

Center for Palestine Research & Studies (CPRS)

Public Opinion Poll NO (16)

Armed Attacks, Negotiations, Jenin Proposal, Elections, Economic Situation, and the Palestinian-Jordanian Relations, March 16-18, 1995

This is the sixteenth 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: elections, the proposal to place Jenin under the Palestinian Authority, Palestinian-Jordanian relations, Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, and armed attacks against Israeli targets.

SRU 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. Since previous polls have shown Hebron to be a particularly unique area, this poll focuses on Hebron in order to compare it with other areas with regard to the topics discussed and a larger sample was taken in the Hebron area. This approach also allows CPRS researchers to test the methodology used, by comparing previous smaller samples with the larger one gathered this month. (See [Focus on Hebron](#)).

Here are the main findings of this poll:

- -67% of the Palestinians support continuation of negotiations.
- -33% support armed attacks against Israeli targets, and 44% oppose them.
- -65% support two independent states: Palestine and Jordan.
- -49% are optimistic and 32% are pessimistic.
- -52% oppose the suggestion to extend the Palestinian Authority to Jenin before the other areas, compared with 33% who support it.
- -37% evaluate the Palestinian Authority's performance as excellent or good, 30% as fair, 17% as weak or bad.
- -The unemployment level in the West Bank and Gaza decreased to 38%, and 53% felt that the economic situation had deteriorated.
- -56.5% support Arafat and 49.4% support Fateh.

Enclosed are the results of the current public opinion poll that has been conducted in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (see [Appendix](#)) and a summary of the analysis of the results.

General Background

In the period immediately preceding this poll the closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip continued, although it was eased slightly as some permits were re-issued. Also, negotiations, which had been suspended following the Beit Lid attack, resumed in Cairo between the

Palestinians and the Israelis concerning elections and redeployment of Israeli troops in the West Bank. There were reports of progress in the elections talks. Arafat and Peres met and announced that they have set the 1st of July as a deadline for finishing the redeployment and elections talks. Reports were published indicating that a secret deal concerning redeployment may have already been reached. During this period, Yassir Arafat decided to form a National Security Court to try persons accused of security offenses. Also, a conference of the foreign ministers of Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority was held in Amman concerning those Palestinians displaced during the 1967 war and the possibility of their return. The U.S. Secretary of State visited Gaza in the context of his Middle East trip designed to encourage resumption of the Israeli-Syrian negotiations. This period also marked the first anniversary of the Hebron Mosque Massacre and many Palestinians were prohibited from entering Jerusalem for Ramadan prayers. Also, it marked the first celebrations of Eid al-Fitr under Palestinian Authority for the autonomous areas. There were no incidents of Palestinian armed attacks against Israeli targets reported during this relatively calm period.

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. During this poll, a question where respondents were asked to specify their religion was added to the demographic section. CPRS also added a question regarding marital status that had been used previously but dropped for a period. The section on unemployment that was added in the previous two polls remained in this questionnaire as well.

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. The percentages reflect the weighting for the disproportionately large Hebron sample.

District (Sample	Localities (Type)	District (Sample	Localities (Type)
Size/ %)		Size/%)	
Nablus (112/09.8%)	Nablus Salim,	Tulkarm/Qalqilya	Tulkarm city and
camp,	Taluza, 'Aqraba,	(90/07.8%)	Siyda, Kafr 'Abush,

Jenin (90/07.8%)	Balata Camp Dir Abu Da'if, 'Araana, Jaba', Toubas, Jenin Camp	Jericho (25/02.2%)	Bala'a Jericho
Ramallah (111/09.7%) Halhoul, 'Auwa,	Bateen, Beitounia, Ain Yabrud, al-Bireh, Ramallah, Jalazon Camp	Hebron (284*/11.9%) *See introduction and page 4 for explanation of Hebron sample size	Hebron, Dura, al-'Aroub, Beit al-Shiyukh, Bini Na'aim, Beit Ula, Tarqumiya, Yatta, al-Thahiriya, Beith Kahil, Beit Ummar, al-Rihiya Bethlehem,
Jerusalem (76/06.6%) Deheisheh Abu	Old City, Beit Hanina, Beit Safafa, Shufat Camp	Bethlehem (75/06.5%)	Camp, al-Sawahra, Dis
Gaza North (70/06.1%)	Beit Hanoun, Jabalya Camp, Beit Lahiya	Gaza City (173/15.1%)	al-Rimal, ad-Daraj, as-Shati, al-Sheik Radhwan, al-Tofaah, al-Zatoun
Gaza Middle (140/12.2%)	Nusseirat Camp, Dir Balah Camp, Bureij Camp, 'Absaan Kabira, al-Qaraara, Khan Younis City	Gaza South (50/04.4%)	Rafah city and camp

*The fieldworkers conducted interviews in 77 cities, villages, and camps where over 145 sampling units were used.

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.

Sample Distribution

(Expressed as a % of the total sample)

Sample Distribution	March 1995	Education	March 1995
West Bank	63.0 (62.0)	Up to 9 yrs.	51.0 (53.0)
Gaza Strip	37.0 (38.0)	10-12 years	28.0 (27.0)
		Two-Yr. Coll.	11.0

		University Degree(s)	10.0 (20.0)***		
Muslim	96.5	Male	48.1		
Christian	03.5	Female	51.9		
City	34.9			Single	19.5
Town/Village	40.5	Refugee	46.0	Married	77.0
Refugee Camp	24.6	Non-Refugee	54.0	Divorced or Widowed	03.5
		Occupation			
Age		Laborers	11.4		
18-22	14.4	Craftsmen	08.7		
23-26	14.1	Housewives	42.0		
27-30	13.9	Specialists*	03.1		
31-35	14.8	Employees**	10.5		
36-42	15.7	Merchants	03.5		
43-50	09.7	Students	05.8		
Over 50	17.2	Farmers	02.8		
		Retired	01.6		
		None	09.2		

*Specialists (University teacher, engineer, doctor, lawyer, pharmacist, executive).

**Employees(school teacher, government employee, nurse, lower-level company employee).

Population Estimates are based on the "Statistical Abstract of Israel" (1993) and FAFO (1993).

*** for all post-secondary degrees.

We received 863 questionnaires from the West Bank and 433 from Gaza, for a total of 1296 interviews. In the Hebron area, we interviewed 284 Palestinians. Since the Hebron sample is disproportionately large, it was weighted (in this case, deflated) when included in the totals. Table 2 provides the reader with data on sample distribution for the present poll where the sample was selected based on household interviews. The percentages reflect the weighting for the Hebron sample.

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. More experienced fieldworkers from the Nablus area travelled to Hebron to train fieldworkers there. An exchange of experiences, expertise, and problems was facilitated, and feedback from fieldworkers indicated their increased interest in and appreciation of the importance of their work as they gained greater exposure to other contexts.

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%.

Results

Unemployment

The poll results indicate that the rate of unemployment is 38%, compared with 51% last month and 30% at the end of December. The data show that the heightened closure preceding our February poll which prevented all Palestinian workers from entering Israel resulted in a 19 point increase of the unemployment rate. Less than two months later, the rate dropped to 38% as some of the unemployed found some type of work in the West Bank and Gaza or were able to go back to their jobs in Israel as around 10,000 Palestinians were issued permits to enter Israel. The results of this poll and previous polls show a correlation between area of residence and unemployment rate. The various areas of the Gaza Strip (except Gaza City) suffer from unemployment the most, followed by the southern and northern districts of the West Bank. The Gaza areas are inhabited primarily by refugees who are affected by unemployment more than non-refugees. Unemployment is widespread in refugee camps and villages. Cities are least affected by unemployment. The unemployment rate is higher among women than men and among the young and the least educated. The fact that cities and the middle of the West Bank (Ramallah and Jerusalem) are least affected by unemployment might be due to a number of factors: 1) This area is more developed than other areas. Also, most of the industrial, trade, and services sector is located here. 2) The local offices of many international organizations are located in the middle of the West Bank, which is also the focus of their development projects. Also, PNA offices are centered in this area and Gaza city. 3) The residents of this area are least dependent on work in Israel. Also, many residents of Ramallah depend on remittances from family members working abroad. As for Jerusalem residents, they are not affected by the closure to the same degree, with regard to unemployment.

With regard to education, there is a direct relationship where those with university degrees are the least affected by unemployment, particularly after the closure of Israeli markets. This may be due in part to the fact that they are least dependent on the Israeli markets and the fact most of the jobs created by the PNA institutions require higher education.

Also, we notice that the youngest respondents were the most affected by unemployment, particularly those who are married, as they are not issued permits to enter Israel for work.

Table 3

Unemployment Demographics

	March 1995 Unemployed %		March 1995 Unemployed %
Area of Residence		Education	
WB North	40.8	Up to 9 yrs	45.2
WB Middle	19.6	10-12 yrs	42.9
WB South	45.0	2-yr college	34.6
Gaza City	28.8	University	23.9
Gaza Other	50.4	Degree(s)	
City	25.0	Male	36.1
Town/Village	44.1	Female	50.8
Refugee Camp	49.7		
Single	30.8	Refugee	43.4
Married	35.6	non-Refugee	35.2
Age			
18-30	46.7		
31-43	35.9		
44-64	26.1		

*West Bank North: Nablus, Tulkarm, Jenin

West Bank Middle: Ramallah, Jericho, Jerusalem

West Bank South: Bethlehem, Hebron

Unemployment is spread throughout the West Bank and Gaza, where it is at 43% in Gaza and 35% in the West Bank. This percentage of unemployment represents persons who are part of the labor force and did not work (not even for one hour) the week preceding the poll, who want to work, and are actively seeking work. However, if we look at the people who want to work but are not looking for some reason or another (discouraged labor), we find that their percentage is 13% of the labor force (defined here as those working or wanting to work, whether actively looking or not). Among those who are working, 84% are full-time workers and 16% are part-time.

Future Relations with Jordan

Most Palestinians (65%) support the establishment of two independent states: Jordan and Palestine, compared with 29% supporting a form of unity with Jordan, whether through confederation (14%) or complete unity (15%). In this respect, we find that more West Bank residents support a form of unity with Jordan than Gaza Strip residents. We notice that there is a decrease in support among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza for a form of unity with Jordan, whether complete unity or confederation, where support for this idea was at 37% in October of 1994 and 33% in December.

We find that support for a form of unity with Jordan is 41% among those with a bachelor's degree and decreases to 23% among those with secondary school education. (See Table 4)

Table 4

Attitude Towards Future Relations with Jordan by Education

	2 Ind. Countries %	Complete Unity %	Confederation %	Other %
up to 9 yrs	63.2	20.4	11.2	05.2
9-12 yrs	72.9	10.6	12.4	04.1
2-yr college	70.8	09.6	17.2	02.4
University degree(s)	53.9	11.3	28.6	06.1

Also, support for unity is higher among men than among women. This support is located to a great extent in the cities and among laborers, merchants, and specialists. Support for unity with Jordan increases with age. (See Table 5)

Table 5

Attitude Towards Future Relations with Jordan by Age

	Two Ind. Countries %	Complete Unity %	Confederation %	Other %
18-22	70.4	16.6	09.1	03.9
23-26	73.8	07.5	13.4	05.3
27-30	74.8	07.5	13.4	05.3
31-35	66.9	16.4	14.4	02.3
36-42	61.4	17.6	14.0	07.0
43-50	60.3	16.1	17.9	05.8
51+	53.9	22.2	16.7	07.2

Support for unity is also located to a large extent among independents and among supporters of Fateh and Hamas. Support for unity (whether complete or confederation) is no higher in the area of Hebron than in other West Bank areas, rather we find that support for unity here is less than in any area. Support for unity with Jordan is higher in Jericho and Nablus. (See Table 6)

Table 6

Attitude Towards Future Relations with Jordan by Area of Residence

	Two Ind. Countries %	Complete Unity %	Confederation %	Other %
Nablus	55.4	22.3	16.1	06.3
Tulkarm	65.2	18.0	16.9	---
Jenin	71.1	20.0	08.9	---
Jericho	32.0	28.0	32.0	08.0
Ramallah	59.5	12.6	17.1	10.8
Hebron	69.0	14.8	12.3	03.9
Bethlehem	62.7	13.3	13.3	10.7
Jerusalem	60.5	19.7	11.8	07.9
Gaza North	75.7	17.1	07.1	---
Gaza City	76.3	08.1	13.3	02.3
Gaza Middle	65.0	15.0	12.9	07.1
Gaza South	68.0	10.0	20.0	02.0

View of the Future

A total of 49% of respondents declared that they are optimistic, compared with 32% who are pessimistic and 19% who are not sure. Optimism was higher in the Gaza Strip than in the West

Bank. Also, when compared with the results of previous polls (February and March 1994), the percentage of optimism has increased by at least 10%.

Optimism decreases with education where it is 57% among the least educated and increases to 39% among those with bachelor's degrees. (See Table 7)

Table 7

View of the Future by Education

	Optimistic %	Pessimistic %	Not Sure %
up to 9 years	57.1	26.3	16.6
9-12 years	40.7	37.7	21.7
2-year college	44.5	34.7	20.8
University degree(s)	38.0	39.0	23.0

We find also that men are more pessimistic than women. We notice that there is a direct relationship between age and optimism and that optimism is higher among supporters of Fateh than among those of other groups. (See Table 8)

Table 8

View of Future by Political Affiliation (Selected Groups)

	Optimistic %	Pessimistic %	Not Sure %
Fateh	62.8	21.0	16.2
Hamas	25.9	56.1	17.9
Islamic Jihad	37.4	47.9	14.7
DFLP	30.2	44.7	25.1
PFLP	35.0	49.2	15.8
Islamic Inds.	20.4	48.1	31.4
Nationalist Inds.	41.5	44.6	13.9

Palestinian-Israeli Negotiations

The poll results indicate that 67% support continuing the negotiations with Israel, compared with 21% who oppose continuing them. Here also we notice a difference between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip where more respondents from Gaza support continuing the negotiations. Also, the current level of support for negotiations is unprecedented. If we look at January 1994 we find that support for the negotiations at that time was 51%. Support for negotiations is present to a large extent among supporters of Fateh, however, there is more than slight support among supporters of opposition factions. (See Table 9)

Table 9

Attitude Towards Continuing Negotiations by Political Affiliation (Selected Groups)

	Yes %	No %	No Opinion %
Fateh	84.0	07.8	08.2
Hamas	37.6	47.9	14.5
Islamic Jihad	54.8	35.5	09.7
DFLP	66.7	33.3	---

PFLP	45.1	43.1	11.8
Islamic Inds.	38.7	41.9	19.4
Nationalist Inds.	55.9	37.3	06.8

Support for continuing the negotiations decreases with increase in education, where those with university degrees are the most opposed to continuing them. (Table 10).

Table 10

Attitude Towards Continuing Negotiations by Education

	Yes %	No %	No Opinion %
up to 9 years	70.7	16.6	12.7
9-12 years	60.1	26.0	14.0
2-year college	68.6	24.9	06.5
University degree(s)	61.5	30.8	07.6

As shown in Table 11, opposition to continuing the negotiations is higher among older respondents than among younger ones.

Table 11

Attitude Towards Continuing Negotiations by Age

	Yes %	No %	No Opinion %
18-22	56.1	28.6	15.3
23-26	63.0	25.9	11.1
27-30	60.2	26.9	12.9
31-35	70.1	22.6	07.3
36-42	67.6	20.4	12.0
43-50	73.3	16.9	09.8
51+	76.1	10.1	13.8

Also, students and the unemployed are more opposed to the continuation of the negotiations than any other group (Table 12).

Table 12

Attitude Towards Continuing Negotiations by Occupation

	Yes %	No %	No Opinion %
Students	56.1	30.5	13.4
Waged laborers	66.6	24.6	08.8
Housewives	64.6	18.2	17.2
Employees	74.3	18.2	07.5
Merchants	67.5	20.8	11.8
Farmers	72.0	20.2	07.8
Craftspeople	70.2	24.9	05.0
Professionals	73.5	26.5	---
Unemployed	63.6	28.0	08.4
Retired	83.3	11.1	05.6

Armed Attacks

A total of 44% respondents in the West Bank and Gaza Strip opposed armed attacks, compared with 33% who supported them and 23% who declared that they had no opinion on the topic.

Although some respondents were simply unsure of their opinion on this issue, there were fieldworkers who reported that some of the respondents choosing "no opinion" were afraid to answer the question or remarked on the question's sensitivity, implying that support for these attacks may actually be higher than the results indicate. In the February poll, the percentage of respondents supporting such attacks was 46%, with opposition standing at 33%. This might be attributed to the fact that the Beit Lid attack had an influence on the increase in support for attacks, especially since it came after increased frustrations over settlement expansion, which decreased with the passing of time and the inability of these attacks to achieve positive results. Also, the closure and the economic hardship which followed the Beit Lid attack may have caused some Palestinians to reconsider their position. (See Chart 3) There was no noticeable difference between the West Bank and Gaza Strip in this regard. There is a direct relationship between education and support for these attacks where the percentage of support is higher among the educated groups than among those with the least education. Also, percentage of support among those with university degrees is higher than the percentage of opposition, which is not true for the general population. (See Table 13)

Table 13

Attitude Towards Armed Attacks by Education

	Support %	Oppose %	No Opinion %
Up to 9 years	26.8	50.6	22.6
Tawjihi (9-12 years)	35.7	38.4	25.7
2-year college	40.9	32.1	27.0
University Degree(s)	47.0	35.2	17.8

Support for these attacks is higher among men than among women (See Table 14) and is higher in refugee camps than in other areas.

Table 14

Attitude Towards Armed Operations by Gender

	Support %	Oppose %	No Opinion %
Male	35.0	42.1	22.9
Female	30.4	44.7	25.0

Also we find that the percentage of support for these attacks among students is higher than the percentage of opposition. The same is true for employees. (See Table 15)

Table 15

Attitude Towards Armed Operations by Occupation

	Support %	Oppose %	No Opinion %
Students	51.2	28.1	20.7
Waged Laborers	35.8	37.2	27.0
Housewives	28.0	47.9	24.1
Employees	39.4	36.9	23.7
Merchants	34.9	41.6	23.5
Farmers	25.0	49.9	25.1
Craftspeople	24.5	48.8	26.7
Professionals	38.3	42.6	19.1
Unemployed	38.7	43.0	18.3

Single respondents were more supportive of these attacks than married respondents. Support is also higher among youths. (See Table 16)

Table 16

Attitude Towards Armed Attacks by Marital Status

	Support %	Oppose %	No Opinion %
Single	36.2	35.2	28.7
Married	32.4	45.2	22.4

Although support is high among opposition groups, it is not insignificant among supporters of Fatch.

Table 17

Attitude Towards Armed Attacks by Political Affiliation (Selected Groups)

	Support %	Oppose %	No Opinion %
Fateh	25.0	55.4	19.7
Hamas	60.4	20.1	19.5
Islamic Jihad	61.3	25.8	12.9
DFLP	28.6	42.9	28.6
PFLP	52.9	31.4	15.7
Islamic Inds.	25.8	38.7	35.5
Nationalist Inds.	40.0	40.0	20.0

Support for armed attacks is higher in the areas of Bethlehem, Nablus, Hebron, Gaza North, and Gaza South than in the other areas. (See Table 18)

Table 18

Attitude Towards Armed Attacks by Area of Residence

	Support %	Oppose %	No Opinion %
Nablus	33.3	47.7	18.9
Tulkarm	26.1	44.3	29.5
Jenin	25.8	50.6	23.6
Jericho	24.0	36.0	40.0
Ramallah	28.8	41.4	29.7
Hebron	36.0	42.6	21.4
Bethlehem	40.5	29.7	29.7
Jerusalem	35.5	34.2	30.3
Gaza North	38.6	47.1	14.3
Gaza City	32.2	49.7	18.1
Gaza Middle	31.4	39.3	29.3
Gaza South	40.0	40.0	20.0

Extending the Palestinian Authority to Jenin

Most Palestinians (52%) oppose the proposal to extend the Palestinian Authority to Jenin before other areas. Opposition to this suggestion is higher in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank. Jenin is no different in its level of support for this idea than other areas of the West Bank. (See Table 19)

Table 19 Attitude Towards Jenin Proposal by Area of Residence

	Support %	Oppose %	No Opinion %
Nablus	42.3	44.1	13.5
Tulkarm	36.7	51.1	12.2
Jenin	38.2	51.1	12.2
Jericho	45.8	50.0	04.2
Ramallah	33.3	46.8	19.8
Hebron	39.6	47.0	13.5
Bethlehem	29.3	49.3	21.3
Jerusalem	27.6	56.6	15.8
Gaza North	31.4	57.1	11.4
Gaza City	23.1	64.7	12.1
Gaza Middle	25.9	46.0	28.1
Gaza South	16.0	64.0	20.0

We find that opposition to the proposal is higher among men than women and in the cities than in villages and camps. (See Table 20)

Table 20**Attitude Towards Jenin Proposal by Place of Residence**

	Support %	Oppose %	No Opinion %
City	31.5	55.3	13.3
Town	40.1	47.3	12.6
Village	33.8	49.9	12.3
Refugee Camp	29.4	51.8	18.8

Also, opposition to the proposal is higher than support among all political factions. (See Table 21)

Table 21**Attitude Towards Jenin Proposal by Political Affiliation (Selected Groups)**

	Support %	Oppose %	No Opinion %
Fateh	39.8	47.8	12.4
Hamas	22.8	63.5	13.7
Islamic Jihad	29.0	64.8	06.2
DFLP	16.6	50.1	33.3
PFLP	22.9	61.4	15.8
Islamic Inds.	29.7	59.2	11.2
Nationalist Inds.	23.5	66.6	10.0

The Economic Situation

Most Palestinians (53%) declared that their economic situation had deteriorated since the peace process and Oslo Agreement, compared with 36% who believed that their economic situation has remained the same and only 8% who believe that their situation has improved. Although there is no difference between the West Bank and Gaza in the percentage of respondents whose economic condition has deteriorated, more respondents in Gaza declare that their situation has improved than in the West Bank. If we compare these percentages with the expectations expressed in the June 1994 poll, we find a large gap, where 36% expected that their economic situation would improve as a result of the peace process and only 13% expected that it would deteriorate. Residents of Gaza

South and Hebron are more likely to feel that their economic situation has deteriorated. (See Table 22)

Table 22

View of Economic Situation by Area of Residence

	Better %	Worse %	No Change %	No Opinion %
Nablus	05.4	46.4	43.8	04.5
Tulkarm	04.4	55.6	37.8	02.2
Jenin	03.3	56.7	40.0	---
Jericho	04.0	56.0	40.0	---
Ramallah	01.8	37.8	58.6	01.8
Hebron	04.1	66.1	26.7	03.1
Bethlehem	05.3	60.0	32.0	02.7
Jerusalem	02.6	38.2	55.3	03.9
Gaza North	18.6	61.4	18.6	01.4
Gaza City	17.9	49.7	29.5	02.9
Gaza Middle	14.3	50.0	30.7	05.0
Gaza South	08.0	68.0	24.0	---

The poll shows that the perception of economic deterioration is higher among the least educated and decreases with education. (See Table 23)

Table 23

View of Economic Situation by Education

	Better %	Worse %	No Change %	No Opinion %
up to 9 years	08.8	58.8	30.0	02.4
9-12 years	07.4	48.7	41.8	02.2
2-year college	10.0	45.5	40.9	03.6
University degree(s)	08.0	38.9	49.3	03.8

We find that married respondents are more likely to perceive that their economic situation has deteriorated than single respondents. (See Table 24)

Table 24

View of Economic Situation by Marital Status

	Better %	Worse %	No Change %	No Opinion %
Single	05.7	44.7	47.1	02.5
Married	08.5	55.5	33.7	02.3

The feeling of economic deterioration is widespread among all factions, but supporters of Hamas and other opposition groups are more likely to express such a perception. (See Table 25)

Table 25

View of Economic Situation by Political Affiliation (Selected Groups)

	Better %	Worse %	No Change %	No Opinion %
Fateh	11.4	47.6	39.7	01.2
Hamas	03.2	70.5	24.3	02.1
Islamic Jihad	12.6	58.0	25.1	04.2
DFLP	05.6	60.9	33.6	---

PFLP	13.3	56.5	30.2	---
Islamic Inds.	---	57.4	40.8	01.8
Nationalist Inds.	04.9	44.5	40.6	10.0

Palestinian National Authority

The poll results showed that 37% evaluate the performance of the Palestinian National Authority as "excellent" or "good", whereas 30% said that it was "fair" and 17% declared that it was "weak" or "bad."

N.B. "Fair" in this context has the connotation of neither good nor bad, not the connotation of "just." The actual Arabic word is *mutawassit* which is literally "middle." Those interested in comparing these results with previous results should be advised that in the last poll, the same word was translated as "average," although it had been rendered in previous polls as "fair." CPRS believes that "fair" is a better translation, as long as it is not mistakenly understood as "just."

Positive evaluation of the PNA's performance is higher in Gaza than in the West Bank. Also, when compared with the results of the poll we conducted in December 1994, there is a general increase in the positive evaluation of the PNA where the percentage of those who declared at that time that the performance was "excellent" or "good" was 31% compared with 37% now. (See Table 26) With the exception of Fateh supporters, the largest percentage of supporters of each political group chose "fair."

Table 26

Evaluation of the PNA by Political Affiliation (Selected Groups)

	Excellent %	Good %	Fair %	Weak %	Bad %	Don't Know %
Fateh	20.0	33.1	26.7	06.4	03.0	10.7
Hamas	06.7	09.1	33.3	13.9	18.2	18.8
Islamic Jihad	03.2	16.1	25.8	22.6	19.4	12.9
DFLP	09.5	23.8	33.3	09.5	19.0	04.8
PFLP	03.9	19.6	25.5	21.6	21.6	07.8
Islamic Inds.	06.5	09.7	45.2	09.7	06.5	22.6
Nat'list Inds.	01.7	15.0	41.7	18.3	11.7	11.7

Positive evaluation of the PNA is more widespread among non-refugees than among refugees. (See Table 27)

Table 27

Evaluation of the PNA by Refugee Status

	Excellent %	Good %	Fair %	Weak %	Bad %	Don't Know %
Refugee	12.8	20.8	32.7	10.8	08.9	14.0
Non-refugee	15.0	25.2	26.8	07.7	07.9	17.4

Election for PNA President

The percentage of support for Yassir Arafat this month was 56.5%, compared with 53.4% last month. Support for Ahmed Yassin and George Habash declined compared with last month. Support for Hayder Abdel Shafi declined slightly. (See Table 28) This poll confirms that the percentage of support for Arafat is higher in the Gaza Strip than in the West Bank, whereas support for Yassin is roughly equal in the two areas (with a slightly more in the West Bank).

Table 28

Comparison of PNA President Election Results

	Arafat %	Yassin %	Abdel Shafi %	Habash %	Other %
Nov 1994	44.2	19.7	08.9	06.8	20.4
Dec 1994	48.5	18.4	08.6	05.8	18.7
Feb 1995	53.4	14.6	10.0	03.6	18.4
Mar 1995	56.5	13.5	07.6	03.2	19.2

Despite the fact that we do not question respondents concerning their motives for choosing their candidates, the percentages might be a function of the following: 1) Fateh is the group with the most support, and we find that most Fateh supporters cast their vote for Yassir Arafat. 2) The question deals with elections for the PNA, which has already been established, and some supporters of opposition groups consider the question inappropriate since they intend to boycott such elections. 3) The choices offered are limited despite the fact that respondents have the option of choosing "other." Therefore, the percentages should be understood as relative popularity rather than absolute popularity. Arafat has a slight advantage because of being the incumbent and PLO Chairman, and having the highest name recognition value. Some fieldworkers report that many people, while severely critical of Arafat's policies, vote for him nonetheless. To many, he still symbolizes the Palestinian search for identity and statehood. Ahmed Yassin is not perceived as an official leader, but rather as a figurehead, by some of the population, including Hamas supporters. The fact that he is currently imprisoned by the Israelis may also make some of the population unlikely to consider voting for him as a realistic choice. Hayder Abdel Shafi was not as well known, even among the educated, until his role in the negotiations. Also, he has declared that he will not run for election. George Habash has been outside of the West Bank and Gaza for a long time and also suffers from illness. Support for Abdel-Shafi increases with education, while support for Arafat is highest among those with no more than 9 years of education. As shown in Table 2, 80% of the respondents have no more than 12 years of education. All of these factors give, in the question and in reality, Arafat an advantage over the other candidates and may influence the choices of respondents.

Ahmed Yassin received his highest support in the Hebron area as 21% of the respondents chose him as PNA president. In the rest of the sample, he received around 13%. Yassir Arafat, despite winning the majority of the votes in Hebron (51%), got a percentage that is less than his average. In Ramallah, he received 38% of the vote and in Jerusalem he received 46% of the vote. George Habash received his highest support in the Hebron area (5.3%) compared with 1.8% in the other areas of the West Bank. Hayder Abdel Shafi had no noticeable difference in his level of support. (See Table 29)

Table 29

Election of PNA President by Area of Residence

	Yassin%	Arafat %	Abdel Shafi%	Habash %	Other %
Nablus	11.7	66.7	05.4	00.9	15.3
Tulkarm	17.0	54.5	11.4	03.4	13.6
Jenin	08.3	75.0	06.0	---	10.7
Jericho	08.0	60.0	04.0	04.0	24.0
Ramallah	13.5	37.8	10.8	02.7	35.1
Hebron	20.5	47.4	08.6	05.3	18.2
Bethlehem	13.3	50.7	06.7	01.3	28.0
Jerusalem	14.5	46.1	05.3	01.3	32.9
Gaza N.	08.6	48.6	08.6	14.3	20.0
Gaza City	14.0	64.0	05.8	02.9	13.4
Gaza Mid.	13.6	63.6	07.9	00.7	14.3
Gaza S.	12.0	50.0	08.0	04.0	26.0

As expected, support for Arafat came primarily from Fateh supporters. (See Table 30)

Table 30

Election of PNA President by Political Affiliation (Selected Groups)

	Yassin %	Arafat %	Abdel Shafi %	Habash %	Other %
Fateh	02.1	85.8	05.9	00.2	06.1
Hamas	70.6	12.3	03.7	---	13.5
Is. Jihad	51.6	22.6	06.5	03.2	16.1
DFLP	14.3	33.3	09.5	09.5	33.3
PFLP	02.0	15.7	07.8	68.6	05.9
Is. Inds	22.6	25.8	12.9	---	38.7
Nat'l Inds.	06.7	36.7	41.7	---	15.0

As shown in Table 31, support for both Ahmed Yassin and George Habash decreases with age.

Table 31

Election of PNA President by Age

	Yassin %	Arafat %	Abdel Shafi %	Habash %	Other %
18-22	18.9	54.6	06.6	03.6	16.3
23-26	20.0	55.5	07.8	05.3	11.3
27-30	13.7	56.3	08.3	04.5	17.3
31-35	10.5	57.9	06.9	05.1	19.7
36-42	11.8	57.7	10.4	01.7	18.4
43-50	13.1	58.1	04.5	01.8	22.5
51+	07.8	55.9	07.0	00.8	28.6

Elections

Most respondents (75%) chose general political elections as the preferred means to select the members of the PISGA Council. A further 20% chose appointments, whether by the PLO leadership or by the leadership of the various factions on a quota basis. Support for elections increases with education, while the opposite is true for appointments, as shown in Table 32.

Table 32

Attitude Towards Method of PISGA Selection by Education

PLO Appt. %	Appt. by Factions %	Elections %	Other %
-------------	---------------------	-------------	---------

up to 9 years	17.3	06.1	69.5	07.0
9-12 years	14.1	04.4	78.9	02.7
2-yr college	08.0	03.2	86.4	02.4
bachelor's	03.3	08.9	84.0	03.8
grad. degree(s)	09.5	09.5	71.4	09.5

As for participation in elections, 74% of the respondents declared that they intend to participate in the elections. The majority of the supporters of all political groups intend to participate in elections. (See Table 33)

Table 33

Attitude Towards Election Participaton by Political Affiliation

	Yes %	No %	Not Sure %
DFLP	74.9	22.4	02.7
PPP	94.3	05.7	---
Fateh	84.0	07.8	08.2
PFLP	77.1	08.4	14.5
Hamas	62.1	27.0	10.9
Feda	100.0	---	---
Islamic Jihad	70.7	10.5	18.9
Islamic Independents	70.3	22.2	07.5
Nationalist Independents	86.1	08.9	04.9

Political Affiliation

We notice that support for Fateh is consistent in comparison with last month where it was 49.5%, after an increase in recent months. As for the opposition factions (Hamas, Islamic Jihad, PFLP, and DFLP), we notice a continuing decrease in their popularity, especially among the leftist groups. The collective popularity for opposition groups does not exceed 20%, compared with 29% in November of 1993. The decline in support for the opposition extends to include groups that usually are the most supportive of the opposition groups. Among students, we find that support for the opposition dropped from 31% in December of 1994 to around 24% in both February and March 1995. The results of this poll confirmed what we found in previous polls, that support for Islamicist groups is higher among women than men. The same applies to PPP. As for Fateh and the PFLP, support for these groups is higher among men than women. Among those with bachelor's degrees, support for the opposition declined from 31% to 16.3%. At the same time, we notice a 10% increase in support for Fateh among this group. Opposition groups received their highest level of support in Hebron, where 31.2% of the respondents support the opposition, compared with 17% in the rest of the West Bank. (See Table 34)

Table 34

Political Affiliation by Place of Residence

	PPP %	Hamas %	Fateh %	Is. Jihad %	DFLP %	PFLP %	Feda %	Is Ind %	Nat Ind %
Other No one									
%									
Nablus 12.8	---	11.0	59.6	01.8	01.8	00.9	---	01.8	07.3 02.8

T'lkrm 13.5	01.1	13.5	51.7	04.5	03.4	02.2	01.1	04.5	02.2	02.2
Jenin 12.5	01.1	06.8	65.9	01.1	01.1	01.1	---	02.3	04.5	03.4
Jericho 16.0	---	04.0	56.0	---	---	08.0	---	---	04.0	12.0
Ram.'h 14.8	00.9	12.0	28.7	00.9	01.9	01.9	00.9	01.9	06.5	29.6
Hebron 13.0	00.8	18.0	40.2	06.1	02.8	04.3	00.3	04.4	06.4	02.8
B'hem 17.6	01.4	06.8	41.9	02.7	02.7	---	---	06.8	08.1	12.2
J'salem 14.5	---	10.5	34.2	03.9	03.9	01.3	---	02.6	06.6	22.4
Gaza N 08.6	---	14.3	44.3	---	---	18.6	---	01.4	01.4	11.4
Gaza C 15.6	00.6	16.2	56.1	01.2	---	02.9	---	01.2	01.2	05.2
Gaza M 12.2	00.7	12.9	58.3	00.7	---	00.7	00.7	00.7	03.6	09.4
Gaza S 06.0	02.0	14.0	40.0	02.0	04.0	08.0	---	04.0	---	20.0

N: North; C: City; M: Middle; S: South

Focus on Hebron

This poll included 284 respondents from Hebron from 16 different areas. After studying the results, we can draw the following conclusions:

Similarities:

- Contrary to popular belief and our previous findings, support for unity with Jordan (whether complete or confederation) is less in Hebron than in the rest of the West Bank. However, support for this idea remains high in Nablus and Jericho.
- With regard to view of the future, Hebron is not very different from other areas of the West Bank. However, there is an increase in both optimism and pessimism than in other areas, meaning that fewer respondents chose "not sure."
- Support for armed attacks in Hebron is not higher than average. In fact, opposition to these attacks is slightly higher in the Hebron area than in the rest of the West Bank and Gaza.
- There is no significant difference between Hebron and the rest of the West Bank concerning views of the PNA.

Differences:

- Opposition to continuing negotiations in Hebron is higher than in other areas .
- With regard to the Jenin proposal, the Hebron area gave it the most support and the least opposition.
- There is a great difference between Hebron and the rest of the West Bank and Gaza when examining the economic situation as 66% of the residents in Hebron felt that their economic

situation had deteriorated, compared with 53% in the general sample and 49% in the rest of the West Bank.

-Ahmed Yassin and opposition groups received their highest level of support in Hebron.

-Support for elections and participation in them is higher in Hebron than in other areas.

Appendix

	Total	West Bank	Gaza
*Unemployment rate	38.0%	35.0%	43.0%
1. With regard to future Palestinian-Jordanian relations, I support the establishment of...			
a. two independent states	65.8%	62.3%	71.6%
b. complete unity between Palestine and Jordan.	15.4%	17.5%	12.0%
c. confederation between Palestine and Jordan.	13.9%	14.5%	12.9%
d. Other (specify)	04.9%	05.7%	03.5%
2. Given the political and economic circumstances here, and the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future?			
a. Optimistic	49.1%	46.0%	54.2%
b. Pessimistic	31.9%	34.9%	26.9%
c. Not Sure	19.0%	19.1%	18.9%
3. Do you support the continuation of the current peace negotiations between the PLO and Israel?			
a. Yes	66.6%	65.2%	69.0%
b. No	21.4%	22.2%	19.9%
c. No opinion	12.0%	12.6%	11.1%
4. With regard to armed attacks against Israeli targets, I...			
a. support them	32.5%	31.7%	33.8%
b. oppose them	43.5%	42.7%	44.7%
c. have no opinion	24.0%	25.6%	21.5%
5. With regard to the Israeli proposal to give the Palestinian Authority municipal and economic authority in Jenin (before the other areas of the West Bank) I...			
a. support it	32.4%	37.2%	24.5%
b. oppose it	52.0%	48.8%	57.4%
c. have no opinion	15.6%	14.0%	18.1%
6. Following the peace process and implementation of autonomy in Gaza and Jericho, my economic situation and standard of living has...			
a. improved	08.4%	03.9%	15.7%
b. worsened	52.7%	52.0%	53.8%
c. stayed the same	36.4%	41.8%	27.5%
d. don't know	02.5%	02.3%	03.0%
7. What is your evaluation of the performance of the Palestinian National Authority?			
a. Excellent	14.0%	11.8%	17.6%
b. Good	23.2%	23.6%	22.4%
c. Fair (see note p.17)	29.5%	26.9%	33.7%
d. Weak	09.1%	09.3%	08.8%
e. Bad	08.3%	07.3%	09.9%
f. Don't Know	15.9%	21.1%	07.6%
8. If an independent election to choose the president of the Palestinian Authority takes place and the following nominate themselves, you will choose:			
a. Ahmed Yassin	13.5%	14.0%	12.7%
b. Yassir Arafat	56.5%	54.6%	59.7%
c. Hayder Abdel Shafi	07.6%	07.8%	07.2%
d. George Habash	03.2%	02.5%	04.2%

e. Other (Specify)	19.2%	21.1%	16.2%
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9. In your opinion, the best way to choose the members of the "Palestinian Council" of the Palestinian Interim Self-Governing Authority is...

a. Appointment by PLO leadership	14.0%	12.4%	16.6%
b. Appointment by political groups	05.6%	05.0%	06.5%

on a quota basis.

c. Political Elections 75.4% 77.6% 71.8% d. Other 05.0% 05.0% 05.1%

10. Will you participate in general political elections to choose the members of the PISGA Council?

a. Yes	74.1%	77.4%	68.8%
b. No	14.1%	14.1%	14.1%
c. Not sure	11.8%	08.5%	17.1%

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

a. DFLP	01.6%	02.3%	00.5%
b. PPP	00.7%	00.8%	00.7%
c. Fateh	49.5%	47.3%	52.9%
d. PFLP	03.6%	02.5%	05.3%
e. Hamas	12.4%	11.1%	14.5%
f. Fedai	00.3%	00.4%	00.2%
g. Islamic Jihad	02.1%	02.8%	00.9%
h. Islamic independents	02.4%	03.0%	01.4%
i. Nationalist independents	04.4%	06.0%	01.8%
j. Other (specify)	10.0%	10.4%	09.2%
k. None of the above	13.0%	13.4%	12.6%