

Why might many Palestinian youths of your own age want to join terrorist organisations such as Hamas or Islamic Jihad, despite the danger of capture, retaliation and assassination? What choices would these youths have to consider in deciding to join such an organisation?

The conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis has lasted since before 100BC. The conflict is over which people really should own the state of Israel. Should it be split 50% 50% or should the Palestinians be made to leave. Israel is the link between the different continents of Europe, Africa and Asia. Without this connection trade may not take place as easily. The country gets most of its money comes from the oil trade. Oil is one of the world's most important resources and so, Israel is needed to keep many other countries running. This means that Europeans Africans and Asians will always be there. Israel is also in various different industries such as cars, wines, farming and the chemical industry. Both the Palestinians and the Israelis hold historic claims to the land, these date back to biblical times. The biblical character of Abraham is the most significant to this long-term dispute because both the Palestinian and Jewish races descended from him. Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael. Each of these sons spawned a different new race. From Isaac, came the Jewish and from Ishmael, came Arabic.

The Jewish have suffered a great deal of persecution throughout their era in history. Christian blamed them for the death of Christ, the worst sin ever. Most recently were the events of 'World War II'. The Jews suffered the most attacks and were used as puppets by Hitler for the outbreak and the consequences of the war. Many were executed in death camps such as 'Auschwitz' during one of the biggest mass genocide's in history, the 'Holocaust'. The Jews were also persecuted during Biblical times because the Egyptians enslaved them. God promised the Jews that he would lead them back to their promised homeland, Israel. God sent Moses to help the Jews who returned them to Israel where they settled in around 1200BC.

The Jewish race emigrated throughout the world for years and years. They were a dispersed race who no longer had a homeland of their own. However, many remained resolute as to the fact that they were Jewish and were proud of it. The Jews experienced a great deal of persecution over the years, throughout the world as I have said before hand. After this, it was decided that the Jews should have their own homeland. This was to return to their homeland of Israel. They were determined on returning to this homeland that can be seen in their final prayer that is used to conclude the annual Jewish festival, the 'Day of Atonement'. The prayer reads "Next year in Jerusalem". This proved their aspirations of a return to their homeland. However, the Jews were faced with a very demanding problem. During the 7th century, the Arabic race claimed control of the country and renamed it Palestine. They proclaimed the new "Palestine" as their own homeland.

A man called Theodor Herzl started a project to form the first Zionist movement. The aim of his new movement was to establish a mass Jewish settlement in Palestine. However, he was to fail to meet this requirement. He became the president of this New World congress of Zionists. His work was mainly based on persuading the likes of Turkey and Britain to support his cause. Theodor Herzl was successful in gaining the trust of the Turks who eventually sided with the Germans against the Arabs in World War One. However, the British preferred to support the

Arabs, who wanted to reduce the support for the countries opposing them. However, the British soon became liable to persuasion. This was due to the money the Jewish race, particularly based in America at the time, had to offer. They had inherited this from previous generations. This would have been of great benefit to the British because the American-based Jews could have persuaded the Americans into the war. As a result of these issues, three agreements were made.

- Balfour Declaration- this promised the Jews that their 'promised land' of Israel would be returned to them on two conditions. These were that they persuaded America to join the war and that they maintained the support of Russia as an ally.
- The Sykes Picot agreement- this was a secret agreement that was written up between Britain and France in which it was agreed that they would share the land gained when they overthrew the Turkish army.
- The McMahon agreement- this promised the support of Lawrence of Arabia in helping the Arabs to revolt against and overthrow the Turks. As a result, they would be given their own, undisputed homeland.

These agreements began to cause problems. The League of Nations were handed the responsibility of controlling the land of Palestine, mainly England and France. Both the Arabs and the Jewish to give control of the land to them put pressure upon the League of Nations. The Jewish population of the world saw their chance to return to their homeland of Palestine, which they preferred to call Israel. Many Jews from around the world began to immigrate back to Palestine. This emigration of the Jewish population continued steadily over the next few years. The United Nations suggested a solution to the dispute over the land of Palestine after the Second World War. In 1947, they put forward a proposal to divide the land into three parts. Two of them would be equal and would divide Palestine into an Israeli and Arabic section. However, the capital of Jerusalem would be left as a neutral city. This city would be controlled by the UN and could therefore be used for important matters of country welfare and economy. This city could be used as an international trade centre for the export of oil. The Jewish accepted this proposal but the Arabs rejected it.

The Arabs, in their increasing restlessness with the Israelites, came together from distant lands. They mainly came from nations such as Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Iran, Kuwait, Jordan and Iraq. They began to fight with the Jews over certain areas of land. This, along with other factors contributed to the two races having four wars in the space of 25 years. Unluckily for the Arabs, this was a big mistake because The Israelis' wealth meant that they could afford the unsurpassed war technology. This money also meant that they could train new soldiers for the next war. Factors such as these gave the Jews the edge in the wars between the races. The Jews came out on top; they were victorious in all four wars. This gave the Israelis a greater degree of control over Palestine. The Jews shortly re-named the country of Palestine, Israel. As their control increased because of these wars, started by the Arabs, they forced the Palestinian inhabitants into refugee camps. This is a very real problem that still faces the Palestinians of today.

After the wars, a mutual bitter hatred developed between the Palestinians and Israelis over who held the strongest claim to the land. This is a very long-term and real argument that continues to this modern age. The overwhelming power and military force available to the Jews means that the Palestinians are unable to match them. The Palestinians feel that they have been unjustly forced out from their own land. They hope to one day, have the power to overthrow the Jews and return to the 'very soil of Palestine' that is sacred to them and was to their ancestors thousands of years beforehand. The Palestinians were extremely humiliated by the fact that they were unable to stop the Jews from taking their land. The Palestinians were forced to live off of UNWRA rations. The conditions in the refugee camps are appalling and diseases are quick to proliferate.

They felt that the western world was turning a blind eye and that they would have to take matters into their own hands. The Palestinians concluded that the UN was failing to direct world issues to an adequate extent. They assumed that the UN were only too quick to become involved with the punishment of Iraq for their problems in dealing with their neighbouring country, Kuwait. The Palestinians found this to be very unfair and increased speculation among the Arab world that they had to deal with their desperate issue individually. This is why the Arab world resorted to terrorism, because it proved a point and raised consciousness as to the problems that the Arabs were facing in Israel.

Loads of Arabs also feel as if they are commonly treated as rouges and are made to pay for such massacres as the holocaust and the Dreyfus affair in France. The exhilaration of representing their race may also have appealed to a youth. All of these factors mean that a youth is lead to believe that they have no substitute but to fight. They see themselves as freedom fighters; not terrorists and so are not unenthusiastic to join. They also believe that they have nothing to lose seeing as they are skirmishing to salvage land that has already been lost and that nations such as America and Britain provide the financial support.

A huge number of Palestinian youths of approximately 14 years of age would have wanted to join such terrorist organisations as the legendary Hamas. Unavoidably in the wars, the two races had fought; they were pushed out of their homes into refugee camps. Some of these refugee camps have low-grade living environments and diseases can multiply easily. Families will have lived in these refugee camps for long periods of time. This will have been long enough to bring up a child. The Palestinian youths will have been trained the common Arab attitudes towards the Jewish race from a very young age. Such as, their parents would have explained to them how the Israelis took their assets and land was taken away from them. This might have encouraged the youth to fight so that they made up for the four wars. Their parents will have inaugurated their own opinions into their children. These opinions would have been very tough in the heart of the child and they would have tremendous hatred towards the Jews. This would have sparked and cultivated the children's' own perspectives as to how monstrous the Israelis were, like an attitude of hatred towards the Israelis.

The youth may have thought that because no one was willing to help their cause they would solve the problem their selves. Adolescents might have felt alienated if they didn't join up to a terrorist organisation. I am sure that peers as well as parents encouraged the youths to sign up to a terrorist organisation like Hamas or Alaxa. Countless youths have been brought up to mistrust the peace talks

of their Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat. Numerous families might have chosen to bring up their children in this way because they feel that peace would not solve anything because so many other Palestinians had died in the last couple of years. They might feel that peace is not enough vengeance towards the Israelis who killed many Palestinian figures such as Deir Yassin, Sabra and Shatila. This will just encourage the youth to hate the Palestinians even more.

Instead, a Palestinian youth could always take a political route towards the conflict and devastation. Many groups such as the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) led by Yasser Arafat offer to help the youths of Palestine. These groups believe in peace, which can be obtained through negotiations and discussions. This process is ideal for the western world because of its loss of threat and the amount of deaths. Members are not at as much risk as those are in terrorist organisations like Hamas or Alaxa. This system has proved to be a great deal more productive than using terrorism because more has been achieved. People still believe that violence is the only way to win. Another way for a youngster to express their aspiration for peace would be to sign their name on the Progressive List for Peace in the Middle East. This aims to achieve teamwork between the Arabs and Israelis in sorting out their differences and accomplish some kind of declaration over the disputed state of Israel. Families and friends, however, might strive to dissuade a youth from joining a campaign because it is not a way of settling the scores and they would be considered to be traitors.

Even though there are six main Arabic terrorist groups, they all share the same common goal. This is to cause fear in order to make a point. The point is to make the world aware of their problems in Israel and to make the world's citizens think about why people would sacrifice their lives for their Homeland. The six groups are Islamic Jihad, Hamas, Alaxa, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Abu Nidal Organisation. They have different styles of making people hate and fear them throughout the world and because of this they have killed hundreds of innocent people from many different cultures. Israel has a secret service and they can find out who is a member of a terrorist organisation.

Prior to a youth's decision to join a terrorist group, they must think about their options and their penalties. For instance the first main question they must choose to answer is what organisation do I join. This is a vital question because, if they ever chose to leave, many organisations will decline this request because the person knows so much information on their group. If you would still want to quit that organisation they would probably kill you so you don't spread the information. The organisations say that you're with us or against us. People would lose their freedom because people would try to kill them on the streets and they would have to disguise or hide themselves.

The last option for a Palestinian youth would be to leave these problems behind and leave Israel. This would not be of any benefit to Israel because it is not solve the problem. This could be a way out for the youths as they are not at jeopardy in the bordering Arab countries such as Egypt. From here, they could support the Arab cause without risk of losing their lives by convincing Europe and other superpowers to join in the struggle for a homeland. The youth could also have a better education and life in such countries as England, France and the USA. Numerous Palestinian youths are faced with such a serious question, should they fight for their country. They have a wide range of choices; none of them are easy. Should they FIGHT??? In order to solve this conflict, there must be debates in the

forthcoming and somebody must take charge of the country. The Palestinian and Israeli youths are the future, maybe if they all stopped fighting the wars would stop. I believe over time the Israelis and Palestinians will merge as one race.