish community was served by a sympathetic news media. Twenty of the 24 national English language periodicals were sympathetic to the Zionist cause, and the pro-Zionist Yiddish press reached approximately one-third of all American Jewish families. The Jewish Agency sponsored two English-language press services in Palestine, and in 1945 all but one of the British daily newspapers employed Jewish correspondents in Palestine.⁹¹

In addition, the insurgents created front organisations or used existing lobbying or fund-raising groups to spread their political message in the United States. Here the Haganah was at a distinct advantage, linked as it was through the Jewish Agency to the WZO. With branches in many countries and representatives of the stature of Chaim Weizmann, the WZO could plead the Zionist case in influential circles while denying any knowledge of, connection with or support for Haganah violence. As noted earlier, the Haganah's channel to the American Jewish community was the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA). The Irgun had withdrawn from the WZO before the war and, regarded along with the Lechi as dissidents, they were isolated from the mainstream of American Zionism. Nonetheless, through the efforts of Peter Bergson (Hillel Kook) the Irgun had created as many as ten front organisations in the United States by 1946. The largest of these, the American League for a Free Palestine (ALFP), had a membership of only 35 000. In 1946 the Lechi established its own American front, the Political Action Committee for Palestine.⁹²

Some of these organisations operated on a large scale: in 1943/44, alone, the ZOA distributed more than a million leaflets and

pamphlets to libraries, community centres, editors, journalists, writers and educators. In 1945, ZOA news releases were reprinted in 4000 newspaper columns.⁹³ The ALFP ran a continuous newspaper advertisement campaign: from October 1945 through September 1947 the ALFP placed 120 advertisements in American newspapers, of which 81 were in New York papers. The ALFP also conducted a mailing campaign to influential individuals, consisting of at least 21 separate mailings from February 1946 through August 1947. Furthermore, in the United States and Europe the Irgun and the ALFP published *The Answer*, the Irgun's monthly propaganda magazine.⁹⁴ Both inside and outside of Palestine, therefore, the insurgents had substantial propaganda resources at their disposal which they employed to subject Palestine, Britain, Europe and the United States to a sustained propaganda barrage.

In his study of revolutionary propaganda Maurice Tugwell has identified the common propaganda themes employed by insurgent groups.⁹⁵ The Jewish insurgents presented many of these themes in a manner which reflected the different strategies of the three organisations. The central theme of the Haganah's and the resistance movement's propaganda was that the White Paper policy was illegal because it violated the terms of the Palestine Mandate and was, therefore, the sole cause of violence in Palestine.⁹⁶ This theme legitimised all acts of resistance, particularly those undertaken in support of illegal immigration. Furthermore, it allowed the resistance movement to explain all its actions in terms of self-defence. In a deposition to the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry the resistance movement claimed that:

Our path is not the path of terror . . . if there is terrorism in this country, it is terrorism from the authorities. If . . . the British Government sends out reconnaissance planes and destroyers, operates well-equipped radar stations and builds special police posts along the coast, if it uses airborne troops and mobile police to hound out the so called illegal immigrants . . . then it is terrorism against us. And when we attack these things we do nothing more than defend ourselves against Government terror.⁹⁷

Shlomo Katz, writing for American audiences, developed this theme further by stating that the Haganah had been forced into the struggle against its will and that British terror was responsible for the close cooperation between the Haganah and the Irgun.⁹⁸ As a corollary the resistance movement propagated a second major

theme: the futility of British operations against a united national resistance movement. Emphasising that the British were fighting not just an underground organisation but a whole people, this line of argument claimed that the British must do justice to the Jews or destroy them. Continued refusal to meet Zionist demands would only strengthen resistance. Richard Crossman, a pro-Zionist parliamentarian who had served on the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, lent credibility to this theme when he stated in parliament that the military commanders in the Middle East had expressed doubts about their ability to defeat the resistance movement: 'They said: "Frankly, you can't do it if the whole community is one hundred per cent behind the resistance movement. You can do what you like but you will never get far if it has the support of the people."' ⁹⁹

Having thus explained and justified its use of violence in general terms, the resistance movement disseminated a third major propaganda theme, which might be called 'atrocities propaganda'. This theme equated British policies and actions with Nazism and anti-Semitism.¹⁰⁰ British activities in Palestine provided the insurgents with various opportunities to use it. After riots in Tel Aviv in November 1945, Meyer Levin, an American correspondent, accused the British soldiers of deliberately shooting 20 young children. He claimed that the soldiers had expressed publicly their desire to 'pop off' some children and that they sang the Nazi *Horst Wessel* while doing so. Levin's initial news report was revived two months later as an article in the American Jewish journal *Commentary*.¹⁰¹ Major search operations such as AGATHA and SHARK, in 1946, were denounced as Nazi-style pogroms complete with screenings, mass arrests and wanton brutality and destruction.¹⁰²

On several occasions insurgent attacks caused reprisals or other lapses of discipline by members of the security forces and insurgent propagandists were quick to seize upon these as British atrocities. These incidents included alleged anti-Semitic remarks by senior British officers, and the mysterious bombing of the Jewish Agency press room in March 1947, which the Agency attributed to the police.¹⁰³ Following the Irgun's bombing of the King David Hotel, General Barker, the GOC, issued a harsh non-fraternisation order to the troops. The insurgents quickly published the document which concluded with an undeniably anti-Semitic statement to the effect that by obeying the order the soldiers would be punishing the Jews 'in the way the race dislikes as much as any, namely by striking at

their pockets'.¹⁰⁴ The 'Farran Case' provided the insurgents with some of their most credible and dramatic atrocity propaganda. On 6 May 1947 Alexander Rubowitz, a youthful member of the Lechi, was abducted by an unknown assailant while distributing propaganda literature in Jerusalem; he was never seen again. Within a short time suspicion focused on Captain Roy Farran, who was running covert operations for the police. Accusations appeared in *The Palestine Post*, and American newspapers reported the rumours that were circulating in Palestine: of fascists in the ranks of the police, and of a secret police counter-terrorist cell operating independently of the police high command. Allegations of police abuses became so pronounced that the government established a special office to handle complaints. Farran then compounded the problem: he fled to Syria and demanded political asylum, thereby turning what had been an internal problem into an international incident. Farran eventually turned himself in for trial, but through the summer American newspapers continued to print lurid stores about the case, implying conspiracy and torture.¹⁰⁵

For sheer drama and propaganda effect, however, illegal immigration by sea was unmatched. Regardless of the outcome, every incident was newsworthy, which made the tactic a valuable propaganda weapon. If a landing succeeded, it could be portrayed as a victory for the resistance, and as a defeat for the White Paper policy and the legitimacy of British rule. Every ship intercepted, boarded and seized by the British provided opportunities for atrocity propaganda. The immigrants invariably resisted, often violently, requiring the British to use force to take control of the ships, and to subdue, disembark, tranship or intern the passengers. The ensuing clashes between the wretched refugees, many of whom were recent victims of the Holocaust, and robust British soldiers armed with tear gas and axe handles could not have been scripted and staged better for atrocity propaganda.¹⁰⁶ Two such incidents were noteworthy for their propaganda value: the 'La Spezia affair' and the 'Exodus'.

On 4 April 1946, Italian authorities intercepted 1200 Jewish refugees travelling in a convoy of 37 illegally-acquired British army trucks. They had intended to go to the port of La Spezia, where two schooners would embark them for Palestine. The Italians placed them on board one of the ships under guard, while negotiations began with regard to their disposal. The Jews quickly began to exploit the incident for its propaganda value. They announced a

hunger strike, and threatened to commit suicide at a rate of ten per day. They also said they would sink the ship with all on board if they were not allowed to sail to Palestine. The Vaad Leumi (the representative body of the Jewish community in Palestine) met on 11 April, and called a general strike three days later. Thirteen Jewish leaders began a fast in sympathy with the immigrants at La Spezia. The affair produced a flurry of propaganda in the Zionist press in Palestine, but one *Kol Israel* scriptwriter apparently got 'carried away' with enthusiasm: while negotiations were underway to resolve the stand-off, *Kol Israel* announced that the ship had sunk with the loss of all aboard. In fact, the incident ended as a Jewish victory. British Labour Party leader Harold Laski visited the detainees at La Spezia and promised to intercede on their behalf with Bevin. He did so, and the Foreign Secretary agreed to let the immigrants in, a few at a time. By the end of May, all had reached Palestine.¹⁰⁷ The incident had placed Britain in an impossible position; if the government stood fast on its immigration policy, it courted a political and moral disaster. By giving way, it undermined the legitimacy and credibility of that policy. For the Jews, the timing could not have been better. Fortuitously or not, the affair unfolded as the Anglo-American Commission was meeting in Lausanne to prepare its report.

In mid-June 1947, the *President Warfield*, an American steamship purchased by the Haganah, sailed to the French port of Sète, where it embarked 4493 illegal immigrants. As they all possessed valid Colombian passports, the French government did not intervene and allowed the vessel, renamed *Exodus 1947*, to sail on 11 July.¹⁰⁸ The British decided to make the *Exodus* a test case of their new policy of 'Refoulement' – returning illegal immigrant ships to their ports of embarkation.¹⁰⁹ In a message to High Commissioner Cunningham, the Colonial Office advised:

Consider successful return of *President Warfield's* immigrants to France is likely to have a most important effect on the future of illegal immigration. Not only should it clearly establish the principle of refoulement as applied to a whole shipload of immigrants, but it will be most discouraging to the organisers of the traffic if the immigrants in the first ships to evade the British blockade in weeks end up returning whence they came.¹¹⁰

The French government had agreed to their return to Sète, but would accept them only if they disembarked of their own accord.

It was essential, the Colonial Office noted, to handle this affair as delicately as possible with regard to the French, in order to ensure their future cooperation in such matters. It was not easy to handle the *Exodus* delicately. The ship was prepared to resist and in the boarding operation on 18 July, during which one destroyer rammed the vessel, three Jews were killed and several injured. The ship's master believed that he could beach the ship and put most of the passengers ashore, but the Haganah representative aboard overruled him. The first priority, he was told, was the operation's political impact on world opinion, and this would best be achieved by letting the British take the *Exodus* into Haifa where foreign journalists and UNSCOP representatives could witness the transshipment and observe the results of the boarding operation. As the *Christian Science Monitor's* correspondent noted at the time, 'The Jews here believe that one "illegal" ship may be worth 10 million words in helping to convince the Committee'.¹¹¹ At Haifa, the damage from the fight for control of the ship was clearly visible, but the transshipment operation, observed by Judge Sandstrom, Chairman of UNSCOP, proceeded without incident. Nonetheless, the Zionist propaganda mills worked overtime to achieve maximum effect from the operation. A broadcast from the *Exodus* during the boarding had said that one immigrant was dead, five dying and 120 wounded. The ship was said to have been rammed from three sides and was in danger of sinking. Palestine's pro-Zionist press had a field day with the story, and the Yishuv observed a three-hour general strike in sympathy.¹¹²

Had the British merely repeated the routine of previous transshipment operations, interning the immigrants in Cyprus, that might have been the end of the story. But, in keeping with the new policy, the three transshipment vessels took the illegals back to France, arriving at Port de Bouc on 29 July. The French, true to their word, agreed to accept any of the passengers who disembarked voluntarily. But the Haganah had second-guessed the British, and were waiting, prepared to discourage the immigrants from leaving the ships. In this they had nearly complete success; only 130 disembarked. The remainder waited on the ships to see what the British would do next. The stand-off lasted until 21 August, and as time passed the British weapon was gradually turned against the British themselves. What should have been a British victory became a propaganda nightmare and a defeat.¹¹³

It is quite apparent the Cabinet had failed to think through their new strategy – no one, it seems, had anticipated that the immigrants

might refuse to disembark and, without the cooperation of the French, it was impossible to compel them to do so. Thus, while the ships sat at Port de Bouc, the Cabinet tried to find a solution to the dilemma. They agreed that they could not be sent back to Palestine or to Cyprus. Creech-Jones looked into the possibility of transferring them to a British colony. Bevin examined the question of sending them to the British Zone of Germany. The Cabinet eventually concluded that the British Zone was the only place where there was accommodation and where it was politically possible to send them:

The fact is that we have no alternative but to send these people to the British Zone. If we were to take them to Cyprus now, we should have suffered a major defeat in our campaign against the traffic in illegal immigrants, the consequence of which might be intolerable for the Palestine Government.¹¹⁴

The point is that the British had already suffered a major political defeat without having to send the immigrants to Cyprus. Since the government admitted that there was room for the immigrants on Cyprus, and the transfer of illegal immigrants from two other ships at the end of July attested to this fact, Zionist propagandists attributed the decision to carry the *Exodus* immigrants to Germany to Bevin's personal vindictiveness. American Jews reacted with rallies, press conferences and propaganda.¹¹⁵ Significantly, British newspapers levelled some of the harshest criticism at the government. Calling it 'An Act of Folly', the *Manchester Guardian* wrote:

The Government has not so much credit left in the world that it can afford to squander it in acts of premeditated folly. Yet how else can one describe the threat to take the Jewish refugees who are now . . . at Port de Bouc . . . to the British Zone of Germany.¹¹⁶

The paper concluded that the policy of refoulement had failed, that the British had badly underestimated the courage and fanaticism of the Jews and the ability of Zionist propagandists to misrepresent British policy. It found contemptible the Foreign Office attempts to justify the decision. The final disembarkation at Hamburg on 8 September, accompanied by violent resistance, did nothing to enhance the already tarnished British reputation and the *Exodus* affair, although consigned to history in fact, lived on in Zionist propaganda and fiction.¹¹⁷

Throughout the period the Haganah, in keeping with its strategy, was careful to describe its operations in terms of a 'struggle' and not as acts of war. This was not the case of the Irgun and the Lechi, both of which declared war against Britain early in 1946.¹¹⁸ After the collapse of the resistance movement they continued to use many of the propaganda themes employed by the Haganah, particularly those referring to British atrocities, but there were also significant differences. The central theme of the Irgun's propaganda, based on its basic political assumptions, was that the Jews possessed the historic title to Palestine and thus had the inalienable right to immigrate freely thereto. Implicit in this theme was the idea that the British presence was not just a cause of violence but was inherently and manifestly illegal. It was this illegal occupation of the Jewish homeland that justified the Irgun's war of national liberation. As a corollary, the Irgun's propaganda stated that the group did not recognise the authority of the British administration in Palestine. Members of the Irgun, brought to trial for terrorist offences, used the proceedings to deny the jurisdiction of the British courts. In July 1947 the Irgun took this idea to its logical conclusion: in reply to British executions of members of the group, the Irgun hanged the two sergeants they had kidnapped. The announcement issued to justify the action claimed that an 'underground court' had found the sergeants guilty of the same charges for which the British had executed members of the Irgun.¹¹⁹

A second major Irgun propaganda theme glorified the armed struggle and especially those members of the Irgun who paid the supreme sacrifice. The evidence suggests that apart from an obvious role in maintaining the internal morale of the Irgun, this scheme was designed specifically to gain sympathisers and financial support in the United States. It was probably most highly developed in the ALFP production of Ben Hecht's play 'A Flag is Born'. Described as a 'skillful portrayal of underground heroism' which glamourised the Irgun's leaders, the play had a successful run on Broadway before going on tour to many American cities. Hundreds of congressmen, government officials and foreign diplomats attended the Baltimore performance. The play was more than just a propaganda weapon; the ALFP solicited financial contributions after each performance.¹²⁰ Ben Hecht continued to exalt the actions of the Irgun in a dramatic fashion. In May 1947 several major American newspapers published an ALFP advertisement entitled 'Letter to the Terrorists of Palestine'. Hecht's 'letter' told the Irgun:

Every time you blow up a British arsenal, or wreck a British jail, or send a British railroad train sky high, or rob a British bank, or let go with your guns and bombs at the British betrayers and invaders of your homeland, the Jews in America make a little holiday in their hearts.¹²¹

The letter created a sensation; hundreds of other newspapers reprinted it as news, giving the Irgun an unexpected propaganda bonus.¹²² This same heroism theme was employed to equate the Irgun's struggle with that of the Irish and of the Americans. One advertisement stated: 'Your dollars can help a relentless fighting force – built of the same hardy stuff and filled with the same inspiration as those freedom-loving "rebels" of 1776 – march on to liberation.'¹²³ The Irgun and its American front organisations undoubtedly expected that such appeals to American heritage, patriotism and anti-colonialist sentiment would command widespread support.

For all their bravado, however, the Irgun remained a minority influence in American Zionist politics. The mainstream, which supported the Haganah, still attracted most of the attention and money. This fact may go some way toward explaining the Irgun's attack on the British Embassy in Rome and the propaganda theme which emerged from it. As noted earlier, by October 1946, when the Irgun and the Lechi were trying to increase pressure on Britain, the Jewish Agency had proposed a partition plan and was preparing to denounce terrorism in exchange for the detained Jewish leaders. The Irgun commanders may have concluded that a dramatic show of force, such as an attack on a British embassy, would demonstrate the strength and determination of the Irgun in relation to the apparent weakness of the Agency and the Haganah. Furthermore, it could convey the impression that the Irgun was stronger and more widespread than it was in fact. The propaganda offensive which followed the bombing in Rome appears to have been directed primarily at Britain, although the political message would not have been lost on American audiences. It attempted to convey the image of a widespread all-powerful Irgun. The communiqué accepting responsibility for the attack stated that 'the attack against the British Embassy in Rome is the opening of the military campaign of the Jews in the Diaspora . . . let every Briton who occupied our country know that the arm of the eternal people will answer with war everywhere and with all available means until our sorrowing

country is liberated and its people redeemed.¹²⁴ The Irgun gave the communiqué to American correspondents together with an open letter to the Italian premier explaining the Irgun's case. On 14 November 1946 Samuel Merlin, 'political spokesman' for the Irgun, stated in an interview:

if the Irgun say they are going to attack Britons outside Palestine they will do so the bombing of the Rome Embassy was the first step. There will certainly be others. They will carry the war into Britain. Precautions being taken against the arrival of Irgun . . . are therefore futile.¹²⁵

In fact, this was a bluff entirely without substance since, as noted earlier, the Italian authorities quickly rounded up the Irgun's international terrorist network, including the ringleader.¹²⁶ Nonetheless, as will be shown, the threat of international terrorism did have the desired impact in Britain, if not in America.

The Lechi's central propaganda theme was that they were fighting not just for national liberation but also against British imperialism in the Middle East. Two subsidiary themes flowed directly from this one. First, the Lechi claimed that the Jews and the Arabs did not have a valid quarrel. Their communal differences were a product of British imperialism and would disappear after Britain was removed from the area. The Lechi insisted that the liberation of the Jews would benefit the Arabs, so they should join the Jews in a joint struggle against Britain. Second, the Lechi argued that the British presence was a threat to the Soviet Union, which desired only security in the region. Neutralisation of the Middle East would serve both Jewish and Soviet interests; consequently, the Lechi would gain Soviet sympathy and support for its anti-imperialist struggle.¹²⁷ Like the Irgun, the Lechi opposed partition, favoured unlimited Jewish immigration into Palestine, and refused to recognise the authority of the British administration. In relation to the latter, the Lechi members who were brought to trial went a step further than their Irgun counterparts: they not only rejected the legal jurisdiction of the courts but demanded to be treated as prisoners-of-war, even though they made it equally clear that they did not consider themselves bound by the laws governing conduct in war. Moreover, their ideology gave a curious twist to their relations with the press. British journalists were seen as instruments of the government, part of the enemy, and agents of the police. Contact with them was to be avoided. But, this did not prevent the Lechi from getting its message across, particularly in the United States.¹²⁸

DEEDS AND PROPAGANDA: ASSESSING THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF INSURGENT ACTIONS

Neither terrorist insurgency nor propaganda were new phenomena in 1945. Terrorism had played a central role in the anarchist movements of Europe at the turn of the century and in the Irish rebellion. The major powers had considerable experience of propaganda from the two world wars. The Jewish insurgents demonstrated considerable skill in combining the two activities into a single weapon which, used with exceptional timing in a 'media-intensive' environment, exerted a measurable political impact.

By the time the insurgents launched their campaign, most of the general principles of effective propaganda were well established. First, propaganda is almost exclusively an offensive weapon. Second, credibility is essential, so propaganda must be consistent with verifiable facts, upon which judgements can be made. Third, propaganda should be the servant, not the master, of policy. Fourth, propaganda cannot prevail against fundamental social trends and attitudes. Instead, it should attempt to incorporate and use them to further the objectives of the organisation. Fifth, speed is essential since the first story on any incident will command the most attention. Finally, propaganda must be continuous to be effective.¹²⁹

Generally speaking, the insurgents adhered to most of the basic principles of effective propaganda. First, they used it almost solely as an offensive weapon against Britain, forcing the British government to defend its policies and actions. The insurgents rarely found it necessary to defend their own actions, which they justified *a priori* by attacking the British presence in Palestine. Second, British policy and operations provided sufficient evidence to give factual credibility to insurgent propaganda. The insurgents were free to interpret the facts in the way which best served their objectives. The Irgun had apparently the most credible propaganda: one American correspondent stated that his newspaper had advised him that he could accept the Irgun's statements as fact, but that he should always check the accuracy of statements by the Haganah. Thus, the Irgun was able to portray disastrous operations, such as their attack on Acre Prison, as heroic and successful actions.¹³⁰ Third, the insurgents did not attempt to prevail against fundamental trends and attitudes; rather, they incorporated them into their propaganda and used them as weapons. Within the Palestinian Jewish community there was general agreement on the desirability of creating an independent Jewish state; the insurgents and their political constituents disagreed

only on the question of the social and political shape of the future state. In the United States insurgent propaganda appealed to American patriotism and a climate of anti-British and anti-colonialist sentiment. Finally, the insurgents were skilful propagandists: they usually presented their case quickly, clearly and continuously.

That is not to say that they were flawless propagandists. According to George Kirk, their tactics were inclined to be heavy-handed and patently transparent, especially when addressing American audiences: 'At the most effective moment some incident, comparatively unimportant in itself, would suddenly be taken up, echoed and distorted through scores of publicity channels, and would then be allowed to drop when it had served its purpose.'¹³¹ Tugwell feels, moreover, that there was a tendency for propaganda to lead policy, in violation of one of the basic principles of effective propaganda.¹³² It may be fair to suggest that the decision of the WZO congress in December 1946 not to negotiate with the British government was a product of prevailing extremist propaganda which had declared Britain to be an enemy. Furthermore, insurgent propagandists were inclined on occasion to overplay their hand, the 'La Spezia Affair' being a case in point. Finally, the need to disseminate propaganda to several 'target audiences' produced conflicting messages. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the insurgent propaganda concerning the 'Arab question'. The Lechi called for a joint Jewish-Arab struggle to remove British influence from the Middle East. The Haganah insisted that Jewish claims to Palestine outweighed those of the Arabs. The Irgun denied that the Arabs had any claims to Palestine at all.¹³³ Christopher Sykes concludes that, in general:

it became a Zionist habit to speak not only in two but several voices, to run several lines of persuasion at the same time. The result was to debauch the movement with propaganda to an extraordinary extent so that the Zionists, preoccupied with higher truth at the expense of the yet more essential lower truth, got a not undeserved reputation in the world for chronic mendacity.¹³⁴

In order to determine the extent to which propaganda furthered the objectives of the insurgents it is necessary to analyse its effects on the various 'target' audiences. This process, Ellul feels, remains an imprecise art. The propagandist is unable to predict with certainty how each individual will react to his propaganda. Furthermore, when propaganda is directed against a foreign country, or when it

is operating in a police state or a revolutionary situation, it may not be possible to judge effectiveness. Conclusions as to the success of propaganda, therefore, are inclined to be tentative.

First, it appears that the insurgent groups succeeded in maintaining their internal cohesion and commitment. The behaviour of the insurgents in the courts, in particular their refusal of clemency in the face of the death sentence, was ample testament to high morale – the product of successful 'integration' propaganda. The police experienced great difficulty in penetrating the insurgent groups themselves and there were few informers. Captured insurgents rarely 'cracked' under interrogation. Even Churchill himself was moved to express admiration for Dov Gruner, who refused to appeal for clemency in January 1947, in spite of a sentence of execution.¹³⁵ Ellul concludes that propaganda may be considered successful when 'attitudes learned by propaganda begin to prevail over the "natural" attitudes that are man's second nature'.¹³⁶ Although it is by no means clear what he means by 'natural attitudes' it might be fair to suggest that he feels propaganda would be successful once prevailing social beliefs (such as the instinct for survival or self-preservation) have been transformed from thought to some kind of action desired by the propagandist. In the context of insurgency Lawrence's criterion for successful propaganda is more lucid: 'We had won a province when we had taught the civilians in it to die for our ideal of freedom: the presence or absence of the enemy was a secondary matter.'¹³⁷ By either standard, insurgent propaganda was successful within the groups themselves. Moreover, this sense of loyalty and commitment extended to the next circle, the Yishuv – the Jewish community of Palestine. By combining basic Zionist assumptions with atrocity propaganda and themes of moral righteousness, martyrdom and justification of violence, the insurgents isolated the security forces from the Palestinian Jewish community and insulated themselves from police penetration. This was one aspect of what Begin meant when he appealed to the Jews to build 'a protecting wall' around the insurgents.¹³⁸ Although many of the Yishuv disapproved of terrorism, they refused to cooperate with the security forces in apprehending the insurgents. Instead they either treated the security forces with undisguised hostility or, as one writer graphically recounts, ignored them:

Soldiers walk about the streets But nobody says a word to them. People pass by them as if they did not exist. Military

vehicles pass in the streets . . . Like the armed soldiers and the ever-present barbed wire, they too, are ignored. Two different worlds seem to coexist here, the military and the civilian, and each appears to disregard the other.¹³⁹

The effectiveness of this mobilisation and integration propaganda had a significant impact on insurgent operations and British security efforts; the insurgents were able to operate virtually with impunity. They could plan operations without fear of compromise, thereby gaining the advantage of surprise. Furthermore they could be certain that the Yishuv would offer little or no assistance to the British authorities in their efforts to identify and arrest members of the insurgent groups. In short, it ensured that initiative passed to the insurgents and that the British lost control of events in Palestine.

Second, the evidence seems to suggest that despite the profusion of conflicting viewpoints, insurgent propaganda succeeded in neutralising the Palestinian Arabs while the Jews attempted to remove Britain from Palestine. The Arabs did not interfere with the insurgent campaign against the British; in fact, the Lechi claimed to have had some Arab members.¹⁴⁰ Through most of the period under study the Arabs confined their activities to organising their opposition to the Jews; they became actively involved in the conflict only when, in August 1947, it became apparent that a British withdrawal and the partition of Palestine were likely.

Third, insurgent propaganda achieved a measure of success in the United States. American public opinion, while not necessarily pro-Zionist, opposed British policy and actions in Palestine. Every detail was scrutinised, every mis-step criticised, adding yet another layer to the 'protecting wall' of publicity around the insurgents. The Truman administration rarely wavered from its basically pro-Zionist public stance, although it is difficult to know for certain to what extent this was a result of Zionist propaganda rather than political opportunism. The ZOA's financial contributions to Palestine's Jewish community quadrupled between 1945 and 1947. The ZOA leadership encouraged the militant stance taken at the WZO Congress in December 1946 and the president of the ZOA publicly endorsed a Revisionist boycott of British goods in New York in March 1947. The Irgun increased substantially its American support, owing chiefly to Peter Bergson's energetic propaganda campaign. By the summer of 1947 the ALFP claimed a membership of 140 000 and a budget of \$7 500 000.¹⁴¹ Nevertheless, the insurgents may have overplayed

the propaganda in the United States; there were indications in 1947 that it might be losing its appeal. In April the Palestine Resistance Committee, a coalition of ten Irgun front organisations, was dissolved because it had failed to raise sufficient funds. The ALFP then took over as the sole fund-raising organisation. The British Ambassador suggested that Hecht's 'Letter to the Terrorists' was in fact an attack on the indifference of American Jews to the Irgun's struggle, as indicated by the failure of the Palestine Resistance Committee. And while American newspapers continued to report the deteriorating situation in Palestine, some commentators began to question the American role in the dispute. *The Christian Science Monitor* went so far as to suggest that President Truman had been unduly influenced by minority pressure groups. In any case, British diplomats perceived growing sympathy for the difficulties facing the British people coupled with concern that Britain might be forced to abandon its commitments, leaving a power vacuum in crucial areas, the Middle East among them. They noted with satisfaction that in 1947 the *Congressional Record* devoted little space to the Palestine issue.¹⁴²

Certainly, there is every indication that Zionist propaganda, combined with political pressure, had a negative effect on President Truman himself. He resented the heavy-handed techniques of the Zionists and became little more than a reluctant participant in the Palestine débâcle. It may be fair to suggest, however, that it was a measure of the success of such propaganda in the United States that the President felt trapped in this way; that to do anything else would be to risk political suicide. It is by no means clear that such a fate was a foregone conclusion, but the reality was irrelevant. What was important was the perception of the political stakes, and that perception effectively neutralised the administration as an effective objective arbiter between Britain, the Arabs and the Jews. Instead, it confined the American role to that of a 'spoiler', a political 'force multiplier' that indirectly aided the insurgents from the sidelines by making Britain's task politically impossible.

Finally, it remains more difficult to assess the effects of insurgent propaganda on the British. On the one hand, propaganda aimed at the security forces apparently elicited no response, and other forms of harassment and abuse just made them angry. After all, once they were being killed in steadily increasing numbers, the soldiers could not be expected to accept the insurgent propaganda line that the Jews had no quarrel with them but only with the British govern-

ment.¹⁴³ Eitan Haber, a sympathetic biographer, feels that one of Begin's few real mistakes in the propaganda war was the charge sheet which accompanied the hanging of the two sergeants. He thinks that no one could take the charges seriously or justify the 'retroactive and fabricated sentences'.¹⁴⁴ On the other hand, Irgun had every reason to be satisfied with the psychological impact of the bombing in Rome and the ensuing propaganda campaign. The apparent ease with which the Irgun's supporters travelled around Europe created an atmosphere of anxiety in Britain. Unaware that the Irgun had few sympathisers and no organisation in Britain, the London tabloid headlines proclaimed 'Irgun Threatens London'. The security services increased the protection of government buildings and took special precautions for the opening of parliament.¹⁴⁵ Although some British newspapers had concluded by March 1947 that Britain was losing the battle for the control of Palestine, it is not readily apparent that insurgent propaganda alone had any effect on British policy and decision-making. Creech-Jones said later that he recognised that Jewish propaganda attempted to 'maximise the trouble and difficulty' for the British government. He states that the immigration and security issues became 'irresistible', but believes that Bevin felt constrained to maintain his course of action, in spite of the personal attacks on himself.¹⁴⁶ Bevin's biographer, however, suggests that anger and frustration had so clouded British judgement by the end of July 1947 that the government blundered in its handling of the *Exodus* incident and played into the hands of the propagandists working against them. He concludes that the virtually simultaneous reactions to the *Exodus* and to the hanging of the two sergeants broke the will of the British public and the government (including Bevin himself) to remain in Palestine 'a day longer than was necessary'¹⁴⁷

Neither action nor propaganda alone would have been sufficient to undermine British rule in Palestine. It was a singular achievement of the Jewish insurgents that they were able to combine the two so effectively. In this they demonstrated considerable skill and an unerring sense of timing. But they were assisted by factors over which they exerted only partial influence: the desire of many peoples to make amends for the injustice done to the Jews; the political and moral constraints on Britain's use of its forces in 'imperial policing'; and the daily news coverage which made Palestine the first conflict of the 'information age'. It was this last factor which allowed the

insurgents' propaganda to transcend the limits visualised by Ellul, and to influence the course of the conflict through the opinions, decisions and actions of observers and participants, 'circle beyond circle' outside the frontiers of Palestine.

4 Cordon, Search and Explain: The British Response to the Jewish Insurgency

Sometimes you got a terrorist, sometimes you got something you weren't looking for; more often you got nothing.

*Major-General Anthony Farrar-Hockley*¹

In 1943 R. G. Casey, then Minister of State Resident with Middle East, warned the British Cabinet not to think that it could rely solely on military force to maintain order in Palestine.

It need not be supposed that we can safely sit tight and rely simply on retaining a large military force in Palestine to suppress impartially any disorders that may arise. In a complex situation like that of Palestine, military force is an admirable *preventative* against disturbance of internal security, but it is little use as a cure It will have failed in its first purpose if it ever has to be used. The extreme Zionist leaders would not be deterred by a display of military force alone, lacking any indication of the policy which it was stationed in Palestine to implement. They would rely on the obvious political embarrassment in London and Washington which would be entailed in ordering British . . . troops to 'put down a Jewish rebellion' or even to fire on Zionist demonstrations. However inconsistent with the actual facts of the situation today in Palestine, there is a body of opinion amongst members of the British and American public which regard the Jews in Palestine as an 'oppressed' and 'defenceless' people. The entire force of the world-wide Zionist propaganda machine would be mobilized, in these circumstances, to present events in Palestine

in this convenient emotional light and so to paralyse any effective action by security forces whose only *directive* was to 'maintain order'.²

If Casey's warning had any impact on the Cabinet, it certainly is not apparent from their deliberations on the subject of Palestine. Rather, the historical record shows Casey to have been vindicated; his dire prognosis was borne out in fact. The Zionist movement crafted and deployed an effective insurgent strategy of combined military and political actions designed to place the British at maximum disadvantage. The British government's intention, however, was only 'to keep the peace' in Palestine and it assigned the army the principal role in this regard.³ To this end the government committed formidable resources, only to see the insurgents flourish, internal order disintegrate, and British efforts to explain their own actions fall on deaf ears at home and abroad. The course of events unfolds in this chapter.

SECURITY FORCES ORGANISATION

(a) Command and Control

The civil authority remained paramount throughout the 1945-47 period. At no time did the military displace or supersede the authority of the High Commissioner. Even when statutory martial law was imposed temporarily upon several cities in 1947, the process did not involve a military takeover of civil administration.⁴ The High Commissioner, from November 1945 Sir Alan Cunningham, a retired general, was the senior civilian official, responsible for policy and administration. Under him the apparatus of civil administration consisted of an Executive Council, an Advisory Council, the Secretariat (government departments and civil service), and a geographically-based district administration.⁵ Appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the High Commissioner reported to the Secretary through the Colonial Office. Constitutionally responsible for the internal administration of British colonies and protectorates, the Colonial Office traditionally tended to follow the lead of the senior British official on the spot, giving them a relatively free hand in running the colony or territory.⁶ However, as this chapter will make clear, the special problems of Palestine tended

to circumscribe Cunningham's freedom of action as the British government took the lead in deciding the future of Palestine.

The senior military commander was the General Officer Commanding (GOC) British Troops in Palestine and Transjordan, who in September 1945 was Lieutenant-General J. C. D'Arcy. He was succeeded in 1946 by Lieutenant-General Sir Evelyn Barker; his successor, as of February 1947, was Lieutenant-General G. H. A. MacMillan. During the war Palestine had been a 'rear area', so in 1945 its command structure was 'administrative'. The country was divided into three military sectors: 15 Area in the north (HQ Haifa); 21 Area in the south (HQ Sarafand); and 156 Sub-Area (HQ Jerusalem) in the east. The GOC was permitted to delegate a large degree of responsibility to the area (and later, divisional) commanders. From the autumn of 1945 the field formations and units took responsibility for internal security. Area headquarters retained only an administrative role, overseeing static units and installations. The GOC also had under his command the Palestine police; this made him, in effect, commander of all the security forces.⁷ As such, he had to serve two masters simultaneously: the civil authority in Palestine, to whom he was responsible for maintaining law and order; and his military and political superiors in London. Since the latter and the High Commissioner did not always agree on matters of security policy, as will be made clear later in this chapter, the GOC increasingly found himself at odds with one or the other.

A Central Security Committee, the mandate of which covered the entire range of security policy matters, had been established to facilitate cooperation in this field between the civil authorities and the security forces. It met weekly, chaired by the High Commissioner, and consisted of the Chief Secretary, the Inspector General (IG) of Police – the head of the Palestine police force – the senior officer of GSI (military intelligence), and the Defence Security Officer (the senior representative in Palestine of MI5, the security service). Curiously the GOC, who commanded all of the security forces, including the police, was not a member. Nevertheless, he attended as required, which was often. Moreover, there is no evidence to suggest that his views were not heard or given serious consideration. The Central Committee's counterpart at the district level, by contrast, was chaired by the local (area) military commander, and included the District Commissioner (his political adviser), the District Superintendent of Police, the Area Security Officer, and a military

intelligence officer. Their recommendations were forwarded for approval to the higher committee.⁸

In order to enforce the law and to maintain internal security, the security forces had at their disposal extensive powers under the Defence (Emergency) Regulations 1945. Under these regulations the area commanders were designated Military Commanders; they alone had the authority to use the powers under the regulations although, of course, in practice enforcement was delegated to members of the security forces. Activities declared unlawful in the regulations included membership in the underground organisations, illegal immigration, possession of weapons or explosives, acts of violence involving weapons or explosives, sabotage of transport or communications, training or drilling, possession of military information, and 'endeavouring to influence public opinion in a manner likely to be prejudicial to the public safety'.⁹ To deal with such activities, the security forces were able to arrest persons without warrant on 'reasonable' suspicion of having committed an offence under the regulations, to detain them without trial for up to one year, to impose curfews, to restrict access to any area declared to be 'closed', to enter, search and seize any premises, place, or vehicle, and to order the forfeiture or destruction of any building or land from which an act of violence or other offence was launched.¹⁰ Additionally, District Commissioners were given censorship power – to prohibit publication of a newspaper or any proclamation or notice.

These were powerful regulations, although not unprecedented in British administration, particularly in the colonies. They conferred upon the security forces distinct advantages in the effort to maintain internal security by streamlining both the range of offences and the powers to deal with them, as well as permitting delegation of enforcement power to the security forces as a whole. Yet, the advantages did not accrue exclusively to the security forces. Politically, the regulations represented a two-edged weapon. Like all emergency powers, they were open to abuse and to partisan or otherwise selective enforcement. Even applied judiciously, they were excessive and smacked of a 'police state'. Consequently, while they strengthened the hand of government to respond to unrest, they simultaneously undermined its legitimacy. As noted earlier, insurgent propaganda played skilfully on 'state terror' themes and, however exaggerated, the image prevailed among Britain's critics at home and abroad.

(b) The British Army

As an administrative 'rear area' during the war, Palestine had accumulated a large number of military installations and a sizeable garrison. But most of these had no 'operational' role and, as such, contributed nothing to the internal security of the country. Indeed, it could be argued that their presence was a clear liability. Politically, they were the focus for nationalist (Arab and Jewish) discontent; militarily, they provided the insurgents with a myriad of targets – too many to protect effectively – and an almost inexhaustible source of weapons.

Consequently, the burden of internal security duties fell upon the field formations, which comprised a relatively small proportion of the estimated 100 000 troops in Palestine. As of 1 November 1945 these formations consisted of two divisions (one infantry, one airborne) and an independent infantry brigade. Together they were able to field 29 infantry battalions, four armoured regiments, eight artillery regiments, plus divisional arms and services and two imperial formations – the Arab Legion and the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force – under command. By 6 August 1947, the number of divisions had increased to three with the addition of an armoured division, but the infantry component – the mainstay of the counter-insurgency operations – had declined by one-fifth to 23 battalions.¹¹ Given that the divisional services troops fulfilled support as opposed to line functions, and that units were rarely – if ever – up to strength owing to the demobilisation process, it is unlikely that the number of 'combat' troops available for operations ever exceeded 25 000 during the 1945–47 period.

From late October 1945 until January 1947, the geographic distribution of internal security responsibilities remained unchanged. With the exception of the period December 1945 to March 1946, when it was in Egypt for reorganisation, the 1st Infantry Division was assigned to 15 Area, the northern sector of Palestine. Each of its three brigades looked after a particular area: Haifa, Galilee and the northern frontier, and the southern part of the sector. From January 1946, Major-General R. N. Gale was the divisional commander.¹² The 6th Airborne Division, under the command of Major-Generals E. L. Bols (1945, 1947) and A. J. H. Cassels (1946), was responsible for 21 Area, southern Palestine. One brigade was assigned to each of the sub-sectors: Lydda (which included the city

of Tel Aviv), Samaria, and Gaza.¹³ Throughout the period Jerusalem District (156 Sub-area) remained a separate eastern sector, with a single brigade as its internal security garrison.¹⁴

When the two divisions exchanged areas of responsibility in January 1947, both they and their sectors underwent some reorganisation. Jerusalem sector remained unchanged, but the northern sector was reduced in size, Gaza District became the southern sector, and a new central sector was created out of Lydda, Samaria, and a former southern portion of Haifa District. Both divisions lost one brigade each to demobilisation at that time. From January to June 1947, elements (one brigade and divisional artillery) of the 3rd Division were assigned to the southern sector. In June, the 1st Armoured Division, with two brigades, replaced the 3rd in the south.¹⁵

(c) The Palestine Police and the Judiciary

Notwithstanding the GOC's control of all security forces and the British army's substantial presence, the Palestine police force was the principal law enforcement and security force in Palestine. Founded in July 1920, the force consisted of some 20 000 regular and auxiliary personnel during the 1945–47 period. Exact organisation and size fluctuated constantly. The senior officer was the Inspector General (IG), who in 1945 was Captain I. M. Rymer Jones; he was replaced in March 1946 by Colonel W. N. Gray, who remained until the end of the Mandate. Under the IG were a Deputy and three Assistant IGs, the latter responsible for administration, the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), and Police Mobile Force (PMF). For operations, Palestine was divided into six police districts: Jerusalem, Haifa, Lydda, Galilee, Samaria, and Gaza. Each district was run by a superintendent, and the regular police carried out most of their routine work at this level, operating from more than 100 police stations and posts across the country. The district superintendents reported directly to the Deputy IG. The CID was responsible for police intelligence work, and its Political Branch, under an assistant superintendent, played the leading role in counter-insurgency operations. More will be said of this later. Each district had its own CID detachment. The Assistant IG for administration looked after transport, communications, stores, personnel and welfare, pay and discipline, as well as being responsible for the traffic detachments and auxiliaries.¹⁶

The force included a number of specialised units which bear some explanation. The PMF was one of these. It was a paramilitary 'gendarmierie', formed in 1944 to provide the regular police with some internal security 'muscle' at a time when the British army had few troops to spare for such duties. It consisted of nearly 2000 men organised like a motorised infantry battalion and equipped with armoured cars, lorries, motorcycles, machine guns and mortars. However, it had only a short existence, being disbanded in the summer of 1946, owing largely to the fact that the regular police needed the PMF manpower for routine tasks and the increased army presence in Palestine obviated the requirement for its specialised skills. Nevertheless, during its two-year existence, it did contribute to the counter-insurgency effort.¹⁷ There was a port and marine section of the police which operated motor launches in the anti-smuggling role, and also carried out patrols and other operations to counter illegal immigration.¹⁸ There were several auxiliary police units which carried out certain tasks in order to free the regular police for more important duties. The largest of these was the Jewish Settlement Police, a government-financed uniformed force of 12 800 grouped in ten companies each under a British police inspector. Their task was to protect Jewish settlements and they were equipped with an assortment of small arms. The Railway Protection Police was another British-administered Jewish force which guarded stations, blockhouses, and vulnerable points on the Haifa-Lydda line. Temporary additional constables were enlisted for six months under the same conditions, regulations and pay as the regular police and were assigned to general guard duties. In 1945 this force consisted of 1650 Arabs and Jews.¹⁹

As in Britain, the Palestine police were responsible to the courts for enforcement of the laws. In the case of Palestine this meant not only the normal civil and criminal laws, but also the laws promulgated under the Defence Emergency Regulations. Palestine had a British-style civilian judiciary with supreme, district and magistrate's courts, but cases relating to internal security were heard before military courts, staffed by military officers rather than civilian judges. They could award the death penalty for illegal use of firearms or for sabotage of communications or power facilities. There was no appeal from military court judgments and other courts could not challenge or otherwise call into question the orders or proceedings of military courts. The GOC alone could confirm or commute death sentences.²⁰

(d) Intelligence Services

Owing to the paucity both of documentary sources and proper scholarship, the picture of British intelligence organisation in Palestine remains incomplete. What follows here should be considered an approximation.

As noted earlier, the Political Branch of the Palestine CID was the lead agency for counter-insurgency intelligence. In November 1946, the Political Branch consisted of 80 policemen and clerical staff out of a total CID establishment of 627. It consisted of three operational 'desks' (Jewish, Arab, and European Affairs) and a records branch. The Jewish Affairs section, headed by Assistant Superintendent (now Sir) Richard Catling, was itself sub-divided into three sub-sections: political intelligence, terrorism, and illegal immigration. Most of the branch was concentrated at headquarters in Jerusalem, but there were detachments in every district as well.²¹

Of equal importance was the Defence Security Office (DSO), the local 'station' of the British Security Service (MI5). Charged with 'Defence of the Realm' against espionage, subversion and sabotage, both in Britain and in its territories overseas, MI5 had developed the Defence Security Offices through the 1930s into an effective system of local security intelligence collection and assessment in those territories. In the immediate post-war period, MI5 reached a demarcation agreement with the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6), which allowed the Security Service to operate without restriction in British or former British territories,²² of which Palestine was one. There, in 1945-46, the Defence Security Officer, Sir Gyles Isham, directed a staff of eight to ten intelligence officers at headquarters in Jerusalem, with four to six Area Security Officers stationed in the major urban areas: Jerusalem, Jaffa (including Tel Aviv), Haifa, Gaza and Nablus. The DSO's task was counter-intelligence; in this regard it was responsible for the security of British personnel, installations and information. It was also to maintain a close liaison with both police and army intelligence. It reported to the E2 (Overseas) Division of MI5 in London.²³

The British army had its own intelligence staffs in Palestine, but they were not normally involved in collecting intelligence independently; instead, the army relied on the Palestine police to provide tactical intelligence on the insurgents. The head of GSI, the army headquarters intelligence branch, was Lieutenant-Colonel The

Hon. (now Lord) Martin Charteris.²⁴ Army formations and units, from division to battalion level, maintained their own small intelligence staffs. The army's Field Security Sections, part of the Intelligence Corps, played a more active, visible security intelligence role. Their responsibilities included: controlling civilian access to military formations and installations; security of materials and information; vetting and dismissal of civilian labour; civil-military relations and monitoring of rumours and anti-British propaganda; and gathering useful background information or intelligence for the local brigade or divisional headquarters. Field Security were often called upon for operational or special intelligence tasks. Field Security personnel were also supposed to serve as liaison between commanders and staffs in formations and GSI, Defence Security, civil and military police. A section normally consisted of a captain and at least 13 other ranks and was virtually self-contained; it could operate independently or attached to a field formation. In Palestine, five sections were operating at any one time. Three had permanent geographic mandates corresponding approximately to the military sectors, while the other two were integral to the army divisions and moved with them.²⁵ The Special Investigation Branch of the Royal Military Police, though not an intelligence organisation, bears mentioning since within the context of investigating criminal offences within army installations and units the branch conducted some intelligence work related to internal security.²⁶

Of the myriad of 'theatre-level' intelligence organisations which developed in the Middle East during the war, only one, the Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre (CSDIC) appears to have been directly involved in the counter-insurgency campaign in Palestine. Based at Fayid in the Canal Zone, the CSDIC had been established in 1940 for in-depth interrogation of prisoners and spies captured in the theatre. In February 1946, army headquarters in Palestine gave permission for GSI and the CID to use the centre jointly for interrogation of captured insurgents. It was a small unit, at least in the post-war period: in August 1947, its establishment was only three officers, and ten other ranks. In 1946, its commander was Major W. B. Sedgwick.²⁸

(e) Propaganda

From the earliest years of the Mandate the Palestine government had recognised the influential and, at times, inflammatory role of

the press in Palestine politics. At first the government attempted to restrict the information available to the public and until 1927 the CID controlled the press. In 1928, however, the administration decided that it could play a role in influencing public opinion and so established a press bureau in the Secretariat. In 1938 it became the Public Information Office (PIO).²⁹ By the end of the war the Palestine government was convinced that:

information services had become a normal function of Government and the special conditions of Palestine made it more than ever necessary that every effort should be made to develop and maintain good relations between the Government and the public and, in particular, the press.³⁰

The PIO performed a dual role: first, public relations, by serving as the link between the government and the population; and second, propaganda, to help maintain internal security and to promote the war effort. It fulfilled this dual role by the following means. First, the PIO conducted a sustained public information campaign through the distribution of publications and government information in all three languages, mobile cinema vans, and reading rooms in Tel Aviv and Jaffa. Second, the Office arranged press conferences: weekly for the Public Information Officer and monthly for the Chief Secretary of the government. Third, the PIO served as distribution agent for the British Ministry of Information (MOI). Fourth, it provided press facilities, including the issuing of press cards and a press service relying mainly on Reuters, the MOI and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The PIO also prepared news broadcasts and provided maps and photographs for local newspapers. Finally, it administered press legislation, newspaper rationing, and (during the war) censorship.³¹

As of August 1945, the PIO was organised into a Secretariat, which included the Public Information Officer, his deputy and a special adviser, and two administrative/operating sections. Section One consisted of the Assistant Accountant, Technical Services (films, exhibits, displays, most reading centres), Rural Relations, the Haifa Office, and the Press Section, which prepared bulletins for broadcast, and articles and other materials for the local press. Section Two included the Accountant, Publications and Distribution (the PIO's own material), the Lydda District Office (including reading centres in Jaffa and Tel Aviv), and was responsible for subordinate staff in all sections. British Assistant PIOs directed the

Press Section, Lydda District, and Publications and Distribution. Palestinians ran Technical Services and Rural Relations.³² The Palestine government also had at its disposal the Palestine Broadcasting Service which in 1945 became an independent government department (having been under the Postmaster during the war). It worked closely with the PIO. From December 1945, it had two transmitters at Ramallah and studios in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. At that time there were in excess of 55 000 licenced radio receivers in Palestine, although the listening audience was probably much larger, since communal listening was encouraged particularly in the rural areas. The PBS broadcast in English, Arabic and Hebrew.³³

For presenting its case overseas the Palestine government was dependent upon the resources of the British government and, on paper at least, these were extensive. At war's end the British government still had at its disposal the formidable Ministry of Information, but that arrangement changed quickly. Eager to bring information expenditure into line with overall government spending, eliminating in the process the odious system of government 'control' of information, the Labour government announced in December 1945 that it would replace the MOI in 1946 with a non-ministerial Central Office of Information (COI). The COI was to provide information, material and publicity advice, and services for government departments at home and abroad. Unlike the MOI, however, it was not responsible for governmental or departmental information policy and was not specifically represented by one minister at Cabinet level.³⁴ Thus, it was not an offensive propaganda weapon in the pattern of the wartime MOI or the Political Warfare Executive; after all, Britain was no longer at war.

Efforts to coordinate information policy were confined to the domestic arena – overseas information was the joint responsibility of the Foreign, Colonial and Dominion offices. The Colonial Office had the smallest information operation. In the immediate post-war period its activities were confined to relations with the print and broadcast media in the UK, and to acting through the colonial information departments. The Foreign Office, by contrast, made a conscious effort at this time to organise itself for peacetime propaganda. In 1946 it took over many of the Ministry of Information's overseas posts and absorbed their staff. The wartime system of having press attachés assigned to the Foreign Office from the MOI was replaced by the recruitment of Information Officers from within the ranks of the regular Foreign Service. These, of

course, formed the core of the British Information Services (BIS). Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, a career diplomat with wartime propaganda experience, created an Information Police Department (IPD) with staff largely drawn from the MOI. The IPD supervised the work of and provided 'guidance' to the information officers at diplomatic posts, and provided the Foreign Office with specialised expertise to assist the execution of foreign policy. By these means it was to alert Foreign Office staff and policy-makers to the 'propaganda dimension' of policy. As such, it was the branch of the Foreign Office with the primary responsibility for overt propaganda abroad. The News Department provided the Foreign Office's official outlet to the news media – both domestic and foreign – in London, and thus to their audiences. It was responsible for press conferences, background briefings, and the issuing of official statements and communiqués.³⁵

The External Services of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) had emerged from the controlled wartime posture with its reputation for integrity and credibility abroad very much intact. In the immediate post-war period the BBC's leadership were striving to balance their newly gained editorial independence with the corporation's acknowledged role as a promoter of the British view. The BBC was not expected to act as an official 'voice' of the British government or to engage in uncritical advocacy of its policies. Instead, the government's White Paper on Broadcasting, issued 2 July 1946, emphasised the corporation's independence in preparation of programmes for foreign audiences, and the need to ensure 'complete objectivity' in news bulletins in order to maintain the BBC's reputation for telling the truth. Nevertheless, the External Services was encouraged to obtain from the Foreign Office 'such information about conditions in these countries and the policies of His Majesty's Government towards them as will permit it to plan its programmes in the national interest.'³⁶

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Strategic policy- and decision-making with respect to the Palestine campaign can be divided into two distinct phases. The first, from November 1945 to November 1946, involved efforts to influence the political position of the Jewish Agency. It was carried out against the backdrop of Anglo-American diplomatic efforts to resolve the Palestine problem, and was characterised by levels of security forces

activity which fluctuated according to the fortunes of diplomacy as much as in response to the activities of the insurgents. The second phase, which began in November 1946 and continued until the end of July 1947, consisted largely of efforts to maintain order, as diplomatic means were exhausted and insurgent activity escalated. Approximately half-way through this period the British government abdicated responsibility for deciding Palestine's future. Insurgent and counter-insurgent operations fed a cycle of rising violence and increasingly repressive sanctions. Both phases were characterised by prolonged debates about the merits of particular operational policies, which will be examined in sequence.

As early as May 1945 senior officials in Palestine were urging the British government to do away with the Jewish Agency, which they regarded as a powerful rival political power, and hence as a threat to the authority of the Mandatory government. The British government, however, was reluctant to act against the Agency, because it was a legitimate integral part of the Mandate.³⁷ Once the violence commenced in the autumn, the issue came up again. Both the Palestine administration and the British government were convinced, on the basis of intelligence and the Agency's refusal to cooperate against the insurgents, that it was implicated in the violence.³⁸ In November 1945 the Chief Secretary advised the Colonial Office of his misgivings regarding the Jewish Agency:

I will leave to you to judge whether the demeanour and activity of the Agency and its leaders during the past three years have been consistent with those obligations and responsibilities [imposed on the Agency under Article 4 of the Mandate] It is becoming difficult to the verge of impossibility for us unfortunates out here to deal with these people.³⁹

The government did not act on his information, however, perhaps because it was at that time involved in delicate negotiations with the American government concerning the creation of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry.

The High Commissioner concluded, after insurgent attacks in December 1945, that action should be taken against the Agency. In Cunningham's view, it had rejected the legitimacy of the Palestine administration, had refused to cooperate with the government in suppressing terrorism, and was in fact financing it. He suggested that the security forces occupy the Agency's headquarters and place

certain members under police supervision.⁴⁰ The Cabinet, however, opposed any such action because they felt it would strengthen the hand of the extremists in the Zionist movement and undermine that of the moderates, producing at the very least widespread disorder. Further, they believed it would produce an unfavourable reaction in the United States and render impossible effective work by the Anglo-American Commission. The Colonial Secretary suggested that Cunningham merely reduce contact with the Agency as a demonstration of the government's displeasure. On the advice of the Chiefs of Staff Committee the Cabinet rejected for the same reasons a wholesale search for arms. The Chiefs of Staff had advised the Cabinet that a search at that time would be militarily counter-productive: a substantial search would not produce worthwhile results. They concluded that the most promising plan would be to conduct a search for arms as a secondary operation when action was taken to arrest the leadership of the Haganah and the Palmach. In any case there should be no search until insurgent activity made such a course of action 'obviously justifiable and necessary'.⁴¹

There were, therefore, sound political and military reasons for postponing any significant operations against the Jewish Agency and the insurgents. By June 1946, however, the government had to weigh these reasons against significant developments in the political and military situation. First, the report of the commission of inquiry had recommended that the Jewish Agency resume at once cooperation with the Palestine administration in the suppression of terrorism. Such cooperation was not forthcoming. The insurgent attacks in June represented a major escalation in the level of violence, which the High Commissioner feared would continue unless drastic action were taken. Cunningham, moreover, felt that the recent violence showed that extremist elements had taken control of the Agency which, in turn, controlled the Haganah. The Cabinet concurred in his assessment, concluding that it could tolerate no longer a situation 'in which the authority of the government was set at naught'.⁴²

Second, both the High Commissioner and the CIGS expressed fears that troops in Palestine might get out of hand unless the government took firm action against the insurgents.⁴³ Their fears were hardly groundless. Following the attack on the airborne car park in April, Generals D'Arcy and Cassels warned Cunningham that failure to take firm action might result in reprisals by the troops themselves. Cassels recalls:

When I went to see the High Commissioner was I allowed to do anything positive? . . . The answer is 'No' – a few roadblocks here and there and the odd curfew but no more. All very frustrating and . . . it was not all that easy to keep the . . . Airborne soldiers under control when they saw their comrades being murdered.⁴⁴

The High Commissioner approved only a curfew and road restrictions and, as the generals had predicted, some of the paratroopers engaged in a brief reprisal against a Jewish settlement. After the kidnappings in June a British officer shot and killed a Jew who had jostled him on the street. Against the background of these incidents Cunningham warned the Cabinet that 'any hesitancy in action as result of kidnappings and shooting at officers will have serious effect on morale of troops who have already been tried very highly'.⁴⁵

The army commanders may be justly criticised for either neglecting to instil professional discipline among their troops or attempting to blackmail the government into using draconian measures. In any case, confronted by these compelling arguments the Cabinet authorised the High Commissioner to take such steps as he considered necessary to break up the illegal military organisations, including a search of the Jewish Agency's headquarters and the arrest of its members.⁴⁶ The decision produced significant consequences for the counter-insurgency campaign. First, the principal political objective of the operation clearly was to split the Zionist movement in such a way as to isolate and neutralise the more extreme elements, thus allowing the moderates to regain control. Cunningham had long felt that it might be possible to produce such a division and General Barker was convinced the security forces could do so, so long as they struck principally at the Palmach, the Haganah leadership and the extreme elements in the Jewish Agency and did not try to neutralise and disarm the Haganah as a whole.⁴⁷ General Gale, then commanding the 1st Infantry Division, dissented; he felt mass arrests might produce the exact opposite of the desired and anticipated effect, a leadership vacuum which would be filled by the extremists.⁴⁸

In the short term, Barker and Cunningham were correct. Chaim Weizmann temporarily reasserted his authority over the Zionist movement, forced Moshe Sneh to resign as Haganah commander, and the Haganah and Palmach to suspend offensive operations. After rejecting further armed resistance the Jewish Agency accepted

in principle the idea of establishing a Jewish state in a partitioned Palestine. Nonetheless, the British government was unable to exploit politically these developments. In his public statement on Operation AGATHA, Cunningham had emphasised that the Jewish Agency was not being closed or proscribed and that 'the door of negotiation and discussion is not shut'.⁴⁹ Jewish politicians, however, appreciated that their cooperation was essential to a negotiated peaceful settlement of the Palestine question and they withheld such cooperation by refusing to participate in the London conference on Palestine unless their detained leaders were released. Of necessity this made progress at the conference almost impossible and in October 1946 the government felt induced to suspend the policy of general searches as a gesture of good faith in negotiations with the Agency over the resumption of political cooperation.⁵⁰ Thus, while Operation AGATHA allowed the British government to apply a degree of pressure on the Jews, it gave more significant leverage to the Jewish political community to use as a weapon against Britain.

Furthermore, even if the Cabinet had valid political reasons for taking action there was no sense in doing so unless it would restore law and order. The principal military objective of Operation AGATHA was to break up the insurgent organisations. This would be possible only if the security forces possessed sufficient intelligence on the underground groups, for experience had demonstrated that large searches based on little or no information were not cost-effective. But General Barker advised the Cabinet that the dearth of intelligence on the Irgun and the Lechi would confine the security forces to arresting members of the Haganah and the Palmach. Such action, he warned, would not stop terrorism; in fact it might increase after the operation.⁵¹ In the event, he was correct: by September 1946 the rate of terrorist incidents had increased substantially above that of the previous ten-month period. It is possible to suggest several reasons why this occurred: the disruption of the resistance movement freed the Irgun and the Lechi from all constraints previously applied by the Haganah. Detention of the Zionist leaders precluded obtaining the cooperation of the Jewish public in gathering intelligence on the extremists. Furthermore, the High Commissioner commuted the death sentences which had resulted in the kidnappings,⁵² thereby demonstrating that the insurgents, not the government, determined which laws would be enforced.

In his brief to the Cabinet, General Barker had warned them that it would be impossible to subjugate the Jews to force indefinitely;

a political solution was required.⁵³ When it ordered Operation AGATHA, however, the Cabinet appeared to appreciate only the urgency of the immediate security crisis and not the long-term political implications of the proposed action. Consequently, Operation AGATHA contributed not to the pacification of Palestine but to a substantial deterioration in the security situation. By the end of the year the opportunity for a negotiated settlement had passed. The British government was forced to choose between governing Palestine by coercion or abandoning the Mandate altogether.

Field-Marshal Montgomery was one of those who believed that a more 'robust' policy was long overdue. Prior to taking up his post as CIGS, he had visited Palestine during the insurgents' June offensive and told General Barker that 'this was no way to carry on. The Army must press for a decision to re-establish authority.'⁵⁴ Cunningham later told Creech-Jones that the Field-Marshal had expressed his opinion before he had seen the situation and that he had pressed his views with such vigour that General Paget wrote personally to Alanbrooke, the retiring CIGS, to inform him that there was no truth in Montgomery's allegations.⁵⁵ There may be several reasons why Montgomery took this view. By his own account he felt Britain should fight to retain its position in the Middle East, which he regarded as a vital base for strategic reserves.⁵⁶ He was undoubtedly irritated to see the 6th Airborne Division, the élite formation of the proposed Imperial Strategic Reserve, tied down on internal security duties. Moreover, it is clear that the nature of this counter-insurgency campaign escaped him possibly, as Cunningham suggests, because of his experience in the pre-war Arab revolt:

There is, of course, no comparison between that situation and the present. Moreover, I have seen a telegram to CINCMELF to the effect that as a soldier he must not be concerned with politics and must visualise matters from a purely military angle. I need hardly comment on this in so far as Palestine is concerned.⁵⁷

Cunningham's point was well taken. The two campaigns were manifestly different with regard to the organisation of the rebels, the nature of the fighting, and the counter-measures the security forces were permitted to apply.⁵⁸ It is clear that Montgomery did not understand this, and his suggestion that the army need not take political factors into account tends to confirm Alun Chalfont's assessment that 'the political situation in the Middle East was

altogether too complex for Montgomery'.⁵⁹ Yet it must be emphasised that the Field-Marshal was not alone in these attitudes; as Chapter 5 will make clear, they were common to the army as a whole. His views are important, however, because as CIGS Montgomery was in a position to influence security policy in Palestine. He began to play an active role in this regard in November 1946, with important consequences.

The Field-Marshal had dissented on the decision to release the detained Jewish leaders and regarded the current peacekeeping role as appeasement. In the wake of the increasing attacks on the security forces and the railways and the police reprisals, the IG of the Palestine police told Montgomery, 'We must beat terrorism or it will beat us.'⁶⁰ Colonel Gray's comment undoubtedly reinforced Montgomery's own misgivings about the wisdom of the current security policy. On 20 November, Montgomery told the COSC that in his opinion the policy of appeasement had failed. The suspension of searches and release of detained leaders had not produced any improvement in the security situation; instead, the situation had deteriorated: casualties were increasing and the police were still under-strength. He felt that the government should issue a new directive to the High Commissioner to use the forces at his disposal to maintain strict law and order. He repeated these points in the Cabinet Defence Committee meeting that afternoon, adding that he felt the army had lost the initiative it had gained in June and that the defensive attitude had seriously increased the strain on morale. The Field-Marshal felt that strain had caused the police reprisals and that the problem could spread to the army. Pressed by the Prime Minister as to what further measures were required, Montgomery replied that the army had been prevented from searching for arms or from acting on intelligence received prior to incidents. The committee asked the Colonial Office and the War Office to examine the conditions regarding the use of the armed forces in Palestine.⁶¹

Cunningham rejected Montgomery's allegations and asked that the inference be withdrawn. There were, he said, no limitations on the use of the armed forces. He explained that the operations in June had not gained the initiative against the terrorists, nor had that been the intention; they had only driven a wedge between the terrorists and the Haganah, who were now quiescent. The High Commissioner explained that discussion generally resolved most questions of civil-military relations where opinions were at variance.

Neither he nor General Barker could suggest any changes in the decision-making process and both agreed that the government should encourage the Jews to deal with the insurgent problem themselves while it tried to improve police methods.⁶²

At the end of November the CIGS visited the Middle East again. He found a ready ally in General Sir Miles Dempsey, CINC Middle East Land Forces. Dempsey disputed Cunningham's assertions on the use of the army and on the state of civil-military relations in Palestine. He also favoured immediate searches and the imposition of collective fines on communities where incidents had occurred.⁶³ Cunningham opposed such measures which, he felt, amounted to a policy of reprisals:

I should say with the examples of Ireland and even the Arab rebellion before me, I am dead against reprisals as such. The question of the morale of the troops is constantly in my mind and is a factor which I am constantly emphasising to HM Government, but I am sure that you will agree that it would not be right to take action which would imperil imminent political solution to this thorny problem, which alone can bring peace to this country, for the sake of the morale factor alone.⁶⁴

As General Barker did not attend the conference, Cunningham faced Montgomery and Dempsey alone on these issues. It was an unequal contest. Montgomery carried with him all the authority of his position and was quite prepared to exploit it; moreover, he could count on Dempsey to support him wholeheartedly. The CIGS had nothing but contempt for Cunningham and his policies, which he regarded as 'gutless and spineless',⁶⁵ and minced no words in telling the High Commissioner so:

I have told Cunningham that it is my opinion that his methods have failed to produce law and order in Palestine and that it is my opinion that he will have no success unless he organises his police force in a proper way and uses the police and army properly and adopts a more robust mentality in his methods to keep the King's peace.⁶⁶

Faced with such a formidable united front, Cunningham had little choice but to agree, against his better judgement, that the most effective counter-insurgency plan would be to confine the minimum number of troops to defensive tasks and to employ the largest

number in a mobile offensive role to seize and maintain the initiative. However, Dempsey and Montgomery were persuaded that the constraints imposed upon the army by the existence of an armed population, the immense task of guarding the railway, and the inability to take action without accurate intelligence, were so great that it was not possible to carry out the proposed plan.⁶⁷

Privately, however, Cunningham dissented from the imposed consensus. In separate cables sent subsequently, he told Creech-Jones that he thought the army would not be effective even if it was allowed to develop its 'full power' in maintaining law and order and would, in any case, antagonise the large proportion of the population who were otherwise opposed to terrorism. At the same time, he believed that 'unleashing' the army was still a credible threat. Cunningham warned Jewish leaders that only he stood between them and the army and that if the violence continued he would stand aside and 'free' the army. They replied that the insurgents had agreed to a truce during the Zionist congress and the High Commissioner responded by suspending a proposed series of searches which would have been instituted following further incidents.⁶⁸

Cunningham was correct in his assessment of the limitations on the effectiveness of the army. Given the poor state of intelligence, which will be examined in Chapter 5, there was little more the army could do without becoming a political menace; the mobile role envisaged by Montgomery would be sufficient to antagonise the Jewish population but was likely to fall short of coercing them into cooperation with the security forces. Such a role was, in any case, inappropriate to this largely urban conflict. Montgomery did not grasp the essential point that numbers, mobility and firepower were not the decisive elements in this conflict. The insurgents did not operate in large formations; cells of two or three men planned and carried out the operations and dealing with these was a matter for the police, not the army. The Field-Marshal appears, in any case, to have been misinformed with regard to certain factors which influenced his judgement of the situation. The police reprisals were the product of a combination of factors of which strain was only one element. These factors did not pertain to the army; as will be shown in the next chapter, despite poor living conditions and the demands of continuous operations, army morale was comparatively good. He was correct that the army had been prevented from searching for arms specifically, but Cunningham was not solely

responsible for this policy: the Cabinet had rejected such action a year earlier on the advice of senior military commanders.

Cunningham, for his part, may be criticised for undue optimism or naiveté. A political solution to the Palestine problem was by no means imminent in November 1946. And while police reform was required, cooperation of the Jewish population and official bodies was equally essential and was not likely to be forthcoming. By late autumn 1946 the 'hardliners' were on the ascendancy within the Zionist movement. The moderates in the Jewish Agency had been discredited by agreeing to renounce terrorism in exchange for the detainees but without extracting any changes in British immigration policy or Palestine policy in general. In either case, without a solution or a policy change favourable to the Jews the police would not receive the cooperation from the Jewish public that was vital to defeat terrorism.

As the Colonial Office and the War Office prepared their cases for the Prime Minister, Cunningham, Barker and the Colonial Office found themselves supporting a minority viewpoint. They stressed that if the government desired a political settlement then it must do all in its power to strengthen those opposed to terrorism, with whom a settlement would be negotiated. Hence, military action would have to remain restricted to direct attacks on insurgents when encountered, immediate searches in the vicinity of incidents or preventive action based on sound intelligence concerning proposed insurgent operations.⁶⁹ The War Office view hardened along Montgomery's lines:

... viewed from a military standpoint the policy of appeasement has failed. The restoration of law and order can depend only on the adoption of a consistent and vigorous policy in dealing with disturbers of the peace. Such a policy is not in force. If we are to prevent the present situation in Palestine from getting out of hand, strong military preventive action must be taken in Palestine at once.⁷⁰

Montgomery believes that the flogging incidents at the end of December persuaded the Prime Minister to concur with him when the Cabinet Defence Committee discussed security policy on 1 January 1947.⁷¹ The results of the meeting appear to support Montgomery's claim. Ernest Bevin and Albert Alexander, the Minister of Defence, supported a tough policy and Montgomery himself challenged Creech-Jones' assertion that restraint had prod-

uced results. The CIGS said that all the information at the army's disposal indicated otherwise. The Field-Marshal wanted to flood the country with mobile troops to restore confidence in authority and to make things difficult for the insurgents. Montgomery won his case; the committee directed Creech-Jones, Alexander and Cunningham to draw up a new directive to the High Commissioner. Since it involved a change of policy it would be submitted to the Cabinet for approval.⁷² Two days later Montgomery, Creech-Jones, Cunningham and two Colonial Office officials met to draft the directive. The CIGS pressed his case in even stronger terms: he advocated 'turning the place upside down' to disrupt the population and to persuade them to cooperate with the authorities against the insurgents. Montgomery welcomed the opportunity to draw the Haganah out for a battle, claiming he had succeeded with such measures against the Arabs before the war. Enthusiastically he offered the whole strength of the British army, bringing in reinforcements from Egypt or Germany. Cunningham feared that this would destroy any hope of a political settlement and Creech-Jones observed that war with the Haganah meant war with the whole Jewish nation. Montgomery replied that he thought the British government would have to enforce partition against the wishes of the Jews and the Arabs. He then asked Cunningham if he was prepared to give the GOC a free hand to carry out the new directive. Cunningham replied that he was not so prepared, since he had to take the political aspect into account.⁷³ It was a telling point, but its subtlety and significance was lost on Montgomery.

In spite of the obvious disagreement, the draft directive was sent to Cabinet, where Creech-Jones did not oppose it further. He explained that the army wished to have the power to conduct searches anywhere at any time and to be free to increase patrols in dangerous areas. Montgomery added that recent searches without specific evidence had been very effective. The Cabinet approved the directive, which instructed the High Commissioner to take all possible steps using the security forces at his disposal to establish law and order. They were not to conduct reprisals, but were to take the offensive and seize the initiative. The directive advised the High Commissioner that 'such action as you may take to implement the policy outline . . . above will receive the full support of His Majesty's Government'.⁷⁴

This was surely nothing less than a 'blank cheque', significant both in its results and in revealing how the complex interactions of

events, decisions and personalities changed the way in which the British government directed the war. Though not mentioned in the discussions, insurgent operations undoubtedly influenced the Cabinet's decision: three days earlier the Lechi had bombed the Haifa District police headquarters, causing considerable loss of life. Furthermore, the High Commissioner's decision to remit the second caning sentence aroused considerable controversy, just as the policy debate reached a climax. In a telegram to Dempsey which was later withdrawn because it caused so much 'concern in high places', Montgomery said leniency was a weak and thoroughly bad policy which could only make things worse for the government and the security forces. He told Dempsey to take this up with the High Commissioner.⁷⁵ Sir Winston Churchill echoed these sentiments in the House of Commons debate on Palestine at the end of January:

You may remit a sentence of caning because you do not like that form of punishment, you may remit it because you have a tender heart, you may remit it because some new circumstance has arisen since the magistrate or tribunal gave the decisions, but you do not remit it because a British major . . . and three sergeants are caught and subjected to that punishment, and because you are afraid it may happen to some more This is the road of abject defeat.⁷⁶

The policy debate also reflected personalities. Montgomery and Cunningham were at odds. Cunningham appeared to be indecisive, while the Field-Marshal's views conveyed the impression of strength. Major-General Pyman, Dempsey's Chief of Staff, felt that there would not be a more robust and 'enlightened' policy until Cunningham was replaced. He reminded a colleague that the High Commissioner's wartime record suggested a lack of resolve: 'You will remember that he gave in at Sidi Rezihg in December 1941 forty-eight hours too soon.'⁷⁷ Montgomery was justified in criticising Cunningham for rescinding the caning sentence under duress, but at least the High Commissioner appreciated the political dimension of the conflict; the Field-Marshal did not. In a message to Pyman the CIGS stated that, once started, the new policy would have to be carried through 'firmly and relentlessly and despite world opinion or Jewish reaction in America'.⁷⁸ This appears to confirm Cunningham's recollection years later:

Lord Montgomery . . . deals only with the military side of the problem. I had to deal with it from all angles. From this wider

point of view it seemed and seems to me that the main effect of Lord Montgomery's intervention was to bedevil it still further What he forgets is that there was a civil government in being, and that the military means had to be dovetailed into political requirements.⁷⁹

Montgomery was a professional soldier and it is hard to fault the Field-Marshal for trying to cope with the problem in the only way his profession had shown him. Yet even his military judgements were misguided or, at the very least, ill-advised. There was nothing to be gained by doing battle with the inactive Haganah when the Irgun and the Lechi were carrying out the attacks. Furthermore, contrary to his understanding, the successful searches in January 1947 had been based on accurate intelligence.

The Cabinet's approval of the new directive to the High Commissioner indicates that one result of the insurgency process was that Cunningham and Barker found themselves overruled in or excluded from operational policy-making, which occurred now at a higher level. The distance, both physical and intellectual, that separated the Cabinet from the situation on the ground in Palestine enhanced existing misconceptions about the objective of security force operations. Montgomery correctly grasped that the 'militarised' political situation would be resolved by force, not by negotiation. What he, and perhaps some of his Cabinet colleagues, did not comprehend fully were the costs that politics imposed on Britain's use of force. By the end of February 1947 the government had decided to turn over to the United Nations the responsibility for resolving the Palestine problem. Given that Cabinet policy tended to narrow the security forces options to a limited range of collective and selective coercive measures – martial law and covert special operations – the timing could not have been more inauspicious. Both options involved increased repression and potentially more violent methods. At a point when international attention would be focused on Palestine, this meant increased political risks. Britain's methods would be subject to scrutiny and criticism. Moreover, if these measures failed to restore order, the insurgents would have demonstrated conclusively Britain's inability to govern Palestine. Its authority shattered, all that would remain for Britain, in the absence of a political settlement, would be abdication and withdrawal. Neither Montgomery nor his political masters appear to have grasped the potential implications of their increasingly aggressive counter-insurgency policy.

Security force commanders, on the other hand, went into the 1947 offensive with some misgivings. Martial law could not be imposed on Haifa because of the need to keep the port, refineries and British businesses functioning. The plan for Jerusalem was regarded as an unsatisfactory last resort.⁸⁰ General Dempsey insisted that martial law be imposed for as long as was necessary to produce satisfactory results in terms of arrests, with or without the assistance of the public. He regarded a fortnight as the absolute minimum because:

the employment of the army on such a scale as this is a serious and weighty matter and has been put into effect only after the most careful thought and preparation. To call off the present operations too soon would make it appear that we regarded the recent outrages and our consequent action as comparatively trivial matters and it would in my view be a very grave mistake.⁸¹

Even Montgomery, whose insistence on tough measures had induced the new offensive, expressed doubts about the ability of the security forces to restore the situation. In a message to Dempsey, he reflected: 'It is useless for us to go into back History and to say that if only we had tackled the problem initially with proper will power and determination we would never have got to the present situation. All this is of course very true. The point now is whether we can handle the business.'⁸² He concluded that the security forces could deal with the situation provided that the politicians permitted them to do so and there were sufficient troops for the task.

In the event, he was correct for the short term. Coercion produced a degree of cooperation from the population and, as noted in Chapter 3, the arrests that ensued sharply reduced the level of violence during the next quarter of 1947. But it would be three months before this was obvious and the Cabinet, concerned with immediate results, was not impressed. General Gale had stated at the outset that martial law would continue until terrorism was 'eradicated'.⁸³ Not only had terrorism continued within and outside the controlled areas, martial law had proven as damaging economically to the administration as to the Jewish community. Moreover, the Cabinet believed that lifting martial law after such a short period conveyed an impression of weakness which would encourage only further resistance. The apparently inconclusive results led the Cabinet to conclude that extending martial law over the whole country would not be effective. The High Commissioner opposed it

because the army had advised him that imposing martial law throughout the country would have no extra effect against the insurgents and, in any case, there were insufficient troops to do so. Cunningham added pointedly that the army could not be expected to secure the whole country when it could not defend even itself from attack. Moreover, both he and the Colonial Secretary believed that the experience of martial law had demonstrated that the Palestine government could not afford the economic hardship ensuing from a country-wide withdrawal of services.⁸⁴ The Chiefs of Staff concurred. They felt that the security forces could not govern the country and continue internal security operations as well. Their report recommended, first, that civil government continue, making wide use of the High Commissioner's powers under the emergency regulations. Second, the security forces should intensify pressure against the insurgents by the usual methods. Third, the government could re-impose martial law for limited periods when and where necessary and, finally, summary military courts should be established with the power to impose the death penalty for specific offences. The Cabinet approved the report subject to further consideration of the recommendation concerning military courts.⁸⁵

In the aftermath of Operation TIGER and the hanging of the two sergeants in July 1947, debate resumed on the efficacy of martial law. However, a whole new set of considerations confronted the Cabinet. First, Arab-Jewish communal violence had erupted recently on a large scale. Early in August 1947 Cunningham advised Creech-Jones: 'I cannot guarantee that the situation will not deteriorate to such a degree that the Civil Government will not break down and as you know it is by no means clear how much longer I can keep the Civil Service working under conditions such as exist at present.'⁸⁶ Second, Britain was in the midst of an economic crisis and on 30 July the government ordered an increase in the rate of demobilisation.⁸⁷ Third, when India and Pakistan became independent on 15 August much of the justification for Britain's Middle East strategy simply evaporated. At the same time the United Nations Security Council upheld continuation of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty. British troops would be able to remain in the Canal Zone, and in September the British government announced that the major supply base for the region would be transferred to Kenya.⁸⁸

Against this background the politicians and military commanders considered the options remaining for Palestine. On 3 August, General Sir John Crocker, C in C Middle East Land Forces, advised

the War Office that the troops in Palestine were sufficient to impose martial law on only one area at a time and that even if the situation demanded more, the application of martial law over the whole country would delay planned deployments; it was therefore to be avoided. Nonetheless, he argued forcefully against any further reduction in troop strength, otherwise it would become difficult to fulfil even limited obligations in Palestine, quite apart from any other commitments in the Middle East. With the support of the Cabinet Defence Committee, Montgomery hastened to assure Crocker that his forces would not be reduced further.⁸⁹ At the same time Cunningham sent an equally gloomy assessment to Creech-Jones. He explained that while martial law was the only remaining option, it would not stop terrorism and would place a strain on the army without improving its ability to deal with the situation. Nonetheless, he would hold it in readiness; Creech-Jones endorsed his views.⁹⁰ The government in London, however, was also disillusioned with the result of martial law. One senior Colonial Office official pointed out that Cunningham's views on martial law were contradictory and that in any case it would damage the administration and British prestige.⁹¹

Following a conference with the GOC Palestine, General MacMillan, on 7 August, Crocker informed Cunningham that in view of potential difficulties in Egypt (related to the decision to remain in the Canal Zone) there would be no reinforcements available for Palestine.⁹² On 30 August, the British government announced further reductions in the size of the armed forces, accompanied by reduced defence spending. By early September, the War Office and the Colonial Office had agreed that it would not be possible to impose martial law on Palestine as a whole.⁹³ The implications of these arguments could scarcely be lost upon the government: even without attempting to enforce a solution the security forces were insufficient and were incapable of maintaining order. Owing to force reductions and commitments elsewhere they could not be reinforced. Finally, Palestine was no longer essential as a base area. Under such circumstances the British had no viable option but to withdraw. On 20 September the Minister of Defence advised the Cabinet that, even in the absence of an Arab-Jewish agreement, there were sufficient forces to maintain order during an immediate withdrawal.⁹⁴

The following section of this chapter shows how strategic decision-making translated into operations 'on the ground' in Palestine.

SECURITY FORCES OPERATIONS: THE BATTLE FOR CONTROL

The strategic policy debates in Palestine and London exerted a profound influence on the course of operations in Palestine. The nature and tempo of the operations changed in accordance with shifts in strategic direction. Consequently, it is possible to identify in retrospect four distinct phases of operational activity during the two-year period. First, from October 1945 to the end of June 1946, the security forces carried out a peacekeeping role, involving searches and security operations. The second phase, from 29 June to early September, was characterised by a major offensive against the insurgents, including two division-size search operations. The security forces returned to peacekeeping in the third phase, which continued until the end of February 1947. During the final phase, from March through August, the security forces went on the offensive again, this time employing martial law and special operations.⁹⁵ Each of these phases will be examined in turn.

First Peacekeeping Phase

On 21 October 1945, all army formations deployed to their operational locations and tasks: protection of land lines of communication, airfields and other vulnerable points, and prevention of illegal immigration by land and sea. The 3rd Parachute Brigade deployed on the outskirts of Tel Aviv where it took responsibility for internal security in Jaffa District, potentially the most troublesome area. In spite of these preparations the security forces were caught completely by surprise when the insurgents launched their offensive on 31 October. The troops spent most of the night 'dashing around the countryside' and captured only one insurgent. On 1 November, the GOC imposed a road curfew and formations mounted roadblocks to enforce it. Similar scenarios were repeated many times during the next two years.⁹⁶

A fortnight later Jews rioted in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv in protest against the announcement of the Anglo-American inquiry. This provided the army with the first major test of its internal security doctrine for Palestine. The security forces quickly brought Jerusalem under control, but spent five days restoring order in Tel Aviv.

Trouble began with a general strike on 14 November: a peaceful demonstration in the afternoon deteriorated into attacks on government buildings. By the time troops arrived mobs had nearly overwhelmed the police. At 18.40 hours 'C' Company 8th Battalion, the Parachute Regiment, advanced into Tel Aviv in slow-moving lorries with horns blaring, bayonets fixed, and signs in three languages warning 'Disperse or We Fire'. The troops cleared Colony Square and took up positions blocking the roads into it. The crowd, now numbering in the thousands, stoned the soldiers, inflicting some serious casualties. After repeated warnings by a magistrate using a loudhailer went unheeded, an officer directed selected marksmen to fire several rounds to disperse the crowd. The mob withdrew but continued to wreak havoc in other parts of the city. At 20.40 the remainder of the battalion arrived and after an hour they had restored order in the city. The following morning mobs violated a curfew and attacked businesses. After consultations with the divisional commander, Brigadier Lathbury moved two more battalions into Tel Aviv and by evening the city was quiet once more. Further reinforcements, another battalion and two armoured car regiments, arrived on 16 November. Before dawn on the 17th troops distributed a government proclamation which directed all citizens to behave in an orderly manner and warned that the government would take all measures necessary to maintain order. Gradually the curfew was relaxed and on 20 November the soldiers returned to their camps. Six Jews were killed in the rioting and 60 wounded. Twelve soldiers were wounded, and 30 treated for slight injuries. Operation BELLICOSE, as the task was named, was a tactical success: order was restored and no rioting on this scale occurred again during the next two years. Owing to the casualties, however, it was undoubtedly a propaganda success for the Jews.⁹⁷

Commencing with operations at Givat Hayim and Rishpon at the end of November, the security forces conducted more than 55 searches before the end of June 1946. These had two objectives: to capture wanted persons – insurgents or illegal immigrants – and/or to seize illegal caches of arms, explosives, military equipment or documents.⁹⁸ A typical search of a rural settlement took place at Yemini in northern Palestine early in 1946. Following the derailment and robbery of a train on 12 January, the 9th Infantry Brigade first mounted four roadblocks while an aircraft surveyed the scene of the incident. The commander of the 3rd Infantry Division, Major-General 'Bolo' Whistler, visited the site in the afternoon and,

following consultations with the DSP, ordered the brigade to cordon and search Yemini commencing at dawn the following morning. Armoured units provided the outer cordon consisting of mobile patrols between the roadblocks. Four battalions shared responsibility for the inner cordon. Two companies from one battalion provided the search and clearance troops, while elements of another erected and guarded the 'cage' (holding area for suspects) and provided a reserve. All troops were in position just before dawn. At 06.00 the brigadier, the DSP and their escort drove into the settlement and ordered the *Mukhtar* (the village headman) to parade all males aged 16 to 45 years and all females aged 16 to 30 years. The *Mukhtar* and the inhabitants cooperated fully. The search began at 07.00 and finished two hours later. At 10.25 the police took 16 suspects to Athlit for further questioning, the cordons withdrew, and residents returned to their homes.⁹⁹

Rural settlements like Yemini could be isolated and searched easily, but the urban areas of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa did not lend themselves to such large operations. Cities offered the insurgents unlimited opportunities to escape and hide, to blend in with the population, or to observe and ambush the security forces. The old city of Jerusalem, with its network of streets and alleys, passages and stairways, was almost impossible to police, patrol, or isolate effectively. Thus, urban searches tended to be small unit operations against specific targets. In January 1946, police supported by one platoon of soldiers carried out a typical operation, a search of eight houses in one sector of Jerusalem.¹⁰⁰

Following the car park murders on 25 April 1946, the 2nd Parachute Brigade conducted a much larger search operation in Tel Aviv. The insurgents attacked at 20.45 and withdrew into the Yeminite section of the Yarkon quarter of the city. At 22.30 the security forces imposed a curfew and the 6th Battalion, the Gordon Highlanders, cordoned that section of Tel Aviv. Elements of the Police Mobile Force with the 5th Parachute Battalion and an engineer squadron in support, initiated the search at 05.30 on 26 April. When the operation ended at 12.05 the police had questioned 1491 persons, and had detained 79 although there was no proof that they had taken part in the attack. The police also recovered a quantity of military equipment and plans for an attack on Athlit immigration clearance camp.¹⁰¹

Security operations – patrols, roadblocks, raids and guard duties – were a constant aspect of internal security in Palestine. Unlike

searches, which had a definite beginning and conclusion, security operations were endless. There were many vulnerable points which had to be protected: military installations and government buildings, the railway, Haifa port and oil refinery, water reservoirs and pumping stations, transportation links, and police stations which were under-manned or vulnerable to attack. In addition, troops constantly patrolled their sectors on foot and in vehicles. Patrols served two functions. First, they allowed the soldiers to become familiar with their areas of responsibility, thereby increasing the flow of background information to the intelligence staffs. Second, they restricted the insurgents' freedom of movement and increased the chances of their being captured. This was particularly important in the large cities. Roadblocks were important for similar reasons. They were intended to interfere with insurgent freedom of action by preventing them from concentrating for operations or apprehending them as they attempted to escape from the scene of an incident.¹⁰²

The security forces in Jerusalem demonstrated the effectiveness of continuous urban security operations. In January 1946, the 185th Infantry Brigade was involved in improving the fixed wire defences of government offices, police and brigade headquarters, and other vulnerable points. In addition, 'during the time troops were not actively engaged in curfew patrols and searches, a large proportion were still patrolling the streets in consequence of the "war of nerves"'.¹⁰³ On the instructions of army headquarters, the patrols conducted a series of minor security operations, including sudden identity and baggage checks of pedestrians and passengers on public transportation. The army instituted a new system of emergency roadblocks which were mounted for short intervals on two occasions. Streets were patrolled constantly, and snap searches of houses and flats were so frequent that Jews commented that every Jewish house in Jerusalem had been searched at least once; the army acknowledged that their comments 'corresponded closely to the truth'.¹⁰⁴ The high degree of vigilance produced results. On 14 and 15 January the police received intelligence reports indicating that the insurgents were about to launch further operations; at the same time they noticed a self-imposed curfew in specific Jewish areas of the city, around the Palestine broadcasting studios in particular. The security forces acted on the warning by completing additional wiring and by mounting extra foot patrols and mobile escorts for police cars in the appropriate areas of the city. The anticipated action occurred on 19 January when a mobile patrol encountered insurgents near

the broadcasting studios. A firefought ensued and, on hearing the shooting and explosions, troops established the pre-designated emergency roadblocks. This prevented the escape and permitted the capture of some of the insurgents. Subsequent searches produced further suspects, a large arms cache, and valuable intelligence.¹⁰⁵ This was one of the rare occasions when the security forces were able to develop background information into operational intelligence and to follow it up with appropriate operations. When this occurred the outcome was never in doubt, a factor which obviously impressed the insurgents; they conducted no further operations in Jerusalem until June.

The army and the police continued to work together in this manner throughout February and March. Their perseverance was rewarded again in March when the discovery of an arms cache was followed up by a security force raid which netted 30 suspected insurgents and led to 30 more arrests the following week.¹⁰⁶ When the 31st Infantry Brigade took over responsibility for Jerusalem at the end of March, it maintained the pressure: 46 foot patrols and mobile night patrols in April; 34 night patrols in May. In addition, the forces carried out raids on Jewish cafes, railroad stations, suspect houses, and persons under police supervision. These operations induced a long period of relative quiet in Jerusalem, but they were so effective as to be almost counter-productive: after the middle of May the security forces discontinued some patrols and roadblocks and removed the guard on the King David Hotel despite warnings of impending insurgent activity.¹⁰⁷ By relaxing their vigilance at this time the security forces played right into the plans of the insurgents who were preparing the next wave of attacks, which included targets in Jerusalem.

The security forces also maintained a series of mobile patrols in Haifa – four per night, each lasting 14 hours and covering 60 to 100 miles through the streets of the city. In April they were reduced in scale, number and length. At the same time the army switched from using static roadblocks, which had proven unproductive and expensive in terms of manpower, to using highly mobile roadblocks which would remain in one place for an hour or two, then switch to another location. In this way they intended to 'keep the possible "evil doer" guessing and give the impression of having more roadblocks in use than previously'.¹⁰⁸ As in the case of Jerusalem, Haifa was almost free of incidents and the security operations eventually produced results: on 17 June 1946 troops mounted four

roadblocks around the city minutes after the attack on the railway workshops. The fleeing insurgents ran into one of these blocks and the entire group was killed or captured.¹⁰⁹

Tel Aviv, on the other hand, was largely ignored by the security forces. Until autumn 1946 no troops were based permanently in the city; instead the battalion based at Sarona in the suburbs maintained a company on-call to support the police at short notice. The security forces did not maintain continuous patrols and troops deployed into Tel Aviv only for specific search operations.¹¹⁰ As a result the insurgents conducted more operations there and in Jaffa (which was subject to the same security arrangements) than in the other large cities. There were sound reasons, however, for maintaining a low profile presence in Tel Aviv. In order to base troops in Tel Aviv in large numbers, the army would have had to requisition housing, which would have further antagonised the population of the completely Jewish city. Moreover, bases in rural areas were easier to defend from attack.

Rural security operations produced mixed results owing to the inability of the forces to control vast areas of open country. In the northern sector, the 1st Guards Brigade adopted a scheme for establishing quick-reaction roadblocks following incidents. Sited close to camps and police posts, however, they were obvious and easily avoided, though they ensured that the insurgents would have to approach targets and retreat by long cross-country routes. In April these roadblocks were supplemented by observation posts, snap road checks, and 'snooping patrols' by the 1st King's Dragoon Guards armoured regiment, valuable in maintaining 'a visible presence and creating 'an uncertain factor to be reckoned with in any plans laid down by lawbreakers'.¹¹¹ Sometimes these operations produced results: on 3 April 1946 aerial reconnaissance located a group of insurgents retreating across country following attacks on the railway. Troops and police quickly blocked all avenues of escape and captured 30 insurgents with weapons, explosives and equipment.¹¹² More often than not, however, the limitations of rural security operations were painfully obvious: in June 1946 army headquarters issued specific warnings about insurgent operations anticipated for the 16th against lines of communication. Formations conducted snap road checks and carried out reconnaissance of railway bridges, to no avail; the insurgents attacked their targets and most evaded capture.¹¹³

In his review of the situation in the Middle East at the beginning

of 1946, General Sir Bernard Paget, Commander in Chief Middle East Forces, stated that in Palestine, 'the Army has not yet initiated any offensive action: any fighting that has been done has been carried out in support of police operations.'¹¹⁴ This peacekeeping phase ended in June when, in response to the insurgent offensive, the security forces took action against the Jewish Agency and the Haganah.

First Offensive Phase

The security forces' action took the form of a major search and arrest operation, code-named AGATHA. The operation had two tactical objectives: first, to occupy and search the Jewish Agency headquarters and other buildings suspected of being the headquarters of illegal organisations; and second, to arrest as many members of the Palmach as possible, as well as certain members of Jewish political bodies believed responsible for the recent upsurge of insurgent activity. The success of the operation depended upon surprise, so the security forces took strict precautions to ensure secrecy: all conferences were held away from headquarters and senior officers attending removed their distinctive red hatbands; written orders were kept to minimum, circulated in sealed envelopes to officers on a restricted list. Only brigade staffs, police superintendents and a few trusted members of their staffs were briefed before the morning of 28 June. Battalion and company commanders were briefed during the day at 'O' groups disguised as informal meetings of officers lower in rank than usual. The other ranks were not informed until late in the evening. The army made every effort to convey the impression that life was carrying on as normal; a large number of senior officers appeared on the 28th at the Jerusalem horse show. Troops in armoured regiments prepared their vehicles for an inspection, unaware that they were in fact preparing for a major operation.¹¹⁵

Commencing at 04.05 hours 29 June, parties of Royal Signals troops, escorting civilian personnel who had not been told of the operation and who were brought directly from their homes, occupied all exchanges and suspended all telephone communications across Palestine for more than three hours. This was sufficient to prevent telephone transmission of any warning of the impending operation. The GOC imposed road curfews in four districts and complete

curfews in the main cities.¹¹⁶ At the same time some 10 000 troops and 7000 police deployed to their operational targets, the three main cities and 30 rural settlements. In the cities parties of troops and police equipped with CID 'Black Lists' arrested wanted persons, generally at their homes. In addition, in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv they searched the premises of the Jewish Agency, the Histadruth and other organisations, in some cases forcing entry and blowing safes with explosives. Rural settlements were cordoned and searched in the usual manner. Police carried out interrogation and identification and sent suspects to Athlit or Latrun detention camps. However, Jewish anticipation of the operation and the alleged discovery of plans prevented the security forces from achieving complete surprise.¹¹⁷

Because the Jewish Agency was a legal organisation, and because the Haganah made only modest efforts to conceal its activities, information on the two organisations was of high quality. The security forces knew whom to arrest and where to look for evidence, arms and equipment. By 1 July the police had arrested 2718 persons; many had been detained for resisting searches and were released after a short time. Seven hundred persons were placed in long-term detention, including four members of the Jewish Agency Executive, seven Haganah commanders, and about half of the Palmach membership. Other members of the Agency, the Histadruth, and the Va'ad Leumi (National Council) were held, but Moshe Sneh, the Haganah Commander in Chief, evaded arrest. In the Agency files the police found evidence implicating the organisation in the activities of the resistance movement, as well as quantities of government documents revealing the extent of subversive penetration of the administration. Troops seized nine tons of documents in Tel Aviv alone.¹¹⁸ At Mesheq Yagur, a settlement near Haifa, troops discovered 33 arms caches containing over 500 weapons and a large quantity of munitions. The Haganah did not have many such armouries, so the loss was a serious blow to the resistance movement.¹¹⁹ During the course of Operation AGATHA the security forces encountered only light resistance, mainly of a passive nature, and casualties were few.¹²⁰

In mid-July the army returned to routine security operations, but following the bombing of the King David Hotel troops searched parts of Jerusalem and the police arrested 376 persons on whom they had been keeping a close watch.¹²¹ The government directed

further that the security forces institute an intensive search for members of the Irgun and the Lechi, so for the second time within one month the army and the police carried out a large-scale operation: code-named SHARK, it involved cordoning and searching the entire city of Tel Aviv. The airborne division was the conducting formation, with four brigades and supporting arms and services under command, amassing a total force of 21 000 troops. Operation SHARK posed unique problems. First, as in the case of AGATHA, secrecy was essential, the insurgents certainly expected some major response. But unlike the previous operation the whole force had to be concentrated on one target. It would not be possible to camouflage troop deployments by dispersing units in all directions. Second, the army would be responsible not only for searching all buildings and screening all persons in the city, but also for maintaining essential services to the population for the duration of the search. Third, to be effective, the search had to be launched as soon as possible, despite the fact that the army had no plans for an operation of this magnitude. Finally, there was very little intelligence upon which to act against the Irgun.¹²²

Before dawn on 30 July signals troops disrupted the telephone service while the four brigades converged on Tel Aviv by different routes. They drew a cordon around the city, isolating it from north to south, before the columns passed through into Tel Aviv. Police and navy launches patrolled the waterfront. Troops had imposed a 36-hour curfew before most inhabitants were awake. The brigades then laid inner cordons dividing the city into four sectors, and then sub-divided their sectors into battalion areas. The thorough nature of the operation was its unique feature: troops and police searched every building on every street from roof to cellar, then escorted all but children and the elderly to battalion screening teams, who identified and interrogated some 100 000 people. Approximately 10 000, mostly males aged 16 to 60 years, were sent for further screening at brigade level where CID officers checked the identity of each person against photographs and descriptions of wanted persons. When the operation ended on 2 August the police sent 787 persons to detention camp, including Yitzak Yizernitsky (now Shamir), a member of the Lechi's leadership triumvirate. They failed to identify Friedman-Yellin, however, and missed Begin who was hiding behind a false wall in his apartment. Troops found five arms caches, the largest hidden in the basement of the Great Synagogue.

Essential services worked smoothly: curfew was lifted briefly in the evenings to allow the population to obtain food and other necessary services within their restricted sectors.¹²³

The British offensive ended with battalion-size searches at Dorot and Ruhama in August and Operation HAZARD, the imposition of a curfew in Tel Aviv, in early September.¹²⁴ With the exception of deployments to protect the railway in November, HAZARD was the last large-scale operation until the end of 1946.

Second Peacekeeping Phase

Up to the middle of November most operations were small-unit actions. The 2nd Parachute Brigade carried out a series of snap searches, road checks, and searches of houses and blocks of flats, usually employing no more than one or two platoons in conjunction with the police. Battalions conducted two cordon and search operations. In a major shift in deployment policy the brigade maintained one company at police headquarters in Tel Aviv for immediate employment on anti-terrorist operations. To counteract the effects of road mining, the 1st and 2nd Parachute Brigades established a road curfew at night, restricting movement to specific routes, and mounted mobile patrols, mobile and static roadblocks, and off-road foot patrols. The 9th Infantry Brigade, on duty in Jerusalem, carried out security operations in the usual manner.¹²⁵

In the middle of November the security forces launched Operation EARWIG to protect the railway from sabotage that had brought rail operations to a halt. EARWIG consumed large numbers of troops on purely defensive guard duties throughout the whole length of the railway in Palestine. In southern Palestine the whole airborne division, with the exception of several reserve battalions, was deployed on this task protecting 70 miles of track. The division divided its sector into three zones, each assigned a different density of troops according to the degree of danger. Small observation posts linked by patrols were established 500 to 1000 yards apart in the most hazardous areas, which were also patrolled at night. Every morning the company responsible for a given sector inspected the line with the railway gangs before trains were allowed to pass. Aircraft also surveyed the line at first light. The army was employed in this manner for a month, though the numbers were reduced after the first fortnight. EARWIG was successful: sabotage ceased and normal rail service was gradually restored.¹²⁶

The tempo of operations increased in response to the flogging incidents of 29 December 1946. Between 30 December and 3 January 1947 the airborne division carried out seven brigade-size searches in Tel Aviv and its suburbs. More than 10 000 people were screened and 191 arrested or detained. In addition, troops found small quantities of arms and explosives. They achieved a higher degree of success when they returned to small-unit operations. Operation OCTOPUS, 7–17 January, consisted of a series of raids on specific areas of known insurgent activity, guided by accurate intelligence. Supported by snap searches and mobile roadblocks, the raids netted 90 persons, of whom a much larger proportion than usual was detained in custody. In Rishon Le Zion alone the security forces arrested 12 members of the Irgun, including three important members.¹²⁷

Operations ceased for about one week in the middle of January while the two divisions exchanged areas, but resumed as soon as the formations redeployed.¹²⁸ The 1st Guards Brigade, now assigned to the turbulent Lydda district, continued the OCTOPUS scheme through February while the 9th Infantry Brigade carried out a similar programme in Jerusalem. The 3rd Parachute Brigade found Haifa quiet, but there were more targets to protect; the naval depot, the oil refinery and the pipeline.¹²⁹ The kidnappings at the end of January 1947 disrupted these routines almost immediately. The 8th Infantry Brigade cordoned and searched Petah Tiqva and the 9th Infantry Brigade carried out two battalion-size searches in the Jewish quarters of Jerusalem. The abductions resulted in additional duties for the security forces; they assisted in the evacuation from Palestine of non-essential British personnel, and the concentration of the remainder in protected security zones, which became known as 'Bevingrads'. This meant providing static guards, patrols and mobile reserves for a purely defensive mission.¹³⁰ But it also marked the end of this peacekeeping phase; the decks were being 'cleared for action.'

Second Offensive Phase

On 3 March 1947, following a large number of incidents, the Palestine government imposed statutory martial law on Tel Aviv and its suburbs and on a Jewish sector of Jerusalem, with the

intention of putting an end to terrorism in those areas. The process involved joint military-civilian administration of the affected areas, withdrawal of public services, and the imposition of certain restrictions on the activities of the population within those areas. For the duration, military courts replaced civil courts and heard military, civil and criminal cases.¹³¹ Even so, the military were not a 'law unto themselves' in the martial law districts. The High Commissioner always had the authority to overrule the GOC and his subordinates.

The controlled area of Jerusalem covered a Jewish quarter where many incidents had recently occurred. It included both rich and poor neighbourhoods and a business and shopping area, which facilitated feeding the population and bringing pressure to bear equally on a cross-section of the community. One battalion with an armoured car troop in support controlled and administered the area. Tel Aviv posed a problem of greater magnitude: the martial law area covered some 50 square miles, enclosing a population of more than 300 000 people. The 1st Guards Brigade was the conducting formation with four additional battalions, an armoured regiment, and supporting arms and services under command. Most of these were deployed on the long cordon around the controlled area. The operation was carried out in four phases: imposition of a strict curfew; cordoning the area; publication of regulations and issuing of passes; and gradual relaxation of the curfew and restoration of near normal living conditions.¹³²

Martial law imposed a dual responsibility on the security forces. First, they had to carry out security operations within the controlled areas; second, they had to administer these areas, by far the more demanding task. In Jerusalem the martial law headquarters staff included advisers in all fields of civil affairs, and the commander met daily with seven elders representing the interests of the community. Owing to its size and scope the Tel Aviv operation, aptly code-named ELEPHANT, required a larger and more formal organisation. On the third day of martial law Brigadier Moore appointed a civil advisory council empowered to make immediate decisions necessary to fill the administrative gaps created by martial law. The council included representatives from all essential services and the security forces. It met four times during the operation, dealing with problems related to food distribution, health and sanitation, welfare, public works and unemployment.¹³³ Martial law ended at noon on 17 March. Daily searches in the controlled area of Jerusalem had resulted in the detention of 129 persons and the

discovery of a mine assembly factory, but had not produced new information on the insurgents. Troops in Tel Aviv had conducted four major as well as many smaller searches. In all the security forces made at least 60 arrests, including 24 members of the Irgun and the Lechi. Although martial law did not eliminate terrorism – incidents occurred even in the controlled areas – the arrests were apparently a major blow to the insurgents; during the next quarter of 1947 the rate of insurgent operations declined by more than 50 per cent.¹³⁴

On the day martial law was lifted Captain Roy Farran, a highly decorated veteran of the Special Air Service Regiment (SAS), and Alistair McGregor, a former member of the Special Operations Executive (SOE), arrived in Palestine to conduct special operations against the insurgents. They selected two squads of ten men each from the ranks of the police and commenced operations at the beginning of April, after only a fortnight's training. The nature and results of their operations remain something of a mystery. Richard Clutterbuck claims that, acting on a pattern of intelligence built up gradually by covert surveillance, Farran's squad 'eliminated' as many insurgents in six weeks as a battalion employing cordon and search operations. Farran's claims are more modest: he states that his squad worked 'round the clock' for two months, 'watching, following, listening and occasionally making an arrest.'¹³⁵ Only one operation has been described in any detail: Farran's squad 'borrowed' a laundry delivery van detained at a bogus roadblock and, acting on intelligence from an informer, used the van as camouflage – allowing the squad to capture an insurgent courier and some of his contacts. They later returned the van with an apologetic explanation to the driver.¹³⁶ Obviously it is not possible to assess the effectiveness of the squads on the basis of such scant evidence. But it is worth noting that during this time the insurgents attempted to assassinate more plainclothes policemen than usual, a development which suggests that the activities of the squads made the insurgents nervous of police surveillance and hence 'trigger happy'. The squads were probably on the right track, but Farran's cover was blown before they could produce significant results.¹³⁷

The security forces carried out 63 search operations from May through July 1947, apart from the special operations or the application of martial law.¹³⁸ The army imposed martial law on Nathanya in July in response to the abduction of the two Field Security sergeants. Operation TIGER was intended to permit a thorough search for the missing soldiers and to prevent a recurrence

of terrorism within the controlled areas. From 13 to 27 July the 1st Guards Brigade, with two additional battalions and an armoured regiment under command, maintained a tight cordon around the city. A civil affairs advisory council was established the day before the operation commenced, but the administrative problems were not as formidable as those of Tel Aviv, since the controlled area of Nathanya contained only 15 000 persons. Daily searches led to the capture of 18 wanted persons and economic pressure was brought to bear on the community, but TIGER was nonetheless unsuccessful: it did not coerce the population into cooperation with the security forces and did not result in the recovery of the missing sergeants. General Gale, moreover, was not convinced that the operation would prevent a recurrence of terrorism in the area.¹³⁹

The security forces maintained the offensive, however. On 5 August they arrested some 70 members of the Revisionist Party, including the mayors of Tel Aviv, Ramat Gan and Nathanya, and occupied the headquarters of Betar, the Revisionist youth organisation. The government detained these persons because it was believed they had information about the insurgents which they had not disclosed. But detention produced no results: the detainees refused to divulge any information, and though the police felt they had arrested two persons directly involved in the murder of the two sergeants, there was insufficient evidence on which to bring them to trial.¹⁴⁰

With that the offensive phase and the counter-insurgency campaign itself came to an end. While the British government and the United Nations deliberated the future of Palestine, the Jews and the Arabs initiated the next stage in the struggle: between 8 August and 30 September there were more than 25 incidents of communal violence; by contrast there were only 13 attacks on the security forces during that period.¹⁴¹ After the British government announced in September its intention to withdraw from Palestine, the security forces increasingly found themselves trying to keep the peace in a bitter communal conflict in which they were only an unwelcome third party.

SECURITY FORCES OPERATIONS: THE BATTLE FOR LEGITIMACY

Devising a propaganda campaign to support the British position in Palestine was by no means an easy task. First, the campaign would

have to reach at least five targets: Jews and Arabs in Palestine, the British domestic audience, Jewish audiences outside Palestine, and interested and influential persons in the United States. Second, responsibility for propaganda was divided between the government of Palestine and the British government. The difficulties encountered in developing and coordinating such a campaign are discussed in the next chapter. What follows here is an explanation of what the British attempted to accomplish, however imperfectly.

In June 1945 the Ministry of Information's Overseas Planning Committee established the aims and objectives of the British government's propaganda plan for Palestine. The aims, set out in an appreciation, were to maintain internal security in Palestine and to create an atmosphere conducive to a settlement of the problem by promoting good relations between the British, the Arabs and the Jews. The committee acknowledged, however, a crucial constraint on this programme: 'Until H.M.G. makes a new declaration of policy with regard to Palestine, it is undesirable that our publicity should attempt to cover future developments.'¹⁴² A separate paper noted that while it was undesirable to push separate propaganda lines to the Jews and the Arabs, different approaches were necessary. Propaganda to the Jews would have to convince them that the British government cared about their fate; both communities, however, would have to be reminded constantly of Britain's obligations under the Mandate.¹⁴³

It is now clear that from the outset the focus of British propaganda efforts – both offensive and defensive – was on the target audiences outside Palestine. The High Commissioner, concerned about being unable to prevent inaccurate news reports abroad, proposed that the Public Information Office provide local correspondents with informal preliminary 'handouts' containing the first confirmed details of any incident. He also suggested that the PIO distribute these to the MOI to brief the British press. The Colonial Secretary agreed in principle, but for reasons which are not clear, the MOI declined to cooperate.¹⁴⁴ Throughout the campaign the PIO issued its own communiqués as incidents occurred, but it was not until August 1947 that the Central Security Committee decided that the PIO should 'colour' its reporting to emphasise successful security forces operations.¹⁴⁵ By then, of course, it was too late to make a difference, even if that were possible.

For the army, conducting operations 'in the glare of publicity' was a new problem. There was nothing in the internal security manual to explain the propaganda implications of unrestricted news

coverage. Generally speaking, the army responded to the propaganda problem by trying to protect its image. Such arrangements as were made tended to be *ad hoc*, defensive, and oriented toward the external, as opposed to local, audience. First, the army attempted to deny the insurgents material with which to make propaganda. Formation commanders explained to their troops the aims and effects of propaganda. They told them to set aside preconceived notions and prejudices and to treat Arabs and Jews equally and without malice. Consistent with the principle of minimum force, commanders urged their soldiers to avoid unnecessary provocation or embarrassment in search operations and to handle carefully incidents involving illegal immigrants. They were to avoid initiating incidents such as reprisals, which were likely to cause press comment, and above all, they should not lose their 'sense of proportion'.¹⁴⁶

Second, the army encouraged good relations with the press. The security forces gave all possible assistance to the accredited correspondents consistent with safety and operational security. Public relations officers were appointed to sector, brigade and divisional headquarters to assist the press. Correspondents were permitted to move freely through curfew and restricted areas and to accompany the troops on operations. They were allowed on several occasions to visit internment camps.¹⁴⁷ Third, the army attempted to 'manage' news coverage of events in Palestine. Army instructions emphasised the need for speed and accuracy in passing of information; it was essential to 'beat Reuters' in order to prevent or correct inaccurate news reports.¹⁴⁸ One staff officer suggested that the army should try to influence reporting by providing the press (via the PIO) with information before the insurgents did. He felt:

It is the first 'hot news' that captures the headlines They will use the first story they get Our object must be, therefore, to provide the material basis of a story within a few minutes of the start of an incident It should usually be possible for this HQ to produce a story for the PIO of what is happening . . . sufficient to give the right angle to the story.¹⁴⁹

Until 1947, however, officers were forbidden to give interviews to the press. It was decided then that the senior military commander on the scene of an operation could give an interview or answer questions from the press. Officers concerned were encouraged to give the fullest possible account of the operations, but were to confine their remarks to statements of fact that the correspondents

could check; they were not to comment on policy or express opinions.¹⁵⁰ Finally, the security forces tried to jam or locate and capture the insurgents' illegal radio stations. In January and February 1946 army radio direction-finding units fixed the location of *Kol Israel* on several occasions, but troops and police who converged on the sites never captured the transmitter or its crew. They did, however, locate and seize the Lechi radio station and its staff in Tel Aviv. Begin claims the Irgun's station was never silenced.¹⁵¹

The British government's campaign to counteract insurgent propaganda overseas, particularly in the United States, was largely defensive and low-key. It began at the end of November 1945 when the High Commissioner complained to London about the flood of propaganda concerning the search at Givat Hayim. He felt that both British policy and the internal situation in Palestine would suffer unless vigorous steps were taken to deal with the propaganda. Cunningham's views were passed to Washington but the British Ambassador, Lord Halifax, did not appear to take the problem seriously. He felt that misrepresentations were not widespread and that the few newspapers which had violently distorted facts were, in any case, incorrigible. On the occasion of any future incidents he stated that the embassy would issue an appropriate communiqué through the BIS. Moreover, the embassy and the BIS would continue to give information privately to press and radio commentators in order to put across the British view of operations in Palestine. In the case of Givat Hayim, however, British reports from the scene varied considerably on crucial details. Insurgent propaganda thus scored a significant victory when the British government accepted the Zionist version of events despite some obvious inconsistencies.¹⁵²

There was a brief change in policy in May 1946: following the car park murders in Tel Aviv the Foreign Office urged the Washington embassy to 'move from the defence to the attack' by using reports of such incidents as the basis for a propaganda offensive.¹⁵³ In principle this probably made sense, but in practice official British statements would carry little weight amongst Britain's American critics. Moreover, in this specific case it was already too late by at least a fortnight. Insurgent propagandists had turned a potential disaster for the resistance movement into an embarrassment for the British by skilfully exploiting British excesses in response to the murders: the divisional commander's public rebuke to the mayor of Tel Aviv and the brief reprisal by British troops against a Jewish settlement. Any propaganda advantage the British might have gained

from the Lechi attack vanished as the Jewish press castigated General Cassels, linking his attitude to the reprisals. General Cassels himself later conceded that he had achieved nothing by his public statement 'except more British press adverse comments and a spate of letters from American Jews'.¹⁵⁴ So the Foreign Office directive was not only too late; it was completely out of touch with the realities of the propaganda war.

Following Operation AGATHA in June 1946, the British Ambassador, now Lord Inverchapel, felt that the principal British propaganda aim in America should be 'to remove the Palestine issue from the headlines' by allowing the current agitation to subside and by refraining from further public statements. He did, however, favour continued efforts by BIS to influence the American press.¹⁵⁵ Through 1946/47 British diplomats also protested, without success, to the State Department about advertisements soliciting funds for the insurgents. The Foreign Office, however, criticised the embassy for not pressing the issue with sufficient vigour. Commenting on a memorandum sent to the State Department in December 1946, one official said:

This is a lamentably weak document. One would have thought that as three previous protests have gone unanswered, we could, without really upsetting Anglo-American relations, point out that the financing of rebellion on the territory of a friendly power was just the least bit steep?¹⁵⁶

The British did not ask for suppression of the advertising; they tried instead to persuade the American government to remove the tax-exempt status of contributions to the organisations concerned. By September 1947 the issue was still unresolved and all that British persistence had achieved was a statement from the Truman administration asking Americans not to engage in activities likely to cause violence in Palestine.¹⁵⁷ At the embassy's request the Foreign Office attempted to keep them informed of British plans for Palestine, to enable the officials in Washington to anticipate and respond effectively to criticism. Even so, certain limitations may have hampered the efforts of British diplomats in America to present their case effectively. In February 1947, the embassy felt that British officials had been misquoted on several occasions and thus decided that they should not speak in public on the Palestine issue; consequently, numerous invitations to do so were refused. The

Foreign Office disagreed with this policy, pointing out that:

it seems to be an unfortunate development at a time when the other interested parties must be intensifying their propaganda It seems to be more than ever necessary that misrepresentations of British policy should be answered as effectively as possible.¹⁵⁸

The embassy insisted, however, that its staff and the BIS were more effective in putting the British case personally, in letters to and conversations with influential persons. The ambassador lifted the ban on public speaking in April but by August even the embassy staff had come to doubt the value of their propaganda techniques. They concluded that insurgent propaganda was effective and wondered if they were doing enough to counter it. They could not afford to place full page newspaper advertisements like those of the ALFP; conversations and replies to letters were valuable, but they reached only a few people; briefing correspondents was effective, but by this time many American newspapers were reluctant to print anything that sounded pro-British. The embassy requested more information on Palestine, including statistics on terrorist incidents, casualties and illegal immigration, but did not receive a reply until September 1947.¹⁵⁹

Propaganda counter-measures directed at the British audience showed even less drive or imagination than efforts in America. It may be fair to suggest that once British soldiers were being killed such measures were unnecessary because the British population tended to sympathise with the army in such difficult circumstances. Nonetheless, the Palestine government and the army attempted to correct or forestall what they considered misleading or sensationalist accounts in British newspapers. The High Commissioner's view, however, that an eyewitness account of events by a senior British officer would provide 'an adequate rejoinder to wilful distortions' suggests a certain naiveté on his part, since critics would not find such an account unbiased. The British government made statements in the House of Commons, either in reply to questions or on the occasion of major developments, such as Operation AGATHA in June 1946. In July 1946 the government published a White Paper on terrorism which provided evidence implicating the Jewish Agency in the resistance movement.¹⁶⁰ The Foreign Office, with the assistance of Passport Control, the security service and the Palestine

government, made a concerted effort to harass and keep under surveillance the ALFP's European representatives. After his speeches in London and Rome, Irgun spokesman, J. J. Smertenko was denied re-entry into Britain. Peter Bergson's Palestinian citizenship was revoked and the British government persuaded the Italian government to suppress *La Riposta*, the ALFP's propaganda magazine.¹⁶¹

During the period 1945/47 the British and Palestine governments conducted only one well-organised and effective propaganda campaign: a recruiting campaign for the Palestine police. At the end of November 1945 the Chief Secretary suggested that the existing recruiting campaign – then confined to the armed forces and not producing the desired results – be expanded to include the general public, using all the methods of modern publicity. The Colonial Office approved the idea in principle in January 1946, but there was considerable reluctance to begin the campaign at that time. The government did not want to attract too much attention to the Palestine problem, nor did it wish to introduce too many men into the force rapidly without providing adequate training. Furthermore, as noted earlier, the government felt that the army would be responsible for controlling major disorder in Palestine, so police manpower was not regarded in London as an urgent problem.¹⁶² In June 1946, however, the deteriorating situation in Palestine and a shortage of 3000 policemen forced the government to act. A two-month publicity campaign prepared by the Palestine government began in June. The Colonial Office, the War Office, and the COI assisted the Palestine government in securing advertising space, even at the expense of recruiting for the armed forces. The campaign commenced in early June with advertisements in 40 provincial newspapers. Later this expanded to 80, supplemented by letters to 1350 headmasters of public and secondary schools and a recruiting slide presented at 400 cinemas and 50 theatres. The campaign was renewed in September and November 1946 and again in January 1947; by that time it included national Sunday newspapers and some national magazines.¹⁶³ The recruitment propaganda, which was produced originally in 1945, was criticised for not telling the whole truth about service in the police: it stressed the reputation of the force as a 'body of picked men' chosen for their high standards of character, education and physical fitness; it said nothing about the dangers, the fact that effective training had all but ceased, and problems such as equipment shortages.¹⁶⁴ Nonetheless, the recruiting campaign was a major success. The first week of advertising produced

2000 inquiries and by the end of September the Colonial Office had received some 6000 applications. The large majority were rejected for a variety of reasons, but the monthly intake of recruits increased steadily: from 62 in June 1946 to a peak of 395 in December, by which time more than 1200 recruits had been selected and intake to the force had outstripped wastage. Enquiries and applications continued to increase until July 1947.¹⁶⁵

Both in effort expended and in results achieved this single endeavour contrasts sharply with the overall British propaganda campaign for Palestine, in which the government violated every principle of effective propaganda. In this regard, the negative comparison with the insurgents' efforts is striking. Where the insurgents went on the offensive, the British remained defensive. Where insurgent propaganda appeared credible, the British seemed inconsistent. Where the insurgents were quick to exploit the propaganda value of an incident, the British were slow on the uptake. Finally, where the insurgents were unrelenting in hammering home their message, the British havered, apparently uncertain whether they should be saying anything about Palestine at all. It is by no means certain that a more robust effort might have regained for Britain the 'moral high ground' in this struggle. The insurgents started out with a clear advantage in that domain, and the British response never seriously challenged it. All that can be said with certainty is that the lacklustre propaganda campaign all but ensured that Britain would lose the battle for legitimacy virtually by default.

5 A Counter-Insurgency Defeat: Some Reasons Why

Clausewitz called the decisive phase of conflict the 'culminating point'.¹ This point may be easily discernible in a conventional conflict: a significant defeat on the battlefield which shifts the strategic balance conclusively against one belligerent. However, in insurgency the turning point is often less than clear, for the results on the battlefield are significant only to the extent that they affect political and strategic decisions on further conduct of the campaign. The culminating point is reached when the leaders on one side have been convinced that they can no longer impose constraints on the decisions and actions of the other. The result is a stalemate, which often favours the insurgents who win by demonstrating that the security forces cannot contain the insurgency.

By September 1947 just such a situation prevailed in Palestine. Because the insurgents had convinced the British government that it could not restore or maintain order, the operations of the security forces no longer affected the political outcome of the struggle. The difficulty in determining the reasons for this defeat is related both to understanding the nature of the war and the perspective from which the war is seen and examined. This is true not only for the participants in the conflict, but for those who attempt to analyse it after the fighting has ceased. The conflict in Palestine is a case in point: there is a general consensus among historians that insurgent terrorism played a role in persuading the British government to relinquish the Palestine Mandate. There is less agreement on the significance of the insurgent role. Apologists for the Haganah insist that the Irgun and the Lechi did not make a decisive contribution to the independence struggle.² Others, like Begin himself and some

historians, attribute the British withdrawal solely to the actions of the insurgents: J. Bowyer Bell, for example, describes the hanging of the two sergeants as 'the straw that broke the Mandate's back'.³

While it must be conceded that both viewpoints have their merits, they remain simplistic interpretations of a complex process; they simply are not the whole story. Most serious scholars have concluded that the effects of insurgent actions must be weighed against the political and economic conditions surrounding Britain's involvement in the Mandate at that time.⁴ Indeed, there is compelling evidence to show that the insurgents' leverage strategy succeeded largely because of factors over which the insurgents had no control: the economic crisis in Britain, and the changes in Middle East strategy arising from the Labour government's different perception of Britain's global role. The insurgents can be credited with shaping their strategies to capitalise on these factors. Yet, even this interpretation leaves the story incomplete. For every victorious army there is a vanquished one. Until recently, serious scholars were either unable or unwilling to address in a critical way a central question raised by the conflict: why did the security forces fail to defeat the insurgents? The answer, to be explored in this chapter, is more complex than the earlier studies have led us to believe.

First, no military campaign, conventional or otherwise, is likely to succeed in the absence of a realistic, clearly defined strategy. Bruce Hoffman thus goes to the heart of the matter when he attributes the British defeat to the pursuit of inappropriate 'military strategies'.⁵ This is an important step forward in understanding the problem, but Hoffman does not pursue the reasons why the British army might have adhered to an outmoded 'doctrine' of counter-insurgency. Nor does he address the institutional and situational obstacles to tactical innovation, nor the all-important question of intelligence. Examining these heretofore insufficiently explored aspects of the British campaign should shed some light on the intellectual and organisational conditions which contributed to the defeat.

STRATEGIC THOUGHT AND COUNTER-INSURGENCY DOCTRINE

The British army did not enter the Palestine campaign devoid of knowledge and experience of counter-insurgency. Since the eight-

eenth century it had been an imperial army, tasked to defend the outposts of the empire rather than the homeland.⁶ Moreover, from the end of the Napoleonic period low-intensity warfare, usually against primitive opponents in out-of-the-way places, was the predominant experience of the British army. Continental conventional wars were exceptions to the rule.⁷ This operational history exerted a significant impact on the army as an institution, influencing its ability to learn from experience and to adapt to new situations. More will be said of this later in the chapter. For the moment, the important point is that the British army entered the Palestine campaign with a considerable body of experience in low-intensity operations to its credit. Whether that experience was relevant, and whether it was properly understood or not, is another matter.

In fact, the case can be made that there was little in this that could give the army guidance in countering a modern insurgency, wherein the enemy's organisation was clandestine and his tactics were political in intent and criminal, rather than military, in method and character. The principles of 'aid to the civil power', developed by trial and error through the nineteenth century, and considerably refined after the Amritsar incident of 1919, were intended for use in riot control.⁸ The unrestrained employment of superior firepower and mobility that had characterised the nineteenth-century colonial campaigns were shown to be both irrelevant and inappropriate once insurgent campaigns shifted to urban areas. The Irish rebellion of 1919–21 was a case in point. In its rural aspects the campaign bore some slight resemblance to earlier colonial insurrections such as the Boer War, but urban terrorism and propaganda added entirely new dimensions which transformed the nature of the conflict and the army's role in it. Consequently, many new problems arose. Cooperation with the police was never satisfactory. Inadequate training led to reprisals by the army and the police. The security forces were unable to build a dependable intelligence service. The legal ramifications of martial law were never resolved, and there was a noticeable absence of policy direction from the British government. Most of the military operations involved fruitless raids and searches in urban areas, while mobile columns pursued the insurgents in the countryside.⁹ There were lessons to be learned from this conflict, but even if the army had been so inclined – which it was not – there was no reason for the army to suppose that the Irish experience was anything but unique. The official account of the campaign concentrated mainly on a military analysis of operations

at divisional level and, with the exception of some perceptive observations on propaganda, did not offer many useful intellectual insights into the nature of revolutionary insurgency.¹⁰ Moreover, its 'Most Secret' grading clearly restricted its circulation and probably prevented its useful aspects from being more widely studied within the army. Consequently, military writing from the period exhibited only a modicum of comprehension about the nature of Irish-type insurgencies.¹¹ The tendency was to look for answers in familiar methods; the theory and practice of internal security coalesced along purely military lines reminiscent of the pre-war period.

Exceptions to this general rule were rare and largely overlooked. In 1937, H. J. Simson, a retired officer, published a treatise on counter-insurgency, entitled *British Rule and Rebellion*. Simson's principal concern was to provide guidance to those dealing, ineffectively Simson thought, with the Arab rebellion in Palestine. 'We have not yet admitted,' Simson writes in his conclusions, '... that our methods of dealing with modern rebellion are comic ... Extremists under our rule rearmed themselves with new methods of resisting it. It is time that we rearmed ourselves with new methods of ruling.'¹² With that in mind, he wrote what may be fairly described as the first considered analysis of urban insurgency and counter-insurgency.

Drawing on the Irish experience, however inappropriate in view of the largely rural nature of the Arab rebellion, he described perceptively the new face of colonial insurgency: the combination of terrorism and propaganda he called 'sub-war'. Simson believed this strategy had two objectives: first, to support a carefully orchestrated political/psychological war against the government; and second, to isolate the police from the population, thereby ensuring a secure subversive organisation, and to disperse the security forces on defensive duties, thus denying them the initiative. Simson recognised that existing army doctrine had not been framed to deal with this type of war. To remedy this he favoured the application of martial law, but if that was not possible he recommended the appointment of a single director of operations, assisted by a joint civil/police/military staff to direct both the emergency and the normal administration. Most important, he felt the security forces had to destroy the clandestine subversive organisations and they needed, therefore, improved intelligence services.¹³ Simson did not have all the answers. He gave little consideration to the negative aspects of martial law, despite the limitations obvious from the Irish case. He

said nothing about how to respond to propaganda. Nonetheless, the study was remarkable for its sophistication – it clearly defined insurgency as a form of political warfare, requiring both a political and a military response, and offered solutions to some of the problems posed by this form of conflict.

Yet, officers assigned to internal security duties in Palestine in 1945 were urged to read, not Simson, but Sir Charles Gwynn's *Imperial Policing*, published at about the same time.¹⁴ While Gwynn recognised the importance of intelligence to both sides and the need for close cooperation between all elements of the security forces, his study revealed no understanding of the political nature of insurgency. For reasons he never makes clear he deliberately avoided drawing upon the Irish experience; instead, the case studies focused on either rural insurrection or urban riot control.¹⁵ The latter could be dealt with by established procedures for aid to the civil power. Gwynn's approach to the former, with its emphasis on firepower and mobility, was little different from C. E. Callwell's three decades earlier.

Recent experience, however, tended to lend credence to Gwynn's approach. In Palestine from 1936 to 1939, the army had to suppress urban terrorism and rural guerrilla warfare. Although confined to defensive tasks in the early stages of the revolt, once on the offensive the army dealt harshly with the rebels. It eliminated urban terrorism in Jaffa by demolishing the centre of the old town and driving a road through it. In the rural areas the army searched villages, imposed collective fines, and demolished buildings thought to house guerrillas. Roads were driven into the hills where mechanised troops encircled and defeated the guerrillas. Military control, an abbreviated form of martial law, was imposed on Jerusalem, and military courts detained, deported, or executed activists and rebels.¹⁶ General Bernard Montgomery, then commanding a division in northern Palestine, typified the British approach: in Ronald Lewin's words, he 'clamped the countryside in a vice'.¹⁷ To an army inclined to conservatism in strategic thought and to neglect of the political aspects of conflict – such as, for example, the role of the 1939 White Paper in influencing Arab attitudes towards British policy in Palestine – the apparent suppression of the rebellion through the application of 'robust' military methods represented a vindication of the traditional, proven strategic formula. Certainly, as the debate on strategy indicated in Chapter 4, that campaign exerted a profound influence on Montgomery. It coloured his view as to how the British

army ought to deal with the Jewish insurgency. The wider impact of this school of thought can be seen in the fact that in 1939 the Staff College ran only three brief internal security exercises. They covered the basic principles of imperial policing, the use of mobile columns, and the lessons of the Arab revolt in Palestine.¹⁸ Gwynn's book became, in the words of one former senior officer, 'part of the stock in trade of any Staff College candidate or graduate'.¹⁹

All of this tends to lend weight to Hoffman's assertion that in 1945 it was the *Imperial Policing* school of thought, drawing upon the Arab rebellion as the relevant 'model', that informed British preparations for dealing with a possible Jewish insurgency.²⁰ There was a tendency to define the threat and the responses in the purely military terms with which the army was most familiar. It was, presumably, in this light that in March 1945 the War Office issued to Middle East Forces a study on guerrilla warfare prepared for the forthcoming allied occupation of Germany. The paper discussed the strengths, weaknesses and tactics of guerrilla forces, and advised that offensive action by security forces – drives against centres of resistance, pursuit of sabotage bands, and searches – was the most effective strategy for defeating guerrillas. Counter-guerrilla operations were seen as purely military.²¹ So it is not surprising that 'Notes for Officers on Internal Security Duties', the manual issued by GHQ Middle East Forces to provide the army with a body of tactical doctrine, fell short of providing guidance appropriate to the situation in Palestine. According to the manual, an organised revolt was thought likely to include guerrilla warfare, and to involve raids, ambushes, sniping, sabotage, and acts of terrorism. The pamphlet suggested that this conflict form presented the simpler problem of suppression, since each outbreak could be dealt with by 'action in aid of the civil power', that is, by riot control procedures of the type developed and refined since Amritsar. The pamphlet went on to observe that if the 'opposition' found it impossible to confront the army in this fashion, they would be 'driven underground'.²² This was at variance not only with the War Office view of guerrilla warfare, but also with Gwynn and Simson. Moreover, the pamphlet did not explore the implications of driving the opposition underground.

Two other conflict forms were discussed in the pamphlet: outbreaks of civil disturbance directed against the government; and communal (inter-racial, religious, political) disputes not directed against the authorities, but which they have the responsibility to suppress. Both

of these types were expected to involve demonstrations, riots, and destruction of property, with the communal conflicts involving clashes between different sections of the population. Curiously, the former were believed to present a more difficult response problem than the organised revolt, owing to the difficulty of locating and dealing with 'hostile elements'. Unless prompt and effective measures were taken, the pamphlet warned, 'the opposition may gather strength by intimidating loyal elements of the population and by winning over or coercing neutrals'.²³ It is difficult to see how a conflict involving rioting should be more difficult to suppress than a guerrilla-style revolt, especially when proven riot-control methods were available. The GHQ Training Branch appears to have had such a muddled view of insurgency and counter-insurgency that it could not differentiate between distinct conflict forms, and thus could not prescribe appropriate military responses. With this kind of intellectual preparation it is understandable that the army proved unequal to the task in Palestine.

The guidelines began with a definition of the objectives of internal security operations: 'either to dissuade the opposition from any action which is liable to undermine the civil authority, or to force them to abandon their purpose and thus enable the civil authority to re-assume control'.²⁴ Regardless of the form of conflict, the army's task was two-fold: to prevent interference with the normal life of the afflicted area, and 'to get to grips with the hostile elements and bring them into subjection'.²⁵ In this regard, the army was guided by a number of general principles, the four most significant being: firm and timely action; the application of the minimum degree of force necessary to achieve the object of any operation; close cooperation between the army and the civil authorities, particularly the police; and mobility.²⁶ The pamphlet then went on to discuss in detail procedures for mobile columns, curfews, search operations, riot control, vehicle convoys, and the use of armoured vehicles and aircraft. While a major portion of the manual was taken up with standardised and entirely appropriate riot control measures, the influence of *Imperial Policing* attitudes was manifest throughout. The disjunction between these attitudes and both the likely threat and politically acceptable responses is apparent in the references to the use of 'offensive action' against armed bands, and to the use of air support for such operations, and in the admonition that 'when civil disturbances break out in town, the tactics to be employed are street fighting tactics, *modified* ... to suit the circumstances'.²⁷

The pamphlet also covered legal aspects of internal security operations, training and administrative matters, such as accommodation, welfare, morale and discipline of troops. So, within its limitations, 'Notes for Officers on Internal Security Duties' was a reasonably comprehensive document, and it was supplemented by others. Army Headquarters in Jerusalem distributed instructions covering civil-military relations and responsibility for internal security. They defined the army's powers under the emergency regulations to make arrests and to detain persons without trial, to conduct searches, to use lethal force, to impose curfews, and to try suspected insurgents before military courts.²⁸ The Armoured Corps Staff at GHQ Middle East Forces issued a study on the role of armoured forces in internal security for tasks such as road patrols, convoy escort, clearance and occupation of urban areas. The document also emphasised the limitations and vulnerability of armoured vehicles in urban conflict.²⁹ The Airborne Division produced a brief on air support for internal security which included command and control procedures and the description of a new technique called the 'Air Pin' in which aircraft could be used to keep inhabitants inside a village while the army was laying a cordon around it.³⁰ In view of the political sensitivity of operations in Palestine higher authorities produced directives on several potentially controversial issues. The use of tear gas was discussed extensively and approved at Cabinet level.³¹ The Chiefs of Staff Committee restricted the use of heavy weapons in areas likely to involve risk of innocent civilian casualties or damage to holy places. Discretion to approve use was vested in the Commander in Chief Middle East, but was delegated to the GOC Palestine.³² While the high-level deliberations on these matters reflected an obvious understanding of the political sensitivity of the Palestine situation, there was an air of unreality to the discussion of the use of 'heavy weapons'. It represented a kind of 'worst case' contingency planning that was appropriate neither for the threat nor the response in Palestine at that time. Even with the political limitations imposed, the pervasive influence of Callwell and Gwynn is implicit in the consideration of these military options. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the operational policy dictated by Montgomery. That said, and wrong-headed as he was, it may be unfair to criticise the CIGS for clinging to obsolete tactical concepts *before* it was clear that they had become obsolete. It was not immediately apparent to the army – nor to many politicians – that Britain's relationship with its colonies had

been altered in any substantial way by the war. Britain, after all, had emerged victorious, so there was no reason for the army, unconcerned with political matters, to question the assumptions upon which imperial rule and imperial policing were based. It was a rare officer indeed who could draw the analogy between colonial rebellion and the wartime resistance and suggest that the British army could learn from its former enemies.³³ So the old methods, proven by previous experience in Palestine, would suffice.

Significantly, but not surprisingly, neither 'Notes for Officers on Internal Security Duties', nor any other set of instructions assigned the army a role in intelligence collection or countering insurgent propaganda. The former was a police responsibility, and army thinking emphasised that 'Troops are not trained for police duties . . . and should not be so employed'.³⁴ They were not to undertake on their own 'duties of a detective or secret service nature'.³⁵ There were two influences at work in this regard. The first was the army's legal position in Palestine; it was providing 'aid to the civil power': assisting the police, not replacing them. The conditions under which the army provided that aid were clearly defined in both operational and legal terms. Senior commanders expressed grave reservations about altering in any way those principles and procedures, for fear that the soldiers would not be protected adequately by the law.³⁶ Second, although the army had gained considerable experience of intelligence work during the war, historically it had never been entirely comfortable with the intelligence task. There was, in the immediate post-war period, substantial opposition within the army to the creation of even a small permanent intelligence corps.³⁷ Propaganda, on the other hand, was a purely political matter, out of the army's purview. There was no requirement for it to function in the counter-propaganda role, and no precedent for doing so. There was, of course, a need to deal with the news media and, as will be shown later, the army did adjust to that task, if somewhat imperfectly.

Two observations arise from the foregoing analysis. First, it is clear that the British army did not understand the nature of the insurgent challenge, and as a result, the methods prescribed for response were inappropriate. In a delicate political situation that called for precision, the army was a blunt, unwieldy instrument: existing doctrine of employment would not disrupt the insurgent infrastructure, and thus would leave the initiative in the hands of the insurgents. Indeed, it left the British with the worst possible

combination of methods: repressive in appearance – a political liability – and ineffective in fact. Applied in the absence of a policy, it virtually ensured the fulfilment of Casey's prescient prophecy.

Second, the arrangement by which the army provided 'aid to the civil power' implied an asymmetrical police/army relationship, instead of a partnership of equals in counter-insurgency. This was symbolised graphically by the GOC's exclusion from formal membership in the Central Security Committee. This meant that the Palestine conflict was perceived not as a war, which it was, but as merely another civil disturbance. Hence, the emphasis on the primacy of the police as the 'lead agency' in internal security, with the army in a subordinate role. This might not have proven a serious matter had the police force been strong and effective. But as this chapter will make clear, the police were not equal to the task. Consequently, the burden of security duties would fall increasingly on the army, a fact which exacerbated an already awkward security relationship. The third point is related to this; although the army was required increasingly to take the lead in the counter-insurgency campaign, contemporary methods made no provision for the army to operate in two fields where the civil authority was weak: intelligence and countering propaganda. The army was almost completely exposed on these two crucial flanks, and lacked both the intellectual tools and operational guidelines either to defend itself or to prosecute the counter-insurgency campaign effectively in these vital areas. In both it was forced to devise *ad hoc* measures which were neither wholly appropriate nor effective. In conclusion, then, it may be fair to suggest that the intellectual or conceptual limitations of British counter-insurgency thinking made operational failure – at both the strategic and tactical levels – the most likely outcome.

OBSTACLES TO TACTICAL INNOVATION

Significant as it was, a failure of strategic thought to provide an appropriate doctrine was only part of the problem. The nature of the army itself, and the conditions prevailing in the army in Palestine in 1945–47, were probably equally important factors that contributed to the army's defeat.

Although the army had a long history of aid to the civil power at home, and low-intensity operations abroad, it lacked the intellectual tools, particularly an 'institutional memory' that would

allow it to learn from historical experience. This lacuna can be traced in large part to the army's imperial role. Never needed for defence of the homeland, posted overseas where it was largely forgotten by its countrymen, it never became a citizen army. Instead, Anthony Verrier observes, it acquired from the imperial experience 'habits and practices which not only distinguished it sharply from most other armies . . . but from many of the attributes which we now associate with British life'.³⁸ These unique habits and practices are probably most singularly manifest in the regimental system. Regimental organisation preceded by a wide historical margin the peak period of the British Empire, but imperial requirements in the latter half of the nineteenth century shaped regimental organisation and the character of the British army thereafter. The residual effects may still be seen today, even in the much diluted modern British regiments. The Cardwell system, introduced in 1873, reorganised the infantry into paired battalions so as to provide permanent forces for overseas duty, plus a home-based rotational reserve garrisoned and recruited on a territorial basis.³⁹ The system survived largely intact until its virtual collapse during the Second World War, owing to the demand for a vastly expanded army.

The pervasive impact of the regimental system cannot be overstated. More than one observer has described the British army as 'not so much an Army as a collection of regiments'.⁴⁰ Regimental loyalties, however diluted by reorganisation and amalgamation, have remained strong. They have precluded the development of a national 'officer corps'.⁴¹ This approach has some obvious limitations. To this day, the army remains a conservative institution, resistant to change, neither deeply intellectual nor self-critical. In this sense it is not radically different from other professional armies which, as noted in Chapter 1, are inclined towards conservatism in strategic thought for sound reasons. But in the British army this tendency has been reinforced by the predominance of the regimental system, which has hindered the development of the kind of thinking that would see the army as a functional whole greater than the sum of its component parts. Traditionally shy of 'doctrine' in its approach to the study and practice of war, the British army was and remains today – in the view of Shelford Bidwell and Dominick Graham – 'an unprofessional coalition of arms and services'. Moreover, lacking the centralised 'brain' of a properly organised and trained general staff, the army was not good at retaining and learning from historical experience, until comparatively recently.⁴² Instead, there was a

tendency on the part of senior officers to take the uncritical view that 'if it worked well in the last war, why shouldn't it work well in the next one?'⁴³

At the operational level this meant that overseas commanders traditionally were allowed a fair degree of latitude in the formulation of strategy, execution of policy and devising of tactics for local situations. A certain independent habit of mind was both required and permitted. This lent itself neatly both to the individualistic nature of overseas regimental life and to operational necessity; the army was frequently 'outnumbered by its enemies and . . . more impoverished than its friends'.⁴⁴ The need to concentrate on the immediate requirements of practical 'down to earth' soldiering in such circumstances made the army a master of improvisation, flexibility and 'on the job' training and learning – making do with what was available on the spot. Unfortunately, this skill was often acquired at the expense of a 'wider view' of the conflicts in which the army was involved. Nor did it encourage officers to take the time during their service careers to reflect on experience and thus to learn from both failure and success.

The army's insular nature posed problems for the institution when it was forced to confront the political aspects of conflict. The history of the British army's involvement in internal security, and the traditions and professional assumptions of the army itself, mitigated against considerations of the political aspects of warfare. From the Restoration until the creation of regular police forces in the nineteenth century, the army was primarily responsible for enforcing law and order in Britain. But it was neither a satisfactory nor a popular arrangement, disliked by soldiers, politicians, and the public alike. Robin Higham has observed that soldiers not only detested aid to the civil power, they probably feared it, and with good reason: acting in this capacity soldiers found themselves bound by two contradictory sets of laws – civil and military – and the overriding principle of minimum force. The arrangement had the appearance of a legal trap.⁴⁵

In the twentieth century political opinion began to insist that aid to the civil power be applied with equal restraint in the empire. This shift of attitudes was given considerable impetus by the army's massacre of Punjabis at Amritsar in 1919. The incident became a watershed in the development of internal security theory and practice, from which two lessons emerged. First, as noted in the previous section, the army had to refine its riot control drills and

train the troops properly for such duties. This was one case where the army did learn from bitter experience, but it is significant nonetheless that the most pressure for reform came from outside the army. This points directly to the second lesson, which is that incidents such as Amritsar could result in significant political consequences, which in turn could rebound to the detriment of the officer concerned. Most of the criticism of Brigadier-General R. E. H. Dyer, the British commander at Amritsar, came from those in Britain who had not been required to confront that, or a similar, situation. It may be fair to suggest, as Higham does, that the outcome of the Amritsar incident enhanced the army's distrust of politics and its distaste for internal security operations because:

when the situation gets so bad that statesmen or mayors call in the military force, they are frequently more interested in saving their own reputations by restoring order than in giving the professional soldier a clear mandate. Too often the soldier finds himself attempting to back up men whose lack of planning has resulted in the soldier on the spot having to make unpalatable decisions which, . . . he will later find the Cabinet repudiating Politically naive, afraid for his career, the military man usually finds himself at a disadvantage in upholding his position and reputation because he will rarely resort to counter-pressure through a lawyer, Parliament, or the Press.⁴⁶

With the example of General Dyer before them it is hardly surprising that the army wanted it clearly understood that troops should be employed only as a last resort, when the forces of local governments were unable or unwilling to act effectively.⁴⁷ Furthermore, both the political conduct and the outcome of the Irish campaign undoubtedly reinforced existing fears and prejudices and discouraged examination of the political dimensions of internal conflicts. At the very least it would have required a revolution of attitude in the army to induce its officers to study the crucial interplay of political, military and psychological dimensions of such campaigns. The atmosphere prevailing in the inter-war army ensured that no such revolution was likely. Bidwell and Graham's caustic assessment of the inter-war Royal Artillery might easily have applied to the army as a whole: 'guilty not so much of a failure of foresight, or of considering the wrong options, or making the wrong assumptions, but of failing to think about anything at all'.⁴⁸ With hide-bound traditionalists such as Field-Marshal Sir George

Milne (Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 1926–33) in command, the small professional army remained resolutely anti-intellectual and insulated from examination of those aspects of warfare that bore heavily on political affairs. The Staff College discouraged discussion of such matters, and unorthodox officers who had been involved in unconventional operations, and had taken the trouble to think and write about them, were out of favour; T. E. Lawrence undoubtedly was the most prominent case in point, but by no means the only one.⁴⁹

In 1939 the war intervened and the army had to concentrate on 'proper soldiering', engaging a conventionally armed, uniformed enemy with large-scale combined arms methods. To the extent that they were required at all, internal security operations were a minor consideration, confined to inactive rear areas. Palestine was one of these, but even here, where both the Jews and the Arabs posed modest security problems, political considerations dictated that internal security operations were not pursued vigorously.⁵⁰ In sum, then, it may be said that the army which deployed into Palestine in 1945–46 was influenced by a mindset which was, first, oriented to conventional war; second, distrustful of internal security operations, particularly their political aspects, and hence poorly informed about the nature of insurgency and how to respond; and finally, resistant to institutional change 'from the top down', but comparatively good at learning on the job at the tactical level. The army's situation in Palestine between 1945 and 1947, however, was such that even tactical innovation proved very difficult to achieve and sustain.

While the Palestine campaign was unfolding, the British army was engaged in the process of reorganisation from a wartime to a peacetime footing. In the first five years after the war the army declined in strength from more than two million in 1945 to 354 000 in 1950.⁵¹ This pace of demobilisation meant that by October 1947 every regiment of the line was reduced, temporarily, to a single battalion. Similar reductions affected the other arms and services.⁵² So for the duration of the Palestine campaign the British army was in a state of constant flux, and the garrison in Palestine was not immune to this. Formations were subject to frequent unit changes (unit turbulence), and units were constantly losing experienced officers and NCOs, while acquiring new ones and drafts of recruits in the other ranks (manpower turbulence). Even a cursory survey of the formations and units in Palestine illustrates this point clearly.

In the autumn of 1945, the 1st Infantry Division consisted only

of the 2nd and 3rd Infantry Brigades, with four attached Territorial Army and some colonial and imperial units. The arrival of the 1st Guards Brigade in November brought the division up to full strength, but shortly thereafter (early December) it went to Egypt for a four-month period of reorganisation. The Guards Brigade, the Territorials, and the colonial and imperial units were left behind under command of the 3rd Infantry Division. Two of the 1st Division's regular battalions left the division at the end of 1945. Unit turbulence continued after the 1st returned to Palestine in April 1946. The Territorial battalions dispersed during the autumn of 1946, and four of the regular battalions (including one complete brigade) had gone by the end of January 1947. Of the units added from Europe during reorganisation, two battalions stayed less than one year, and three others left in the spring of 1947 upon completion of one year tours. The King's Dragoon Guards, an armoured unit, was with the division from late 1945 until early 1947 when it handed over to the 17th/21st Lancers. During the course of one twelve-month period, unit turbulence had completely changed the face of the division.⁵³

The 6th Airborne Division suffered similar instability. It arrived in Palestine with the 2nd and 3rd Parachute Brigades and the 6th Airlanding Brigade, plus the normal complement of divisional arms and services. In March 1946, the division's reconnaissance regiment disbanded; some of the officers and most of the men transferred to the 3rd King's Own Hussars, which remained on strength until withdrawal from Palestine. The following month, the 1st Parachute Brigade arrived to replace the Airlanding Brigade, which then left the division and moved to the Jerusalem sector to become an independent infantry brigade. The 2nd Parachute Brigade departed in late January 1947, taking with it a slice of the divisional arms and services.⁵⁴ Jerusalem was garrisoned by a succession of brigades: 185 (redesignated 7th) from November 1945 to April 1946; 31st Independent Infantry (formerly 6th Airlanding), April to November 1946; 9th Infantry, until the end of March 1947, and 8th Infantry thereafter. The 1st Battalion, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, which began their tour of duty in Palestine as part of the Airlanding Brigade, subsequently served under the 31st, 8th and 9th Brigades.⁵⁵

Simultaneously, every unit and formation to a greater or lesser degree was subject to internal turbulence as a result of manpower turnover. Officers and men were being posted away from units temporarily on entitled or compassionate leave, extra-regimental

employment, short- and long-term courses (e.g. at Staff College) and other temporary duties. Still others were being repatriated to the UK, either for demobilisation or return to a parent unit. At the same time, units in Palestine were receiving new officers and NCOs, and drafts of other ranks recruits, either from units disbanding in the theatre, or straight from depots in Britain. A glance at the staff list of the Airborne Division illustrates this point in a graphic fashion. Between 1945 and 1947, the divisional commander changed twice, and the GI(Ops) position was filled by three different officers. Brigade commanders changed frequently: Brigadier R. H. Bellamy, for example, commanded, in sequence, 6th Airlanding, 1st and 2nd Parachute Brigades. The 2nd had three different brigadiers, although it kept its battalion commanders for 1945 and 1946. The 3rd kept the same brigadier and one battalion commander for the first two years, but every other command position changed.⁵⁶ The same process was at work in the arms and services, and at every rank level.

Actual unit and formation strengths fluctuated constantly, often between extremes of 'boom and bust'. In April 1946 the minutes of the Brigadier General Staff's conference recorded the comment that the 'Offr posn in Middle East is reaching its most critical stage. Corps and Services other than RAC, RA, Inf and REME were in a very difficult posn.'⁵⁷ Nearly a year later the Commander in Chief Middle East, General Sir Miles Dempsey, reported confidently to the CIGS (Montgomery), 'We have ample troops in Palestine at present probably too many' and went on to add that a surplus of infantry meant that 'all battalions in the Middle East will be up to or over strength'.⁵⁸ Barely five months later his successor reported that there were in Palestine troops sufficient only for one sanction – imposition of martial law – at any one time, and that the situation might demand more. Not only would this delay the departure of a brigade and four battalions; he believed six additional battalions would be required.⁵⁹ Until that point, numbers had only been part of the problem, as unit strengths varied between formations and over time. For example, a King's Dragoon Guards Squadron Leaders Conference in April 1946, on the subject of squadron strengths, 'appeared to have a depressing effect on all Sqn Ldrs present'.⁶⁰ The war diary went on to record that 'D' Squadron was in no position to lose anyone, and to express the hope that the group currently on leave would return on time and not 'protract the agony'. By contrast, the battalion strengths of the 8th Infantry Brigade in

the first quarter of 1947 varied between 825 and 964,⁶¹ which in terms of raw numbers was more than adequate. The more serious problem was that constant turnover precluded the retention of experienced officers and NCOs needed to train both the new officers and the large drafts of incoming other ranks. To cite but one example, the 9th Infantry Brigade suffered an 11 per cent reduction in other ranks strength between the beginning of the last quarter of 1946 and the end of the first quarter of 1947; but more important, it lost 20 per cent of its officer strength.⁶² This experience was shared by many units.⁶³

Unit and manpower turbulence exerted a significant impact on operational readiness, although this is difficult to represent in terms of empirical data. Moreover, these factors cannot be considered in isolation; they were concurrent with constant operational commitments, which compounded the problem. Most units complained of a lack of trained men in all ranks and branches, and some were hard pressed to maintain strengths sufficient for operations. The quality of administration, maintenance, and 'battle ready' status all declined accordingly, to the 'danger level' in some units. There were also some morale problems, although the scale and impact are difficult to assess.⁶⁴

Undoubtedly, the most important aspect of readiness affected in this manner was training. As noted in Chapter 1, sufficient and proper training is central to the process of preparing army units and men for counter-insurgency operations. With regard to Palestine, first, the troops had to adjust their thinking from combat to peacekeeping. Second, the individual soldier had to learn the basic principles and tactical procedures laid down in the manuals, instructions and directives, as well as acquainting himself with the structure of the police, the administration and the two ethnic communities. This indoctrination process was particularly important for the 6th Airborne Division, which had been sent to Palestine at short notice and did not have time to adapt gradually to the situation. Training was conducted at two levels: in early autumn 1945, training teams from GHQ Middle East Forces taught street and house clearing, and command and control of a company-sized mobile column. Formations and headquarters, in accordance with the basic manual, carried out signals exercises and tactical exercises without troops covering cordon and search operations and suppression of large-scale insurrection. Two brigades, however, did not have time to run exercises before the first incidents at the end of October.⁶⁵

As the campaign continued and the turbulence increased, the opportunities for in-depth training declined. While in Egypt in 1946, the 2nd Infantry Brigade held a two-day study period on tactical problems and procedures for internal security.⁶⁶ There is no indication that other units or formations experienced the luxury of such a session once the campaign escalated in 1946. Instead, most officers and other ranks received their training 'on the job', through participation in operations.⁶⁷ Yet, it is clear that this was regarded as insufficient. The 1946 war diary of the King's Dragoon Guards indicates that both operational deployments and manpower turbulence hampered proper training; young officers were not receiving the intensive training they needed because they were fully occupied dealing with the raw material in their troops, which unfortunately was increasing with each new draft of reinforcements.⁶⁸ Later that same year, the commander of the 9th Infantry Brigade commented that owing to operational commitments, the brigade had no men available for training. The infantry battalions had 200 men per day on IS duties, and every third night on guard. Moreover, leave schemes were taking away 40 to 50 men per battalion, with normal overlap leaving as many as 100 vacancies. The situation remained largely unchanged in the first quarter of 1947.⁶⁹ Other formations experienced the same problems.⁷⁰

There was also a question of training priorities. Army headquarters in Palestine did not regard counter-insurgency as the primary task of field formations in the country. Throughout the 1945-47 period it expressed concern that internal security operations were interfering with the army's proper role there, which was to train for war. Whenever possible, units used spare time for conventional training.⁷¹

With all of these conflicting pressures at work, it is understandable that army operations tended to follow the standard procedures prescribed in the manual, with only minor variations. Between November 1945 and July 1947 the army carried out at least 176 search operations, 55 of which involved battalions of larger formations. In more than 50 cases, the searches were reactive, mounted in response to specific incidents.⁷² These operations left considerable room for improvement, and the series of searches carried out at the end of June 1946 proved useful in exposing inadequacies in operational procedures. Reports by the 1st Guards Brigade indicated requirements for: unarmed troops to deal with passive resistance; special equipment and expert searchers to locate hidden arms; improved techniques and Hebrew interpreters to

facilitate identification and interrogation; reserve troops to relieve weary search teams; and above all, secrecy and surprise in executing operations.⁷³ However, there is little evidence from subsequent operations to suggest that the army followed up these recommendations. Given the army's predilection for large-scale reactive searches, it is not surprising that tactical surprise was almost invariably lost, with concomitant results. Weaknesses in the intelligence community, particularly the police, discussed later in this chapter, ensured that little could be done to improve identification and interrogation of suspected insurgents.

That said, the army was not devoid of innovation and adaptation. As the situation and unit circumstances permitted, some commanders attempted to compensate for such gaps as they perceived in procedures and training by revising techniques on the basis of operational experience. Several formations endeavoured to refine their roadblock procedures, since it was felt that this was the best way to restrict the insurgents' freedom of movement. The new techniques included pre-designated roadblock locations which would be occupied rapidly following an incident, and mobile roadblocks which could be mounted at short notice at random locations on main roads.⁷⁴ Other tactics which were not provided for in the manual, but which were tried experimentally and then incorporated into operational routine included snap searches of dwellings, transportation facilities (buses, bus and railroad stations), and places of entertainment. Some units conducted off-road foot patrols. Operational records indicate that knowledge of these procedures was transferred from unit to unit, implying at least a degree of institutionalisation.⁷⁵

The most innovative methods were those employed by the special 'undercover' squads of Farran and McGregor. These were the brainchild of Colonel Bernard Fergusson, a former Chindit officer who was serving temporarily as an Assistant Inspector General of Police. Subsequent counter-insurgency campaigns have demonstrated clearly the value of such operations, which amount to using insurgent tactics against the insurgents themselves.⁷⁶ However, under the circumstances prevailing in Palestine the political risks – arising from exposure of these methods – were very high while, given the flawed application of the scheme, the chances for significant success were relatively low.

First, the squads became a 'private army'. While they operated ostensibly under the direction of a District Superintendent of Police,

they were answerable only to Colonel Fergusson, who in turn reported directly to the IG, Colonel Gray. They thus bypassed completely the normal police chain of command. Second, placed outside the normal command structure the squads never became fully integrated with the CID Political Branch, for whom covert anti-terrorist operations were routine. While close cooperation existed at lower levels, some senior police officers did not approve of or support the scheme. Furthermore, rather than exploit the talent available in the CID, Colonel Fergusson turned to the army for leaders with wartime experience of special operations. The squads, although recruited from the ranks of the police force, consisted largely of ex-servicemen rather than experienced police intelligence officers.⁷⁷

Third, from the beginning the squads laboured under grave limitations. They had trained together for only a fortnight in a rural setting despite the fact that the cities were to be their theatre of operations. Special operations rely on secrecy for effect but by Farran's own account the activities of the squads were anything but secret.⁷⁸ Finally and most important, the tactical objectives of the squads were never clear. In theory, such units can be used to gather intelligence covertly for the CID. Alternatively, the squads could exploit CID intelligence to capture or kill the insurgents themselves. Colonel Fergusson clearly favoured the latter role since the squads did not consist of trained detectives and none of the men had more than a cursory comprehension of Hebrew. Thus, their value as intelligence gathering units was limited. However, if the squads were to operate in the anti-terrorist role they required good intelligence and their operational guidelines would have to be specific and in accordance with the law; as soldiers and policemen they were bound by regulations which were very clear on their powers of arrest and the circumstances under which they could open fire. But accurate intelligence was scarce and there was no clear directive to specify how the squads were to be employed. In his memoirs Fergusson noted that they were 'not to terrorize or repay in kind, but to anticipate and to give would-be raiders a bloody nose as they came in to raid'.⁷⁹ Farran, on the other hand, maintains that they were given full discretion to operate as they pleased within their area: to advise on defence against terrorism and to take an active part in hunting the insurgents. Farran considered this 'a *carte blanche* . . . a free hand for us against terror when all others were so closely hobbled'.⁸⁰ When the case became public, however, the Chief

Secretary insisted that, 'No authority has ever been given for the use by any member of the police force of other than ordinary police methods in dealing with apprehended persons'.⁸¹

The obvious discrepancies suggest that the guidelines were less than clear in some crucial aspects. In any case, these methods were out of step with the objectives of the internal security campaign; a mandate to restore law and order precluded the use of disruptive tactics of dubious legality. Furthermore, Fergusson's and Farran's wartime experience caused them to think of Palestine, and thereby to devise their operations, as if they were in occupied Europe. But the analogy was incorrect because the security forces were the occupiers and the insurgents were the resistance movement. Conducted in a poor intelligence environment without strategic purpose or clear tactical objectives, the operations could be expected to achieve only minor success at best. There was no reason to expect that the squads would be decisive by covert means when the overt system of internal security had already broken down.

What can be inferred from the foregoing is that army commanders were rarely in a position to think and plan beyond the next roadblock or the next search operation. The Palestine campaign demanded innovative, flexible tactical thinking. But unit and manpower turbulence and the pressure of constant operational commitments confined army operations largely to routine formats that could be implemented easily by successions of conventionally oriented officers and NCOs and relatively inexperienced other ranks. In fact, there were barely sufficient officers and NCOs with experience to instill even the most basic skills, let alone to be 'creative'. Moreover, there were strong institutional disincentives to modify operational 'doctrine'.

Nonetheless, modifications were made, in the imperial tradition, at unit and sub-unit level. When this was done, it usually was effective, producing positive results out of proportion to the effort involved. However, such efforts tended to be *ad hoc*, unsustained, unit specific, and insufficiently propagated to have permeated the army as a whole. As such, they were inadequate to disrupt the insurgent organisations beyond temporarily reducing their freedom of action, and thus could not reverse the gradual erosion of public order. The methods which clearly exhibited the greatest potential in this regard – covert special operations – were poorly conceived and politically inappropriate. It would be easy to fault the High Commissioner and the Colonial Office for approving the scheme

under such inauspicious circumstances. But the influence of the strategic decision-making described in Chapter 4, with the pressure for results, and the interplay of politics and personalities, helps to place operational policy, including this plan, in perspective.

THE INTELLIGENCE PROCESS

In his memoir of the insurgency, Menachem Begin described the intelligence struggle between the security forces and the insurgents as 'the clash of brains', and 'perhaps the decisive battle in the struggle for liberation'.⁸² Unnecessarily, he added that it was a battle the British lost. Begin's gift for hyperbole notwithstanding, his assessment of the importance of intelligence to the outcome of the campaign is scarcely exaggerated. The security forces were unable to collect, develop and exploit successfully intelligence sufficient to defeat the insurgents; nor were they able to use intelligence consistently to prevent major insurgent operations. Army officers who served in Palestine at this time were almost unanimous in the view that inadequate intelligence was one of the keys to the British defeat. 'You never have enough intelligence,' Lieutenant-General Sir Roger Bower observed, 'but we had virtually none.'⁸³ Moreover, the insurgents were able to penetrate and compromise the security of the principal British intelligence organisation, the Palestine police. This suggests an 'intelligence failure' of significant proportions. The idea of intelligence failure has become fashionable of late, but as Mark Lowenthal points out, it remains a valid concept even if it is over-used or misapplied. Intelligence failures happen.⁸⁴ Palestine was one of these. This section will examine the nature and consequences of that failure, and will attempt to suggest some reasons why it occurred.

Failure occurred at the levels of both strategic intelligence – that dealing with broad intentions and capabilities⁸⁵ – and tactical intelligence – specific detailed information about immediate plans, operations and targets.⁸⁶ There were some successes at both levels as well. As a general proposition it could be said that the security forces acquired strategic intelligence of adequate quality on the Haganah, but not on the Irgun or Lechi. That standard of strategic intelligence provided the basis for more effective operations against the former than against the latter. More often than not, however,

the security forces were unable to turn such strategic intelligence as they had into tactical intelligence that would allow them to forestall insurgent operations or to identify, locate and apprehend the perpetrators.

The Haganah's semi-clandestine existence, and its cooperation with the British during the war, gave the security forces an edge in intelligence collection on the organisation. Although they overestimated its size, they had relatively accurate information on its structure and general procedures.⁸⁷ This allowed the security forces to locate and apprehend with relative ease many of the Haganah and Palmach commanders selected for arrest and detention during Operation AGATHA.

The British were also well informed about the Haganah's strategic intentions. In January 1945 the GHQ Middle East Joint Intelligence Committee issued an assessment which anticipated two phases of Jewish resistance to British policy in Palestine. In the first of these, the JIC expected the Yishuv to use passive resistance in an effort to paralyse the Palestine government and to impede the operations of the security forces, coupled with the use of violence to resist searches for arms and to support illegal immigration operations. This corresponded almost exactly to the Haganah's strategy during the united resistance period. Even more notable for its accuracy was the annex to the assessment, which analysed the anticipated role of Zionist propaganda in such a campaign. It predicted that: propaganda would be directed to influence world opinion, particularly in the United States; that it would consist of efforts to discredit the Palestine government, the civil and military authorities; and that British measures would be represented as illegal and aggressive, contrary to Britain's obligations under the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, and to the will of the Jewish people.⁸⁸ Strategic warning of such prescience is rare in counter-insurgency, but this was not the last accurate forecast. The British interpreted correctly the Haganah's efforts to create the united resistance, and received advance warning of the movement's intention to begin its campaign with a 'single serious incident'.⁸⁹

Nonetheless, this was insufficient to permit the security forces to prevent that incident; indeed, the evidence suggests that the incidents of 31 October/1 November 1945 took the security forces by surprise. Nor was this the only occasion the security forces were caught off guard in spite of early warning. In May 1946 the Defence Security Office accurately forecast a revival of insurgent activity on a major

scale in June. This was followed up by specific warnings on the eve of the attacks to patrol and protect the lines of communication, particularly the railway bridges.⁹⁰ The insurgents reached and damaged or destroyed every target, including the bridges.

The Irgun and the Lechi posed an intelligence problem of a considerably greater scale. The two organisations were much smaller, more selectively recruited, and hence more secure from penetration. Unlike the Haganah, they had never had a legal existence, and had not cooperated with the British during the war. So British information on them was sketchy at best; the JIC's estimate of 3000 Irgun members⁹¹ was at least twice as large as Irgun's active membership. In June 1946, during the planning of Operation AGATHA, General Barker admitted that '... our intelligence regarding them [Irgun and Lechi] is insufficient to permit of any preconceived plan for their extermination The fact that the whereabouts of the five officers who were kidnapped . . . is still unknown shows how negative is our intelligence on which to be able to act.'⁹² At that time Barker did not expect the intelligence situation to improve, and his expectations were borne out.⁹³ That said, the security forces carried out a number of successful operations, described in the previous chapter, which led to the capture of members of the groups and the disruption of their operations, which subsided to a significant degree in the second quarter of 1947, following arrests during the Martial Law operation. But such successes tended to be the exception to the rule.⁹⁴ The security forces were demonstrably unable to collect or produce intelligence sufficient to prevent costly assaults on themselves – attacks on police stations being a case in point – or on other vital installations. According to Edward Horne, the Palestine police received information, well in advance of the event, which indicated that the insurgents were planning to attack the government offices in the King David Hotel.⁹⁵ Yet, such information proved inadequate to prevent the disaster. The statistics on violent crimes, detentions and prosecutions are equally telling. Violent crimes, many of them associated with the insurgency, increased significantly from 1945, but of the more than 2000 Jews placed in long-term detention, only 168 were convicted in the courts of offences relating to insurgent activities.⁹⁶ Against the rest there was insufficient evidence to proceed to prosecution; their involvement in insurgent activities was suspected, but could not be proven.

The implications of this failure were significant and severe for

Britain. It could not enforce the law in Palestine, and it could not control the activities of the insurgents. Together, these factors meant that intelligence failure contributed to the erosion of British legitimacy and control in Palestine. In short, intelligence failure was a direct cause of the British defeat.

On the basis of available evidence, however, it is difficult to establish with certainty the locus and causes of this failure, but the concept of an 'intelligence cycle' provides a useful analytical tool for understanding the problem. The cycle is the process by which, in Jeffrey Richelson's words, 'information is acquired, converted into intelligence, and made available to the policy-makers'.⁹⁷ Richelson identifies five basic stages of the cycle: planning and direction; collection; processing; production and analysis; and dissemination. As Lowenthal points out, the process can break down or otherwise go wrong at any one of these stages.⁹⁸ The evidence with respect to Palestine suggests failure at several points within the cycle.

Planning and direction began at the 'joint services' level, and it is here that the first indications of trouble may be found. The security committees, both central and district, served as joint operational planning forums. The frequency of meetings – weekly, daily, or otherwise – was determined by the urgency of the situation at the time. But the format was always the same. A representative from the CID political branch would brief the committee on the intelligence 'picture', covering the period since the last meeting; the committee would then formulate plans based on the available intelligence. According to former CID officer John Briance, there were also joint intelligence meetings, involving GSI and the Defence Security Office, once or twice per week.⁹⁹ So there were forums for establishing intelligence requirements; what is less clear is how well they functioned. It has since become a 'rule of thumb' that the ability to develop and exploit operational intelligence sufficient to defeat insurgents depends almost entirely on the establishment of a close and harmonious working relationship between the army and the police, the latter being the principal intelligence service.¹⁰⁰ With regard to Palestine, most former army officers and policemen felt that day-to-day relations were satisfactory, but it is clear from both contemporary sources and subsequent observations that army-police relations were in some respects neither close nor harmonious. At the heart of the problem lay, first, a clash of operational styles, approaches to the problem. The policeman, Simon Hutchinson

suggests, sees the insurgents as highly organised, dangerous criminals and thus favours the methodical approach – evidence, written statements, photographs – which is likely to frustrate his army colleague although it is far more likely to produce results in court months later.¹⁰¹ The army, however, was inclined to view the insurgents as a military force to be destroyed by military means, and had no patience for methodical intelligence methods. Major-General Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley, then a company commander, summarised perceptively this clash of styles:

The fundamental problem is that the army is not called in until the police are exhausted. Then you have the worst of all possible situations – the police are played out and feel that their efforts have not been appreciated, and the military come in with a superior attitude that they are going to restore order The upshot is that you start off in a muddle, with poor intelligence, without proper understanding of the other person's situation – this was very obvious in Palestine.¹⁰²

For this and other reasons which will be examined shortly, the army tried to diversify its intelligence sources and sometimes excluded the police from operational planning. These efforts included the development of deceptive cover plans or informing the police and involving them only once the operations were underway. Some officers, however, like Brigadier E. H. Goulburn, felt that effective planning required cooperation of the police: 'not being able to inform the police is a great disadvantage'.¹⁰³

Some policemen were equally critical of the army which, in the words of John Briance, 'didn't know what it was doing Big operations are fine for the military. But intelligence is a police responsibility.'¹⁰⁴ Catling, who headed the Jewish affairs section in the CID political branch, was more philosophical. He asserts that a great deal of the army's criticism of the police could be attributed to the fact that the army never felt comfortable with the intelligence task. Moreover, army-police cooperation was a relatively new idea, so it is not surprising that there were contrary views.¹⁰⁵ It would be misleading, in any case, to suggest that there was no cooperation between the two forces. Army units were assigned to assist and advise the police on the physical security of their stations, and they monitored the police radio frequencies to ensure prompt response in the event of attacks. Joint operations were conducted as a matter of routine. In the field of intelligence both forces made efforts to

share experience and knowledge.¹⁰⁶ Still, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the army and the police never established the kind of working relationship that would give appropriate direction to the intelligence task.¹⁰⁷

There is also some question as to whether the Inspector General from 1946 to 1948, Colonel William Nicol Gray, gave sufficient priority to the CID's intelligence work. It is not appropriate to fix blame upon any one individual, and even if it were, to lay it wholly at the feet of Colonel Gray would be unjust, and probably historically inaccurate. Nonetheless, as the IG during the most critical period, he must bear some of the responsibility. Gray's appointment was controversial. The Palestine government had requested an experienced policeman to replace Rymer Jones, who was due to return to the Metropolitan Police. But the Colonial Office felt a non-policeman would be able to fill the position so long as he had an experienced policeman as his deputy. They pointed out that several recent Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police had not been policemen themselves, though the comparison was hardly relevant. Nonetheless, the Colonial Office criteria weighed heavily in favour of a military man, and when the only acceptable police candidate withdrew, Colonel Gray, a Royal Marines officer who came highly recommended, got the post. News of his appointment, Horne reports, 'came as a shock to all ranks'.¹⁰⁸ From the outset his appointment was viewed with suspicion within the force; some felt it reflected the British government's preoccupation with the military aspects of the insurgency. Even in retrospect, some of the leading policemen think Gray was the wrong man for the job. They feel that he was too concerned with 'firepower and mobility' to give appropriate attention to the intelligence aspect. In his own defence, Colonel Gray points out that his mandate was to build up the strength of the police force, a task for which it was expected that his experience in training and leading young men would be most valuable.¹⁰⁹ Moreover, it must be said that the force's intelligence problems were not of Gray's making, and they persisted in spite of efforts to correct them.

The security forces' difficulties in acquiring and exploiting both strategic and tactical intelligence, or even in obtaining evidence sufficient to permit successful prosecution of captured insurgents, points clearly to problems in the collection phase of the intelligence cycle. The sources of this problem were political and structural; indeed, up to a point, the two factors overlap. The hostility of the

Yishuv toward the British administration and its policies tended to isolate the two communities – Jewish and British – from each other. Miss J. S. M. Dannatt, who served in the Defence Security Office, suggests that this separation hampered British intelligence collection efforts,¹¹⁰ and there is support for this thesis in contemporary sources. In a letter to Montgomery in March 1947, General Dempsey told the CIGS:

In England there are I suspect just as many murders as in Palestine. In England the murderer is caught because the people . . . are on the side of law and order and assist the police. In Palestine the people do not assist the police and the murderers are not caught . . . The people not being on our side the police find it difficult if not impossible to get evidence.¹¹¹

The police needed the cooperation of the Yishuv to obtain the intimate details of groups and their activities that were essential to prevent or respond effectively to insurgent operations. But the Jewish community largely refused to cooperate with the police in such matters. Even if support for the insurgents was not always whole-hearted, there was reluctance to betray them. A language barrier reinforced the political one, and further isolated the police. Less than 4 per cent of the British police spoke Hebrew. This problem could not be resolved by recruiting since, as Colonel Gray points out, 'You can't suddenly recruit a lot of police efficiently into a multi-language society . . . a British constable who doesn't speak Hebrew isn't going to get very far'.¹¹² Thus isolated, the police could not be expected to see and hear all of the warning signs of impending insurgent activity. They were also left on their own to collect criminal evidence, since the Yishuv would not come forward to assist the prosecution of their own kind.

This problem could not be alleviated by relying on the Jewish members of the regular police. First of all, they were few in number: 725, all but 40 serving in the ranks. Until mid-1946, there had been no regular Jewish policemen 'on the beat', a lapse that Colonel Gray set about immediately to change.¹¹³ Second, insurgent intimidation and infiltration rendered the few Jewish members of the CID unreliable from a security standpoint. Living unprotected in the Jewish community, they succumbed to pressure from the insurgents and, caught in a dilemma of conflicting loyalties, some Jewish policemen began to work for both sides.¹¹⁴ This is a natural tendency, as William F. Whyte has observed in such situations:

The smoothest course for the officer is to conform to the social organisation with which he is in direct contact and at the same time to try to give the impression . . . that he is enforcing the law. He must play an elaborate role of make believe.¹¹⁵

The police took no special precautions to deal with the problem and as a result, 'security was a nightmare. If you wanted to keep anything secret you did not tell anybody . . . nothing passed to a Jewish officer could be kept from the Jewish Agency or the Haganah.'¹¹⁶ Menachem Begin claims that the Irgun knew in advance about security force operations and the evidence confirms some extraordinary breaches of security: top secret documents were stolen from the police and the security of at least one major search operation was compromised. Penetration was not confined to the police, however; Jews serving in government and military installations also acted as spies for the insurgents.¹¹⁷

This left the British section of the CID to bear the largest share of intelligence work, and it was not up to the task. Edward Horne, in his 'insider's' history of the police, credits Arthur Giles (CID head 1938–47) and John Rymer Jones (IG 1943–46) with shaping the CID into 'the finest intelligence system in the Middle East', a system which, he says, 'was to prove devastatingly effective against terrorism'.¹¹⁸ Even allowing for a degree of professional pride, these assertions appear extravagant. At the very least, they are curiously at odds with the results of security forces operations, and with the numerous intelligence 'failures' cited earlier. The record suggests intelligence did not receive the priority attention that the situation required, and that the CID's resources fell short of being the well-oiled machine' described by Horne. Indeed, a critical examination of the CID calls into question Horne's glowing endorsement of its intelligence and anti-terrorist capabilities.

Although the Palestine police had a higher proportion of CID personnel than any normal police force at the time, they were not organised to deal effectively with the insurgency. Of the 627 CID members, only 80 were assigned to the political branch; Jewish Affairs accounted for only a proportion of the latter. None of the remainder of the district CID were assigned specifically to political work. Owing to lack of incentive, the risks and difficulty of the work, and the inability to produce spectacular results over long periods, they tended to ignore political investigation. Consequently, the ordinary CID was under-employed while the political branch was chronically over-worked. Furthermore, police stations requiring

plainclothes officers to exploit important intelligence were forced to apply to district headquarters, a process which inevitably delayed operations. Financially, criminal investigation – the heart of counter-insurgency intelligence work – had a low priority. The government postponed and under-spent purchases of scientific equipment for the CID and of a new wireless system for the force as a whole. The forensic laboratory and the records section lacked suitable accommodation. Nor was there within Palestine a secure interrogation centre for detailed questioning of captured insurgents. Out of a police budget of £6 million for 1946–47, only £50 000 was allocated to investigative/intelligence work.¹¹⁹

The manpower shortage in the political branch, which reflected the manpower problem afflicting the force as a whole,¹²⁰ had serious implications for intelligence collection and processing. By 1945 the activities of the political branch had expanded to such an extent that the CID officers did not have sufficient time to follow up on political intelligence reports, thereby creating a significant lacuna in the intelligence cycle. Furthermore, the Wickham Report suggests that, with the exception of some excellent officers and NCOs, the political branch was not staffed to a high quality. There were few in the branch with more than three years' service and, owing to a shortage of competent instructors, even good candidates could not be assured of proper training.¹²¹

Unable to gather intelligence through routine contact with the Yishuv, the CID political branch relied on clandestine methods: informers, wiretapping, mail interception, and monitoring of jailed insurgents. A small number of captured insurgents were subjected to 'in-depth' interrogation at the Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre. Former political branch officers assert that they used informers successfully in penetrating the insurgent groups. Begin, on the other hand, claims that informers betrayed the Irgun on only three occasions, all of which were discovered. Most informers, in any case, tended to act as double agents, which casts some doubt on their reliability. Moreover, evidence suggests that the political branch encountered some difficulties in 'servicing' their informers with prompt and adequate payment from secret service funds.¹²² There is insufficient information upon which to assess the effectiveness of the other techniques. However, the overall intelligence performance obviously speaks for itself.

Unimpressed by police efforts in the intelligence field, and distrustful of police security, the army tried to develop and exploit its own intelligence sources, with mixed results. Some senior army

commanders developed personal contacts with highly placed and influential members of the Jewish community.¹²³ While this may have produced occasional intelligence bonuses, its cumulative impact remains unclear.

Nor is it clear that the 'I' Branch at army headquarters in Jerusalem, which had access to police and other sources of intelligence, fared much better. The head of the branch, Lieutenant-Colonel The Honorable (now Lord) M. M. C. Charteris, felt that one of his main tasks, given the army's non-political nature, was 'to make sense for the soldiers out of the tangle of the Palestine Problem, so that they may see things in their true perspective'.¹²⁴ He believed this was necessary because the troops, who were in Palestine temporarily and who regarded their security duties as an interference with proper soldiering, had neither the time nor the incentive to get to grips with the problem. This is a commendable sentiment, and Colonel Charteris clearly worked hard at fulfilling this mission. The 'Fortnightly Intelligence Newsletters' issued by HQ Palestine were full of insights, often quite perceptive, on the subtle nuances of Yishuv politics and opinion. However, they offered few and unremarkable insights on the insurgents; these tended to be buried in a mass of trivia.¹²⁵ This casts doubt on the newsletters' operational intelligence value. Occasionally GSI simply produced bad estimates. Newsletter no. 16, issued 9 June 1946, on the eve of the resistance movement's offensive, discounted reports that predicted an early resumption of terrorism and suggested that there was a 'good chance' this would not occur.¹²⁶

General Gale has since criticised GSI for inaccurate intelligence on the Jewish Agency and the Haganah, to which he attributes the unnecessary arrests of many innocent persons during Operation AGATHA.¹²⁷ His criticism is only partly justified. The CID political branch, not GSI, drew up the arrest lists for that operation, and many Haganah and Palmach members were apprehended. Yet, it is clear that GSI's voluminous, intimate knowledge of the Yishuv was insufficiently complete to permit refining of the target lists. Like the JIC in 1945, GSI (and the police) probably tended to overestimate the size of the Haganah. Consequently, some 2000 of those arrested had to be released after only a brief detention owing to lack of evidence. This suggests that in trying to 'make sense' of the Palestine problem in the larger context, GSI lost sight of its more important and appropriate mission: facilitating the development of raw intelligence into 'operational' intelligence through evaluation,

analysis and interpretation. This process requires experience, which in turn demands prolonged service 'in-country'. It may be fair to suggest that GSI, which was subject to manpower turbulence as much as the rest of the army in Palestine, could not retain experienced analysts long enough to ensure that the task was done properly. But it was even more a question of priorities, and GSI's seemed to reflect the army's ambivalent attitude toward intelligence work and the institutional strictures that flowed therefrom.

Although information on the Defence Security Office is insufficient for definitive assessment, there is some evidence to suggest that it was better equipped to develop accurate intelligence. The staff were on permanent posting to Palestine; many had lengthy service in the country, and were based in all of the main cities, where they could observe and listen. As professional intelligence officers with experience and stability in their postings, they were probably better able to evaluate the information they acquired. That undoubtedly explains the DSO's record for providing more accurate intelligence reports.¹²⁸ Even if this assessment is correct, it is clear that the DSO could not by itself compensate for the deficiencies in the intelligence system as a whole.

COUNTER-PROPAGANDA

In his authoritative study of revolutionary propaganda, Maurice Tugwell has identified the components of an effective counter-propaganda campaign. First, government policy should be clearly stated, since this provides the essential point of reference for effective counter-propaganda. Second, politicians and military leaders need to be 'educated', that is, to understand the nature of the problem and why a response is called for. Third, it may be necessary to create counter-propaganda staffs in government, the police, and the military. In effect, he argues that like the insurgents, they must treat counter-propaganda as a joint operation, carried out in support of the political and military campaigns. Fourth, there is a requirement for counter-propaganda advice in operational planning, to alert the security forces commander to the propaganda risks arising from proposed courses of action. Finally, hostile propaganda must be analysed for the themes and details that require a response. He points out that there are appropriate responses to the common themes of revolutionary propaganda. But these are also subject to

the same rules that make for effective insurgent propaganda: consistency both with verifiable facts and with pre-existing attitudes and fundamental trends; continuity, founded on repetition; speed of dissemination; and delivery of the appropriate message to each target audience. The methods available to the government are diverse. They include: ministerial statements and parliamentary speeches; press conferences and interviews with senior officials and commanders; briefing of journalists by counter-propaganda/information staffs; and direct means such as posters, leaflets, broadcasts, and press releases.¹²⁹

At first glance it may appear unhistorical to judge this campaign by standards based on the advantage of thirty years' hindsight. It is important to recall, however, that in 1945 Britain had just terminated a major propaganda effort and that the principles Tugwell enunciates were not unfamiliar to policy-makers of the time.¹³⁰ They provide, moreover, a useful framework for assessment. The British campaign to counter Zionist propaganda, such as it was, exhibited weaknesses – some of which were identified in the previous chapter – under all of the criteria identified above.

First, and foremost, Britain did not have a political programme upon which to found a propaganda campaign that could be expected to appeal to the Yishuv and to their supporters in the United States. Bevin's adviser, Harold Beeley, acknowledged this much in October 1946, when he observed that the only effective forms of counter-propaganda would be a conclusive policy decision on Palestine and an Arab effort to publicise their own case.¹³¹ For the reasons already explained, no such policy was forthcoming, and the British government was reluctant to encourage the Arabs to press their case too strongly for fear of raising expectations that might further undermine the British position in the region. Furthermore, the government's unwillingness to renounce the White Paper policy left it open to Zionist propaganda attack while giving it nothing with which to challenge the basic assumptions of insurgent propaganda. In this regard, the propaganda objectives established in 1945 were inappropriate, and could not contribute to the pacification of Palestine. This, Tugwell notes, made it difficult for the British to appeal over the heads of the insurgents to the moderate Zionists by showing some benefit to be gained by restraint.¹³² Thus, it was not possible to drive a permanent wedge between the moderates and the extremists. Nor was the task made any easier by the fact that the Labour government itself was largely sympathetic to the

Zionist cause and to their case. Differences were over interpretation, degree and methods. But propaganda cannot be effective if it is reduced to 'splitting hairs' over fine points of political semantics.

Second, while there was probably little need to 'educate' Britain's political leaders and Foreign Office officials about the nature, benefits, risks and requirements of propaganda in general terms, it is clear that the politicians did not believe it was appropriate for the post-war situation.¹³³ Hence, the disbanding of MOI and a similar run-down in Palestine. Peacetime thinking prevailed, and though the insurgents had 'declared war' on Britain in Palestine, the British viewed the insurgency as a form of civil disturbance not as a war. Not only was this consonant with army thinking that prevailed at the outset of the conflict, it was the only acceptable political standpoint. Effective propaganda would have required a 'wartime' adversary relationship with the Zionists, and this was not possible, both for moral reasons and because of the desire to resolve the issue through diplomacy. By the autumn of 1946 General Barker, who himself had become the target of insurgent propaganda, had changed his mind on the nature of the struggle sufficiently to urge the Palestine government to acquire a psychological warfare officer to conduct counter-propaganda. The Central Security Committee agreed, but the position apparently was never filled, undoubtedly because of the 'extreme delicacy' of the matter and the 'extremely serious repercussions' of any leak.¹³⁴ From that point forward the committee regularly included propaganda/psychological warfare matters and actions in their deliberations. But without the benefit of advice from an officer experienced in this field, their decisions lacked a sense of purpose. Such measures as were proposed tended to be *ad hoc*, reactive, and generally 'too little, too late'.¹³⁵ So, such formal 'education' as was undertaken was limited essentially to the army which, to its credit, appreciated the threat accurately. It concluded that its principal contribution to the propaganda war would be defensive – relying on the disciplined, professional bearing and actions of its troops to deny the insurgents the opportunities and material with which to make propaganda.

Third, the British were not organised to mount an effective counter-propaganda campaign. The reorganisation in London has already been described. Similar changes occurred in Palestine. The MOI carried 85 per cent of the cost of the PIO, and at the end of the war the British government wanted to reduce this burden. Between June and December 1945 budgets and establishment

proposals were constantly reviewed and reduced. By December the MOI had fixed the proposed reductions at about 30 per cent. The estimated budget for 1946/7 was reduced by as much again. The PIO staff, diminished by vacancies to 109 persons out of an establishment of 133, was to be run down to 65 by March 1946. The PIO cancelled two heavily subsidised government newspapers. The reading centre in Tel Aviv, though apparently successful as a means of reaching the Jewish population, was to be reduced in scale. Those in Haifa and Jaffa received funds for only a further six months and the proposal for a centre in Jerusalem was scrapped altogether.¹³⁶ The PIO also discontinued the quarterly report and appreciation which the MOI had used to brief British and American journalists. The Colonial Office rectified the situation by providing the MOI with copies of the Monthly Situation telegram.¹³⁷

The cancellation of the government newspapers in Palestine may have been a mistake. The press in Palestine was without exception hostile to the government. Richard Graves, Mayor of Jerusalem in 1947/8, felt that the Palestine government was severely hampered in not having a press of its own. Its only means of answering criticism was by austere communiqués, in papers already slanted against the government, which could hardly be expected to win many converts. He concluded that the government should have subsidised an English language newspaper long before and given it a free hand to criticise as well as a general mandate to support the government. Such a paper would have been able to launch counter-attacks against criticism in the local papers.¹³⁸ Although correct perhaps in theory, Graves' view seems unduly optimistic. Under the circumstances prevailing it is difficult to see how such a paper could have overcome the government's credibility problem with the Zionists. Coming at a time when insurgent propagandists were initiating a major offensive against the British and Palestine governments, these changes and reductions could only make the British propaganda task more difficult. There is, however, no evidence to indicate whether the PIO or the Palestine government objected to these reductions or tried to compensate for them.

Fourth, the army did attempt to inject the propaganda element into operational planning, if only from a defensive point of view: alerting the troops to the propaganda risks inherent in their actions; promoting good relations with the press; and attempting to make incident information available as rapidly as possible. These were appropriate and commendable efforts, although the army's inexperience

in these matters meant that mistakes were made. Despite all good intentions army-press relations were less than satisfactory. British correspondents complained of being 'held up, searched, and refused admittance to places where, with their passes, they have every right to go'.¹³⁹ If this was the case it is hardly surprising that the security forces had few defenders in the news media. The problem probably became self-sustaining, since hostile reporting generated a hostile attitude towards the press on the part of the army. General Cassels observed:

It did make one hopping mad to read some of the comments in the Press . . . denigrating all or most of our actions. They sat in comfort and safety in England while we lived in fairly uncomfortable conditions and under the continued . . . threat of being sniped or blown up!¹⁴⁰

In fairness, it must be stressed that the army was not accustomed to conducting operations under the glare of publicity. Nonetheless, the army's inexperience and the government's low-profile approach to propaganda generally made it difficult for the Palestine authorities to present themselves as a winning side, let alone to recover from embarrassments like the Farran case which, as the GOC acknowledged, 'caused considerable agitation in the Jewish Press and also some sensation in the World Press . . .'.¹⁴¹ He went on to add that the propaganda associated with the incident probably increased anti-British feeling among the more extreme elements of the Jewish community. In a similar vein, any political credit the British government might have gained from the King David atrocity, and from the White Paper on terrorism published several days later, was undermined by the exposure of General Barker's ill-advised letter, the tones of which were undeniably anti-Semitic. Insurgent propagandists quickly exploited the letter, forcing the British government to renounce it publicly.¹⁴² It appears logical to conclude that it was this latter affair that persuaded Barker to urge the Security Committee to hire someone to conduct counter-propaganda.

Fifth, the GSI and DSO intelligence staffs did conduct propaganda analysis.¹⁴³ However, such analyses were produced apparently only for the general information purposes described earlier by Colonel Charteris. There is no evidence that they provided the basis for counter-propaganda, since British propaganda never attacked the basic themes of insurgent propaganda.

Finally, in a campaign otherwise undistinguished by success, one

propaganda effort adhered to all the rules. The police recruiting drive had a clear, if limited, objective. The various agencies concerned cooperated in the task and pursued the objective in a manner uncharacteristic of British propaganda efforts at that time. The initial message, which was reinforced and sustained, appealed to a receptive audience of young men and ex-servicemen who found peacetime life in Britain too dull or economically difficult and for whom the prospect of exciting work in Palestine provided a desirable alternative. In this sense perhaps the recruiting campaign was blessed by extraordinary timing: delayed much longer than was justified by police requirements, it opened against a background of rising violence which actually may have helped recruiting. In summary, it possessed and exploited what British propaganda on the Palestine issue lacked: consistency with facts, trends and attitudes; continuity; timing, targeting, and the appropriate methods. It was to Britain's considerable disadvantage that politics and economics conspired to preclude the conduct of a campaign of comparable vigour against the insurgents.

6 Palestine and the British Experience of Counter-Insurgency

To make war upon rebellion is messy and slow, like eating soup with a knife.¹

T. E. Lawrence's wry observation on the Turkish predicament in the First World War has proven timeless in its relevance to armies in counter-insurgency, and no more so than for the British in Palestine. Counter-insurgency is 'messy and slow'; success requires skill and perseverance, both political and military. The evidence presented suggests that the British campaign lacked these essential qualities. It also indicates some reasons why this was the case. In these lie the answers to the two questions posed at the outset of this study.

Dennis Duncanson has observed that:

the test of validity of experience in armed conflict ought to be victory or defeat. However, victory or defeat are not always easy to measure under conditions of de-colonisation, the end result of which was, by definition, surrender of the colonial power's mandate sooner or later.²

In these circumstances, applicable in Palestine and in most of Britain's other post-war campaigns, the outcome was determined by political and other factors, at home and within the colony, of which the military/insurgent struggle was merely one of many. The relative significance of the counter-insurgency dimension varied from one campaign to the other. However, the extent to which the army adapted effectively to the requirements of the situation could determine to a considerable extent the character of the British

surrender of authority: either an orderly transfer of power, as in Malaya, or chaos – as occurred in Palestine.

Whether judged by these standards or according to the criteria set out in Chapter 1, the British army – with few exceptions – did not adapt effectively to the operational situation in Palestine. Like its political masters, the army did not comprehend the nature of the conflict in which it was engaged. The politicians saw Palestine as a problem of diplomacy, and focused their attention accordingly. For them the insurgency was a nuisance, an embarrassment, and an obstacle to rational settlement of the dispute – but not a war. It was a civil disturbance, and the army's role was to contain it while a political arrangement was worked out. Neither they nor the army understood that they were involved in a war in which the issues at stake were the legitimacy of Britain's position in Palestine and its ability to exert *de facto* control in the territory. Field-Marshal Montgomery, the CIGS, recognised the insurgency as a war; in this he was an exception to the rule. But the subtle interplay of political and paramilitary actions eluded his grasp and that of his subordinate commanders. They could hardly have behaved otherwise, since the army's experience of 'imperial policing' had not prepared the institution intellectually for what amounted to a revolution in methods of warfare. Moreover, the army itself was inherently resistant to radical changes in strategic thought, particularly where military issues transgressed into the political domain. So the army's attention remained fixed on the military aspects of the situation, which were regarded as secondary to the army's real mission – to train for war. The 'frocks' and the 'brass' thus operated as 'two solitudes', neither one seeing the 'big picture', nor appreciating the other's role in it.

This exerted a significant influence on the course and direction of the campaign and on the army's ability to adapt to it. First, the need for a close political-military partnership in directing the campaign was only partly realised, and then only in Palestine itself. There, operating according to the principles of 'aid to the civil power', the government and the army developed a functional relationship, in the form of the Central Security Committee, for local planning and direction of internal security operations. But there was no similar meeting of minds at the strategic level. By the beginning of 1947 Montgomery had wrested direction of the campaign away from the civil and military powers in Palestine. Owing to his personality and prestige, and their tendency to isolate the political

issues from the military aspects, the Cabinet deferred to the CIGS on the question of military policy. This allowed him to ride roughshod over the arguments of the High Commissioner, whose efforts to coordinate political and military measures he did not understand, and even despised.

Second, and as a direct consequence of the above, there was no 'strategy' to defeat the insurgents. So, Sir Alan Cunningham's efforts notwithstanding, political and military measures were neither wholly in phase with each other nor with the situation on the ground. From November 1945 to January 1947, operational policy fluctuated largely according to the fortunes of Anglo-American diplomacy. In respect of insurgent activity, it was almost completely reactive. Then, once Montgomery imposed his style on military planning, operational policy became more 'offensive' in regard to the insurgency. Yet now it was completely divorced from the political battle which, in shifting to the forum of the United Nations, rendered such a policy untimely and politically inappropriate. Moreover, the absence of a coordinated political-military strategy meant that the British government could not exploit through diplomacy the 'military' victory they won over the Jewish Agency and the Haganah with Operation AGATHA.

Third, constrained both by political considerations and its own professional outlook to treat the insurgency only as a civil disturbance, the army left the intelligence task to the civil authorities – the Palestine police. But when institutional weakness and political isolation hampered the force's intelligence activities, the army intelligence branch was not oriented or prepared to fill the gap. Combined with the failure to understand the nature of the conflict and the consequent inability to forge a counter-insurgency strategy, this intelligence failure adversely affected operational policy and actions. The security forces did not have sufficient, timely and accurate tactical intelligence upon which to base operations that could have anticipated and pre-empted insurgent activity. So army operations tended to be reactive, responding to the insurgents. This left the initiative in their hands, and allowed the insurgents largely to set the pace and dictate the outcome of the conflict. Furthermore, with rare exceptions such as Operation AGATHA, army operations could not be and were not directed against the organisational and political structures of the most active and dangerous insurgent groups: the Irgun and the Lechi. Thus effectively undisrupted, these groups retained their freedom of action throughout the insurgency.

Fourth, although small unit operations (platoon or smaller), based

when possible on good intelligence, usually produced results out of proportion to their scale, several factors combined to make these the exception rather than the rule. Contemporary army doctrine of 'imperial policing' was one of the obstacles. Founded on an approach to insurgency that was outdated, it emphasised the value of the large-scale sweep or search at the expense of the more discriminate raid, patrol, or snap search. Nor did it prescribe for the army an intelligence role which, in view of the weakness of the police, might have made all operations, large and small, more effective. Moreover, the army's institutional resistance to innovation was reinforced by the fact that it had just emerged from a major conventional war in which the large operation was routine; it was the dominant experience of all ranks. So it was not easy for the army to adjust its operational thinking to the scale and restrained nature of the Palestine conflict, and the 'hide and seek' character of insurgent versus counter-insurgent operations. Finally, the combination of continuous operational commitments and army reorganisation disrupted training and continuity; the inability to retain experienced officers and NCOs was particularly troublesome. The struggle to maintain minimum standards of discipline, and professional and technical skills meant that operations had to be reduced to simple, familiar routines that could be absorbed quickly by new personnel. Consequently, commanders tended to mount operations 'by the book'. There was little scope and few opportunities for innovation. That said, some commanders and their units exhibited a capacity for 'on the spot' adaptation and a readiness to share their operational 'lessons' with others. However, these efforts were *ad hoc* and, in spite of efforts to transfer useful experience, innovation tended to be unit-specific and was not institutionalised throughout the army.

The most innovative and potentially most effective counter-insurgency ideas originated with army officers serving in the police whose wartime experience had been irregular rather than conventional. Their confidence in the value of covert special operations as a counter-insurgency technique has been borne out by subsequent experience in Malaya, Kenya and Northern Ireland.³ But in the context of Palestine in 1947, their efforts were poorly conceived, inadequately controlled, and politically ill-timed. The resulting 'Farran Case' symbolises graphically the implications of the failure to integrate political aims and military means.

The fifth and final point regarding adaptation: the loss of the propaganda battle for legitimacy cannot be blamed on the army.

Conducting and countering propaganda was a civilian responsibility and it was the civilians who lost that battle, almost by default. The army's role was essentially defensive. It cooperated with the news media covering the army's operations, and sensitised the troops to the political/propaganda aspects of their own activities, so as to reduce the number of mistakes and excesses and, hence, the number of opportunities for the insurgents to make propaganda out of army actions. In spite of its limited experience in dealing with hostile propaganda and critical press coverage, the army adapted to the situation much better than might have been expected. It assessed accurately the propaganda threat to itself, and attempted to educate its troops intelligently on the matter. It tried to inject the propaganda factor into operational planning, even if only to be prepared to defend itself and its actions. The army intelligence branch, for all its limitations, did conduct insurgent propaganda analysis. That such material was not used to produce counter-propaganda was not the fault of the army; after all, it was the GOC who proposed that the Palestine government should hire a psychological warfare officer. Still, both the army and the civilians were slow to appreciate the potential counter-propaganda value of 'on the spot' interviews by operational commanders. Furthermore, the army made its share of propaganda mistakes, the senior commanders being as much – if not more – to blame than the other ranks for politically damaging *faux pas*.

The picture that emerges from this analysis is of a large and unwieldy institution grappling unsuccessfully with an unfamiliar, difficult problem that taxed some of the best military brains of the period. Politically unsophisticated, beset by post-war organisational turmoil, shackled to an outmoded operational doctrine, and buffeted by inconsistent and inappropriate strategic direction, the British army responded to the insurgency in the only way these constraints permitted. It relied on proven, if ponderous methods which were only marginally effective against the insurgents. They were, however, relatively easy to instill in an army in a state of flux. Moreover, however unimaginative, they were less likely to produce unpredictable or uncontrollable results, and hence to attract criticism and further interference from the army's political superiors. So, while it would be easy to dismiss the army's performance as a failure because it did not adapt fully to the insurgency, it also would be unhistorical. The politicians, after all, demanded of the army only that it buy time for them to reach a diplomatic solution. The methods the army

tried to apply were, in fact, appropriate for that mission. The problem was that British political objectives were completely out of step with the objectives and strategies of the insurgents.

This, of course, provides at least part of the answer to the second question, which concerns the army's contribution to the outcome of the conflict. First, lacking a coordinated political-military strategy, an appropriate counter-insurgency doctrine, and sufficient operational intelligence, the army and the other security forces were unable to disrupt the 'centre of gravity' – the political base and organisational infrastructure – of the two key insurgent groups: the Irgun and the Lechi. They were able to strike in this fashion at the Jewish Agency and the Haganah. Yet, this merely neutralised those elements of the Zionist movement with whom it might otherwise have been possible to negotiate a settlement of the dispute, but without any political benefit, since the British politicians were unprepared to exploit the disarray in the Zionist movement by seizing the diplomatic initiative. Worse still, it freed the other two groups to pursue their strategies unconstrained by the dictates of the more moderate organisations. Their freedom of action never seriously threatened, the Irgun and the Lechi gained and retained the strategic initiative in the battle for control. So it seems fair to conclude that the army's inability to adapt contributed directly to the escalation of the insurgency. Second, in the face of continuous and effective insurgent attacks on the security forces and on other components of the British administration in Palestine, the army's operations were ineffective both in appearance and in fact. Occasional tactical successes were overshadowed by the fact that major operations, which attracted the most attention and criticism, tended to produce meagre results in terms of captured insurgents; more important, they did not stop the insurgency. Furthermore, insurgent successes and security force failures and excesses provided ammunition to the insurgent propagandists, who were able to interpret and present the facts of the situation in such a way as to erode the political legitimacy of the British position. So, ineffective army operations allowed the insurgents to increase the human, material and political costs of the British presence in Palestine to the point where the British government ceased to view Palestine as an asset, but rather as a liability.⁴

That said, Britain's defeat in Palestine cannot be blamed solely on the performance of the army. Its inability to contain the insurgency can be attributed in large measure to factors over which

it had little or no control. The army's failure to understand and to adapt to the war in which it was engaged was but one factor in a complex matrix of politics, personalities and power. A quarter of a century of diplomacy had placed the British government – and hence, the army – in an untenable position over the Palestine question. A diplomatic solution would be difficult at best; a military solution was out of the question. Unable to achieve its objectives by either means, the government resorted to half-measures, while seeking an honourable exit. This left the army to apply methods which would do everything to aggravate the situation, and nothing to resolve it. In the final analysis, withdrawal was the only option that made sense.

In June 1948, barely a month after Britain had withdrawn from Palestine, another anti-colonial insurgency broke out, this time in Malaya. As in Palestine, the British authorities and security forces floundered during the early stages of the crisis; unlike Palestine, however, the relevant agencies developed a political-military strategy and a system of coordinated action which gradually allowed them to gain the initiative and ultimately to defeat the insurgents.⁵ This scenario was repeated, although not always with the same degree of success, in Kenya, Cyprus, Aden, Oman and Northern Ireland. Over a period of thirty years, experience built upon experience. Old 'lessons' had to be relearned constantly, but in the process operational techniques were refined and a body of doctrine developed that was not only 'combat tested', but which proved sufficiently flexible to be adapted to varied operational situations world-wide.⁶ Hardly surprising, then, that in 1981 even the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* could boast: 'Britain world leader in anti-guerrilla methods'.⁷

Undoubtedly because it was a significant victory, the Malayan campaign was seized upon as the 'model' for counter-insurgency success.⁸ Yet the contribution of the Palestine experience to that and subsequent campaigns clearly has gone largely unrecognised. Some of the techniques that contributed to the victory in Malaya, such as the joint security committee system and special operations, were pioneered, however imperfectly, in Palestine. Colonel Gray served as Commissioner of Police in Malaya during the early and most difficult years of the Emergency. Along with him went some 450 former Palestine policemen whose arrival, it has been suggested, prevented the collapse of British rule in the early months of the insurgency.⁹ A number of British army officers who held significant posts in subsequent campaigns 'cut their teeth' as junior officers in

Palestine. It is here, perhaps, that the campaign had its most long-lasting impact. Reflecting on three decades of counter-insurgency campaigning, Maurice Tugwell concluded:

The Jews had the highest quality of terrorists the British Army faced in the post-war period, so the army probably set its standards by them, and it did them good What was learned was applied much better elsewhere. Palestine put the army in the right frame of mind, so they responded much better and much faster later.¹⁰

Appendix I: Insurgent Organisation Charts

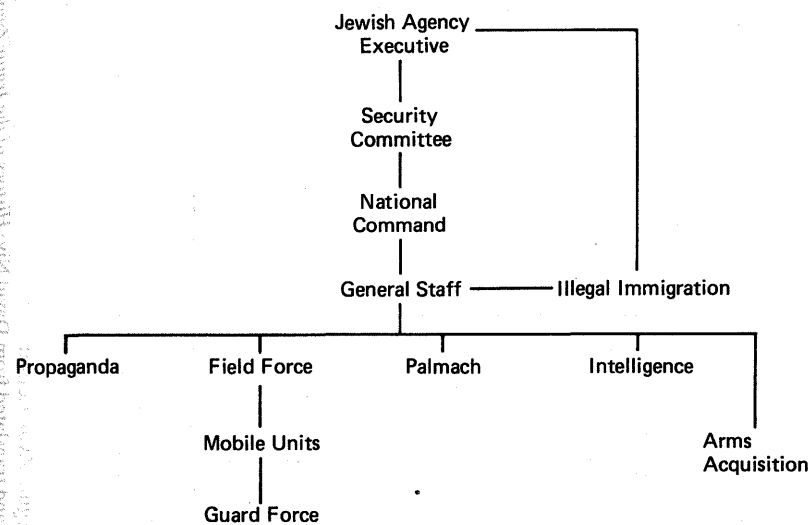


Chart 1.1: The Haganah
 SOURCE: HC [6873] (1946); Bauer, 'Rommel's Threat of Invasion', pp. 225-6.

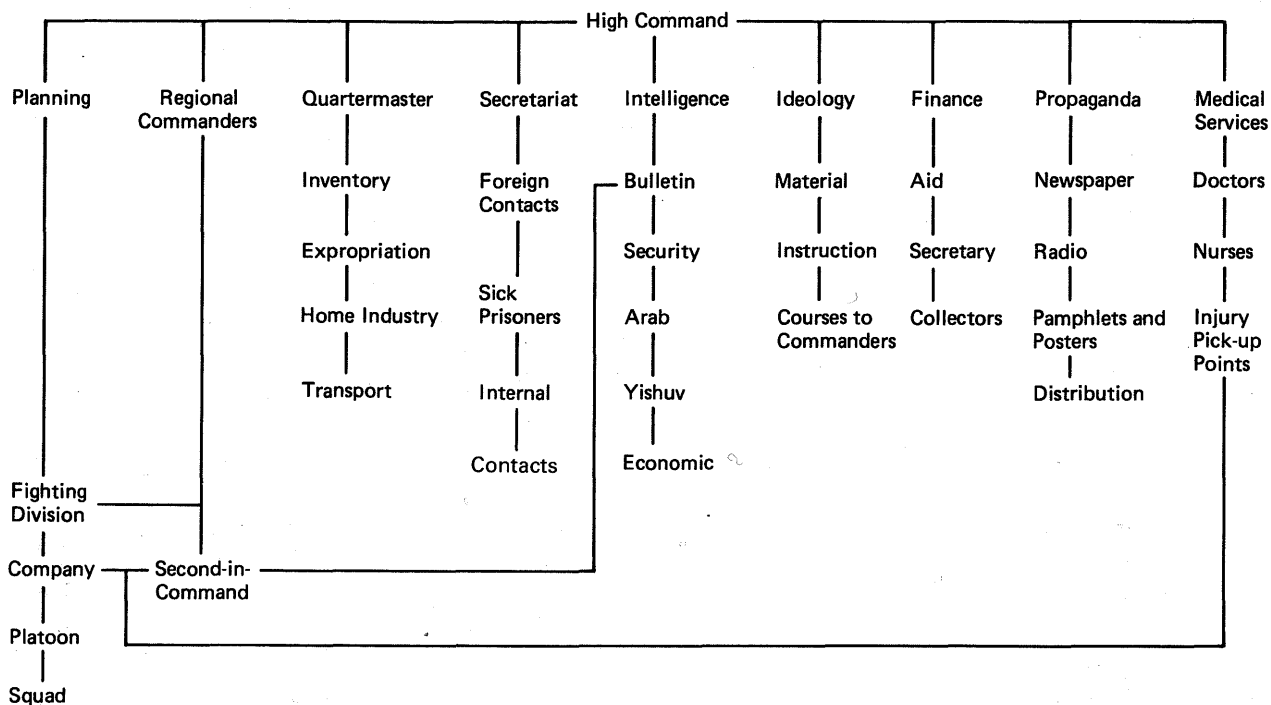
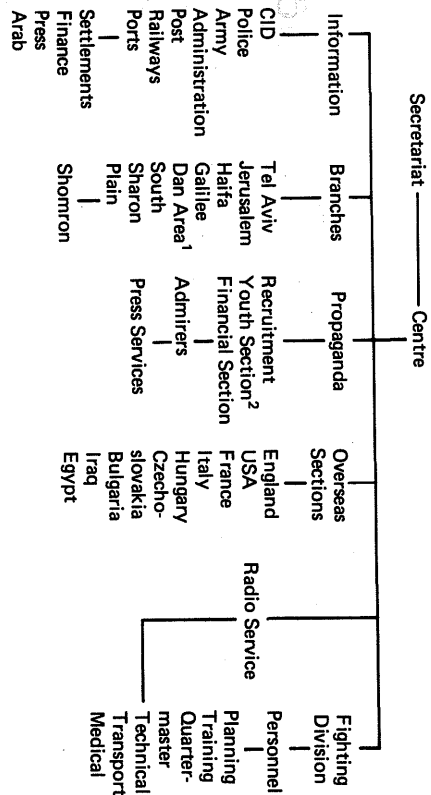


Chart 1.2: The Irgun Zvai Leumi

SOURCE: Extracted and translated from David Niv, *History of the Irgun Zvai Leumi* (Tel Aviv, 1968) (in Hebrew), by Yisrael Medad, National Studies Institute, Jerusalem, 1978.



Notes: ¹ Area around Tel Aviv proper.

² Includes recruitment, ideological and military training, and distribution of posters and newspapers.

Chart 1.3: The Lochmei Heruth Israel

SOURCE: Extracted and translated from Y. Banai, *Chayalim Almonim* (Tel Aviv, 1958), by Yisrael Medad, 1978.

Appendix II: The Palestine Police Organisation Charts

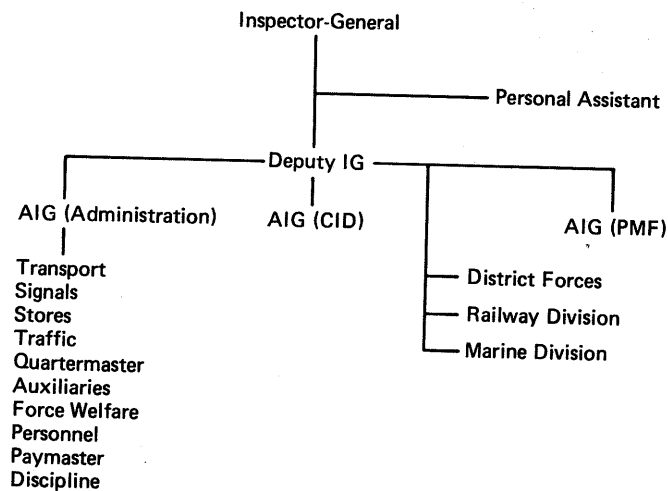


Chart II.1: The Organisation of the Palestine Police
 SOURCE: 1 Armd. Div., "Appendix A to IS Instruction no. 4", 6 June 1947, WO 261/178.

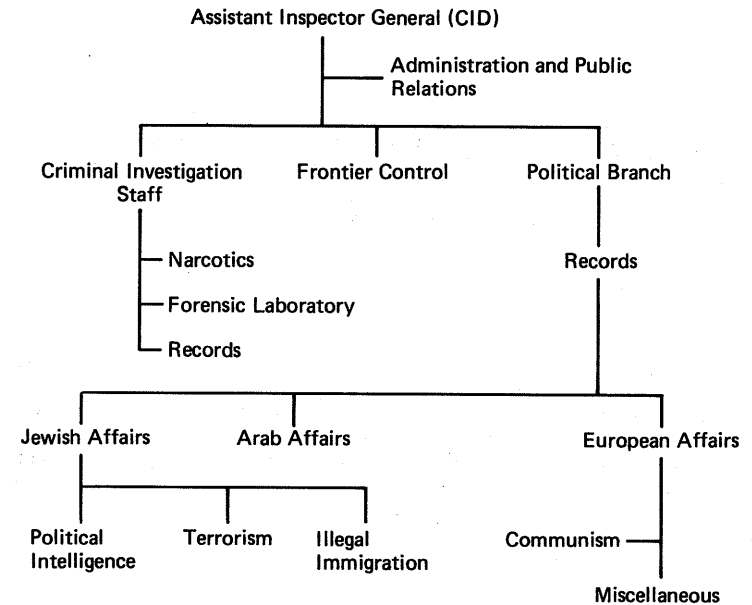


Chart II.2: The Criminal Investigation Department
 SOURCE: John Briance, interview with author, 3 March 1977.

Appendix III: Insurgent Operations in Palestine

Sources for this information are as follows: CO 537/2281; CO 733/456; FO 371/52563, 52565-6; WO 261/171, 181; 'Jewish Terrorist Outrages Since His Excellency's Arrival in Palestine', 1947, Cunningham Papers, V/4; 1 Inf. Div., 'Report on Operation ELEPHANT', Moore Papers.
Note: Unless otherwise specified operations were carried out by Irgun and/or Lechi.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Details</i>
1945		
31 Oct.	Across Palestine	Widespread damage to railway; some damage to oil refineries; 2 police launches damaged, one sunk; 13 casualties to security forces, railway staff (Haganah, Palmach, Irgun, Lechi).
? Nov.	Haifa	Theft of 5 tons of nitrate from chemical firm (Irgun).
23 Nov.	Ras El Ain	Major theft of arms from RAF camp.
25 Nov.	Givat Olga	Attack on coastguard station; 4 policemen wounded (Haganah).
	Sidna Ali	Attack on police post; 10 policemen wounded (Haganah).
1 Dec.	Tel Aviv	Textile robbery.
17 Dec.	Tel Aviv	Abortive diamond robbery.
27 Dec.	Jerusalem	CID HQ badly damaged by bomb; 22 security forces casualties (Irgun and Lechi).
	Jaffa	CID HQ partially destroyed (Irgun and Lechi).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Details</i>
	Tel Aviv	Abortive arms theft at army workshops; one insurgent killed.
1946		
12 Jan.	Hadera	£35 000 stolen from derailed train.
14 Jan.	Haifa	Robbery of chemical firm.
19 Jan.	Jerusalem	Abortive attack on prison and broadcasting studios; electric sub-station damaged; insurgent, 7 security force casualties (Irgun).
21 Jan.	Givat Olga	Coastguard station destroyed, 17 soldiers wounded (Haganah).
	Mount Carmel	Abortive attempt to blow up radar station (Haganah).
25 Jan.	Tel Aviv	Theft of £6 000 worth of yarn.
29 Jan.	Aqir	Abortive theft of arms from RAF station (Irgun).
3 Feb.	Tel Aviv	Theft of small quantity of arms from RAF medical unit (Irgun).
5 Feb.	Safad	Abortive attempt to rescue prisoners; one policeman wounded (Palmach).
6 Feb.	Agrobank	Theft of arms and vehicle from army camp; 3 security force casualties (Lechi).
15 Feb.	Haifa	Abortive attempt to assassinate DSP (Lechi).
16 Feb.	Beit Nabala	Abortive attack on army camp.
19 Feb.	Mount Carmel	Radar station destroyed; 8 RAF personnel wounded (Haganah).
21 Feb.	Sarona, Kfar Vitkin, Shafr Amr	Some damage to PMF camps at two latter locations; 4 insurgents killed, one policeman, 2 civilians injured (Palmach).
25 Feb.	Lydda, Petah Tiqva, Qastina	Attacks on airfields destroy 5 aircraft, damage 17; 4 insurgents killed (Irgun and Lechi).
27 Feb.	near Safad	One policeman wounded in a shooting incident (Haganah).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Details</i>
6 Mar.	Sarafand	Theft of arms from army camp; 2 insurgents wounded, 9 captured; one soldier killed, one civilian wounded (Irgun).
22 Mar.	near Sarona	Assassination of German internee (Lechi).
25 Mar.	Tel Aviv, Sarona	One person killed in disturbances.
27 Mar.	Sukreir	Abortive attack on railway station.
2 Apr.	railway	Line cut at several locations; 5 bridges destroyed (Irgun).
7 Apr.	Yibna	Shooting incident.
13 Apr.	Nathanya	Theft of arms from RAF camp; bridge blown up; some soldiers wounded.
	?	Abortive attempt to steal arms.
23 Apr.	Ramat Gan	Theft of arms from police station; 4 insurgent, 3 security force casualties (Irgun).
	Tel Aviv	Abortive attack on railway station (Irgun).
25 Apr.	Tel Aviv	7 soldiers killed; some arms stolen (Lechi).
1 May	Haifa	Abortive attempt to blow up Royal Navy destroyer.
14 May	Tel Aviv	2 jeeps stolen, one damaged in three attempts; 2 soldiers wounded.
15 May	railway	Theft of 135 000 rounds of ammunition from train.
20 May	Nablus	Theft of £6200 from bank.
6 June	Jerusalem	Rescue of captured leader from medical clinic (Lechi).
10 June	railway	4 trains seriously damaged; 3 security force personnel wounded.
12 June	Tel Aviv	Soldier stabbed, wounded.
14 June	Haifa	Arab District Officer wounded in assassination attempt (Lechi).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Details</i>
	Haifa	Bombing of Arab café; 2 civilians wounded.
16 June	across Palestine	11 bridges damaged or destroyed; 8 insurgent, 5 security force casualties (Haganah and Palmach).
17 June	Haifa	Railway workshops seriously damaged; 11 insurgents killed, 15 captured (Lechi).
18 June	Tel Aviv, Jerusalem	Kidnapping of 6 army officers (Irgun).
26 June	Tel Aviv?	Theft of £40 000-worth of diamonds.
4 July	Haifa	2 Jews abducted and tortured as informers (Haganah).
22 July	Jerusalem	Bombing of King David Hotel; 91 killed, 69 wounded (Irgun).
21 Aug.	Haifa	Sabotage of British ship used for transhipment of illegal immigrants (Palmach).
8 Sept.	railway Haifa	Some damage to communications. Sabotage of oil pipeline; one British casualty (Lechi).
	Haifa	Assassination of CID sergeant (Lechi).
9 Sept.	Tel Aviv	Assassination of Area Security Officer; several other British casualties (Lechi).
	Tel Aviv	6 soldiers wounded in shooting, mining incidents.
13 Sept.	Tel Aviv, Jaffa	3 banks robbed, one police station attacked; 7 security force and civilian casualties.
20 Sept.	Haifa	Railway station blown up (Irgun).
23 Sept.	railway	Attack on oil train; abortive attack on railway bridge; one guard killed.
30 Sept.	?	2 British personnel casualties in separate attacks.
1 Oct.	Haifa	Abortive attempt to blow up oil dock.

Date	Location	Details
6 Oct.	Jerusalem	2 RAF personnel shot, one killed.
8 Oct.	across Palestine	Widespread road and rail mining; 8 security force, civilian casualties.
17 Oct.	Jerusalem	Assassination of police officer (Lechi).
17 Oct.	across Palestine	Widespread road mining, 2 army vehicles damaged; 5 security force casualties.
	?	Café damaged by arson.
20 Oct.	Rishon Le Zion	Army jeep blown up by mines; 2 casualties.
22 Oct.	railway	Train derailed by mines
24 Oct.	Jerusalem	Army checkpoint bombed; one soldier killed, 10 wounded; police billet bombed.
26 Oct.	Hadera	Army lorry blown up and bridge damaged.
29 Oct.	near Haifa	2 army vehicles mined; 2 casualties.
30 Oct.	Jerusalem	2 army, one civilian vehicle mined, fired on; 13 military, one civilian casualties.
	Jerusalem	railway station blown up, one policeman killed (Irgun).
31 Oct.	Petah Tiqva	Army lorry mined, 2 soldiers killed, 2 wounded.
	near Tel Aviv	Police vehicle fired on.
	Haifa District	Army lorry mined; one casualty.
1 Nov.	near Hadera	Engine of goods train mined, slight damage to engine and bridge.
	?	Army lorry blown up; 4 casualties.
2 Nov.	?	Attacks on army lorries and bridges; 10 casualties.
3 Nov.	Qalqilya	Train derailed by mine, staff slightly injured.
	same area	Military vehicle detonated mine, no damage.

Date	Location	Details
4 Nov.	south Palestine near Tel Aviv	Abortive attempt to mine railway. Train derailed by mine, one train-man wounded.
	south Palestine	Train detonated a mine, no damage.
5 Nov.	near Rishon Le Zion near Qalqilya	Civilian car blown up by mine, no casualties. Oil train mined and fired on, some damage, no casualties; nearby blockhouse fired on (Lechi).
6 Nov.	Kiryat Haim	Abortive attempt to mine railway.
7 Nov.	Lydda District	Troop train derailed by mines, no casualties.
9 Nov.	?	3 policemen killed by booby trap mine (Irgun).
10 Nov.	Ras El Ain	Railway station blown up; 4 security force casualties (Irgun).
11 Nov.	near Qalqilya	Railway damaged by mines at 3 locations.
13 Nov.	railway and roads	28 security force casualties from mines.
15 Nov.	near Benyamina	Police rail trolley derailed by mine; 3 soldiers wounded.
17 Nov.	railway near Sarona	2 successful attempts to mine railway, 2 failures; 2 army casualties. 10 security force casualties from road mine.
18 Nov.	railway	Army rail trolley blown up, one casualty; second bomb found nearby.
19 Nov.	railway Jerusalem	5 army casualties from attempt to remove mine. Abortive attempt to blow up police vehicle; one civilian injured.
	Tel Aviv	Assassination of Jewish policeman (Lechi).
	railway	2 abortive attempts to mine railway.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Details</i>
20 Nov.	Jerusalem	Income Tax office destroyed by bomb; 5 security force casualties (Irgun).
	Tel Aviv	Jewish civilian shot by Jews, believed to be for political reasons.
22 Nov.	railway	Section of line blown up.
25 Nov.	near Beit Dajan	2 military vehicles fired on in separate incidents; one casualty.
30 Nov.	Jerusalem	Attack on police barracks, 4 casualties; roads mined.
2 Dec.	near Jerusalem near Benyamina	Jeep blown up by mine; 4 soldiers killed. Jeep blown up by mine; 4 casualties.
3 Dec.	Tel Aviv near Kfar Vitkin Haifa	Abortive attempt to rob welfare officer; 2 insurgent casualties. Jeep blown up by mine; 2 casualties. Jeep blown up by mines; one soldier killed.
5 Dec.	Sarafand	Truck bomb exploded in military camp; 30 casualties (Lechi).
	Jerusalem	2 insurgents killed in abortive car bombing (Lechi).
	Jerusalem	Policeman wounded in shooting attack on police barracks.
	Jerusalem	Abortive grenade attack on guards of GOC's residence.
	Jerusalem	2 bombs discovered at different locations.
17 Dec.	Jerusalem	Army detonated bomb found in Jerusalem hotel; little damage.
18 Dec.	Jerusalem	Insurgent killed in shooting incident.
26 Dec.	Tel Aviv, Nathanya	2 diamond robberies.
29 Dec.	Tel Aviv, Rishon Le Zion, Nathanya	4 soldiers abducted, flogged in 3 incidents (Irgun).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Details</i>
1947		
2 Jan.	Jerusalem	Grenades thrown at 2 locations, no casualties.
	Jerusalem	Police patrol attacked with flame throwers, no casualties.
	Jerusalem Hadera	Abortive attempt to mine road. One security force casualty in bombing, gunfire attack on army camp.
2 Jan.	Kiryat Hayim near Haifa	Attack on army camp with bombs, gunfire (Irgun). Army vehicle blown up by mine; 5 casualties.
	Haifa	2 security force vehicles blown up by mine; no casualties.
	Tiberias	Attack on military car park; no damage or casualties
	Tel Aviv	Gunfire, mortar attack on army headquarters and police barracks; 4 casualties.
	Jaffa	Attack on police headquarters (Irgun).
	near Hadera Tel Aviv	Abortive attempt to mine 2 jeeps. One policeman wounded in shooting attack on railway station.
	near Petah Tiqva	Lorry blown up by mine; 5 soldiers wounded.
	near Petah Tiqva	Jeep blown up by mine; 3 soldiers wounded.
	Tel Aviv near Tel Aviv	Police vehicle blown up; 2 casualties Taxi blown up by mine; policeman wounded.
3 Jan.	Lydda	Two military vehicles blown up; 6 injured.
	near Wilhelma	Military vehicle blown up; 3 casualties.
4 Jan.	Jerusalem	Military vehicle blown up; 3 casualties.
	Haifa	Military vehicle blown up; 2 casualties.
5 Jan.	Jerusalem, Haifa	Military vehicles blown up by mines in 2 incidents; one casualty.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Details</i>
6 Jan.	Lydda	Military vehicle blown up; no casualties.
12 Jan.	Haifa	Bombing of District Police Headquarters; 104 casualties (Lechi).
23 Jan.	?	Bank robbery.
26 Jan.	Jerusalem	Judge, businessman kidnapped (Irgun).
29 Jan.	near Athlit	Textile robbery.
13 Feb.	Haifa	Sabotage of 2 government vessels in harbour.
18 Feb.	Jerusalem	Army lorry blown up by mine; 5 casualties.
	near Nathanya	Army vehicle blown up by mine.
19 Feb.	Haifa	2 army vehicles blown up by mines; no casualties.
	?	Oil pipeline damaged by explosives.
	Ein Shemer	Mortar attack on airfield.
	Aqir	Abortive attempt to mine road.
28 Feb.	Haifa	Bombing of shipping agency; 7 casualties.
1 Mar.	Jerusalem	Officers' club bombed; 29 casualties (Irgun).
	Beit Lid	2 vehicles destroyed by mines.
	Beit Lid	Mortar and gunfire attack on army camp; 4 casualties.
	Haifa	4 military vehicles damaged by bomb.
	Haifa	Army jeep mined; 4 casualties.
	near Haifa	Army lorry mined.
	Rehovoth	2 bombs exploded outside police station.
	Rehovoth	Army vehicle blown up; 4 casualties.
	Petah Tiqva	Slight damage to vehicle from road mine.
	Petah Tiqva	Army vehicle blown up; 2 soldiers killed.
	Nathanya	Army vehicle blown up.
	Kefar Yona	Mortar and gunfire attack on army camp.
	Aqir	Government vehicle mined;
2 Mar.	near Hadera	Army lorry mined; 2 casualties.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Details</i>
3 Mar.	Haifa Hadera	Grenades thrown into army camp. Gunfire attack on army camp.
4 Mar.	Ramle/Aqir road Rishon	RAF lorry blown up; four casualties. Army lorry blown up; 3 casualties.
5 Mar.	Jerusalem Haifa Jerusalem	Armed robbery. Sentry post bombed. One soldier wounded in grenade attack.
	Jerusalem Rehovoth Hadera	Shooting at sentries. Vehicle blown up; 2 casualties. Mortar and gunfire attack on army camp; 3 casualties.
6 Mar.	Ramle/Aqir road near Benyamina	Shooting at RAF vehicle. Shooting at government vehicle.
7 Mar.	near Hadera Rishon near Rishon	Army vehicle blown up; 4 casualties. Shooting at police station. Jeep fired on.
8 Mar.	Jerusalem Haifa Jerusalem	Police vehicle fired on; 2 casualties. Grenades thrown into army camp. Grenades thrown into army camp; 2 casualties.
	Sarona	Grenades thrown into army camp; 3 security force casualties.
	Jaffa Tel Aviv	Gunfire attack on police HQ. Gunfire attack on army HQ; 20 insurgent casualties.
	Tel Aviv	Gunfire attack on survey building.
10 Mar.	Ramat Gan	2 army vehicles mined.
11 Mar.	Nathanya Tulkarm	Government vehicle fired on; one security force casualty. Government vehicle fired on.
12 Mar.	Ein Shemer Jerusalem	Gunfire, grenade attack on army camp. Raid on government billet; 9 army casualties, considerable damage.
	Rishon Sarona	2 civilian vehicles mined. Army jeep mined, one casualty.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Details</i>
13 Mar.	Ras El Ain Battir	Oil train mined and derailed. Goods train mined and derailed; 2 railway staff casualties.
	Tel Aviv Kefar Yona	Grenades thrown at jeep. Gunfire, mortar attack on army camp.
	Haifa	3 oil pipelines blown up.
14 Mar.	Be'er Ya'acov	Railway mined.
15 Mar.	Hadera	Army club set on fire by arsonists.
16 Mar.	Nathanya Jerusalem	Gunfire attack on 2 army camps. Jewish Agency public relations office bombed.
19 Mar.	Zichron Ya'acov	Bomb thrown at security forces; 7 casualties.
24 Mar.	Tel Aviv	Bank robbery; £27 500 stolen, bank clerk wounded.
28 Mar.	near Ramle Haifa	Security forces ambushed; 2 killed. Oil pipeline damaged by bomb.
31 Mar.	Haifa	Sabotage of oil refinery; 16000 tons of petroleum products destroyed (Lechi).
1 Apr.	near Nahariya ?	Arms theft; one soldier killed. Shooting incident; one policeman, 2 civilian casualties.
8 Apr.	Jerusalem	Shooting incident; 2 police casualties.
18 Apr.	Tel Aviv Nathanya	Police vehicle attacked; 6 casualties. Army medical post bombed; one casualty.
20 Apr.	Nathanya Ramat Zev	Army cinema bombed; 4 casualties, extensive damage. Military vehicle blown up by mine; 4 casualties.
22 Apr.	near Rehovoth	Train blown up, fired on, derailed; 13 casualties.
23 Apr.	near Lydda	2 government vehicles blown up; 4 casualties.
24 Apr.	Tel Aviv	British civilian abducted (Irgun).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Details</i>
25 Apr.	Sarona Afula	Police barracks bombed; 10 casualties. Bank robbery.
26 Apr.	Haifa	Assassination of CID Superintendent (Lechi).
30 Apr.	near Jerusalem	Abortive attempt to mine road.
4 May	Acre	Prison escape.
12 May	Jerusalem	Assassination of 2 policemen.
14 May	railway Jerusalem	7 incidents of sabotage. Abortive attempt to bomb military court building.
	Sarafand	Army cinema bombed; 2 casualties.
16 May	Haifa	CID car damaged by bomb; 4 casualties.
19 May	Haifa	Assassination of policeman.
20 May	Tel Aviv Fejja, Yehudiyee	CID car damaged by mine. Insurgent attack on 2 Arab villages; one insurgent, 9 Arab casualties.
27 May	Ramle railway	Railway station blown up; one casualty. 2 explosions; no damage.
28 May	Haifa	Oil dock slightly damaged by bombs; one casualty.
3 June	Jerusalem	Bombing of military compound.
4 June	railway	2 trains derailed by mines in separate incidents; one casualty.
5 June	Athlit ?	Railway station bombed; extensive damage. Oil pipeline cut by explosion.
9 June	Ramat Gan	2 policemen kidnapped; recovered later.
18 June	Tel Aviv	Abortive attempt to blow up army HQ (Irgun).
22 June	Jerusalem	Abortive attempt to kidnap senior police officer (Irgun).
25 June	Jerusalem	Abortive attempt to kidnap government official (Irgun).

Date	Location	Details
28 June	Haifa	Shooting attack on soldiers; 3 casualties (Lechi).
	Tel Aviv	Shooting attack on soldiers; 4 casualties (Lechi).
29 June	Herzliya	Shooting attack on soldiers; 3 casualties (Lechi).
12 July	Nathanya	2 soldiers abducted (Irgun).
15 July	Tel Litwinsky	Jewish policeman assassinated.
16 July	Jerusalem	2 military vehicles damaged by mines; 2 casualties.
	near Hadera	Army car mined.
	Petah Tiqva Petah Tiqva	Army lorry mined; 4 casualties. Army jeep mined; 2 casualties.
18 July	Jerusalem	Gunfire attack on military vehicle; 3 casualties.
	Jerusalem	Grenade thrown at military post; one casualty.
	Jerusalem Kefar Bilu	Police vehicle set on fire by bomb. Army lorry mined; 4 casualties.
19 July	Haifa	2 policemen assassinated.
	Jerusalem	Incendiary bombs thrown at 2 police vehicles; one casualty.
20 July	railway	Abortive attempt to mine railway.
	railway	Train mined; slight damage.
	railway	Goods trains mined; slight damage.
	railway	Oil train mined.
	Jerusalem Jerusalem Gan Menashe Nathanya Tel Litwinsky	Policeman wounded in shooting. 2 police vehicles mined; 5 casualties. Military vehicle mined; 4 casualties. Army car fired on. Gunfire, mortar attack on army camp.
21 July	Haifa	Gunfire, grenade attack on army camp.
	Haifa	Attack on military installation; radio equipment damaged.
	Haifa	Oil pipeline slightly damaged by bomb.
	Haifa	Military vehicle blown up; 2 casualties.

Date	Location	Details
	near Afula ?	Oil pipeline damaged by two bombs. Soldier fired on.
	near Hadera	Army lorry mined.
22 July	Haifa	Army vehicle mined; one casualty.
	Jerusalem	Shooting at RAF vehicle; one casualty.
	Jerusalem	Fire bombs thrown at RAF, police vehicles.
	Jerusalem	Attack on police barracks; general firing throughout city.
23 July	Haifa	Military vehicle mined; 4 casualties.
	Haifa	Bombing of army billet; one casualty.
	Haifa	Bombing of military car park; 3 casualties.
	near Haifa	Military vehicle mined; 7 casualties.
	near Beit Lid	Army jeep mined; 4 casualties.
	near Rishon Le Zion	Army lorry mined; 7 casualties.
24 July	Tel Aviv Jerusalem	Diamond robbery. Shooting at officers' mess.
24 July	Jerusalem	Bombing of military vehicle; 3 casualties.
	Jerusalem ?	Police car mined; one casualty. Railway bridge damaged by bomb.
25 July	Haifa	Abortive attempt to mine road.
	Jerusalem	2 explosions in open ground.
26 July	?	Two soldiers killed by mine.
	railway	Abortive attempt to mine railway.
	railway	Abortive attempt to mine railway.
27 July	near Jaffa	Railway trolley mined; 2 casualties.
	Jerusalem	Gunfire, grenade attack on military convoy; 2 casualties.
28 July	near Rehovoth	Abortive attempt to mine military convoy.
	Sarafand	Abortive arson attempt at army camp.
	Jerusalem Tel Litwinsky	Shooting at police vehicle. Bombing of cinema; 3 casualties.
29 July	Nathanya	2 soldiers (kidnapped 12 July) hanged by Irgun.

Date	Location	Details
	near Haifa Jerusalem near Athlit	Military post destroyed by bomb. Grenade thrown at police vehicle. Railway considerably damaged by mine.
30 July	Jerusalem near Nathanya	Abortive mining. Military vehicle mined; 5 casualties.
31 July	near Zichron Ya'acov	Train mined; considerable damage.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF INSURGENT OPERATIONS

1. Monthly Rate of Operations

1945:	November	4
	December	5
1946:	January	7
	February	13
	March	4
	April	11
	May	6
	June	24
	July	2
	August	1
	September	13
	October	19
	November	35
	December	18
1947:	January	29
	February	8
	March	58
	April	15
	May	19
	June	12
	July	60
Total		363
Average:	17.285 incidents per month	

United Resistance (November 1945–August 1946): 77 incidents (excluding the incidents of 31 October 1945) over 10 months; 7.7 incidents per month

IRGUN/LECHI ALONE (September 1946–July 1947): 286 incidents over 11 months; 26 incidents per month

2. Location of Insurgent Operations

(a)	Jerusalem	58
(b)	Tel Aviv	34
(c)	Haifa	47
(d)	Lydda District*	69
(e)	Other	155

3. Types of Insurgent Operations (successful and abortive)

(a)	Assassinations	26
(b)	Other shooting incidents	31
(c)	Bombings	87
(d)	Mining incidents	119
(e)	Robberies	32
(f)	Kidnappings	14
(g)	Other (including raids, mortar attacks)	54

4. Targets of Insurgent Operations

(a)	Security forces	212
(b)	Government	16
(c)	Railway	67
(d)	Oil industry	12
(e)	Other	56

* Apart from Tel Aviv (listed and counted separately), Lydda District includes the following major towns: Jaffa, Petah Tiqva, Ramat Gan, Rehovoth, Rishon Le Zion, Sarafand, Tel Litwinsky.

Appendix IV: Security Force Search Operations

Sources for this information are as follows: WO 169/19656-23228; WO 261/171-219; CO 733/456; Pyman Diaries, 6/1/8; Wilson, *Cordon and Search*, pp. 230-8. Search operations involving units of less than a platoon are not listed, owing to insufficient data.

Date	Location	Formations	Results
1945			
23 Nov.	north of Tel Aviv	Company and police	Nil.
25-27 Nov.	Rishpon	Two brigades with units under command	29 arrested, 2 killed, 16 wounded.
	Shefayim	As above	
	Hogla	As above	
26 Nov.	Givat Hayim	One brigade plus	10 wounded, 100 arrested.
28 Dec.	Jerusalem	Battalion plus and PMF	26 detained for one month.
	Ramat Gan	Battalion and police	59 detained for questioning.
1946			
1 Jan.	Jerusalem	Elements of two battalions and PMF	6 suspected insurgents arrested.
3 Jan.	Jerusalem	Four platoons and PMF	6 detained.
4 Jan.	Tel Aviv	Company and police	Nil.

Date	Location	Formations	Results
7 Jan.	Rishon Le Zion	Four battalions and police	55 detained, including one known insurgent.
8 Jan.	Jerusalem	CID and army	Equipment and documents seized.
13 Jan.	Yemini	Brigade with units under command	16 arrested, equipment and documents seized.
17 Jan.	Jerusalem	Army	Nil.
20-24 Jan.	Jerusalem	Army and police	47 detained, large quantity of arms and explosives seized, valuable intelligence gained in six searches.
22 Jan.	Hadera	Brigade with units under command	27 arrested.
24 Jan.	Tel Aviv	Battalion and police	Nil.
29 Jan.	Jerusalem	Platoon and police	2 detained.
30 Jan.	Jerusalem	Army, police and PMF	Nil.
	Tel Aviv	Brigade and police	11 detained.
31 Jan.	Jerusalem	Platoon plus and police	One detained, some equipment seized.
5 Feb.	Jib Yousef	Company and police	Nil.
6 Feb.	Tel Aviv?	Company and PMF	Nil.
7 Feb.	Rosh Pinna	Elements of brigade and police	Nil.
	Safad	As above	Nil.
11 Feb.	Rosh Pinna	Battalion and police	Nil.
13 Feb.	Rosh Pinna	As above	Nil.
	Tiberias	As above	Nil.
15 Feb.	Haifa	Brigade and police	6 arrested, equipment seized.

Date	Location	Formations	Results
18 Feb.	Elements of battalion and police	20 arrested, weapons and equipment seized in capture of Lechi transmitter.	
22 Feb.	Kfar Vitkin	Company and police	Nil.
28 Feb.	Birya	Brigade and police	25 arrested, two arms caches and documents seized.
	Ein Zetim Jerusalem	As above Elements of brigade	Nil. Large arms cache seized.
6 Mar.	Sarafand area	Elements of division	Nil.
3 Apr.	south of Rehovoth	Elements of battalion and PMF	Some suspects detained in two settlement searches.
25 Apr.	Tel Aviv	Two battalions plus and PMF	79 detained and equipment seized.
5 May	Jerusalem	platoon, PMF and police	Nil.
17 June	across Palestine	All army units and police	One large arms cache seized in large number of searches.
18 June	Tel Aviv Jerusalem	Battalion plus Police	Nil. Nil.
19 June	Kfar Giladi	Brigade	Nil; 2 killed, 7 wounded.
20 June	Beerot Yitshaq	As above	Nil.
22 June	southern Palestine	Brigade and police	Nil.
24 June	south of Rehovoth	Battalion and police	Arms and ammunition seized, 7 detained.
25 June	Rehovoth	Company	4 arrested, some arms and ammunition seized.

Date	Location	Formations	Results
26 June	Rehovoth	Battalion	Nil.
29-30 June	across Palestine	All formations	700 detained, large quantities of arms, equipment, documents seized in 18 separate searches.
23 July	Jerusalem	Two battalions	46 detained.
30 July-2 Aug.	Tel Aviv	Division plus units under command	787 detained, large arms cache seized.
26 Aug.	Sedot Yam	Brigade	?
28 Aug.-2 Sept.	Dorot, Ruhama	Two battalions	Large quantities of arms seized at both locations.
10 Sept.	Ramat Gan	Brigade	47 detained for questioning.
	Sedot Yam, Heftsi Bah	As above	?
13 Sept.	Tel Aviv, Jaffa	As above	27 detained.
23 Sept.	near Petah Tiqva	Battalion?	Small quantity of arms seized.
3 Oct.	Kfar Bilu	Battalion	Nil.
9 Oct.	Nathanya	As above	4 arrested, small quantity of arms seized.
16 Oct.	south of Tel Aviv	Two platoons and police	Nil.
18 Oct.	Tel Aviv	Company and police	One arrested.
21 Oct.	Petah Tiqva	Company	?
23 Oct.	Petah Tiqva	Battalion	One suspected insurgent arrested.
	Rehovoth	Company	4 detained for questioning.
31 Oct.	Tel Aviv	Four platoons	Some equipment seized.
	Petah Tiqva	Two companies	Nil.

Date	Location	Formations	Results
30 Dec.	Petah Tiqva	Brigade plus units under command	19 detained, small arms cache seized.
	south of Nathanya	Brigade plus	24 arrested.
31 Dec.	Rishon Le Zion	Battalion plus	18 detained.
1947			
1 Jan.	Tel Aviv	Brigade plus	47 arrested.
2 Jan.	Rehovoth	As above	19 detained, some arms seized.
3 Jan.	Lydda area Jerusalem	Brigade As above	34 arrested. 30 detained, small quantity of equipment seized.
26 Jan.	Jerusalem	Company	Nil.
27 Jan.	Jerusalem Petah Tiqva	Battalion Brigade	Nil. Nil.
29 Jan.	Petah Tiqva Rishon Tel Aviv	Company and police As above Platoon and CID	? ? ?
30 Jan.	Jerusalem Jerusalem	Battalion and police As above	? ?
2 Mar.	Jerusalem	Battalion	11 detained.
7 Mar.	Rehovoth Hadera	Brigade plus Brigade	12 detained. 6 detained, including one suspected insurgent.
	Nathanya	As above	2 detained.
17 Mar.	near Rishon Le Zion	Brigade plus	5 detained.
22 Mar.	Jerusalem	Battalion	Arms and explosives seized.
28 Mar.	Jerusalem	Company plus	2 detained.
4-5 May	Acre area	Brigade	4 separate searches, no results.

Date	Location	Formations	Results
6 May- 11 July	across Palestine	variable	46 separate search operations, results undetermined.
12 July	Nathanya	?	Nil.
12-13 July	Nathanya area	Brigade	Nil.
15 July	Nathanya	As above	18 detained, including 3 suspected insurgents.
16 July	Nathanya	Battalion	Nil.
17-18 July	Nathanya	same	Nil.
19-26 July	Nathanya	same	Nil.

Total Number of Search Operations: 176 plus.

At least 44 searches, or 25 per cent, produced no results. Of these, 31 were carried out by battalions or larger formations.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF SECURITY FORCE SEARCH OPERATIONS

1. Monthly Rate of Operations

1945:	November	5
	December	2
1946:	January	19
	February	13
	March	1
	April	3
	May	1
	June	27 plus
	July	2
	August	3
	September	6
	October	9
	November	0
	December	3

1947:	January	12
	February	0
	March	7
	April	0
	May-July	63

2. Location of Search Operations

(a)	Jerusalem	27
(b)	Tel Aviv	14
(c)	Haifa	1
(d)	Lydda District (less Tel Aviv)	32
(e)	Other/undetermined	102 plus

3. Size of Search Operations

(a)	Division	2
(b)	Brigade or larger	38
(c)	Battalion or larger	55
(d)	Company or larger	19
(e)	Platoon or larger	5
(f)	Other/undetermined	58

Appendix V: The Cost of Insurgency

1. The Human Cost

Casualties sustained from August 1945 to August 1947:

	Killed	Wounded	Total
(a) British	141	475	616
(b) Jewish: (i) Insurgents	40	23	63
(b) Jewish: (ii) Others	25	115	140
(c) Arabs	44	287	331
(d) Others	10	12	22
Totals	260	912	1172

Of these casualties 1089 occurred between 31 October 1945 and 31 July 1947.

Source: High Commissioner to British Embassy, Washington, 18 September 1947, CO 537/477.

2. The Financial Cost

Sources for this information are as follows: CO 537/2279; CO 814/17, 40; FO 371/61770, 61941.

(a) Palestine Government

	<i>Expenditures</i> (1945/47) £	<i>Estimates</i> (1947/48) £
(i) Police and security	9 206 179	5 700 000
(ii) Damage to railway	3 049 811 ¹	2 550 192 ²
(iii) Internment of illegal immigrants in Cyprus	2 200 000 ³	900 000
(iv) Evacuation and cantonment		300 000
(v) Compensation for King David Hotel incident		400 000
(vi) Repairs to buildings damaged by terrorism		500 000 ⁴
(vii) Compensation to Shell Oil Company for damage from terrorism		400 000
Totals	11 711 160	8 455 019
Revenue for period	44 737 774	n.a. ⁵
Percentage expenditure on Internal Security	26%	n.a.

(b) British Government

- (i) Expenditures on armed forces in Palestine, 1 July 1945 to 31 January 1947: £55 600 000 (army: £48 000 000).
- (ii) Estimate for calendar year 1947: £23 500 000 (army: £21 000 000)

Notes:

1. Total cost of damage to 31 March 1947.
2. Deficit charged against next fiscal year owing to damage and loss of revenue in 1946/47.
3. Total cost to 31 March 1947.
4. Cost of repairs undertaken for damage incurred in 1946/47.
5. No figures available.

Notes

CHAPTER 1

1. C. Von Clausewitz, *On War*, M. Howard and P. Paret (trans. and ed.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976) pp.88-9.
2. On this theme, see W. H. McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Forces, and Society Since AD 1000* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); and M. Tugwell, 'Adapt or Perish: The Forms of Evolution in Warfare', in D. Charters and M. Tugwell (eds) *Armies in Low-Intensity Conflict: A Comparative Study of Institutional Adaptation to New Forms of Warfare*, ORAE Extra-Mural Paper No. 38 (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1985) pp.1-22.
3. S. P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil Military Relations* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957) p.71.
4. See Chapter 5 for development of this theme in respect of the British army.
5. Tugwell, p. 1.
6. P. Calvert, *Revolution and International Politics* (London: Frances Pinter, 1984) p.180.
7. E. Luttwak, *A Dictionary of Modern War* (London: Allen Lane, 1971) p. 116.
8. I. F. W. Beckett and J. Pimlott (eds) *Armed Forces and Modern Counter-Insurgency* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1985) p. 1.
9. B. E. O'Neill, 'Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis', in B. E. O'Neill et al. (eds) *Insurgency in the Modern World* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1980) pp. 1-2.
10. D. C. Pirages, 'Political Stability and Conflict Management', in T. R. Gurr (ed.) *Handbook of Political Conflict: Theory and Research* (New York: Free Press, 1980) p. 433.
11. E. Ahmad, 'Revolutionary War and Counter-Insurgency', in D. S. Sullivan and M. J. Sattler (eds) *Revolutionary War: Western Response* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971) p. 5. Variations of this definition are identified in E. Zimmermann, *Political Violence, Crisis, and Revolutions: Theories and Research* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing, 1983) p. 203.
12. T. Lomperis, 'Vietnam's Offspring: The Lesson of Legitimacy', *Conflict Quarterly*, vol. 6, no. 1 (Winter 1986) p. 21.
13. Ahmad, p. 5.

14. Zimmermann, pp. 207–10, 212–15, 224–6, 228–30, 234.
15. H. Eckstein, 'On the Etiology of Internal Wars', in G. A. Kelly and C. W. Brown (eds) *Struggles in the State: Sources and Patterns of World Revolution* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1970) pp. 177–8. Eckstein offers 21 hypotheses on the sources of internal war.
16. A. Atkinson, 'Social War – The Death of Classicism in Contemporary Strategic Thought?', *Royal United Services Institute Journal for Defence Studies* (hereafter cited as *JRUSI*), vol. 119, no. 1 (March 1974) p. 43.
17. J. Niezing (ed.) *Urban Guerrilla: Studies on the Theory, Strategy and Practice of Political Violence in Modern Societies* (Rotterdam: Rotterdam University Press, 1974) p. 25.
18. Atkinson, pp. 44–8, expands upon this theme, based on the Maoist revolutionary 'model', in his book *Social Order and the General Theory of Strategy* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981). See also, O'Neill, pp. 3, 5–8, 9–10, 11–14.
19. Zimmermann, p. 208; Eckstein, p. 186; A. C. Janos, 'Authority and Violence: The Political Framework of Internal War', and L. W. Pye, 'The Roots of Insurgency and the Commencement of Rebellions', in H. Eckstein (ed.) *Internal War: Problems and Approaches* (New York: Free Press, 1964) pp. 120–41, 168–70; T. Bowden, *The Breakdown of Public Security: The Case of Ireland 1916–1921 and Palestine 1936–1939* (London: Sage Publications, 1977) pp. 284–6, 293–4, 299–301, 307–8.
20. O'Neill, p. 3.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13; See also F. Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peacekeeping* (London: Faber, 1971) Figure 5, p. 128.
23. See M. A. J. Tugwell, 'Revolutionary Propaganda and Possible Counter-measures', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of London, 1979, for a full discussion of revolutionary and nationalist insurgent propaganda themes.
24. *Ibid.*; O'Neill, pp. 6–11, 13–14.
25. O'Neill, pp. 4–5.
26. *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5, 26–34; see also, P. Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State*, 2nd edn (London: Macmillan, 1986) pp. 113–14.
27. Kitson, pp. 51–2, 89–90.
28. *Ibid.*, pp. 71–2, 95, 98–9; Sir R. Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences From Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1966) pp. 55–7, 84–9; see also, N. Leites and C. Wolf, Jr, *Rebellion and Authority: An Analytic Essay on Insurgent Conflicts* (Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1970) pp. 151–2.
29. S. Hutchinson, 'The Police Role in Counter-Insurgency Operations', *JRUSI*, vol. 114, no. 4 (December 1969) pp. 57–8.
30. See J. Paget, *Counter-Insurgency Campaigning* (London: Faber, 1967) p. 166; on the importance of platoon-level operations.
31. Kitson, p. 90.
32. R. Clutterbuck, *The Long Long War: The Emergency in Malaya 1948–1960* (London: Cassell, 1966) p. 51.
33. See D. Charters, 'From Palestine to Northern Ireland: British Army

- Adaptation to Low-Intensity Operations', in Charters and Tugwell, pp. 249–52, 255–63.
34. A. Deane-Drummond, *Riot Control* (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence Studies, 1975) p. 64.
35. Lt-Col. J. C. M. Baynes, *The Soldier in Modern Society* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972) p. 91, notes that between 1950 and 1967 infantry provided 70 per cent of the manpower for British 'emergency' operations, while the artillery and the armoured corps contributed 18 per cent and 12 per cent respectively.
36. Certainly a comparison of the British experience in the Korean War and the Malayan Emergency is suggestive in this regard. See H. Stanhope, *The Soldiers: An Anatomy of the British Army* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1979) Appendix 6, p. 343.
37. O. Thomson, *Mass Persuasion in History: An Historical Analysis of the Development of Propaganda Techniques* (Edinburgh: Paul Harris, 1977) pp. 125–6, 128–9.
38. The British armed forces in Malaya, Northern Ireland and other campaigns became involved in propaganda and psychological warfare operations to a greater or lesser degree, as did the French army in Algeria, and the US army in Vietnam. See A. Short, *The Communist Insurrection in Malaya 1948–1960* (London: Frederick Muller, 1975) pp. 422–4, 451–2; D. Charters, 'Intelligence and Psychological Warfare Operations in Northern Ireland', *JRUSI*, vol. 122, no. 3 (September 1977) pp. 23–5; J. Pimlott, 'The British Army: The Dhofar Campaign, 1970–1975', in Beckett and Pimlott, pp. 32–5; A. Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954–1962* (New York: Viking, 1977) pp. 108–9, 165–7; A. A. Heggoy, *Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in Algeria* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972) pp. 78, 147, 188–211; R. W. Chandler, *War of Ideas: The US Propaganda Campaign in Vietnam* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1981).
39. See A. Hooper, *The Military and the Media* (Aldershot: Gower, 1982) pp. 4–8, 111–22, 124–48, 181–4; R. Eveleigh, *Peace-keeping in a Democratic Society: The Lessons of Northern Ireland* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1978) pp. 37–47; Col. H. Summers, Jr (Ret'd), 'Western Media and Recent Wars', *Military Review*, vol. 66, no. 5 (May 1986) pp. 4–14.
40. Apropos of sports, the author finds this aphorism peculiarly relevant to the psychological warfare dimension of counter-insurgency.
41. Lt-Gen. Sir K. Darling, 'British Counterinsurgency Experience', *Military Review*, vol. 45, no. 1 (January 1965) p. 9.
42. Clutterbuck, p. 3.
43. A. Verrier, *An Army for the Sixties: A Study in National Policy, Contract and Obligation* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1966) p. 158. Verrier's criticism is cited and amplified in P. Darby, *British Defence Policy East of Suez, 1947–1968* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973) pp. 49–51.
44. Charters, 'From Palestine to Northern Ireland', p. 236 and notes 27–9.
45. J. B. Bell, 'Revolts Against the Crown: The British Response to Imperial Insurgency', *Parameters*, vol. 4, no. 1 (1974) pp. 31–46.

CHAPTER 2

1. Text in E8917, FO 371/61789, quoted in M. J. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers 1945–1948* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982) pp. 276–7.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 37–8. See also Defence Committee's endorsement of Chiefs of Staff Appreciation, 5 April 1946, discussed in W. R. Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East 1945–1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States, and Postwar Imperialism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984) pp. 28–31.
3. R. Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy of the British Labour Government 1947: The Decision to Withdraw', *International Affairs*, vol. LVI (1980) pp. 87, 90–91. See also Cohen, pp. 268–76, and Louis, pp. 473–7.
4. D. E. Knox, *The Making of a New Eastern Question: British Palestine Policy and the Origins of Israel, 1917–1925* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1981) pp. 11–19.
5. E. Monroe, *Britain's Moment in the Middle East, 1914–1956* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1963) p. 43.
6. J. C. Hurewitz, *The Struggle for Palestine* (New York: Norton, 1950; reprinted New York: Schocken Books, 1976) p. 18.
7. Monroe, pp. 66–7, 79, 81; Knox, pp. 36, 42–3, 145–6, 152.
8. Hurewitz, pp. 20–2.
9. Knox, pp. 6, 9–10, 165–6, 176.
10. House of Commons Command Paper number [3530], 'Report of the Royal Commission on Palestine Disturbances of August 1929', pp. 161–2, *British Parliamentary Papers*, Session 1930.
11. Monroe, p. 81; Hurewitz, pp. 22–3.
12. HC [5479], 'Report of the Palestine Royal Commission', (1937); M. J. Cohen, *Palestine: Retreat From the Mandate. The Making of British Policy, 1936–1945* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978) pp. 10–49 *passim*. 62–72; N. Bethell, *The Palestine Triangle: The Struggle Between the British, the Jews and the Arabs 1935–48* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1979) pp. 25–6.
13. HC [6019], 'Palestine: A Statement of Policy', (1939); Cohen, *Retreat From the Mandate*, pp. 72–87.
14. Cohen, *Retreat From the Mandate*, p. 87.
15. Monroe, pp. 88–9. Cohen, *Retreat from the Mandate*, casts doubt on the military priority the British assigned to the Middle East at the time of the White Paper.
16. Cohen, *Retreat From the Mandate*, pp. 160–1.
17. Churchill to Lord Privy Seal and Colonial Secretary, 18 April 1943, in Sir W. L. S. Churchill, *The Second World War: The Hinge of Fate*, vol. IV (London, 1956) p. 758.
18. War Cabinet Paper (hereafter cited as WCP) 178, 'Note by Prime Minister', 28 April 1943, CAB 66/36, Public Record Office, Kew.
19. WCP 563, 'Report of War Cabinet Committee on Palestine', 20 December 1943, CAB 66/44; Cohen, *Retreat From the Mandate*, pp. 161, 163–4.
20. Sir W. L. S. Churchill, *The Second World War: Triumph and Tragedy*,

- vol. VI (London: Cassell, 1954; reprinted 1956) p. 546; Cohen, *Retreat From the Mandate*, pp. 171–9.
21. WCP 214, 'Note by Minister Resident in the Middle East', 4 April 1945; and WCP 229, 'Memorandum by Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs', 10 April 1945, CAB 66/64; Cohen, *Retreat From the Mandate*, pp. 179–80.
22. J. Marlow, *The Seat of Pilate: An Account of the Palestine Mandate* (London: Cresset, 1959) p. 181; see also A. Bullock, *Ernest Bevin Foreign Secretary 1945–1951* (London: Heinemann, 1983) p. 47; G. Kirk, *The Middle East 1945–1950. Survey of International Affairs, Volume 5*, A. Toynbee (ed.) (London: Oxford University Press, 1954) p. 190n; Y. Bauer, *From Diplomacy to Resistance: A History of Jewish Palestine, 1939–1945* (New York: Atheneum, 1970; reprinted 1973) p. 348.
23. M. Fitzsimons, *Empire by Treaty: Britain and the Middle East in the Twentieth Century* (London: Ernest Benn, 1965) p. 54.
24. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 29, citing D. C. Watt, *Personalities and Policies* (London: Longmans, 1965).
25. Bullock, pp. 49, 53–4.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 49; Louis, p. 12; see also C. Attlee, *As it Happened* (New York: Viking, 1954) pp. 228–31; C. J. Bartlett, *The Long Retreat: A Short History of British Defence Policy, 1945–1970* (London: Macmillan, 1972) pp. 9, 11–13; R. N. Rosecrance, *Defense of the Realm: British Strategy in the Nuclear Epoch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968) pp. 34–5; W. P. Snyder, *The Politics of British Defence Policy, 1945–1962* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1964) pp. 206–7, 216.
27. Bullock, pp. 13–14, 121–4; Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 29–30.
28. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 30; Louis, pp. 12–14; see also B. Donoghue and G. W. Jones, *Herbert Morrison: Portrait of a Politician* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973) p. 404.
29. Bullock, pp. 126, 240; Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 30; E. Barker, *The British Between the Superpowers, 1945–50* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1983) pp. 55–6.
30. Barker, p. 56.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 38–9, 56; Bullock, pp. 112, 128, 240–4.
32. In Attlee's view, Europe was the first priority, and the Middle East, second. F. Williams, *A Prime Minister Remembers: The War and Post-War Memoirs on The Rt. Hon. Earl Attlee* (London: Heinemann, 1960; reprinted 1961) p. 175. According to Bullock, p. 112, Bevin placed the Middle East fourth, after the Commonwealth and Empire, the international economic system and an international security system.
33. P. Darby, *British Defence Policy East of Suez, 1947–1968* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973) p. 1.
34. See Bullock, pp. 31–2, 34; and Monroe, p. 89.
35. Cabinet Defence Committee Paper DO(46)45, April 1946, CAB 131/2, quoted in Bullock, p. 113.
36. Cabinet Defence Committee, DO(46)10, 5 April 1946, CAB 131/1,

- cited in Louis, p. 31.
37. Barker, pp. 7, 10, 49–51; Bullock, pp. 242–3; Louis, pp. 28–31.
 38. Post Hostilities Planning Staff Paper 10(0) (Final), 'Security in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East', 27 March 1945, in Chiefs of Staff Committee [hereafter COSC] Minutes, CAB 79/31; see also Chiefs of Staff Report, 'Strategic Position of the British Commonwealth', Defence Committee Paper DO(46)47, 2 April 1946, discussed in Louis, pp. 28–9.
 39. Bullock, pp. 131–5, 240; Louis, pp. 16–21.
 40. Bullock, pp. 128, 240–3; see also four articles by B. Liddell Hart, widely published and reprinted in 1946, items 5a, 11, 22, 25, Liddell Hart Papers, Box 10/1946, Middle East Defence Policy, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London. Also, item 29, letter G. Crowther (*The Economist* newspaper) to Liddell Hart, 21 March 1946, and Liddell Hart's reply, 2 April 1946; and item 39, A. J. P. Taylor, 'To Fight or to Share', *The Listener*, 28 March 1946, pp. 389–90, both in Box 10/1946.
 41. Bullock, pp. 242–4; Louis, pp. 28–32.
 42. Kirk, pp. 3, 6.
 43. Louis, pp. 90–100; Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 34.
 44. Monroe, p. 154; Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 35; Bullock, pp. 43–4.
 45. Quoted in Williams, p. 177; see also Monroe, p. 154; Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 37.
 46. 'From an observer recently returned from the Middle East', 7 July 1946, item 28, Box 10/1946, Liddell Hart Papers. See also, Williams, p. 178.
 47. Monroe, p. 155.
 48. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 35–7; Kirk, p. 8.
 49. Quoted in Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 37–8; see also, Louis, pp. 10–1; Bullock, pp. 171, 243; and R. Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy of the British Labour Government 1945–1946', *International Affairs*, vol. LV (1979) p. 413.
 50. Major R. D. Wilson, *Cordon and Search: With 6th Airborne Division in Palestine* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden, 1949) p. 4. Wilson says Palestine was chosen for the divisional base primarily because of the air training facilities (including several airfields) available in southern Palestine.
 51. Monroe, p. 157, gives May 1946 as the date of the British offer. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 35 places it in April.
 52. Louis, pp. 31–2; Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 35.
 53. For a selection of official views on this, see COS(45)443(O), *COSC Middle East Policy*, 10 July 1945, COSC memoranda 1945, CAB 80/95; CP(45)156, 'Report by Lord President of Council', 8 September 1945, CAB 129/2; Colonial Office, 'Memorandum on Short Term Policy for Palestine', 19 September 1945, E6966, FO371/45380; CP(46)258, 'Memorandum by Secretary of State for the Colonies on Report of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry', 8 July 1946; and CP(46)267, 'Anglo-U.S. Report – Military Implications – Report by the Chiefs of Staff', 10 July 1946, CAB 129/11; see also JP(47)130, 26 September

- 1947, quoted in Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 39–40.
54. Churchill to Oliver Stanley, 6 July 1945, CAB 119/147.
55. Quoted in G. Meir, *My Life* (New York: G. P. Putnams, 1975) p. 161.
56. Bauer, pp. 47–8, 72.
57. S. Halperin, *The Political World of American Zionism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1961) p. 222. See also Bauer, pp. 234–42.
58. Hurewitz, pp. 224–5, 227–8; Bullock, p. 46; Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 69–70. After the 'Jewish Brigade' was created in 1944, the demand for a Jewish army had been dropped.
59. Hurewitz, p. 228.
60. R. J. Donovan, *Conflict and Crisis: The Presidency of Harry S. Truman, 1945–1948* (New York: Norton, 1977) pp. 312–13, 317–18; see also, Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 44–5, 49–50.
61. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 45–9, 52.
62. Bullock, p. 175.
63. Z. Ganin, *Truman, American Jewry, and Israel, 1945–1948* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979) pp. xxiii–xvi, 4–5, 8–12, 36–7.
64. *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6, 120, 122–3; Halperin, pp. 184, 318–20 (membership figures on the latter pages).
65. See Chapter 3.
66. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 109–10, 129–32, 135; Louis, pp. 35–6.
67. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 43.
68. House of Commons, Parliamentary Debates, 13 November 1945, col. 1934.
69. Louis, pp. 6–7, 384; Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', p. 410; Bullock, pp. 299–300. Despite periodic reports of disagreement within Cabinet, the government maintained unity in public on the Palestine question. On the internal dissension, see Bethell, pp. 294–6; Williams, pp. 179–80; Diary of Field Marshal Viscount Alanbrooke (hereafter cited as Alanbrooke Diary), 5/11, 4 October 1945, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College, London; Elizabeth Monroe, interview with Francis Williams, October 1959, and with Arthur Creech-Jones, 29 October 1958, Papers of Elizabeth Monroe, St Antony's College, Oxford; Creech-Jones to Callaghan, 30 November 1961, f. 14, File 3, Box 32, Papers of Arthur Creech-Jones, Rhodes House Library, Oxford; *The Palestine Post*, 9 February 1947.
70. Bullock, pp. 96–8, 100.
71. Quoted in Bethell, p. 202.
72. Interview with author, 10 May 1978.
73. Bullock, pp. 57, 70–80; Louis, pp. 5, 383.
74. Cabinet Palestine Committee Minutes, 6 September 1945, CAB 95/14; Hall to Attlee, 19 September 1945, CO 733/461; CP 196, 'Memorandum by Secretary of State for the Colonies', 28 September 1945, CAB 129/2.
75. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 55–7. See also Truman to Attlee, 31 August 1945, E7251 FO 371/45380.
76. Bullock, pp. 174–5.
77. Louis, p. 388 quotes Yehuda Bauer to the effect that the Jewish Agency was well aware that the number of Jews in the DP camps was only

- about half of the 100 000 figure and was worried lest the British accept Truman's proposal.
78. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 57–9; Bullock, p. 175.
 79. Cabinet Minutes CM(45)38, 4 October 1945, CAB 128/1; Bullock, pp. 175–6; Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', p. 415.
 80. CP(45)216, 'Report by Lord President of the Council', 10 October 1945, CAB 129/3.
 81. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 64–5; Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', p. 416; Bullock, p. 179.
 82. Hurewitz, pp. 236–44. Louis, pp. 397–405, 410–11, provides an illuminating dissection of the character of the commission's participants, and places considerable emphasis on the influential role of the British delegate Richard Crossman who, during the course of the commission's work, became decidedly pro-Zionist. On the commission's recommendations see HC[6808], 'Report of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Problems of European Jewry and Palestine', (1946).
 83. Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', p. 419; 'Statement by the President on Receiving the Report of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry', item 92, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman, Containing the Public Messages, Speeches and Statements of the President, 1946* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1962) p. 218.
 84. Louis, p. 425; Donovan, pp. 317–18.
 85. Alanbrooke Diary, 5/12, 24 April 1946; see also, Louis, p. 428; Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', pp. 416–18. Bevin referred to the Tel Aviv incident in correspondence with the American Secretary of State about the commission's reports. See Bethell, p. 235.
 86. Bullock, p. 257; Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', pp. 418–19.
 87. HC, Debates, 1 May 1946, cols 195–9.
 88. Hurewitz, pp. 249–50; Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 107, 113–14 suggests that Attlee's statement relieved the Zionists of the need to make a decision on proposals about which they were ambivalent. See also, GHQ Middle East Forces, 'Weekly Military Intelligence Review' (hereafter WMIR), 3, 10 May 1946, WO 169/22882; and 1 Infantry Division, 'Intelligence Review', 7 May 1946, WO 169/22957.
 89. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 117; Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', pp. 420–1; Kirk, p. 217; Louis, p. 428.
 90. See Chapter 4.
 91. 'Note by General Sir Alan Cunningham', Index to Papers as High Commissioner, Sir Alan Cunningham Papers, Box IV, File 2, Middle East Library, St Antony's College, Oxford.
 92. Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', p. 422.
 93. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 117, 121–2; Louis, pp. 433–4.
 94. CP(46)258, 'Memorandum by Secretary of State for the Colonies on Report of the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry', 8 July 1946; CP(46)259, 'Long Term Policy in Palestine – Memorandum by Secretary of State for the Colonies', 8 July 1946; CP(46)267, 'Anglo-U.S. Report

- Military Implications – Report by the Chiefs of Staff', 10 July 1946, all in CAB 129/11; see also Cabinet Minutes, 22 July 1946, note 2, CAB 128/6; Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 124; and Bullock, pp. 294–6.
95. Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', pp. 424–6; Donovan, pp. 319–20; Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 128–32; Louis, pp. 436–7.
 96. See Chapter 3.
 97. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 135–6.
 98. Louis, p. 440.
 99. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 136–7. Quote is from correspondence: Goldman to Ben-Gurion, 20 June 1946, in Ben-Gurion Archives, cited in Cohen.
 100. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 139–40, 142–6; Minutes of Meeting, Sub-Committee – Colonial Office and Jewish Agency, 17 October 1946, E10531, FO 371/52562; Telegram, Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 29 October 1946, E10765, FO 371/52563.
 101. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 147–51; UK Embassy (Washington) to Foreign Office, 9 August 1946, E7750, FO 371/52552.
 102. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, p. 151; 'Palestine Policy: London Conference, Summary of Proceedings', September–October 1946, 75872/147/11, CO 733/464.
 103. 'Statement by the President Following Adjournment of the Palestine Conference in London', 4 October 1946, item 227, *Public Papers: Harry S. Truman (1946)*, pp. 443–4; Bethell, pp. 282–3.
 104. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 160, 163–4; Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', pp. 427–8.
 105. Owendale, 'The Palestine Policy', p. 429.
 106. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 171–83.
 107. The process by which the various British proposals were drafted, discussed and rejected is examined in Owendale, 'The Decision to Withdraw', pp. 75–86. See also Cabinet Minutes, 7, 14 February 1947, CAB 128–9; CP(47)30, 'Palestine – Memorandum by Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs', 14 January 1947, and CP(47)31, 'Palestine: Future Policy – Memorandum by Secretary of State for the Colonies', 16 January 1947, both in CAB 129/16; and CP(47)59, 'Palestine – Memorandum by Secretaries of State for the Colonies and Foreign Affairs', 13 February 1947, CAB 129/17.
 108. Bethell, pp. 312–13; Hurewitz, pp. 284–6, 289–90, 295–8.
 109. Cabinet Minutes, 20 September 1947, CAB 128/10; Bethell, pp. 344, 346; Hurewitz, p. 299.
 110. Bullock, p. 367.
 111. Creech-Jones to Callaghan, 30 November 1961, Creech-Jones Papers; E. Monroe, interview with Creech-Jones, 29 October 1958, Monroe Papers.
 112. Speech in House of Commons, 31 January, 1947, on Palestine issue. See Sir W. L. S. Churchill, *Winston S. Churchill: His Complete Speeches, 1897–1963*, volume VII, R. R. James (ed.) (London and New York: Chelsea House, 1974) p. 4722.
 113. Hurewitz, p. 281.

1. Col. T. E. Lawrence, 'The Evolution of a Revolt', in M. Elliott-Bateman, J. Ellis and T. Bowden (eds) *Revolt to Revolution: Studies in the 19th and 20th Century European Experience. The Fourth Dimension of Warfare, Volume II* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1974) p. 160. Lawrence's article was originally published in *Army Quarterly*, vol. I, no. 2 (October 1920).
2. See for example, A. Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954-1962* (London: Macmillan, 1977) pp. 101, 104, 112, 134-5.
3. A. Perlmutter, *Military and Politics in Israel: Nation-Building and Role Expansion* (London: Frank Cass, 1960) p. 49. This constituted about 7 per cent of the Yishuv (the Jewish community in Palestine).
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6, 11, 13, 29, 32-3; Y. Bauer, 'Rommel's Threat of Invasion, Zionist Policy, and the Jewish Underground in Palestine, 1942', *Studies in History*, vol. VII (1961) pp. 222-48.
5. 'The Jewish Agency - Extract from Report of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry', G. Branch, HQ Palestine, WO 169/23022; Y. Bauer, *From Diplomacy to Resistance: A History of Jewish Palestine, 1939-1945* (New York: Atheneum, 1970; reprinted 1973) pp. 305-11, 351. On the Agency's role in relation to the World Zionist Organisation, see HC[5479] (1937), 172-4; and J. C. Hurewitz, *The Struggle for Palestine* (New York: Norton, 1950; reprinted Schocken Books, 1976) pp. 18, 40-1.
6. HC[6873], 'Palestine. Statement of Information Relating to Acts of Violence' (1946); 'Notes on the Structure of Jewry in Palestine', HQ 1st Infantry Division, War Diary Appendix J1, WO 169/22956; Bauer, 'Rommel's Threat of Invasion', pp. 224-6. An organisation chart is provided in Appendix I.
7. 1st Guards Brigade, 'Intelligence Summary [ISUM] no. 15 - Structure and Organisation of the Haganah', June 1946, WO 169/22989; Y. Allon, *The Making of Israel's Army* (London: Valentine, 1971) pp. 19-21; E. Luttwak and D. Horowitz, *The Israeli Army* (London: Allen Lane, 1975) pp. 20-1, 24-5; Perlmutter, pp. 37-8, 49-50.
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9. Katz, 'Jewish Resistance', p. 48; S. Katz, *Days of Fire* (London: W. H. Allen, 1968) p. 88.
10. M. Sirkin, quoted in J. Borisov, *Palestine Underground: The Story of the Jewish Resistance* (New York: Judea Publishing, 1947) p. 69.
11. E. Monroe, *Britain's Moment in the Middle East, 1914-1956* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1963) p. 67; J. B. Bell, 'Revolts Against the Crown: The British Response to Imperial Insurgency', *Parameters*, vol. IV (1974) pp. 34-42.
12. J. B. Bell, *Terror Out of Zion: Irgun, Lehi, and the Palestine Underground, 1929-1949* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1977) p. 145.
13. G. Frank, *The Deed* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960) pp. 47-9, 57-9, 78-82, 90-1, 103; S. Katz, *Days of Fire*, pp. 14-16, 54; Perlmutter, pp. 26-7; D. Levine, 'David Raziell, the Man and His Times', unpublished PhD thesis, Yeshiva University, New York, 1969, pp. 81-2, 84, 91-3, 166-72, 183.
14. M. Begin, *The Revolt: Story of the Irgun*, S. Katz (trans.) (London: W. H. Allen, 1951) pp. 61, 74-81; E. Haber, *Menahem Begin: The Legend and the Man*, L. Williams (trans.) (New York: Delacorte Press, 1978) pp. 95-6, 104, 198; W. Laqueur, *Terrorism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977) pp. 87, 90; 'Proclamation on the Palestine Resistance', *PM* (newspaper) New York, 2 December 1946, copy in E11991, FO 371/52571; C. J. Levine, 'Propaganda Techniques of the Bergson Group: 1939-48', unpublished MA thesis, University of Texas, Austin, 1974, pp. 9, 29, 86, 94; Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, pp. x, 238, 351, 353. See also Appendix I.
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16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*; Haber, p. 111.
19. *Herut* (Irgun newspaper) November 1945, quoted in Borisov, p. 73.
20. 'IZL on Lessons of Greek Rebellion', Defence Security Office, 'Fortnightly Intelligence Summary [hereafter FIS] no. 96 for Period Ending 14 January 1945', Appendix B, WO 169/19758; Begin, p. 52.
21. Begin, p. 52.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 80, 93; J. B. Bell, *On Revolt: Strategies of National Liberation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976) p. 41; 'Aims of the Irgun'.
23. Katz, *Days of Fire*, p. 106.
24. See Appendix III.
25. Hurewitz, p. 198.
26. *Ibid.*; Y. S. Brenner, 'The Stern Gang, 1940-48', *Middle East Studies*, vol. II (1965) pp. 4-8, 12-13; E. Hyams, *Terrorists and Terrorism* (London: Dent, 1975) pp. 152-8; Frank, pp. 20-2, 105-6, 121-5, 129-34, 147-52. See also Appendix I.
27. Frank, p. 133.
28. G. Cohen, *Woman of Violence: Memoirs of a Young Terrorist, 1943-1948*, H. Halkin (trans.) (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1966) pp. 232-3.
29. *Ibid.*; Frank, pp. 102-3; Hyams, pp. 145-6; H. Mitchell, 'A Tale of Terror, Peace, and Our Times', *International Herald Tribune*, 9 August 1976 (interview with N. Yalin-Mor - formerly Friedman-Yellin - leader of the Lechi).
30. Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, p. 62.
31. Cohen, p. 232.
32. *Ibid.*; Brenner, pp. 4-5. Yair was Stern's cover name in the underground.

33. Cohen, p. 233; Brenner, pp. 11–12; Haber, p. 94.
34. Brenner, p. 18; Fighters for the Freedom of Israel, 'An Outline of Foreign Policy', Jerusalem, 1947, trans. from Hebrew, no. 987a, Jabotinsky Institute, Tel Aviv, Israel; Friedman-Yellin, interview with Gerold Frank, *Liberty* (Magazine), 12 October 1946, copy in E 10694, FO 371/52563; and with Clifton Daniel, *New York Times*, 25 August 1947, copy in E 8142, FO 371/61758.
35. Haber, p. 150; Brenner, p. 18.
36. Z. Iviansky, 'Individual Terror: Concept and Typology', *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. XII (1977) pp. 43–63; N. Bethell, *The Palestine Triangle: The Struggle Between the British, the Jews and the Arabs 1935–48* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1979) pp. 125–6; Frank, p. 150; Laqueur, p. 81.
37. Brenner, pp. 5–6; see Cohen, p. 221 on the rescinding of the order in 1944.
38. Friedman-Yellin interview with Frank, 1946, FO 371/52563.
39. Frank, pp. 130–1.
40. Borisov, p. 142; Brenner, p. 20.
41. 'Situation: Bomb Outrages, 1944', 751561/151A, CO 733/456; Hurewitz, p. 199.
42. C. Weizmann, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann* (New York: Harper, 1949; reprinted Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1972) pp. 437–8.
43. Bauer, *Diplomacy to Resistance*, pp. 313–33; Begin, pp. 138–51; Bethell, pp. 188–91.
44. HC[6873] (1946), 4–5; E. Pedazur, *The History of the Irgun Zvai Leumi*, Volume III, K. Kaplan (trans.) (Jerusalem: Shilton Betar Department of Education, 1961) p. 30; M. J. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers 1945–1948* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982) pp. 69–72; Begin, pp. 183–8; Katz, *Days of Fire*, p. 87.
45. This 'working definition' drafted by the Centre for Conflict Studies is consistent with those suggested by other academics. See for example, G. Wardlaw, *Political Terrorism: Theory, Tactics, and Counter-measures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) p. 16.
46. Defence Security Office, 'Monthly Summary no. 1', October 1945, WO 169/19758; telegram, Shaw to Hall, 1 November 1945, 75156/151A, CO 733/456; HC[6873] (1946), 3.
47. HC[6873] (1946), 4; Bethell, p. 216; M. J. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, pp. 72–3.
48. Bethell, pp. 215–16; House of Commons, Parliamentary Debates, 2 November 1945, col. 786.
49. See Chapter 4.
50. HC[6873] (1946), 4–5; Brenner, p. 16; G. Cohen, *Woman of Violence*, pp. 102–3.
51. Only a selected number of major operations are discussed in the text. For a more complete list see Appendix III.
52. 6th Airborne Division, 'Report on Attack on Airborne Car Park Tel Aviv, 25 April 1946', WO 169/22978; HQ Palestine, 'Fortnightly Intelligence Newsletter [hereafter FIN] no. 8', 17 February 1946, WO 169/23021; Bethell, pp. 232–3.

53. See Chapter 5.
54. HQ Palestine, 'FIN no. 17', 23 June 1946, WO 169/23022.
55. Ibid. HC[6873] (1946), 8–9; Brilliant, pp. 249–50; Katz, 'Jewish Resistance', p. 49; Bethell, pp. 244–5; Hurewitz, p. 254; G. Blaxland, *The Regiments Depart: A History of the British Army, 1945–1970* (London: William Kimber, 1971) p. 217.
56. Telegram, Shaw to Martin, 25 June 1946, no. 85 75156/151A Part II, CO 733/456; 1st Guards Brigade, 'ISUM no. 16', 3 July 1946, WO 169/22989; Bethell, p. 246.
57. HQ Palestine, 'FIN no. 15', 26 May 1946, WO 169/23022; Defence Security Office, 'Monthly Summary no. 8', May 1946, WO 169/23031; G Branch, HQ 1st Infantry Division, Letter TS/4/G, 'Infantry Division/North Palestine District, Operational Instruction no. 4', 15 June 1946, Appendix Z1, WO 169/22957; HQ 3rd Infantry Brigade, 'Message', 15 June 1946, Appendix F16, WO 169/22995. See also Chapters 4 and 5 for discussion of British intelligence capabilities and limitations.
58. GHQ Middle East Forces, 'Weekly Military Intelligence Review no. 75', 21 June 1946, WO 169/22882.
59. J. P. I. Fforde, 'CID Report on King David Outrage', 16 August 1946, CO 537/2290. See Chapter 4 for discussion of the British search operation.
60. T. Clarke, *By Blood and Fire: The Attack on the King David Hotel* (New York: G. P. Putnam's, 1981) pp. 83–5, 97–101; Irgun Zvai Leumi, 'The Truth About the King David', 22 July 1947, copy in CO 537/2290; Begin, pp. 212–15; Bethell, p. 258.
61. Clarke, pp. 74–5, 78–80, 103–4, 107–9, 123–5, 133–4, 135–6, 144, 242–3, 245, 247–8; CO 537/2290; *The Times* (London), 23 July 1946; *The Palestine Post*, 24 July 1946; Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, p. 173.
62. Begin, p. 226; Clarke, p. 256; Katz, *Days of Fire*, p. 92.
63. See Chapter 2.
64. Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, p. 174.
65. See Appendix III.
66. 'Avner', *Memoirs of an Assassin*, B. Partridge (trans.) (London: Anthony Blond, 1959) p. 87; Major R. D. Wilson, *Cordon and Search: With 6th Airborne Division in Palestine* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden, 1949) pp. 122–5; see also Appendix III.
67. Quoted in Bethell, p. 288.
68. See for example, Quarterly Historical Reports, 2nd Infantry Brigade, WO 26/191–2.
69. Bethell, pp. 271, 277, 308; B. Fergusson, *The Trumpet in the Hall 1930–1958* (London: Collins, 1970) pp. 224–5; Avner, pp. 12–13, 16; see also Chapter 4.
70. Foreign Office, 'Weekly Intelligence Summary [hereafter WIS]', 7 January 1947, FO 371/61761; Cabinet Minutes, 27–8 January 1947, CAB 128/9; Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, pp. 188–9; Wilson, pp. 87–8; G. Kirk, *The Middle East 1945–1950: Survey of International Affairs*, Volume V, A. Toynbee (ed.) (London: Oxford University Press, 1954) p. 234.
71. Begin, pp. 231, 257, 275–83; Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, pp. 204–18; Bethell, pp. 336, 338.

72. Haber, pp. 182–3; Wilson, p. 123. See Appendix VI.
73. 1st Infantry Division, 'Report on Operation TIGER', WO 261/181; Begin, pp. 288–90; Wilson, pp. 132–4.
74. *Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, 1 February 1947; *New York Herald Tribune*, 1 February 1947.
75. Quoted in Haber, p. 191.
76. 'Jewish Terrorist Outrages Since His Excellency's Arrival in Palestine', Box V, file 4, Papers of General Sir Alan Cunningham; and Minutes of Officers' Monthly Meetings, November 1946–August 1947, in Papers of Sir Arthur F. Kirby, General Manager, Palestine Railways and Ports Authority. Both collections in Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford; see also Bell *Terror Out of Zion*, p. 191; see also Appendix V.
77. Rome to Foreign Office, 31 October, 4 November 1946, FO 371/60786; D. Nimrod, letter to author, 12 December 1978; see also the following section on propaganda.
78. FO 371/52564, 60786, 67796; D. Nimrod, interview with author, 14 June 1978; Bethell, p. 308.
79. Avner, pp. 19–20, 21–3, 109–50.
80. P. Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State* (London: Macmillan, 1977) pp. 49, 80–1, 110.
81. Avner, pp. 86–7.
82. Wilkinson, *Terrorism and the Liberal State*, pp. 111–2.
83. B. M. Jenkins, 'International Terrorism: A New Mode of Conflict', in D. Carlton and C. Schaerf (eds) *International Terrorism and World Security* (London: Croom Helm, 1974) p. 16.
84. J. Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes* (New York: Knopf, 1965) p. 16.
85. *Ibid.*, pp. 71–4; see also, E. Tavin and Y. Alexander (eds) *Psychological Warfare and Propaganda: Irgun Documentation* (Wilmington, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, 1982) pp. 101–21, 234–5; Frank, pp. 55–7, 189–40.
86. Ellul, pp. 295, 298–9.
87. T. E. Lawrence, *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1935) p. 195.
88. HC[6873], p. 3; see also Appendix I.
89. Quoted in Borisov, p. 79.
90. Great Britain, Ministry of Information, Overseas Planning Committee [hereafter MOIOPC], Paper 577A, 'Plan of Propaganda for Palestine: Second Revision of Channels', 9 June 1945, CO 733/465; 1st Infantry Division, 'Weekly Intelligence Review [hereafter WIR] no. 5', 7 May 1946, WO 169/22957; B. D. Weinryb, 'The Hebrew Press in Palestine', *Palestine Affairs*, vol. 2, no. 8 (August 1947) pp. 81–3. If Weinryb is correct, by 1947 the number of Hebrew dailies had declined to eight.
91. MOIOPC, 577A, CO 733/465; Cairo to Foreign Office, 4 January 1945, FO 371/45376; see also Begin, pp. 311, 314; Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, pp. 179, 305–6; S. Halperin, *The Political World of American Zionism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1961) p. 257. According to Z. Ganin, *Truman, American Jewry and Israel, 1945–1948* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1979) p. 23, *Time* and *Life* magazines, as well as

- the *New York Times* and the *Christian Science Monitor* newspapers were anti-Zionist.
92. Washington to Foreign Office, 18 October 1946, FO 371/52562; 'Proclamation on the Palestine Resistance', *PM*, December 1946, FO 371/52571; C. J. Levine, pp. 86, 94–5, 106–7, 121, 124; Halperin, pp. 318–20; Hurewitz, p. 278.
93. Halperin, pp. 257–8, 402. In addition, the Jewish Agency's press services issued daily bulletins throughout the period of the insurgency. The ZOA circulated these in the United States.
94. 'List of Advertisements: ALFP', 'Mail Campaign: Reference to Scrapbook Entries', f. 9, Box 14, Palestine Statehood Committee Papers; see also Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, pp. 305–6. American newspapers published at least 24 full page advertisements and several two page ads. *The Answer* and other Irgun newspapers were published in Europe in several languages.
95. Brig. M. A. J. Tugwell, 'Revolutionary Propaganda and Possible Counter-measures', unpublished PhD thesis, Department of War Studies, King's College, University of London, 1979, pp. 295–307.
96. Ben-Gurion, quoted in letter, Shaw to Hall, 24 August 1945, Palcor News Agency, *Bulletin*, 29 November 1945, and Cunningham to Hall, 24 February 1946, CO 733/456; Washington to Foreign Office, 26 September 1945, CO 733/461; HQ Palestine, 'Operations Log – Report of *Kol Israel* broadcast', 20 February 1946, WO 169/23023; *Kol Israel* broadcast, 3 March 1946, cited in HC[6873], p. 7; 'Political Resolutions of the 22nd Zionist Congress', *Palestine Affairs*, vol. II, no. 1 (January 1947), pp. 8–10.
97. 'Submission by Head of Command, Jewish Resistance Movement', 25 March 1946.
98. Katz, 'Jewish Resistance', pp. 47–8.
99. *Ibid.*, p. 49; 'Submission by Head of Command, Jewish Resistance Movement', 25 March 1946; *Palestine Post*, 1 July 1946; *Kol Israel* broadcast, 7 January 1947, cited in HQ South Palestine District, 'ISUM no. 21', 15 January 1947; Ben-Gurion to Attlee, 18 March 1947, E 2567, FO 371/61900; House of Commons, Parliamentary Debates, [5th series CLXXIV, 1881].
100. See Defence Security Office, 'Monthly Summary no. 3', December 1945, WO 169/19758; 3rd Parachute Brigade, 'ISUM no. 10', 18 January 1946, WO 169/22997.
101. Overseas News Agency, 'Report on Action of British Troops in Tel Aviv', 20 November 1945, copy in E 9183, FO 371/45386; 'Lullaby for Dying Children', *New York Post*, 29 November 1945, cited in 'List of Advertisements: ALFP', Palestine Statehood Committee Papers; 'The Battle of the Children', *Commentary*, January 1946, pp. 25–7, cited in Kirk, p. 201.
102. Kirk, p. 220; *New York Herald Tribune*, 3 July 1946.
103. Bethell, pp. 221; Kirk, p. 204; HQ Palestine, 'FIN' no.8, 17 February 1946, WO 169/23021; article by G. L. Cassidy, *New York Post*, 25 October 1946, cited in telegram, British Embassy, Washington to Foreign Office, 25 October 1946, E 10606, FO 371/52562; Irgun Zvai

- Leumi, *Herut*, no. 65 (December 1946) CO 537/2365; Jewish Agency, 'Political Survey, 1946-1948, Memorandum Submitted to United Nations Special Committee on Palestine', Jerusalem, July 1947; S. Welles, 'Terrorism in Palestine', *Washington Post*, 12 August 1947.
104. 'Text of Letter Issued by Lieutenant General Sir Evelyn Barker', CO 537/2291.
105. D. A. Charters, 'Special Operations in Counter-Insurgency: The Farran Case, Palestine, 1947', *RUSI Journal for Defence Studies*, vol. CXXIV (June 1979) pp. 56, 59, 61n, 31, 32.
106. J. and D. Kimche, *The Secret Roads: The 'Illegal' Migration of a People, 1938-1948* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1954) pp. 143-57.
107. *Ibid.*, pp. 123-42; see also Bethell, pp. 229-30; HQ Palestine, 'FIN' no. 12, 15 April 1946, and no. 13, 29 April 1946, WO 169/23022.
108. Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, pp. 229-30.
109. The policy was approved in May, before the *Exodus* sailed. See Palestine Executive Council, 65th meeting, 31 May 1947, CO 814/41.
110. Colonial Office to Cunningham, 14 July 1947, copy in Colonial Office to HQ Middle East Land Forces, 14 July 1947, Diary of General Sir Harold E. Pyman [hereafter Pyman Diary], 6/1/7, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives.
111. Wilson, pp. 134-5; A. Bullock, *Ernest Bevin Foreign Secretary 1945-1951* (London: Heinemann, 1983) pp. 448-9.
112. Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, pp. 231-2; Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 'Daily News Bulletin', nos. 166-7, 20-21 July 1947, copies in E 6038, 6610 FO 371/61912. The second bulletin revised the casualty figures downward to 3 killed, 28 wounded. R. Gruber, *Destination Palestine: The Story of the Haganah Ship Exodus 1947* (New York: Current Books, 1948) pp. 17-35, 40-1, 47-51 provides a colourful journalistic account of the boarding and transhipment, as well as photographs showing clearly the damage to the ship.
113. Wilson, p. 137; Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, pp. 232-3; Bethell, pp. 335-6, 341-3; M. J. Cohen, pp. 255, 276; *Palestine Post*, 30 July 1947.
114. Cabinet Minutes (47) 66, 31 July 1947, CAB 128/10; telegram, Foreign Office to British Embassy, Washington, 16 August 1947, no. 36 in CO 537/2313; Bullock, pp. 449-50.
115. Hurewitz, p. 292. American anti-British rallies, propaganda advertisements in newspapers are described in files E 7148, 7500, 7667 FO 371/61758.
116. *Manchester Guardian*, 22 August 1947.
117. *Ibid.*, Bethell, p. 343; Wilson, pp. 137-8. Leon Uris's novel *Exodus*, and the film of the book were major successes.
118. HQ Palestine, FIN no. 8, 17 February 1946, WO 169/23021; 1 Infantry Division, WIR no. 2, 15 April 1946, WO 169/22956.
119. 'Irgun Zvai Leumi Speaks to the United Nations - Will There be War or Peace in Palestine', September 1947, pp. 1-5, f. 45, Box 12, Palestine Statehood Committee Papers; *Palestine Post*, 26 June 1946; Wilson, pp. 133-4.
120. Levine, pp. 110-15; R. Silverberg, *If I Forget Thee, O Jerusalem: American Jews and the State of Israel* (New York: Pyramid Books,

- 1970) pp. 323-5; I. Zaar, *Rescue and Liberation: America's Part in the Birth of Israel* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1954) pp. 193-4; Alexander and Tavin, pp. 121-6.
121. See, for example, *New York Herald Tribune*, 15 May 1947.
122. Silverberg, pp. 326-7.
123. Palestine Resistance Committee advertisement in *The New Republic*, 24 April 1947, copy in E 3484, FO 371/61860; see also statement by Guy Gillette, in US Congress, House of Representatives, *Congressional Record*, 79th Congress, 2nd Session (1946), XCII, Appendix 4744.
124. 'Document issued by Irgun Zvai Leumi on the bomb outrage in Rome', translation of document in telegram, Rome to Foreign Office, 4 November 1946, ZM 3732, FO 371/60786.
125. D. Briggs, 'British Precautions are Futile', *Continental Daily Mail* (14 November 1946), copy in letter, British Embassy, Paris to Foreign Office, E 11365, FO 371/52565.
126. Letter, His Majesty's Representative, Rome, to Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Italy, 27 November 1946, enclosing notes taken by member of British Embassy Staff at Smertenko press conference, E 12101, telegram, Rome to Foreign Office, 29 November 1946, and telegram, Foreign Office to Washington, 11 December 1946, E 11660, FO 371/52571. See also note 78.
127. Fighters for the Freedom of Israel, 'An Outline of Foreign Policy', Jerusalem 1947, pp. 9-13, 26-33, 37-40.
128. Telegram, Political Action Committee for Palestine to Attlee, 30 August 1946, copy in E 8903, FO 371/52556; letter, British Embassy, Washington to Foreign Office, 18 October 1946, discussing advertisement by the Political Action Committee in *New York Post* (15 October 1946), E 10625, FO 371/52562; Friedman-Yellin interview with Frank in *Liberty* (1946), FO 371/52563; Fighters for the Freedom of Israel, *LHI-Bulletin* (Palestine, August 1947), pp. 12-13, 19-20, 22, P.P. 1149 mcl., British Library, London; I. Eldad, *The Jewish Revolution: Jewish Statehood*, H. Schmorack (trans.) (New York: Shengold, 1971) p. 81.
129. D. Lerner (ed.) *Propaganda in War and Crisis: Materials for American Policy* (New York: George W. Stewart, 1951) pp. 260, 347, 421, 474; Sir R. B. Lockhart, *Comes the Reckoning* (London: Putnam, 1947) pp. 155, 262; C. Roetter, *Psychological Warfare* (London: Batsford, 1974) pp. 16-18; R. H. S. Crossman, 'Psychological Warfare', *RUSI Journal for Defence Studies*, vol. XCVII (1952) pp. 320-1, 324.
130. *Palestine Post*, 5 May 1947; 'The Irgun Speaks at Acre', *New York Post*, 7 May 1947; Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, p. 218; Katz, *Days of Fire*, p. 150; Alexander and Tavin, pp. 155-8.
131. Kirk, p. 204.
132. Tugwell, pp. 147-8, 171; C. J. Levine, pp. 144-5 suggests that this was the case with respect to the Irgun's propaganda fronts in the United States.
133. Palcor News Agency, *Bulletin*, 29 November 1945, CO 733/456; Fighters for the Freedom of Israel, 'An Outline of Foreign Policy', p. 44; 'Irgun Zvai Leumi Speaks to the United Nations', pp. 12-13.

134. C. Sykes, *Cross Roads to Israel* (London: Collins, 1965) p. 26.
135. Begin, pp. 97–103; Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, p. 182; Sir W. L. S. Churchill, *Winston S. Churchill: His Complete Speeches, 1897–1963*, Volume VII, R. R. James (ed.) (London and New York: Chelsea House 1974) pp. 7422–3. Police difficulties were emphasised by John Briance and Sir Richard Catling in interviews with the author.
136. Ellul, p. 302.
137. Lawrence, 'The Evolution of a Revolt', p. 152.
138. Begin, p. 43.
139. S. Katz, 'Curfew in Jerusalem', *Commentary*, vol. II (1946) p. 529.
140. Brenner, p. 13. According to General Sir Richard Gale, in an interview with the author, 6 July 1976, the Arabs even concealed a senior Jewish official to prevent his arrest during Operation AGATHA in June 1946.
141. American Jewish contributions to the two largest fund-raising projects – the Jewish National Fund and the Palestine Foundation Fund – increased from almost \$15 million in 1945 to more than \$59 million in 1947; Halperin, pp. 325–6. See also *New York Times*, 24 March 1947; Foreign Office note, digested from a series of *Daily Mail* articles, 'Illegal Jewish Immigration, Theory and Practice', 6 August 1947, E 7462, FO 371/61860.
142. Letter, British Embassy, Washington to Foreign Office, 15 April 1947, E 3348, FO 371/61753; Foreign Office, 'Memorandum on Jewish Affairs in the United States', June 1947, E 5489, FO 371/61756; C. J. Levine, pp. 106–7, 124.
143. On the reactions of the British security forces, see 3rd Parachute Brigade, 'ISUM no. 2', 21 November 1945, WO 169/19705; HQ Palestine, 'Ops Log', 9 December 1945, WO 169/19745; letter, Astor to Hall, 7 March 1946, no. 32, 75156/151A, CO 733/456; 3 Field Security Section, 'Security Report for Week Ending 11 May 1946', WO 169/24120; 'Minutes of Security Conference', 11 July 1947, no. 40, f. 1, Box IV, Cunningham Papers; Wilson, *Cordon and Search*, p. 110.
144. Haber, p. 189.
145. *The News Chronicle*, 9 November 1946; *The Times*, 12, 15 November 1946; *Herut*, no. 65 (December 1946); *Washington Daily News*, 13 November 1946, cited in Zaar, p. 212; Katz, *Days of Fire*, pp. 103–5; letter, M. Harris to author, 18 February 1978.
146. 'Govern or Get Out', *Sunday Express*, 2 March 1947, cited in Bell, *Terror Out of Zion*, p. 190; Eric Grey, 'Even Guns Didn't Make Them Talk', *Daily Express*, 27 March 1947, copy in 15/5/24, Box 1, Liddell Hart Papers; letter, Creech-Jones to Monroe, 23 October 1961, Monroe Papers.
147. Bullock, p. 450.

CHAPTER 4

1. Interview with author, 13 September 1976. Farrar-Hockley served in Palestine as a company commander in the Parachute Regiment.
2. 'Palestine: Memorandum by the Minister of State', War Cabinet Paper (43) 246, 17 June 1943, CAB 66/37.
3. 'Extract from note on points raised with Secretary of State by the High Commissioner', 14 November 1945, 75872 Part VI, CO 733/461; note, Martin to Gater, Colonial Office, 7 May 1946, 75015/60, CO 733/451.
4. The administrative and legal parameters of Martial Law are explained and documented later in this chapter.
5. Government of Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine: Memorandum Submitted to the Anglo-American Commission of Enquiry by the Government of Palestine*, Volume I (London, 1946) pp. 1–10, 17, 108–13.
6. D. Goldsworthy, *Colonial Issues in British Politics, 1945–1961* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971) pp. 15, 41–2; J. M. Lee, *Colonial Development and Good Government: A Study of the Ideas Expressed by the British Official Classes in Planning Decolonization, 1939–1964* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967) pp. 12, 34.
7. Government of Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine*, Volume II, p. 582; Major R. D. Wilson, *Cordon and Search: With 6th Airborne Division Palestine* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden, 1949) pp. 16–17.
8. HQ 21 Area, 'OI21', 21 November 1945, WO 169/19821; GSI HQ Palestine, *Short Handbook of Palestine* (Jerusalem, April 1944) p. 7, copy in Private Papers, Mr J. Briance, London; Minutes of the meetings of the Central Security Committee, 1946–47, in the Papers of General Sir Alan Cunningham, Box IV, File 1, St Antony's College, Oxford. Information relating to the operations of the committees was also acquired in interviews with Mr J. Briance and Sir R. Catling (ex-Palestine police), 3 March 1977 and 28 May 1976 respectively, and Mr R. W. D. Pawle, formerly personal secretary to the High Commissioner, 18 May 1978.
9. HQ Palestine, 'OI21', 27 October 1945, WO 169/19745; HQ 21 Area, 'OI21', WO 169/19821. This is only a partial list but it covers the principal illegal activities.
10. Ibid.
11. Compiled from the war diaries of formations in Palestine in November 1945, WO 169/19656–19717; and 'Appreciation by GOC Palestine', 5 August 1947, Appendix D to General G. H. A. MacMillan (GOC Palestine), 'Palestine – Narrative of Events from February 1947 until Withdrawal of all British Troops', 3 July 1948, Papers of General Sir Gordon MacMillan of MacMillan, Imperial War Museum, London. The Order of Battle of the 1st Armoured Division as of 1 June 1947 indicates a higher complement of armoured units than appears in the GOC's appreciation, but this number may have been reduced during the intervening two-month period. See 1st Armoured Division, 'OI no. 2', 30 May 1947, WO 261/178.
12. G. Blaxland, *The Regiments Depart: A History of the British Army, 1945–1970* (London: William Kimber, 1971) pp. 31, 33–4, 35; General

- Sir R. Gale, *Call to Arms* (London: Hutchinson, 1968) pp. 159–61; 1st Infantry Division, 'Location Statement', 21 April 1946, WO 169/22956. While the 1st was in Egypt (minus one brigade left in Palestine) the 3rd Division (two brigades) replaced it in the north of Palestine.
13. Wilson, pp. 4–5, 21–4, 42.
 14. Blaxland, p. 33; see also, war diaries, 185 Infantry Brigade WO 169/19717, and 7th Infantry Brigade, WO 169/22999; and 9th Infantry Brigade, Quarterly Historical Report, October–December 1946, WO 261/207.
 15. Blaxland, p. 42; Wilson, p. 97; 1st Armoured Division, 'OI' no. 2, 30 May 1947, WO 261/178.
 16. E. Horne, *A Job Well Done: Being a History of the Palestine Police Force 1920–1948* (Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, UK: Palestine Police Old Comrades Benevolent Association, 1982) pp. 35, 595; Government of Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine*, Volume I, pp. 119–20, Volume II, p. 582; GSI, *Short Handbook of Palestine*, p. 72; 'Table of Organisation – Palestine Police', Appendix A to 1st Armoured Division, I.S. Instruction no. 4, 6 June 1947, WO 261/178. See also Appendix II.
 17. Horne, pp. 515–17, 521–4; 'War Establishment: Police Mobile Force, Middle East', 16 July 1944, CO 733/451; Sir R. Catling, interview with author, 14 February 1979. Curiously, although the unit was disbanded in 1946, the AIG (PMF) is still shown on strength of the 1947 organisation table.
 18. Horne, pp. 428–31, 436–40.
 19. Ibid., pp. 525–7, 542; T. Bowden, *The Breakdown of Public Security: The Case of Ireland 1916–1921 and Palestine 1936–1939* (London: Sage Publications, 1977) pp. 158–60; GS(Ops) British Forces Palestine and Trans-Jordan, 'The Development of the Palestine Police Under Military Control', June 1939, WO 201/831; Government of Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine*, Volume II, pp. 590–2.
 20. Government of Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine*, Volume I, pp. 111–12; GSI, *Short Handbook of Palestine*, p. 7; HQ Palestine, 'OI no. 21', February, 27 October 1945, WO 169/19743, 19745. The tendency to rely on the military courts can be attributed in part to the fact that by 1945 litigation had outrun the ability of the civilian courts to cope with the caseload. See letter, Chief Justice W. J. FitzGerald to Gort, 6 February 1945, 75125, CO 733/455. Also, comments in interviews with author, Sir M. Hogan, 10 May 1976 and Sir I. Rigby, 27 April 1978. Hogan had been Solicitor-General of Palestine, and Rigby a District Court judge in Tel Aviv.
 21. Mr Moffatt, 'Criminal Investigation Department', in 'Report by Sir Charles Wickham' [on the Palestine Police Force], 2 December 1946, 75015/82A, CO 5371/2269; Horne, pp. 469–70; J. Briance, interview with author, 3 March 1977. See also Appendix II.
 22. C. Andrew, *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (London: Heinemann, 1985) p. 363; N. West, *MI6: British Secret Intelligence Service Operations, 1909–45* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983) p. 124; J. T. Richelson and D. Ball, *The Ties That Bind: Intelligence Cooperation Between the UKUSA Countries* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1985) pp. 17–18.

23. Defence Security Office Palestine, War Diary 1945–46, WO 169/19758, 23031; N. West, *A Matter of Trust: MI5 1945–72* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982) pp. 14, 18–19; A. W. Cockerill, *Sir Percy Sillitoe* (London: W. H. Allen, 1975) p. 187; Briance, interview, 3 March 1977; Miss J. Dannatt, interview with author, 17 February 1978. Miss Dannatt served as an Intelligence Corps Lieutenant in the DSO, 1945–46.
24. The Hon. M. M. C. Charteris, 'A Year as an Intelligence Officer in Palestine', *Middle East Society Journal*, vol. 1 (1946) pp. 15–23; The Rt Hon. Sir M. Charteris, letter to author, 9 November 1976. In neither source was Charteris forthcoming about GSI. Nor is anything on organisation and duties to be found in the HQ Palestine G Branch war diaries. On this, see also, A. Nachmani, 'Generals at Bay in Post-War Palestine', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 6, no. 4 (December 1983) pp. 72, 81–2n48.
25. GHQ Middle East Forces, 'Directive no. 245 – Internal Security', 23 June 1945, WO 169/19510; 3 Field Security Section, Middle East Forces, war diary 1945, WO 169/21414; J. Haswell, *British Military Intelligence* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973) pp. 167–8, 210–12; Colonel (ret'd) F. G. Robson, Curator, Intelligence Corps Museum, letter to author, 30 April 1986.
26. A. V. Lovell-Knight, *The Story of the Royal Military Police* (London: Leo Cooper, 1977) pp. 275–89.
27. See F. H. Hinsley, et al., *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations* (London and Cambridge: HMSO and Cambridge University Press, 1979–84), vols. I–III; see also, entry for 19–24 December 1946, Diary of Major-General H. E. Pyman, 6/1/1, December 1946, and 'War Establishment Strengths of GHQ MELF and Ancillary Units as at 1 Aug 1947', Annexure A to CINC's Conference 'Size, Role and Location of GHQ', 7 August 1947, Pyman Diary, 6/1/8 August 1947, Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives.
28. Hinsley, vol. I, pp. 205, 282–3; 'Policy – Palestine Detachment', CSDIC/MEF, notes for February 1946, GSI GHQ Middle East Forces, War Diary, WO 169/22882; Annexure A to CINC's Conference, 7 August 1947, Pyman Diary 6/1/8.
29. Ministry of Information, Overseas Planning Committee [hereafter MOIOPC], 'Second Revision of Channels', Paper no. 577A, 9 June 1945, and Christopher Holme, 'Note of a Talk Given by the PIO Jerusalem [Holme] on British Publicity in Palestine and its Relation to the Other Functions of Government', 13 March 1945, 75893, CO 733/465; Government of Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine*, Volume II, pp. 875–6.
30. Government of Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine*, Volume II, p. 877.
31. Ibid., Volume I, p. 121, Volume II, pp. 874–8, 930; MOIOPC Paper 577A, CO 733/465. In August 1944 censorship functions were transferred to a separate Chief Censor, and on 31 October 1945, became the responsibility of an office of the Palestine Government Secretariat.
32. Annex C to letter, C. N. Ryan, MOI, Middle East Services, Cairo, to MOI, Middle East Division, London, 13 August 1945, INF 1/430, Ministry of Information Papers, PRO.
33. Government of Palestine, *A Survey of Palestine*, Volume I, p. 114;

- MOIOPC, Paper 577A, CO 733/465. The MOI paper says that the PBS broadcast 16 news bulletins in seven languages daily. It also stated that as of June there were 54 871 licence holders. The *Survey* put the 1945 figure at 57 000.
34. 'Post War Activities of the Ministry of Information, 1945-March 1946', INF 1/943; M. Ogilvie-Webb, *The Government Explains: A Study of the Information Services* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1965) p. 44.
 35. Ogilvie-Webb, pp. 67, 81-2, 86; J. B. Black, *Organising the Propaganda Instrument: The British Experience* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1975) pp. 14-22, 30.
 36. A. Briggs, *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom, Volume IV: Sound and Vision* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979) pp. 28-30, 35, 36-7, 38, 137-8, 142, 145-6, 153-6; Black, pp. 59, 62-4.
 37. Secretary of State for the Colonies, 'Report of Discussion of Palestine Policy', 25 May 1945, 75872, CO 733/461.
 38. Telegram, Shaw to Hall (Secretary of State for the Colonies), 9 November 1945, 75156/151J, CO 733/457; Great Britain, House of Commons, Command Paper 6873, 'Palestine: Statement of Information Relating to Acts of Violence', July 1946, pp. 4-5; 3rd Parachute Brigade, 'ISUM no. 3', 28 November 1945, WO 169/19705.
 39. Telegram, Shaw to Martin, 3 November 1945, 75156/151A, CO 733/456.
 40. Telegrams, Cunningham to Hall, 29-30 December 1945, CO 733/457; Palestine Executive Council Minutes, 1 January 1946, CO 814/41.
 41. CM, 1 January 1946, CAB 12815; Extract from Brief supplied to Creech-Jones for Cabinet, 1 January 1946, and telegrams, Hall to Cunningham, 2 January 1946, CO 733/457; COSC Minutes, 9, 16 November 1945, CAB 79/41; CINC's Middle East to COSC, 19 November 1945, and Cabinet Defence Committee (CDC) Paper 31, 'Situation in Palestine: Report by Chiefs of Staff, 19 November 1945, Cunningham Papers, V/4.
 42. CP 238, 'Memorandum by Secretary of State for the Colonies', 19 June 1946, CAB 129/10; CM, 20 June 1946, CAB 128/5.
 43. Ibid.
 44. Letter, Cassels to author, 27 November 1976. Cassels' recollection is confirmed in 'Record of a Meeting in the Chief Secretary's Office', 26 April 1946, Cunningham Papers, V/4; and message, GHQ Middle East Forces to Cabinet Office, 1 May 1946, WO 169/22881.
 45. HQ Palestine, message, 18 June 1946, WO 169/23022; CP 238, 19 June 1946, CAB 129/10; telegram, Cunningham to Hall, 21 June 1946, 75156/151A, CO 733/456.
 46. CM, 20 June 1946, CAB 128/5.
 47. Telegram, Cunningham to Hall, 27 December 1945, 75872/142, CO 733/463; Lt-Gen. E. Barker, 'Military Action to be Taken to Enforce Law and Order in Palestine', 22 June 1946, Cunningham Papers, V/4.
 48. Gale, p. 168.
 49. HQ Palestine, 'Statement by High Commissioner', 29 June 1946, WO 169/23022.
 50. 'Minutes of Meeting, Colonial Office and Jewish Agency Sub-commit-

- tee', 17 October 1946, E10531, FO 371/52562.
51. Barker, 'Military Action', Cunningham Papers.
 52. Wilson, pp. 55-6.
 53. Barker, 'Military Action', Cunningham Papers.
 54. Field-Marshal Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, *The Memoirs of Field-Marshal Montgomery* (London: Collins, 1958) p. 423. This quote is from the Field-Marshal's diary, in which he called for actions which he was certain would lead to a 'war against the Jews'. See N. Hamilton, *Monty: The Field-Marshal 1944-1976* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1986) pp. 636-7.
 55. Telegram, Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 23 November 1946, no. 11, CO 537/1731.
 56. Montgomery, *Memoirs*, pp. 433, 436.
 57. Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 23 November 1946.
 58. See 'Memorandum of the Comparative Treatment of the Arabs During the Disturbances of 1936-39 and of the Jews During the Disturbances of 1945 and Subsequent Years', enclosed in telegram, Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 19 June 1947, Cunningham Papers II/1, cited in Hoffman, pp. 76-81.
 59. A. Chalfont, *Montgomery of Alamein* (London: Methuen, 1977) p. 334.
 60. 'Notes on Relationship Between High Commissioner and General Officer Commanding Palestine', November 1946, CO 537/1731.
 61. COSC Minutes and CDC Minutes, 20 November 1946, FO 371/52565.
 62. Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 23 November 1946; in a letter to the author, 30 August 1976, General Barker said that he felt the system of consultation worked well. He could not recall any issues that were not resolved in this manner.
 63. Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 23 November 1946; Hamilton, p. 665.
 64. Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 23 November 1946.
 65. Hamilton, pp. 636, 665-6.
 66. Letter to Sir Alan Lascelles, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 667.
 67. Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 3 December 1946, no. 17, CO 537/1731.
 68. *Ibid.*, 3 December 1946, no. 19; also 6, 12 December, CO 537/1731.
 69. CDC Paper DO(46)145, 'Use of Armed Forces, Part II: Colonial Office Views', 19 December 1946, CO 537/1731.
 70. *Ibid.*, 'Part I: War Office View'.
 71. Montgomery, *Memoirs*, p. 469.
 72. CDC Minutes, 1 January 1947, CO 537/1731; telegram, Montgomery to Pyman [COSMELF], 2 January 1947, Pyman Diaries, 6/1/2.
 73. 'Note of a Conference at the Colonial Office', 3 January 1947, CO 537/1731. Curiously, Nigel Hamilton, Montgomery's biographer, makes no mention of this very important meeting or its consequences.
 74. CM, 6, 15 January 1947, CAB 128/9; CP(47)3, 'Memorandum by Secretary of State for the Colonies: Use of Armed Forces', 7 January 1947, CAB 129/16. In his *Memoirs*, p. 469, Montgomery claims that Creech-Jones asked him to draft the new directive. The documents make no mention of this, but the directive bears the unmistakable stamp of his thinking.

75. Telegram, Montgomery to Dempsey, 16 January 1947, Pyman Diaries, 6/1/2; Montgomery, *Memoirs*, p. 470.
76. Sir W. L. S. Churchill, *Winston S. Churchill: His Complete Speeches, 1897-1963*, Volume VII, R. R. James (ed.) (London: Chelsea House) p. 7422.
77. Letter, Pyman to Hobart, January 1947, Pyman Diaries, 6/1/2.
78. Montgomery to Pyman, 2 January 1947.
79. Gen. Sir A. Cunningham, 'Policy in Palestine: An Answer to Montgomery's Criticisms', *Daily Telegraph*, 9 December 1958.
80. Minutes of Security Conference, 23 February 1947, Cunningham Papers.
81. Telegram, Dempsey to MacMillan, 3 March 1947, Pyman Diaries, 6/1/4.
82. Telegram, Montgomery to Dempsey, 4 March 1947, Pyman Diaries.
83. Quoted in *Daily Telegraph and Morning Post*, 3 March 1947.
84. Letter, Gale to MacMillan, 13 March 1947, in 1 Infantry Division, 'Report on Operation Elephant' (1947), pp. 9-10, copy in the Private Papers of General Sir R. Moore, Hampton Court, Surrey; telegrams, Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 14, 16 March 1947, CO 537/2299; Minutes of Security Conference, 17 March 1947, Cunningham Papers; CP(47)95, 'Memorandum by Secretary of State for the Colonies: Palestine - Use of Armed Forces', 19 March 1947, CAB 129/17; CM, 20, 27 March 1947, CAB 128/9.
85. CP(47)107, 'Report by Chiefs of Staff: Palestine - Imposition of Martial Law', 26 March 1947, CAB 129/18; CM, 27 March 1947, CAB 128/9.
86. Telegram, Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 7 August 1947, CO 537/2299.
87. R. N. Rosecrance, *Defence of the Realm: British Strategy in the Nuclear Epoch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968) p. 63.
88. *Ibid.*; P. Darby, *British Defence Policy East of Suez 1947-1968* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973) pp. 10, 37; G. Kirk, *The Middle East 1945-1950: Survey of International Affairs* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954) p. 8.
89. Telegrams, Crocker to Simpson, Simpson to Crocker, 3-4 August 1947, Pyman Diaries, 6/1/8.
90. Telegrams, Cunningham to Creech-Jones, Creech-Jones to Cunningham, 4-5 August 1947, CO 537/12299.
91. Note, Trafford-Smith to Lloyd, 12 August 1947, CO 537/2299.
92. 'Conference no. 2: Palestine, and Discussion with General MacMillan', 7 August 1947, and letter, Crocker to Cunningham, 13 August 1947, Pyman Diaries.
93. Letter, Charteris to Mathieson, 10 September 1947, CO 537/2299; Rosecrance, p. 63.
94. CM, 20 September 1947, CAB 128/10.
95. A list of major operations, forces involved, and results, is provided in Appendix IV.
96. HQ Palestine, message, 19 October 1945, WO 169/19745; see also formation war diaries, WO 169/19685, 19697, 19699, 19701, 19703, 19706; Wilson, p. 22; Blaxland, p. 31.
97. 3rd Parachute Brigade, 'ISUM no. 3', 28 November 1945, WO 169/19705; see also WO 169/19745, 19685, 19920, 19921; Wilson, pp. 27-9; Blaxland, pp. 32-3.

98. Wilson, p. 36. The war diaries are incomplete; they did not always record and identify individually each search operation. The number cited is the known minimum. See Appendix IV.
99. 3rd Infantry Division, 'Report of a Train Robbery 12 January 1946 and Subsequent Search 13 January 1946', WO 169/22967; 9th Infantry Brigade, 'Report on Cordon and Search Ops, Yemini 13 January 1946', WO 169/23003; Brig. R. N. Anderson, 'Search Operations in Palestine: The Problems of the Soldier', *Army Quarterly*, vol. LV (1947-8) pp. 204-8.
100. 185 Infantry Brigade, 'Schedule of Anti-Terrorist Measures', 28-31 January 1946, WO 169/23006.
101. G Branch, HQ 6th Airborne Division, Report - 'Attack on Airborne Car Park Tel Aviv 25 April 1946', 26 April 1946, WO 169/22978.
102. War diaries, October-November 1945, 6th Airborne Division, 3rd Infantry Brigade, WO 169/19685, 19703.
103. 185 Infantry Brigade, war diary, January 1946, WO 169/23006.
104. *Ibid.*, and 'OI no. 2', 10 January 1946, and 'Schedule of Anti-Terrorist Measures'; HQ Palestine, 'Directive - Searches and Road Checks', January 1946, WO 169/23021. There were 10 identity checks and 15 searches in Jerusalem in January 1946. Emergency roadblocks provided a ring approximately one mile in diameter around the centre of the most likely targets.
105. 185 Infantry Brigade, war diary, January 1946, and 'Report on Operations in Jerusalem 19 January and on Subsequent Dates'.
106. 7th Infantry Brigade, war diary, February-March 1946, WO 169/22999.
107. 31st Infantry Brigade, 'Anti-Terrorist Operations - Jerusalem', 31 March 1946, 'Security Operations - Jerusalem', and 'Foot Patrols - Jerusalem', April 1946, WO 169/23005; 1st Battalion, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 'OI no. 12', 26 March 1946, 'Guards, Patrols, etc. - Adjustments to', 17 May 1946, war diary, April-May 1946, WO 169/23196. Removal of the guard at the hotel may have been the result of long-standing complaints by officers about excessive security. See, HQ Palestine, 'Notes on BGS Conference', 5 January 1946, WO 169/23021.
108. 1st King's Dragoon Guards, war diary, January 1946, WO 169/23147; 3rd Infantry Brigade, 'Order for Night Patrols - Haifa', 2 April 1946, and 'Roadblocks', 5 April 1946, WO 169/22995.
109. 1st Infantry Division/North Palestine District, 'Outline Report - Incidents Night 17/18 June', 19 June 1946, WO 169/22957.
110. Wilson, p. 27.
111. 3rd Infantry Division, 'Directive no. 3 - Further Lessons of Recent Ops', and 'Directive no. 6', 6, 25 February 1946; 1st Guards Brigade, 'Local Alarm Scheme - Plan CAPITAL', 8 March 1946, WO 169/22989; 1st King's Dragoon Guards, war diary, February 1946, and 'Operational Order [hereafter cited as OO] no. 6', 21 April 1946.
112. G Branch, HQ 6th Airborne Division, 'Report on Security Operation 3 April 1946', WO 169/22978.
113. 1st Infantry Division/North Palestine District, 'OI no. 4', 15 June 1946; 3rd Infantry Brigade, message, 15 June 1946. The brigade ordered a recce of all railway bridges every 48 hours from 15 June.

- The insurgents attacked between the first and second checks.
114. General Sir B. Paget, 'Middle East Review 1945', January 1946, WO 169/22881.
 115. 1st Infantry Division/North Palestine District, 'OI nos. 6, 7', 27-8 June 1946; 3rd Infantry Brigade, 'Op AGATHA - Briefing Program', 2 July 1946; 3rd Parachute Brigade, 'OI - Operation AGATHA', 26 June 1946, WO 169/22997; 3rd Kings Own Hussars, war diary, June 1946, WO 169/23148; Wilson, pp. 57-8; Blaxland, p. 37.
 116. 6th Airborne Division Signals, 'Report on I.S. Signal Operation Completed 29 June 1946', WO 169/22982; 1st Infantry Division/North Palestine District, 'OI no. 6', and 'AGATHA Summary no. 1', 29 June 1946; 31st Infantry Brigade, 'OO no. 9', 28 June 1946; GOC Palestine, 'Curfew Order no. 1', 29 June 1946, Appendix J 107A to war diary, G Branch, HQ Palestine, WO 169/23022; 'Confidential Situation Intelligence Report' [hereafter COSITINTREP], in message GHQ Middle East Forces to War Office, 29 June 1946, WO 169/22879; Wilson, p. 59, Blaxland, p. 37.
 117. HQ Palestine, 'Operational Log [hereafter cited as Ops Log] 28-9 June 1946 Op AGATHA', and 'COSITINTREP' nos. 562, 564, 29-30 June 1946; 1st Infantry Division/North Palestine District, 'AGATHA Summary, nos. 1, 2', 29-30 June 1946; 6th Airborne Division, 'Ops Log', 29-30 June 1946; 1st Guards Brigade, 'Report on Op AGATHA', 29 June-1 July 1946; 3rd Parachute Brigade, 'Report on Operation AGATHA', 29-30 June 1946; Wilson, p. 59; Bethell, p. 249; G. Meir, *My Life* (New York: G. P. Putnam's, 1975) p. 195; D. Trevor, *Under the White Paper: Some Aspects of British Administration in Palestine From 1939 to 1947* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Press, 1948) p. 211.
 118. GHQMEF, COSITINTREP, 29 June 1946; GSI GHQ MEF, 'WMIR no. 67', 5 July 1946, WO 169/22882; HQ Palestine, 'Ops Log Op AGATHA'; 2nd Parachute Brigade, 'Report: Operation AGATHA', 1 July 1946, WO 169/22992; 1st Battalion, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 'Internal Security Operations Carried Out . . . From 1700 28 June to 2400 29 June 1946'; 1st Infantry Division/North Palestine District, 'AGATHA Summary no. 2'; 3rd Parachute Brigade, 'Report on Operation AGATHA'; Wilson, pp. 60-2. The 2nd Para Brigade's report indicates that the security forces encountered difficulty planning the operation owing to inadequate town maps.
 119. Statement by George Hall, 10 July 1946, E6554, FO 371/52538; M. Begin, *The Revolt: Story of the Irgun* (London: W. H. Allen, 1951) p. 210. The arsenal included: 10 machine guns, 78 pistols, 92 two-inch mortars, 321 rifles, 475 lbs of explosives, 5017 grenades, 5267 mortar bombs, and 425 000 rounds of ammunition.
 120. G(Ops)1 GHQ MEF, 'COSITINTREP no. 186', 30 June 1946; HQ Palestine, 'COSITINTREP', nos. 562, 564, letter, GOC to formation commanders and I.G. Police, 30 June 1946. Total casualties: three Jews killed, 60 injured (16 hospitalised) and one British soldier killed accidentally.
 121. 2nd Parachute Brigade, 'Diary of Events - Operation HARRY II, 14-20 July 1946', in Quarterly Historical Report, WO 261/213; Trevor, p. 229.

122. CM, 25 July 1946, CAB 128/6; Barker, 'Military Action', Cunningham Papers; Wilson, pp. 67, 72-3.
123. 2nd Infantry Brigade, 'OO no. 2 - Op SHARK', 28 July 1946, WO 261/191; 2nd Parachute Brigade, 'Report on Operation SHARK', 3 August 1946; Begin, pp. 227-30; Wilson, pp. 67-8, 70-1; letter, Charteris to author, 9 November 1976. The arms caches yielded: four machine guns, 23 mortars, 176 rifles, 127 000 rounds of ammunition, a large quantity of explosives, and forged currency.
124. 2nd Parachute Brigade, 'Report on Op HAZARD 9-10 September 1946', 11 September 1946; Wilson, pp. 79-81. These searches also uncovered considerable quantities of weapons and munitions.
125. 2nd Parachute Brigade, 'OI no. 8 - Operation COMB', 19 September 1946, and 'OI no. 11 - Enforcement of Curfew', 27 October 1946; 1st Parachute Brigade, 'OI no. 12 - Brigade Commander's IS Conference 31 October 1946', and 'OO no. 16', 3 November 1946, WO 261/209; 9th Infantry Brigade, 'OI no. 10', 7 November 1946, WO 261/207.
126. 1st Parachute Brigade, 'OO no. 18', 14 November 1946; see also 2nd Parachute Brigade, Quarterly Historical Report; Wilson, pp. 82-4.
127. 1st Parachute Brigade, Quarterly Historical Reports, WO 261/209-10; letter, Dimoline to Dempsey, 9 January 1947, Pyman Diaries 6/1/2; Wilson, pp. 88-9, 91, 235-6.
128. See pp. 88-9.
129. 3rd Parachute Brigade, 'OI no. 25 - IS in Haifa District', 23 January 1947, in Quarterly Historical Report, WO 261/218; 9th Infantry Brigade, 'OI no. 13', 23 January 1947, WO 261/208; 1st Guards Brigade, 'OI no. 2', 25 January 1947, WO 261/187.
130. 9th Infantry Brigade, 'OI no. 17: Cantonment Plan', 2 February 1947; see also Quarterly Historical Reports, 8th Infantry and 1st Parachute Brigades, WO 261/202, 210; Foreign Office, 'WIS', 4, 13 February 1947, E52/56/31, FO 371/61761; telegram, British Embassy, Washington, to Foreign Office, 3 February 1947, E1083, FO 371/61765; Wilson, pp. 102-5. Accordingly to J. C. Hurewitz, *The Struggle for Palestine* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976) p. 282, by the end of February 1947 only 11 British civilians resided outside the security zones.
131. 1st Infantry Division, 'Report on Operation ELEPHANT' (1947), pp. 4, 30; 9th Infantry Brigade, 'OI nos. 19, 20 - Op HIPPOMINIMUS', 1, 7 March 1947; CP(47)107, 'Report by Chiefs of Staff: Palestine - Imposition of Martial Law', 26 March 1947, CAB 129/18.
132. 1st Infantry Division, 'Report on Operation ELEPHANT' (1947), pp. 4, 44; 9th Infantry Brigade, 'OI no. 19', and 'Report on Op HIPPOMINIMUS', 22 March 1947.
133. 1st Infantry Division, 'Report on Operation ELEPHANT' (1947), pp. 66-79; 9th Infantry Brigade, 'OI no. 20', and 'Report on Op HIPPOMINIMUS'.
134. CM, 20 March 1947, CAB 128/9; CP(47)107; Colonial Office, Monthly Reports, April-June 1947, CO 537/2281; entry for 24 April 1947, Pyman Diaries, 6/1/4; see also Appendix III. The 78 arrests reported by the Chiefs of Staff may have included some arrests made subsequent to the operation itself.
135. N. Bethell, *The Palestine Triangle: The Struggle Between the British,*

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136. Farran, pp. 370-1; Fergusson, p. 227. This is probably the operation described in C. Mitchell, *Having Been a Soldier* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1969) p. 61.
 137. Colonial Office, Monthly Report, April 1947; see also Chapter 3, p. 70, and Chapter 5, pp. 150-2.
 138. Telegram, MacMillan to Simpson (VCIQS), 3 August 1947, Pyman Diaries, 6/1/8.
 139. 1st Infantry Division, 'Report on Operation TIGER', copy in WO 261/181; CP(47)208, 'Memorandum by Secretary of State for the Colonies: Palestine - Security Measures', 19 July 1947, CAB 128/20; Minutes of Security Conference, 26 July 1947, Cunningham Papers.
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 142. MOI/OPC Paper 576A, 'Plan of Propaganda for Palestine: Second Revision of Aims and Objectives', 1 June 1945, CO 733/465.
 143. MOI/OPC Paper 575B, 'Plan of Propaganda for Palestine: Second Revision of Appreciation', 2 June 1945, INF 1/943.
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 145. Minutes of Security Conference, 22 August 1947, Cunningham Papers. Samples of PIO communiqués may be found in: G Branch, HQ Palestine, war diary, February 1946, WO 169/23021; in correspondence files, High Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, October 1946, FO 371/52563.
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 147. HQ Palestine, 'OI no. 57 - Press', 31 December 1945; 1st Infantry Division, 'Report on Operation ELEPHANT' (1947), pp. 102-5, 'Report on Operation TIGER'; 9st Armoured Division, 'IS Instruction no. 4', 6 June 1947, WO 261/178; Farrar-Hockley, interview with author.

148. 6th Airborne Division, 'OI no. 4 - Passing of Information', 17 October 1945; HQ Palestine, 'Lessons From Ops 25/26 November 1945', 7 December 1945.
149. 1st Infantry Division, 'Publicity', 8 May 1946.
150. HQ Palestine, 'OI no. 56'; 3rd Parachute Brigade, 'OI no. 38 - Appendix: Relations with Press', 30 April 1947, WO 261/219.
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155. Telegram, Embassy, Washington to Foreign Office, 12 July 1946, E6559, FO 371/52538.
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157. Telegrams, Embassy, Washington to Foreign Office, 28 January 1947, CO 537/2312; and Foreign Office to Embassy, Washington, 21 May 1947, E4378, FO 371/61754; see also FO 371/61757, 61759; see also, J. Schechtman, *The United States and the Jewish State Movement* (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1966) p. 195.
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159. Telegrams, Embassy, Washington to Foreign Office, 16 April 1947; and 6 August 1947, E7361, FO 371/61784.
160. Telegrams, Cunningham to Hall, 30 November 1945, E9449, FO 371/45387, and Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 7 August 1947, E7273, FO 371/61784; GHQ MEF to War Office, 4 January 1946, WO 169/22881; Minutes of Security Conference, 6 June 1947, Cunningham Papers; United Kingdom, House of Commons, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, 5th Ser., CLXXIV, 1805-10, and Command Paper no. 6873, 'Palestine: Statement of Information Relating to Acts of Violence' (July 1946).
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CHAPTER 5

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- Staff Report (45) 145 (Final) 'Middle East Policy', 3 August 1945, in COSC Minutes, 8 August 1945, CAB 79/37; 'Structure and Organisation of the Haganah', Appendix E to 1st Guards Brigade, 'Intelligence Summary No. 15', 12 June 1946, WO 169/22989. The JIC estimate placed the combined strength of the Haganah and Palmach at 65 000, or about twice the actual size of the two groups. The Guards Brigade assessment was based on documents seized during the search of Birya settlement 27 February 1946. For details of content of documents, see undated official communiqué, 75156/151A 1946 Part 1, CO 733/456.
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102. Interview with author, 13 September 1976.
103. Letter, Goulburn to HQ 1 Infantry Division/North Palestine District, 21 June 1946, WO 169/22989; see also, 3 Infantry Division, 'Directive no. 2 - Combined Ops Police and Mil', 23 January 1946, WO 169/22967; HQ Palestine, 'OI no. 67', 17 June 1946, WO 169/23022; 1 Infantry Division/North Palestine District, 'OI no. 7, 28 June 1946, WO 169/22957; interviews with author, Brigadier M. Tugwell, 3 November 1976; Major-General H. E. N. Bredin, 28 June 1977; Lieutenant-General Sir N. Crookenden, 9 June 1976.
104. Interview with author, 26 May 1976.
105. Interview with author, 14 February 1976.
106. HQ Palestine, 'OI no. 67 - Military Cum Police Operations', 17 June 1946, WO 169/23022; HQ Palestine, *Combined Military and Police Action* (June 1947), pp. 8-9, copy in the Private Papers of Mr J. Briance, London: HQ 3rd Infantry Division, 'Directive no. 6', and 'Directive no. 7 - Wireless Communications - Coordination with Palestine Police Network', 25 February 1946, WO 169/22967; HQ 9th Infantry Brigade, 'Internal Security Instruction no. 5', 2 March 1946, WO 169/23003; '1 Div Intelligence Course Programme', 17-30 January 1946, 1st Infantry Division, War Diary, January 1946, Appendix J9, WO 169/22956.
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108. Horne, p. 557; 'Police Vacancy - Inspector General 1945', 75015/52, CO 733/451.
109. Horne, p. 557; Fergusson, p. 202; interviews with author: Briance (1976); Catling (1976); Mr H. B. Shaw, 2 February 1977; Brig. J. M. Rymer-Jones, 5 March 1977; Col. W. N. Gray, 23 July 1976.
110. Interview with author, 17 February 1978.
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117. HQ Palestine, War Diary, October 1945, WO 169/19745; 1st Infantry Division, 'WIR no. 11', 24 June 1946, WO 169/22957; Telegram, Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 7 August 1947, E7273, FO 371/61784;

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118. Horne, pp. 474-7, 555.
119. 'Wickham Report', Government of Palestine, 'Draft Estimates, 1945-46', 75005, CO 733/450, and 'Annual Report of the Accounts and Finances, 1945-46, 1946-47', CO 814/40; 'Establishment of Interrogation Centre for Examination of Terrorists, 1946', CO 537/1838; interviews, Catling (1979), Gray (1976).
120. By June 1946, the British section of the force was 48 per cent under-strength. Recruiting did not exceed wastage (from casualties, resignations, retirements and transfers) until January 1947, and thereafter declined constantly. 'Police Force - Recruitment of Other Ranks', 1945, 1947, 75015/55B, CO 733/451, CO 537/2268; 'Palestine Police - Recruitment Propaganda, 1946', 75015/60, CO 733/451; Palestine Police, 'Annual Administrative Report 1946'; 'Wickham Report'; Gray, interview (1976).
121. 'Wickham Report'; 'Draft Estimates, 1945-46'.
122. Interviews, Briance (1976), Catling (1976, 1979), Shaw (1977); Begin, pp. 97-102; 'Wickham Report'.
123. Gen. Sir R. Gale, *Call to Arms* (London: Hutchinson, 1968) pp. 163, 166-9, and interview with author, 6 July 1976.
124. The Hon. M. M. C. Charteris, 'A Year as an Intelligence Officer in Palestine', *Middle East Society Journal*, vol. 1 (1946), pp. 17, 18, 20. The article, based on a lecture to the society, is deliberately vague on intelligence tasks and sources. In his correspondence with the author, 9 November 1976, he was equally circumspect.
125. See War Diaries, G Branch HQ Palestine, 1946, WO 169/23021-2.
126. Appendix J37A, June 1946, WO 169/23022.
127. Gale, interview (1976).
128. For example, it was the DSO's 'Monthly Summary no. 8', May 1946, (WO 169/23031) that accurately predicted a revival of terrorism on a major scale in June. Lechi member 'Avner' points out that Major Desmond Doran, Area Security Officer for Tel Aviv, was selected for assassination precisely because he was so good at his job: fluent in Hebrew, an expert on the Lechi, and a skilled interrogator. See 'Avner', *Memoirs of an Assassin* (London: Anthony Blond, 1959) pp. 13, 82-3. Also, Dannatt interview (1978).
129. M. Tugwell, 'Revolutionary Propaganda and Possible Counter-measures', unpublished PhD dissertation, University of London, 1979, pp. 15-16, 311, 325-34.

130. See, for example, the three lectures on psychological warfare, by R. H. S. Crossman, in *JRUSI*, vols XCVII–VIII (August 1952–November 1953).
131. H. Beeley, note on file, E10173, 15 October 1946, FO 371/52561.
132. Tugwell, p. 160.
133. Sir R. B. Lockhart, *Comes the Reckoning* (London: Putnam, 1947) p. 339.
134. Minutes of Security Conference, 25, 27 September 1946, Cunningham Papers; R. W. D. Pawle, interview with author, 18 May 1978. The phrases in quotations are Cunningham's.
135. See references to psychological operations in the Minutes of Security Conferences, September 1946 to July 1947, Cunningham Papers.
136. MOIOPC Paper 575A, 'Plan of Propaganda for Palestine: Second Revision of Appreciation', 2 June 1945, and 557A, 'Second Revision of Channels', 9 June 1945, 75893, CO 733/465; MOI, 'Aide – Memoire of Meeting to Discuss Reduction of Palestine Budget', 18–19 June 1945, INF 1/419; letter, Finance Officer, MOI Middle East to Middle East Division MOI (London), 30 August 1945, INF 1/430. Budget: 1945/6 (original): £97 668; (revised): £66 507; (minus revenue): £55 807; 1946/7 (estimate): £46 837.
137. Letters, Driberg (MOI) to Eastwood (Colonial Office), 16, 26 October 1946, Eastwood to Driberg, 7 November 1945, Gutch to Eastwood, 21 November 1945, Trafford-Smith to Driberg, 16 January 1946, all in 75893, CO 733/465.
138. R. M. Graves, *Experiment in Anarchy* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1949) p. 91.
139. 'Bad Tempered Censorship', *Evening Standard*, 25 November 1946.
140. Letter, Cassels to author, 27 November 1976.
141. MacMillan, 'Palestine: Narrative of Events', p. 7.
142. Bethell, p. 269; Hurewitz, pp. 256–7; *The Palestine Post*, 1 August 1946; and Tugwell, p. 163.
143. See War Diaries, 1945–46, G Branch, HQ Palestine, and Defence Security Office, WO 169/23021–2, 19758, 23031.

CHAPTER 6

1. T. E. Lawrence, 'The Evolution of a Revolt', in M. Elliott-Bateman *et al.* (eds) *Revolt to Revolution: Studies in the 19th and 20th Century European Experience*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1974) p. 150.
2. D. Duncanson, 'Lessons of Modern History: the British Experience', in S. C. Sarkesian and W. L. Scully (eds) *U.S. Policy and Low-Intensity Conflict: Potentials for Military Struggles in the 1980s* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1981) p. 100.
3. D. Charters, 'From Palestine to Northern Ireland: British Army Adaptation to Low-Intensity Operations', in D. Charters and M. Tugwell (eds) *Armies in Low-Intensity Conflict: A Comparative Study*

- of Institutional Adaptation to New Forms of Warfare*, ORAE Extra-Mural Paper no. 38. (Ottawa: Department of National Defence, 1985) pp. 254–64.
4. See Appendix V for a breakdown of the human and material costs of the insurgency.
5. A. Short, *The Communist Insurrection in Malaya, 1948–60* (London: Frederick Muller, 1975).
6. Charters, pp. 234–81.
7. *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 17 May 1981.
8. Charters, p. 236, and p. 298n27.
9. Short, pp. 121, 131 and n25, 141, 501; E. Horne, *A Job Well Done: Being a History of the Palestine Police Force 1920–1948* (Leigh-on-Sea, Essex: Palestine Police Old Comrades Benevolent Association, 1982) p. 573.
10. Interview with author, 3 November 1976.

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