

Center for Palestine Research & Studies (CPRS)

Public Opinion Poll NO (14)

Negotiations, PNA and Opposition, Jordanian-Palestinian Relations, Elections, and the Presidency of the PNA,

December 29-31, 1994

This is the fourteenth public opinion poll conducted by the Survey Research Unit (SRU) at the Center for Palestine Research and Studies. The following topics are covered in this poll: Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, the PNA and the opposition, Jordanian-Palestinian relations, elections, and the Presidency of the PNA.

CPRS has been conducting regular public opinion polls to document an important phase in the history of the Palestinian people and to record the reactions of the Palestinian community with regard to current political events. CPRS does not adopt political positions and does not tolerate attempts to influence the conclusions reached or published for political motives. CPRS is committed to providing a scholarly contribution to analysis and objective study and to publishing the results of all our studies and research. Poll results provide a vital resource for the community and for researchers needing statistical information and analysis. The polls give members of the community opportunity to voice their opinion and to seek to influence decision makers on issues of concern to them. In a broader sense, CPRS strives to promote the status of scientific research in Palestine. SRU disseminates the results of the polls through a number of means, including its community outreach program where the results are shared and discussed with a large number of Palestinians.

Enclosed are the results of the most recent public opinion poll that has been conducted in the West Bank (including Arab Jerusalem) and the Gaza Strip (see [Appendix](#)).

General Background

Among the most important events in the period immediately preceding this poll were the following:

- A confrontation between the Palestinian police and demonstrators occurred outside the Palestine Mosque in Gaza City after Friday prayers on 18 November, 1994.
- The issue of settlements and land confiscation was the subject of protest marches, especially around the village of al-Khader, where 600 dunams of land were expropriated. Palestinians considered this expropriation to be a violation of the Oslo Agreement, and a number of Palestinian officials participated in the marches and threatened to halt negotiations.
- The Israeli government passed a law prohibiting activity by Palestinian national institutions in Jerusalem.
- During the last month, authority over taxation and health care was transferred from the Israelis to the Palestinian National Authority.

-Armed attacks were carried out against Israeli targets; for example, 11 Israelis were injured in a suicide attack close to a military bus in West Jerusalem on December 25.

-Regionally, the past month has witnessed the exchange of ambassadors between Israel and Jordan, which led to tension in Palestinian-Jordanian relations. On the Lebanese front, fighting intensified between the IDF and Hizbullah; a number of Israeli soldiers and Lebanese civilians were killed. At the same time, a summit of Islamic states convened in Morocco; the results emphasized Jerusalem's Palestinian identity and asserted Palestinian sovereignty over the city.

-The issue of Palestinian elections was the focus of a meeting between Yassir Arafat and Itzhak Rabin. After the meeting, Arafat announced that agreements had been reached on most issues concerning the elections for PISGA, but the conflict over the redeployment of Israeli forces (a precondition for Palestinian elections) was not resolved.

Methodology

The questionnaire was designed through consultations with experts. A pre-test involving fifty questionnaires was conducted in the Nablus area prior to the poll. The questionnaire instrument includes a large number of demographic variables as indicated in the section on sample distribution.

Household Sample Selection

SRU researchers adopted a multi-stage sample selection process. The process of sample selection began with the creation of lists of all locations in the West Bank and Gaza according to district, population size and distribution, and type of locality (city, town, village, and refugee camp). A simple random sample of locations to be surveyed was selected from these lists, as shown in Table 1. Fieldworkers and researchers created maps for these localities. These maps indicated the boundaries, main streets, and clusters of residential neighborhoods in these localities which were further divided into a number of sampling units (blocks) with each unit comprising an average of two hundred housing units. The sample units (blocks) to be surveyed were selected randomly.

Table 1

Sample Localities Selection

The Following table lists the localities that were included in the sample for this month.

District (Sample Size/ %)	Localities (Type)	District (Sample Size/%)	Localities (Type)
Nablus (110/10.2%)	Nablus (C), Zouata (V), 'Aqraba (V), 'Asira (T), 'Ain Beit al-Ma' (RC)	Tulkarm/Qalqilya (86/7.9%)	Burqin (V), 'Azoun (T), Hableh (V), Tulkarm (C), Nur Shams (RC)
Jenin (77/7.1%)	'Aja (V), Jenin (C), Ya'bad (T), Jenin (RC), Kufr Dan (V)	Jericho (20/1.8%)	Jericho (T)
Ramallah (105/9.7%)	Silwad (T), Beit 'Anan (V), Beit Laqiyyeh (V),	Hebron (120/11.1%)	Hebron (C), Dura (T), Halhoul (T), al-'Aroub (RC),

	al-Bireh (C), Ramallah (C), al-Amari (RC)		al-Masoua' (T), Beit 'Auwa (V)
Jerusalem (79/7.3%)	Old City, as-Souahra (V), Shu'fat (RC), at-Tur	Bethlehem (70/6.5%)	Bethlehem (C), Tafoua' (V), al-'Aziriyyeh (T), Deheisheh (RC)
Gaza North (100/9.2%)	Beit Hanoun (V), Jabalya (RC), an-Nazlah (V)	Gaza City (135/12.5%)	al-Rimal, ad-Darraaj, as-Shati, ash-Shijja'yah
Gaza Middle (90/8.3%)	al-Boureij, an-Nusseirat, Khan Younis (RC), 'Absan al-Kbireh (V)	Gaza South (90/8.3%)	Rafah (C), Rafah (RC)

Households were selected based on a systematic sampling framework. For example, if the fieldworker estimated the number of houses in the sampling unit to be two hundred and is assigned ten interviews, the fieldworker divided the 200 by 10, obtaining 20. Therefore, the fieldworker would conduct the first interview in the 20th house, and the second in the 40th, and so on. Fieldworkers were asked to start their sample selection of housing units from a well-defined point in the area such as a post office, mosque, business, etc. They were asked to report on the direction of their sampling walks. Fieldworkers played an active role in drawing the maps for the localities in the sample and in estimating the number of houses in each block.

To select the individual within the selected household to be interviewed, fieldworkers had to flip a coin twice. The first flip was to choose gender of the respondent and the second was to choose whether the respondent is to be older or younger than forty years. When in the household, fieldworkers would conduct the interview with the person who has the characteristics that they selected in this manner.

We received 666 questionnaires from the West Bank and 416 from Gaza, for a total of 1082 interviews. Table 2 provides the reader with data on sample distribution for the present poll where the sample was selected based on household interviews.

Sample Distribution

(Expressed as a % of the total sample)

Area of Residence					
West Bank "including Jerusalem"	61.6%	City	37.4%		
Gaza Strip	38.4%	Town	04.0%		
		Village	29.5%		
		Refugee Camps	29.1		
Age		Sex		Education	
18-22	17.9%	Males Females	49.8% 50.2%	Up to 9 years (elem./prep)	43.5%
23-26	13.2%			Up to 12 years (Tawjihi)	32.1%
27-30	16.1%			2 year College	11.3%
31-35	13.7%			University (BA)	11.5%
36-42	13.7%			MA + Phd.	01.6%
43-50	09.6%				
51+	15.7%				

Refugee Status		Occupation	
Ref. NonRef.	49.2	Laborers	10.5%
		Merchants	05.3%
		Craftsmen	08.6%
		Students	09.1%
		Housewives	39.2%
	50.8	Farmers	1.8%
		Employees*	09.6%
		Specialists**	3.1%
		Unemployed	11.3%
		Retired	1.5%

* Employees: Schoolteacher, Government Employee, Nurse, Lower-level Company Employee, Secretary, etc.

** Specialists: University Teacher, Engineer, Doctor, Lawyer, Pharmacist, Executive, etc.

***A new question for the demographic section as an initial attempt to measure information access and basis for Palestinian opinions.

Data Collection

Our data collectors have participated in a number of workshops where the goals of the poll were discussed. They were also lectured on household interviewing, confidence building, mapping, sampling techniques, survey methods, and scientific research. Four special training seminars for data collectors were conducted during this month, attended by a total of sixty-four fieldworkers. Training for data collection was conducted in the field where actual illustrations of the sample selection and interviewing techniques were conducted.

Data collectors worked in groups supervised by qualified researchers. CPRS researchers made random visits to interview stations and discussed the research process with data collectors. More than fifty percent of our data collectors were female, so as to ensure the representation of women in the sample. Data collectors were assigned a limited number of interviews (an average of 15 per day) to allow for careful interviewing.

Interviews took place primarily over a three day period (Thursday, Friday, and Saturday) and were conducted on a face-to-face basis. Household interviews resulted in a lower non-response rate, estimated at 7%. Some respondents, we believe, were reluctant to state their political views out of fear or disinterest in the present political factions .

Data Analysis

Data were processed through the use of SPSS, a computer package that is able to detect illogical answers and other inconsistencies. The margin of error for this poll is less than 3%, and the confidence level is higher than 95%.

Results

Palestinian-Israeli Negotiations

A total of 38.7% of respondents expressed their support for continuing the negotiations with Israel, compared with 31.5% who supported suspending the negotiations until Israel complies with the terms of the agreements signed with the Palestinians. A further 20.6% supported halting negotiations permanently. The numbers indicate that the majority of Palestinians are in favor of either suspending or halting negotiations, where many of them stipulate as a precondition for continuing the negotiations the compliance of Israel with the terms of the agreements, particularly the implementation of the agreements on the ground. Most Palestinians (72.3%) do not believe that Israel is sincere in seeking peace with the Palestinians, as shown in the previous poll that CPRS conducted in November 1994. Most Palestinians support the negotiations in principle which may be a reflection of the lack of alternatives.

There is a difference in perspective on this subject between the residents of the West Bank and the residents of the Gaza Strip, where a larger percentage of West Bank residents (23.3%) support halting negotiations permanently and 32.6% support suspending negotiations. At the same time, only 12.3% of the Gaza Strip respondents support halting the negotiations and 29.8% support suspending them. Moreover, only 35.7% of West Bank residents support continuing negotiations in contrast to 43.5% of Gaza Strip residents who are supportive of such an option. The larger percentage of support for the negotiations in the Gaza Strip may be due to the fact that the Gaza Strip has witnessed more the fruits of such negotiations, whereas in the West Bank there is a large perception of Israeli non-compliance with the agreements as shown by the procrastination in transferring authority to the PNA and the continuation of land expropriation in Jerusalem and other areas. Despite the fact that halting the negotiations would harm chances to end Israeli practices, the large support in the West Bank for halting the negotiations may be a reflection of the growing feeling that the negotiations have not been fruitful and that there is a need to find other means to achieve Palestinian goals. The large support for the negotiations in Gaza may also be due to the larger support for Yassir Arafat and Fateh in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank.

We find that there is a relationship between age and support for the negotiations where older respondents are more supportive of continuing the negotiations. Also, there is a relationship between education and support for the negotiations; the more educated respondents are more in favor of halting the negotiations, where 30% of those with a bachelor's degree are supportive of halting negotiations, compared with 15% of those with only a primary education. We notice also that a larger percentage of men (26%) support halting negotiations than women (15%).

While support for continuing the negotiations comes to a large extent from supporters of the peace process, a significant percentage of opposition supporters favor continuing the negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis, as represented by 22.6% of Hamas supporters choosing the option to continue negotiations.

Table 3

Attitudes Towards Negotiations by Political Affiliation

	Halt %	Suspend Pending Israeli Compliance w/ DOP %	Continue %	No Opinion %
PFLP	54.2	23.6	15.3	06.9
Fateh	05.7	33.0	56.5	04.8
Islamic Jihad	42.9	32.1	21.4	03.6

PPP	22.2	55.6	11.1	11.1
Hamas	42.9	22.0	22.6	12.4
DFLP	40.0	20.0	33.3	06.7
Feda	11.1	22.2	55.6	11.1
Islamic Ind	35.9	38.5	07.7	17.9
Nationalist Ind	15.4	48.1	28.8	07.7
Other	15.9	32.9	39.0	12.2
None of the Above	19.2	34.4	30.4	16.0

Future Relations with Jordan

Most of the Palestinians (64.5%) support the option of two independent states: Jordan and Palestine. We find that support for complete unity between Jordan and Palestine is 18.5% and support for confederation is 14.4%, which gives 32.9% of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip supporting some form of unity with Jordan.

Support for some form of unity with Jordan comes more from the West Bank than the Gaza Strip. These results correspond with what was shown during a previous CPRS poll conducted in September 1994, where 45.4% of West Bank residents supported some form of unity with Jordan, compared with 34.7% from the Gaza Strip. However, we notice that there is a decrease in support for unity with Jordan in the West Bank (by approximately 7%) and this drop may be attributed to tension in the relations between the Palestinian leadership and Jordanian government in the recent period. In contrast, we find an increase in support for an independent state from 60.5% in September to 64.5% in this poll. This increase corresponds with the increase in popularity for Fateh and Yassir Arafat.

The current poll results show that support for some form of unity with Jordan comes largely from the areas of Jenin, Nablus, Jericho, and Jerusalem. Despite the prevailing belief that the Hebron and Bethlehem areas are among the most supportive of Jordan, the results show that support for the idea of unity or confederation in these areas is below average. (See Table 4)

Table 4

Attitude Towards Palestinian-Jordanian Relations by Area of Residence

	Two Independent States %	Unity %	Confederation %	Other %
Nablus	50.0	17.6	25.9	06.5
Tulkarm	65.1	22.1	11.6	01.2
Jenin	45.3	37.3	17.4	---
Jericho	55.0	25.0	20.0	---
Ramallah	59.0	24.8	12.4	03.8
Hebron	68.9	22.7	08.4	---
Bethlehem	77.1	14.3	08.6	---
Jerusalem	53.8	20.5	21.8	03.9
Gaza North	80.0	09.0	08.0	03.0
Gaza City	70.1	09.7	17.2	03.0
Gaza Middle	74.2	10.1	12.4	03.3
Gaza South	64.0	19.1	13.5	03.4

We notice also that support for unity (complete unity or confederation) increases in the cities (37%), followed by towns (35%), villages (32%), and camps (27%). Support for unity decreases among those with higher degrees where it is 19%, compared with higher percentages in other groups such as 38% among those with only primary education, 32% among those with secondary education and 31% among those with college degrees. Also, older respondents were more likely to support some form of unity, as evidenced in Table 6.

Table 5

Attitude Towards Future Palestinian-Jordanian Relations by Age

	Two Ind. States %	Unity %	Confederation %	Others %
18-22	70.7	14.7	12.0	02.6
23-26	71.4	17.1	10.0	01.4
27-30	68.2	14.7	13.5	03.6
31-35	63.9	15.6	19.0	01.5
36-42	67.1	15.8	15.8	01.3
43-50	60.2	20.4	17.5	01.9
51+	47.6	31.9	15.1	05.4

The Events at the Palestine Mosque

A total of 32.7% of the respondents hold Israel alone responsible for the events at the Palestine Mosque in Gaza on November 18, 1994, in which 13 Palestinians were killed and 250 injured. Another 28.7% believe that all of the parties (Israel, the PNA, and Palestinian opposition groups) are responsible, compared with 18.4% who hold the PNA alone responsible, another 7.1% holding Hamas and other opposition groups alone responsible, and 13.1% who blame other parties.

Israel carries primary responsibility for the events in Palestinian opinion, which could be due to the actual belief that Israel is responsible for the specific events or to an automatic assumption that Israel is responsible for any tragic events. Also, social-psychological studies have shown that there is a tendency for members of a society to blame outside forces for tragic events in an effort to promote internal unity. This possibility is supported by the larger number of Palestinian respondents, especially in Gaza, blaming outside parties for these events and reflected in the statements issued by a number of Palestinian leaders attributing responsibility to a number of outsiders.

More Palestinians blame the PNA than the opposition. Among Fateh supporters only 11% attributed responsibility to the opposition. Supporters of Fateh and Feda are less likely to blame the PNA than those supporting opposition groups. (Table 6)

Table 6

Parties Considered Responsible for Events at the Palestine Mosque by Political Affiliation

	Israel %	Hamas and Opposition Groups %	PNA%	All of the Above %	Other Parties %
PFLP	23.6	02.8	51.4	18.1	04.2
Fateh	39.9	11.2	05.3	28.5	15.1

Islamic Jihad	14.3	03.6	50.0	25.0	07.1
PPP	---	11.1	11.1	77.8	---
Hamas	29.9	01.1	36.2	20.3	12.4
DFLP	26.7	13.3	40.0	20.0	---
Feda	66.7	---	---	22.2	11.1
Islamic Indp	39.5	02.6	21.1	31.6	05.3
Nationalist Indp	27.5	07.8	11.8	43.1	09.8
Other	19.8	02.5	18.5	37.0	22.2
None of the Above	28.5	08.1	16.3	33.3	13.8

If we compare the situation in the West Bank with that in the Gaza Strip, we find that a larger percentage of West Bank residents attribute responsibility to the PNA (19.5%) than in the Gaza Strip (16.5%) where we find that not a small percentage (22.8%) believe that other parties are responsible for the events.

The number of respondents blaming the PNA alone for the Gaza mosque incident is highest in the areas of Hebron and Bethlehem. Exactly one third of respondents from the Hebron area and 28.6% from the Bethlehem area hold the PNA responsible for the incidents. (See Table 7).

Table 7

Parties Considered Responsible for Events at the Palestine Mosque by Area of Residence

	Israel %	Hamas and Opposition %	PNA %	All of the Above %	Other Parties %
Nablus	34.6	13.1	15.9	28.0	08.4
Tulkarm	34.1	08.2	09.4	35.3	12.9
Jenin	34.7	06.7	09.3	48.0	01.3
Jericho	30.0	05.0	15.0	30.0	20.0
Ramallah	32.0	02.9	17.5	33.0	14.6
Hebron	38.3	05.0	33.3	23.3	---
Bethlehem	37.1	05.7	28.6	25.7	02.9
Jerusalem	33.8	07.8	19.5	32.3	06.5
Gaza North	23.2	10.1	16.2	25.3	25.3
Gaza City	29.1	06.7	17.2	25.4	21.6
Gaza Middle	30.3	05.6	15.7	27.0	21.3
Gaza South	34.8	06.7	16.9	19.1	22.5

A larger percentage of men (21%) blame the PNA, compared with 15% of women. Also, more educated respondents are more likely to attribute blame to the authority, as demonstrated by Table 8.

Table 8

Parties Considered Reponsible for the Events at the Palestine Mosque by Education

	Israel %	Hamas and Other Opposition %	PNA %	All of the Above %	Other Parties%
9 Years or Less	35.9	07.4	15.5	26.4	14.8
Tawjihi	32.8	08.4	19.5	28.5	10.8
2 Year College	30.6	07.4	13.2	37.2	11.6
B.A.	25.2	03.3	27.6	29.3	14.6
M.A. or PhD	16.7	---	44.4	22.2	16.7

There is a relationship between age and attitude towards the events at the Palestine Mosque where we find that older respondents are less likely to hold the Palestinian authority responsible, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Parties Considered Responsible for Events at Palestine Mosque by Age

	Israel %	Hamas and Opposition %	PNA %	All of the Above %	Other Parties %
18-22	37.4	08.4	21.6	20.5	12.1
23-36	27.0	07.8	29.1	28.4	07.8
27-30	26.2	09.3	19.8	31.4	13.4
31-35	37.0	05.5	14.4	28.1	15.1
36-42	32.2	04.9	19.6	28.7	14.7
43-50	36.3	04.9	11.8	36.3	10.8
51+	32.9	07.3	11.6	31.7	16.5

Evaluation of the Palestinian National Authority

The poll results show that 8.8% of the respondents evaluate the performance of the PNA as excellent, 22.6% as good, 29.5% as average, 15.6% as weak, and 3.1% as bad. The evaluation of the performance is more positive in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank, where 36.4% of Gaza respondents evaluated the performance as excellent or good, while only 28.2% of West Bank respondents chose one of these options. In contrast, 31.1% of West Bank respondents gave a negative evaluation, compared with 24.8% of Gaza respondents. It seems that the general evaluation of the authority tends toward a "wait and see" attitude as most Palestinians give the PNA a positive or "average" evaluation. It seems that Palestinians are giving the authority an additional chance to prove itself and also that most Palestinians are favorably disposed towards the authority because of the pressures and delays imposed upon it by Israel. During the recent period, the Palestinian authority dealt in public speeches with issues of concern to the people using a language which reflected the pulse of the street.

The poll results show that the positive evaluation of the performance of the PNA is found to a noticeable extent in the areas of Gaza Middle and Gaza City. As for the negative evaluation, it is clearly found in Jericho, Hebron, and Jerusalem, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Evaluation of the Performance of the PNA by Area of Residence

	Excellent %	Good %	Average %	Weak %	Bad %	Don't Know %
Nablus	04.6	26.6	26.6	21.1	08.3	12.8
Tulkarm	07.0	19.8	33.7	18.6	09.3	11.6
Jenin	08.0	16.0	36.0	13.3	10.7	16.0
Jericho	15.0	05.0	35.0	25.0	20.0	---
R'llah	10.5	18.1	24.8	14.3	08.6	23.8
Hebron	09.2	17.5	30.0	18.3	21.7	03.3
Beth.	07.1	24.3	28.6	12.9	18.6	08.6
J'lem	07.7	24.4	17.9	17.9	19.2	12.8
Gaza North	11.0	18.0	39.0	12.0	10.0	10.0
Gaza City	10.4	29.1	26.9	10.4	15.7	07.5

Gaza	07.8	40.0	24.4	12.2	12.2	03.3
Middle						
Gaza South	11.2	16.9	36.0	19.1	07.9	09.0

Also, the negative evaluation of the PNA is higher among men than among women. With regards to education, we find 48% of college educated respondents and 60% of respondents with higher degrees evaluating the PNA negatively.

Table 11

Evaluation of the Performance of the PNA by Education

	Excellent %	Good %	Average %	Weak %	Bad %	Don't Know %
9 years or less	11.0	22.8	31.5	11.9	09.5	13.4
Tawjihi	08.1	22.0	28.7	17.7	13.6	09.9
2-Year college	04.1	25.4	32.8	19.7	09.0	09.0
B.A.	06.5	21.8	22.6	18.5	27.4	03.2
M.A. or PhD	11.1	11.1	22.2	22.2	27.8	05.6

We also find a relationship between age and evaluation of the PNA. In particularly, negative evaluation of this performance increases among the younger respondents.

Table 12

Evaluation of the Performance of the PNA by Age

	Excellent %	Good %	Average %	Weak %	Bad %	Don't Know %
35 or Younger	08.2	21.0	30.0	16.1	16.1	08.6
36 or Older	09.4	25.3	28.7	14.9	08.7	13.0

Not surprisingly, positive evaluation of the PNA comes largely from supporters of Fateh, whereas we find most of the supporters of opposition factions giving the authority a negative evaluation.

Participation of the Palestinian Opposition in the PNA

Most Palestinians (75%) support the participation of Hamas and other opposition groups in the PNA, by accepting ministerial appointments or positions in national institutions, compared with 17.8% who oppose the idea. The large support for the idea can be attributed to a number of factors. Many Palestinians, especially supporters of the opposition, might consider participation by the opposition parties in the authority to be a right. Also, others might see participation of the opposition as an alternative to internal conflict and a means to achieve national unity as well as a way for the opposition to assert its views from within the national institutions. Support for the idea is higher throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Support for the participation of the opposition was higher among older respondents than among younger ones, as shown by Table 13.

Table 13

Participation of Opposition Groups in the PNA by Age

	Yes %	No %	No Opinion %
18-35	71.7	22.3	06.0
36+	80.3	10.8	08.9

It was noticeable that support for participation of the opposition in the PNA is significant among the opposition groups as it reaches 68.4% among Hamas supporters.

Table 14

Participation of Opposition Groups in the PNA by Political Affiliation

	Yes %	No %	No Opinion %
PFLP	51.4	41.7	06.9
Fateh	82.6	13.5	03.9
Islamic Jihad	57.1	39.3	03.6
PPP	77.8	22.2	---
Hamas	68.4	28.2	03.4
DFLP	53.3	40.0	06.7
Feda	100.0	---	---
Islamic	74.4	15.4	10.2
Independents			
Nationalist	75.0	09.6	15.4
Independents			
Other	84.1	04.9	11.0
None of the above	69.4	11.3	19.4

Elections

The poll included a number of questions concerning Palestinian attitudes regarding elections, including participation in elections, election of the PNA president, and political affiliation.

A. View of Elections

The majority of Palestinians (80.9%) preferred elections as the best means to select the members of the Palestinian "elected council." In contrast, 10% said that the PLO should appoint the members of this council and 6.1% preferred a system of appointments by quota. These results correspond with the results from previous polls, where for example in October 1994, the results indicated that 81% of the respondents preferred elections.

B. Elections Boycott or Participation

The poll results show that if the opposition groups call for a boycott of the PISGA elections, 26.4% of respondents will boycott, whereas 57.3% will participate in the elections despite the call for boycott. The results indicate that there is no significant difference between the West Bank and Gaza Strip in this regard. The intent to boycott the elections is higher in the areas of Bethlehem, Nablus, and Jerusalem, whereas the highest percentage of those intending to participate is in Jenin. (See Table 15).

Table 15

Participation in Elections by Area of Residence

	Will Boycott %	Will Participate %	No Opinion %
Nablus	36.1	55.6	08.3
Tulkarm	18.8	63.5	17.6
Jenin	16.0	70.7	13.3
Jericho	25.0	65.0	10.0
Ramallah	13.3	66.7	20.0
Hebron	40.0	41.7	18.3
Bethlehem	37.7	43.5	18.8
Jerusalem	30.8	51.3	17.9
Gaza North	25.3	53.5	21.2
Gaza City	20.9	55.2	23.9
Gaza Middle	28.9	65.6	05.6
Gaza South	22.5	65.2	12.4

The results of the poll indicated that more men (30%) than women (22%) will boycott the elections. At the same time, we find that the intent to boycott the elections is higher among the most educated respondents, as shown in Table 16.

Table 16

Participation in Elections by Education

	Will Boycott %	Will Participate %	No Opinion %
9 years or less	22.8	58.3	18.9
Tawjihi	27.5	58.1	14.5
2-Year College	26.2	59.0	14.8
B.A.	33.1	54.0	12.9
M.A. or PhD	58.8	17.6	23.6

Most of the supporters of the opposition factions will adhere to a boycott of elections if these factions call for one. However, 28.8% of the supporters of Hamas will participate in elections despite a call for a boycott.

Table 17

Participation in Elections by Political Affiliation

	Will Boycott %	Will Participate %	No Opinion %
PFLP	73.6	22.2	04.2
PPP	---	44.4	55.6
Hamas	57.6	28.8	13.6
Feda	11.1	88.9	---
Islamic Jihad	57.1	28.6	14.3
Fateh	08.8	81.5	09.7
DFLP	60.0	33.3	06.7
Islamic Independents	30.8	43.6	25.6
Nationalist Independents	11.5	67.3	21.2
Other	17.1	56.1	26.8
None of the Above	22.4	40.0	37.6

C. President of the PNA

The proposed law for Palestinian elections might call for direct popular elections for the head of the authority. Therefore, the poll repeated a question regarding a list of distinguished persons as

possible candidates: Ahmed Yassin (founder of Hamas, the largest Islamic group), Yassir Arafat (PLO chairman, head of the PNA, and leader of Fateh), Hayder Abdel Shafi (an independent nationalist), and George Habash (head of the PFLP). Also, respondents were given the option of specifying another person if they chose.

The results of this poll corresponded to a large extent with what was shown in the previous poll of November 1994, where Arafat received the most support, especially in Gaza. Support for Ahmed Yassin and George Habash is slightly higher in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank. As for Hayder Abdel Shafi, his support is higher in the West Bank than in the Gaza Strip.

Table 18

Comparison Between November and December Polls Regarding Election for PNA President

	Arafat %	Yassin %	Abdel Shafi %	Habash %	Others %
Nov. 1994	44.2	19.7	08.9	06.8	20.4
Dec. 1994	48.5	18.4	08.6	05.8	18.7

As shown in Table 18, support for Arafat has increased in December 1994 by 4.3%. Support for the other potential candidates remains relatively stable. Arafat's popularity has increased particularly in the West Bank, compared with last month where it was 37%, and has now reached 45.5%. The increasing support for Arafat among independents is an explanation for the general increase in his popularity. Support for Arafat came to a large extent from the North of the West Bank, particularly Jenin and Nablus, where we also notice an increase in support for Fateh. Despite the increase in support for Arafat in Hebron, we can still regard this area as highly competitive, since the rate of support for Arafat is the lowest there, and since the rate of support for his competitors is relatively high. (See Table 19).

Table 19

Election for Head of the PNA by Area of Residence

	Yassin %	Arafat %	Abdel Shafi %	Habash %	Other %
Nablus	12.1	58.9	04.7	00.9	23.4
Tulkarm	13.1	59.5	10.7	01.2	15.5
Jenin	13.3	62.7	06.7	---	17.3
Jericho	15.0	50.0	15.0	05.0	15.0
Ramallah	25.0	33.7	07.7	01.0	32.7
Hebron	24.8	33.3	16.2	11.1	14.5
Bethlehem	17.9	43.3	10.4	17.9	10.4
Jerusalem	14.3	31.2	11.8	05.2	37.5
Gaza North	18.2	48.5	06.1	13.1	14.1
Gaza City	20.7	54.8	08.9	04.4	11.1
Gaza Middle	16.9	58.3	04.5	07.9	12.4
Gaza South	22.5	50.6	04.5	03.4	19.1

The results of the poll show that support for Arafat and Yassin is higher among the least educated, whereas support for Habash and Abdel Shafi increases with education.

Table 20

Election for Head of the PNA by Education

	Yassin %	Arafat %	Abdel Shafi %	Habash %	Other %
9 Years or less	19.8	53.5	06.5	03.0	17.2
Tawjihi	21.1	47.8	07.0	06.5	17.6
2-Year College	14.3	46.2	10.9	07.6	21.0
B.A.	10.6	39.0	14.6	10.6	25.2
M.A. or PhD	17.6	17.6	23.5	23.5	17.6

CPRS has polled Palestinians concerning their views on a number of possible candidates for the post of a vice-president. This question will be repeated in our next poll, which will allow for a comparative assessment of the results.

D. Political Affiliation

The poll results indicate that the popularity of Fateh is consistent with the figures obtained in the previous poll. Support for Fateh is still at 43.1%, compared with 42.3% for the previous poll. However, in the West Bank, we notice a 4% increase in the popularity of Fateh between the current and previous polls. This increase might be due to the fact that preparations for Fateh's anniversary celebrations were taking place during the polling days. Also, the presence of a number of Fateh leaders in the protest marches regarding the settlements may have increased support for the organization in the West Bank particularly. In addition, the messages conveyed by PNA leaders were becoming more in harmony with the popular sentiments in relation to settlements, prisoners, and lack of Israeli commitment, which may have influenced Fateh's popularity. The greatest increase in Fateh's popularity was in the north of the West Bank, which maintained the highest support rates, although increases were measured throughout the West Bank.

Table 21

Political Affiliation by Place of Residence

Place of Residence	PFLP %	Fateh %	I. Jihad %	PPP %	Hamas %	DFLP %	Feda %	Isl Ind %	Nat Ind %
Nablus	00.9	51.9	00.9	00.9	13.9	01.9	---	06.5	03.7
Tulkarm	---	48.8	---	---	15.5	02.4	01.2	02.4	06.0
Jenin	01.4	62.2	02.7	01.4	08.1	01.4	---	04.1	05.4
Jericho	10.0	35.0	---	05.0	15.0	---	---	---	15.0
Ram. 'h	03.8	26.9	02.9	01.9	18.3	01.9	01.9	06.7	05.8
Hebron	09.2	30.8	08.3	02.5	20.0	02.5	02.5	05.8	06.7
B'hem	14.5	37.7	04.3	---	14.5	02.9	01.4	02.9	07.2
J'salem	07.8	41.6	02.6	---	11.7	01.3	01.3	05.2	03.9
Gaza N	16.0	43.0	03.0	---	19.0	01.0	---	---	04.0
Gaza C	06.7	45.5	03.0	---	14.2	---	---	03.7	05.2
Gaza M	08.9	48.9	---	---	20.0	---	---	01.1	02.2

The current poll confirms that support for Fateh is lower in the middle and the south of the West Bank than the north; that it comes more from men than women; and more from the least educated, where for example, 49% of those Palestinians with less than nine years of education declared their support for Fateh, compared with 38% of those with bachelor degrees. The poll did not indicate any significant change in the popularity of all other groups as, for example, support for Hamas is still at 16.6%. Support for this group is larger in the areas of Hebron, Ramallah, and Rafah. Support for PFLP is more in Gaza than in the West Bank. This support is higher in the middle and south of the West Bank than in the north. Among students, almost equal support goes to the opposition and to the support camps, as a coalition among Hamas, DFLP, PFLP, Islamic Jihad, and Islamic independents would get 40% of the students' vote and a coalition among Fateh, Fedai, and PPP would get 42% of the vote.

Unemployment

We are able to estimate the unemployment rate in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip from a group of questions related to the subject of work among the respondents. We estimate from the poll results that the unemployment rate among Palestinians is at 30.5% (compared with 38% last month). As expected, the unemployment rate is lower in the West Bank (21.5%) than the Gaza Strip where it is as high as 44%. To reach to this estimate, we used the definition of unemployment suggested by the International Labor Organization (ILO) which defines the "unemployed" as those who were not engaged in any paying work during the week preceding the poll, who wished to work, and were looking for work during the time.

The unemployment rate increases if we include those who are part of the labor force and wish to work, but are discouraged to look for it. In this case the unemployment rate in both the West bank and Gaza reaches 42.8%; in the West Bank 35% and in the Gaza Strip 54%.

The results of the poll show that 81% of those employed have full-time jobs (36 hours or more per week), and 19% have part-time jobs, as they work less than 36 hours per week. A total of 59% of those who declared their desire to work are actually looking for a job; the rest are discouraged workers who have no incentive to look for work. The poll shows that 79% of the unemployed are men and 21% are women. The unemployment rate is high among the young as 74% of the unemployed are less than 36 years old.

Appendix

1. With regard to the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations and given the current framework of circumstances, I support...

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
a. stopping negotiations permanently	20.6%	23.3%	16.3%
b. suspending negotiations until Israel abides by the DoP.	31.5%	32.6%	29.8%
c. continuing negotiations	38.7%	35.7%	43.5%
d. no opinion	09.2%	08.4%	10.3%

2. With regard to future Palestinian-Jordanian relations, I support the

establishment of ...

a. Two independent states: Palestine and Jordan.	64.5%	59.8%	71.9%
b. Complete unity between Palestine and Jordan.	18.5%	22.6%	11.9%
c. Confederation between Palestine and Jordan.	14.4%	15.3%	13.1%
d. Other (Specify)	02.6%	02.3%	03.1%

3. With regard to the events at the Palestine Mosque in Gaza on Friday November 18, 1994 which resulted in the deaths of 13 Palestinians and the wounding of 250, I believe the responsibility for these events lies with...

a. Israel	32.7%	34.9%	29.1%
b. Hamas and other Palestinian opposition groups.	07.1%	07.0%	07.3%
c. the Palestinian National Authority	18.4%	19.5%	16.5%
d. all of the above	28.7%	31.6%	24.3%
e. other parties (specify)	13.1%	07.0%	22.8%

4. What is your evaluation of the performance of the Palestinian National Authority?

a. Excellent	08.8%	08.0%	10.1%
b. Good	22.6%	20.2%	26.3%
c. Average	29.5%	28.4%	31.2%
d. Weak	15.6%	17.2%	13.0%
e. Bad	13.1%	13.9%	11.8%
f. Don't Know	10.4%	12.3%	07.6%

5. Do you support the participation of Hamas and other Palestinian opposition groups in the Palestinian National Authority (i.e. accepting ministerial appointments and entering the various PNA institutions)?

a. Yes	75.0%	74.0%	76.6%
b. No	17.8%	18.1%	17.4%
c. No opinion	07.2%	07.9%	06.0%

6. In your opinion, what is the best way to choose the members of the "Palestinian Council" of the Palestinian Interim Self-Governing Authority?

a. Appointment by PLO leadership	10.0%	10.5%	09.2%
b. Appointment by political groups on a quota basis.	06.1%	04.1%	09.2%
c. Political Elections	80.9%	82.6%	79.2%
d. Other	03.0%	02.8%	03.4%

7. If the Palestinian opposition calls for a boycott of elections for the National Authority Council, I...

a. will boycott the elections	26.4%	27.9%	24.0%
b. will participate in the elections	57.3%	56.0%	59.3%
c. No opinion	16.3%	16.1%	16.7%

8. In a statement released by the "Local Government and Elections Commission" it was reported that the proposed Palestinian electoral law will state that the head of the Palestinian Authority will be elected directly by the people. If a separate election for the head of the National Authority takes place, and the following nominate themselves, I will choose...

a. Ahmed Yassin	18.4%	17.7%	19.6%
b. Yassir Arafat	48.5%	45.5%	53.3%
c. Hayder Abdel Shafi	08.6%	10.0%	06.3%
d. George Habash	05.8%	05.1%	07.0%
e. Other (Specify)	18.7%	21.7%	13.8%

9. If elections were to be held today, and you decided to participate, you would vote for candidates affiliated with:

a. PFLP	06.7%	05.3%	09.0%
b. Fateh	43.1%	41.5%	45.5%
c. Islamic Jihad	02.6%	03.2%	01.7%
d. PPP	00.8%	01.2%	00.2%
e. Hamas	16.6%	15.1%	18.9%
f. DFLP	01.4%	02.0%	00.5%
g. Feda	00.8%	01.2%	00.2%
h. Islamic independents	03.7%	04.9%	01.7%
i. Nationalist independents	04.9%	05.8%	03.4%
j. Other (specify)	07.7%	06.9%	09.0%

k. None of the above

11.7%

12.9%

09.9%