PUBLIC PROTESTS AGAINST CENTRAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ISRAEL, 1950–1979

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THE veritable eruption of public protests among western democracies after the Second World War was soon followed by a spate of studies which attempted to analyse the phenomenon. Many of those works were cross-national in character,[1] while others concentrated on specific regions or societies.[2] A wide range of factors were adduced and/or tested as explanatory variables, such as economic indicators[3] and political conditions,[4] as well as aspects of crowd behaviour and personality types.[5]

However, in spite of the growing interest in centre/periphery and federal/state relations, to the best of my knowledge no one has yet considered the public protest issue from the perspective of political geography — the *location* of such events on the one hand, and on the other the *level of political authority* at which protest is directed. Such a study might yield useful results. First, it might indicate the relative political strength (or at least the public's perception of it) of the centre and of the periphery. Indeed, if analysed over a long enough period of time, the data could indicate whether any *change* in the (perceived) relative balance of power had taken place. Second, the morphology of protest events could be determined more accurately to reveal any differences in *intensity*, in *organizational* origin, or in types of *issue* between local and central protests.

The State of Israel provides a perfect setting for such an exploratory inquiry. Its existence for a little more than 30 years offers an extended yet manageable time frame. It is a geographically small country with a national press (there are no serious local daily newspapers), so that reportage of events in large cities, towns, and rural areas is both all-inclusive and homogeneous within each newspaper. The country's citizens are highly politicized: official voter participation in national elections consistently hovers around 80 per cent; in reality, this amounts to a 90 per cent turn-out of those physically able to vote.[6] They have no compunctions about demonstrating their dissatisfaction

on issues large or small. And of perhaps greatest interest, while Israel's constitutional/electoral structure is unitary (proportional representation in state elections with the entire country serving as a single district), various signs of greater regionalization have been in evidence over the past decade or two. Although far from federal in character, Israel seems to be moving in the direction of 'territorial democracy', according to Elazar.[7] To discover whether this trend is reflected in the public's extra-parliamentary activity is one of the central goals of the present study.

Methodology

The source for this study's data is *The Jerusalem Post*, with the Hebrew language daily *Ha-aretz* reviewed randomly for comparative control purposes; virtually no differences were found in their reporting, with regard to both the number of events and internal variables. All forms of public protest were included: indoor and outdoor demonstrations, *politically* oriented strikes, and other miscellaneous forms (office sit-ins, hunger strikes, building squattings, etc.) — as long as a minimum number of ten adults was involved.[8] Jewish protests in the captured territories were included, as were all Arab protests within the pre-1967 borders; Israeli citizenship was the criterion here, but the rare tourist or 'other resident' group protest within these borders was also included.[9]

Each public protest was scored for a number of variables. The relevant categories for this study are:

1. LOCATION

   City. The three major cities: Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Haifa.

   Town. All other smaller towns and municipalities.

   Rural. Villages, co-operative settlements, collectives, and non-residential areas.

2. LEVEL OF GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY against which the protest was directed

   Central. Including those institutions run, controlled, or strongly supervised by the Government (for example, Social Security, television, the Electric Corporation, etc.).

   Local.[10]

   Other. Other governments, external organizations (for example, the U.N., foreign embassies).

3. SIZE of the protest

   Small. 10 to 99.

   Medium. 100 to 999.

   Large. 1,000 to 9,999.

   Mass. 10,000+.

4. INTENSITY

   Peaceful, disruptive/obstructive, violence against property or people, general riot.

5. DURATION

   Up to 3 hours, 3–24 hours, over a day, dispersed by police.

6. ORGANIZATION

   Ad hoc, formal pressure group, political party.

7. ISSUE

   Political. Defence, settlements, elections.

   Economic. Inflation, unemployment, etc.

   Religious. Sabbath desecration, autopsies, abortions.

   Social. Discrimination, education, housing, etc.

The data were aggregated on an annual basis and then per decade in order to discover possible trends and to compare periods.

Findings and Discussion

As can be seen from Table 1, Israeli public protest frequency rose dramatically from an average of 43 protests per year in the 1960s to an average of 127 in the 1970s. In fact, 1979 was marked by an astounding 241 demonstrations! There are a number of reasons for this, as discussed elsewhere.[11] Briefly, one can enumerate the following few factors as being of some significance: feelings of relative economic deprivation among certain sectors, spiralling inflation, the breakdown of a national consensus on matters pertaining to national security, and the expansion of television audiences. With the exception of television, these social, political, and economic factors are all related to government policy. As the present article attempts to show, there is also a significant institutional/structural element underlying Israel's protest phenomenon.

The first interesting specific finding is the relative geographical consistency of public protest in Israel over the thirty years studied (Table 1). While there are some large year-to-year fluctuations in relative percentage (between the three 'location' categories), there is no outstanding trend over the long term for any of these three loci. In each decade, approximately 70 per cent of all protests occurred in the large

cities, about 20 per cent in the medium-sized towns, and less than 10 per cent in the rural areas. Indeed, the only long-term trend that can be ascertained over the thirty-year period is in the countryside, with a small but relatively steady proportional rise in protest occurring away from the cities and the towns.

TABLE I. *Location of Protest*

Decade	Annual Average No.	Large Cities Annual Average		Towns Annual Average		Rural Annual Average	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1950s	40.0	28.3	70.8	9.1	22.7	2.6	6.5
1960s	43.1	29.4	68.2	10.5	24.4	3.2	7.4
1970s	126.8	90.4	71.3	23.9	18.8	12.5	9.9

There are probably three reasons for this latter tendency. First, Israeli Arabs (who overwhelmingly live in rural areas) started to mimic Jewish protesters, beginning after the lifting of military government rule in the mid-1960s and gathering force with the increased expropriation of Arab land in the mid-1970s. In the 15 years from 1950 to 1965, there were 27 Arab protests; in the 10 years from 1966 to 1975, there were 23; in the four years from 1976 to 1979 there were 49! Second, after Israel's 1967 conquest of the 'territories', Jewish ultra-nationalists began to unilaterally 'settle' these areas as a means of protesting against government procrastination, resulting in an increase of the number of such events in the rural category.

Various cross-tabulations bear this out. Whereas only 7.7 per cent of all rural protest in the 1950s involved 'political' issues, and 15.6 per cent in the 1960s, by the third decade 'political'-issue protests constituted 45.6 per cent of all such rural events; the respective percentages for the large cities are 15.6, 35.5, and 32.1; and for the towns, 11.0, 20.0, and 21.5. By contrast, 'economic' protests in rural Israel dropped over the three decades from 50 per cent to 28.1 per cent to 6.4 per cent in 1979! Economic protests in all locations declined over the years, but much less steeply as a whole: from 37.8 per cent in the 1950s to 14.0 per cent in the 1970s. In addition, rural protests increased in size through the years: 3.8 per cent to 6.3 per cent to 16.8 per cent of rural protests in the respective decades involved more than a thousand participants; in the towns, the percentages were 6.6, 12.4, and 16.6; the major cities actually registered a 'large'-protest proportional decline in the 1970s from 21.5 to 17.9 per cent. Indeed, the 1970s proportion of rural protest with more than one thousand participants — one out of every six such events — is quite remarkable, since in Israel a rural area by definition has a maximum of only five thousand residents. And

although the general rule is, the larger the protest the shorter its duration, rural protests exhibited a steady rise in length over the three decades — from 34.6 to 43.7 to 58.4 per cent of all such protests lasted for more than three hours. Protests in smaller towns increased in duration only from the 1960s to the 1970s: 34.4 to 51.6 per cent, while demonstrations in the large cities remained short-lived. As for the fourth variable — intensity — no trend unique to a specific area could be found. Protest in Israel has been steadily becoming more peaceful over all three decades in all three locations; by the 1970s, only one out of every ten protests involved any violence.

Another factor which explains the rural trend is the advent of television in 1968 as a 'facilitator' of isolated protests.[12] Without television, many of these demonstrations would hardly impinge upon the nation's consciousness; its increasingly sophisticated use, especially by the ultra-nationalist groups, enabled them to choose a protest venue which would have been worthless (from a public communications stand-point) before 1968. Indeed, while only 17 per cent of all 'rural' protests before 1968 were led by a formal organization (15 per cent interest groups and 2 per cent political parties), with the advent of television in Israel such groups were behind almost half of all the rural protests (45 per cent interest groups and 4 per cent political parties — a proportion of organized protest higher than the percentage of *all* organized protest). This trend towards greater rural protest organization also explains why such protests became increasingly larger and longer: many of them were no longer ad hoc spontaneous eruptions of the local populations, but were exported from the centre to the periphery by organized groups who could rely on their message being transmitted back to the centre.[13]

Nevertheless, the rural trend is still decidedly secondary and should not blur the remarkable consistency of Israeli protest location. Such consistency is all the more remarkable given the city-town-rural population changes which Israel has undergone over the thirty-year period. Table 2 illustrates this clearly.

TABLE 2. *Jewish Population Dispersal: 1950–1978**

	1950		1965		1978	
	Thousands	%	Thousands	%	Thousands	%
Cities	585	50.3	789	30.4	850†	23.4
Towns	353	30.4	1338	51.5	2268	62.5
Rural	224	19.3	472	18.1	513	14.1
Total	1162	100.0	2599	100.0	3631	100.0

*Source: *Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1950–51*: pp. 8, 9; tables 6 & 7; *1966*: pp. 29, 35; tables B/8 & B/11; *1980*: p. 50; table II/4. Jewish population only. Non-Jewish figures not available by area.

†Does not include Arabs of East Jerusalem since Arab protests in East Jerusalem were not tallied.

Whereas in 1950 half the total (50.3 per cent) Jewish population of Israel lived in the three large cities — Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem — by 1978 less than a quarter (23.4 per cent) did so. The smaller towns meanwhile more than doubled their relative strength over the same period, from 30.4 to 62.5 per cent. The rural component has been marked by a mild but steady proportional decline. In view of such a massive demographic shift, the consistency of protest locale is anything but a continuation of the status quo. Despite the much larger amount of people who now live in smaller towns, in contrast to 1950, protest still occurs preponderantly in the large cities. This is not a matter of innate conservatism (the demographic shift belies such an evaluation), but rather does tend to reinforce the point made earlier — *Israeli protest has become a highly mobile phenomenon with large numbers of protesters carefully choosing their venue* in order to maximize the impact of their demonstrations. In some cases, as we saw, this involves protest away from 'civilization', while in far more cases it entails being drawn to the political and media magnet of the central cities, especially Jerusalem as the capital and Tel Aviv as the commercial and international communications centre. In short, the data suggest that protest is far from being anomic, mindless, or haphazard; many protesters gravitate to where they believe their demonstrations will be most seen, heard, and/or responded to.

To whom are protests addressed? Table 3 shows that whereas the *location* of Israeli protest has remained constant despite the population shifts, the *level of authority* at which protests are directed has altered considerably. When taking all protests into account (including the irrelevant 'other' category — for example, against foreign governments), we can see that the central government has come under increasing attack over the years — 40 per cent of all protests in the 1950s, 52.9 per cent in the 1960s, 58.3 per cent in the 1970s (and 62.7 per cent for the years after the Yom Kippur War: 1974–79). Concomitantly, the decade of the 1960s was marked by a very sharp drop in protests against local authorities from 50.8 per cent in the 1950s to 30.8 per cent, although no further appreciable decline occurred in the 1970s. Much the same holds true when the 'other' category is eliminated (Table 4).[14]

TABLE 3. *Protests Against Central and Local Authorities*

Decade	Total Annual Average No.	Central Auth. Annual Average		Local Auth. Annual Average		Other Annual Average	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1950s	40.0	16.0	40.0	20.3	50.8	3.7	9.3
1960s	43.1	22.8	52.9	13.3	30.8	7.0	16.2
1970s	126.8	74.1	58.3	39.5	31.2	13.2	10.4

TABLE 4. *Central and Local Protests*

	Central		Local		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No. (without 'Other')
1950s	160	44.0	203	56.0	363.0
1960s	228	63.2	133	36.8	361.0
1970s	741	65.2	395	34.8	1136.0

We turn now to the central question posed by this study: does the political geography of public protest in Israel support the thesis of 'democratic territorialism', of political decentralization? Is Elazar correct in asserting that: 'Today, the well-nigh inevitable movement toward greater emphasis on territorial democracy is making itself felt at the local level . . .'?[15]

On the face of it, the data here undercut and perhaps even contradict Elazar's argument. If power has shifted to the local authorities, one would then expect the citizens' dissatisfaction to be manifested in greater protest addressed to the local government which now is 'to blame' for local problems. But as has already been shown, quite the reverse has taken place — the relative proportion of protest addressed to local authorities has decreased since the 1950s, and this despite a massive transfer of the population away from the three largest cities, where the central government's offices and institutions make convenient targets.

Yet paradoxically, *such a decrease in protest levelled at local government is a sign of its greater — not lesser — power.* Protest, after all, is a result of systemic dysfunctionality. Lack of protest, conversely, can be taken to mean that the system is working the way it should — or, in the case of reduced protest, that the public is less dissatisfied. If so, the drop in local protest may reflect an increase in local government power and the relatively satisfactory way in which it is being used. Elazar has considered this possibility, and the reasons behind it.

One of the central factors involved here is the process of political differentiation which began in the 1960s and gathered force through the 1970s. This can be seen both on the plane of an informal institutional transfer of power from central to local government, and in the electoral selection by the voters of local candidates and lists which have little connection with the central parties and their politics. Such phenomena manifested themselves in a number of ways.

Institutionally, as Elazar notes, it is 'at the local level that the most innovative developments are taking place and local governments are far more advanced than the government of the state in institutionalizing the new democratic republicanism of Israel'.[16] One of these

innovations is the 'local committee', which originated in the polis-like moshavim and kibbutzim, and has now been extended to unincorporated urban settlements within the more densely populated regional councils — 'the Israeli version of the town meeting principle [projected] in new directions'.[17] A further institutional development, albeit quite recent (1978), is the direct election of the mayor — the *only* direct elections in effect in Israel today at any political level — forging a closer direct link between the local administration and its constituency.[18]

The institutionalization of direct mayoral elections is but the natural continuation of several electoral trends evident over the last two decades. Ticket-splitting between the central and local parties has become an accepted, if not yet dominant, phenomenon — increasing in strength throughout the 1960s and 1970s.[19] This is a mark of the Israeli voters' greater sophistication and concern about local matters, as they vote into office (and keep a close watch on) local officials whose chief concern is the resolution of local problems and whose political future is dependent upon their municipal success, regardless of the vagaries of their central parties' fortunes.

Indeed, quite a number of localities have gone so far in this central-local separation that they have voted into office independent local party (non-affiliated) lists. As Elazar notes, 'the more successful ones present themselves as "good government" lists, designed to appeal to the voters on the basis of their ability to improve local programs and services (usually by taking a non-partisan stance vis-à-vis the national parties)'.[20] Not only are comparatively new towns such as Arad being swept by this tide of local non-partisanship,[21] but even Jerusalem's mayor decided to cut the umbilical cord in the 1978 municipal elections, winning a resounding victory over the candidate of the Likud, the party which one year earlier had been triumphant in the general elections.

The very names of these lists aptly illustrate their novel (for Israel) approach to decentralized politics: Nahariyah: 'We Care'; Rishon Le-Zion: 'For Rishon Le-Zion'; and Kiryat Ono: 'Our City'. This is not a matter of parochial chauvinism; allegiance to the State still carries greater weight for the vast majority of Israel's citizens. Rather, it is a matter of more mundane concerns: 'The residents of these communities are oriented toward the separation of local government from the larger political arena, because they perceive local government as a means for providing appropriate services administered efficiently.'[22]

The number of local authorities headed by local list candidates has increased steadily over the last three municipal elections, to the extent that after 1978 such lists ruled over a population sector larger than even that of the Likud (see Table 5)![23] And insofar as the number of local authorities captured by the independent local lists is concerned, the

increase by two thirds, from 12 to 20 per cent, is substantial here as well, albeit not as huge as the population figures. And the extent of such a local take-over is even more widespread than the numbers would indicate, since as a rule numerous local lists win under the aegis of central parties:[24]

> Even where attempts were made to send political veterans into new towns to assume positions of responsibility in the early days of their development, such people were soon overwhelmed by the rise of local leaders who were able to move ahead simply by virtue of their being who they were, vis-à-vis their reference groups, where they were. Ultimately, the parties had to accommodate them and seek to co-opt them, making certain necessary conditions in the process. Not the least of these concessions was an almost total ignoring of ideology in the recruitment of new local leadership.

All these phenomena, then — new local administrative systems, direct mayoral elections, ticket-splitting, independent local lists, and dichotomization of the central parties into two levels of functionaries — point in the same direction. Local government which used to be the political Cinderella of national politics[25] has come into its own, and with the rise of political power has forged closer links with its local constituency. Even this may be understating the case; in many respects it is the local citizens who have taken over their government. They now not only hold their local officials accountable for nitty-gritty performance, but also have involved themselves (through various local councils and committees) in the actual decision-making and governing processes. In short, the local government's 'powers are actually being diffused among an increasingly wide variety of committees, most of which join the elected members of the council with a certain number of private citizens appointed to represent the various local interests, and some of which are entirely citizen bodies.'[26]

TABLE 5.   *Distribution of Party Control: 1973 and 1978*

Party	Total Heads of Local Authorities		Total Population	
	1973 %	1978 %	1973	1978
Labour Alignment	61	38	1,560,785	1,217,910
Likud	14	25	741,200	781,350
National Religious Front (Aguda and National Religious Party)	—	3	—	32,320
National Religious Party	4	6	49,900	43,410
Aguda	2	1	85,900	12,600
Democratic Movement for Change	—	1	—	49,700
Unopposed Lists	4	5	1,265	2,168
Local Lists	12	20	147,090	805,910

SOURCE: The Institute of Local Government, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, Israel.

In such a situation — where ideology no longer holds sway, where formerly excluded groups are now recruited or even force themselves into the system, and where political responsiveness is expedited as a result of rulers and ruled understanding and communicating with each other as a matter of course — it is little wonder that political protest against local authorities should decline. The important question which affects such protest is not so much about who wields political power, but whether the power which each authority has is being used in the proper manner. There have been changes in both the structure and the staff of local government in Israel over the last few years to take account of the needs and desires of its electorate; this has led to a reduction of overt extra-systemic political behaviour. On the other hand, the central government has undergone no comparable overhaul (especially on the structural plane), with the result that it has had to face increasing protests directed against it — despite the fact that it has transferred some of its powers to other levels of the administration.

The data with regard to 'level of authority', coupled with 'location', provide graphic evidence of the adaptability of local government — especially the towns and rural areas which have local systems and structures newer than those of the large cities. As can be seen from Table 6, the proportion of rural protests addressed to the local authorities dropped very steeply from an average of 61.5 per cent in the 1950s to an average of 9.6 per cent in the 1970s; there was even a drop in absolute numbers, from 16 to 12. There was also a decline in the smaller towns, but it was more moderate: from 64.8 per cent in the 1950s to 48.3 per cent in the 1970s.

The three large cities, however, show a different pattern — and present serious problems of analysis: while in the 1960s there was a sharp drop in the proportion of protests addressed to the municipalities (from 45 per cent in the 1950s to 23.5 per cent in the 1960s), such protests rose to 29.4 per cent in the 1970s. This suggests that the older cities may not have succeeded during the last decade in improving their local political machinery in order to satisfy their constituents' desires and demands. Nevertheless, in this respect, the cities in the 1970s were still faring better than the small towns: the latter's protests to their local authorities amounted to 48.3 per cent. On the other hand, that proportion was an improvement on the 1960s percentage (54.3), which in turn was an improvement on the 1950s (64.8 per cent) in the small towns. The large cities naturally attract many centrally-addressed protests (in Jerusalem, for example, in front of the Knesset or of the Prime Minister's Office), thereby significantly reducing the relative *proportion* of city 'local' protest. How, then to control for this factor?

One possible way is to compare the difference in relative percentage of city/'local' and town/'local' protest over the three decades. As Table

TABLE 6. *Location/Level of Government Protest: 1950–1979*

	Local		Central		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1950s						
Cities	127	45.0	122	43.3	33	11.7
Towns	59	64.8	28	30.8	4	4.4
Rural Areas	16	61.5	10	38.5	0	0
1960s						
Cities	69	23.5	162	55.3	62	21.2
Towns	57	54.3	41	39.0	7	6.7
Rural Areas	5	15.6	26	81.3	1	3.1
1970s						
Cities	266	29.4	516	57.1	122	13.5
Towns	117	48.3	115	47.5	20	4.1
Rural Areas	12	9.6	111	88.8	2	1.6

6 shows, the results for both categories are identical — a decline of 16 per cent from the 1950s to the 1970s (45 to 29.4 per cent for city/'local'; and 64.8 to 48.3 per cent for town/'local') — indicating perhaps that they have been equally successful in institutionally responding to their constituents' formal demands. Yet this 'proportional' comparison is somewhat misleading, since it does not control for population changes within each category. As Table 2 shows, the large cities registered a 45 per cent increase in population between 1950 and 1978, while over the same period the population of the smaller towns increased more than *sixfold*! From this perspective the doubling of city/'local' protests over the three decades (127 to 266) ran somewhat ahead of urban population growth, whereas the doubling of town/'local' protest (59 to 117) was *well behind* its population growth. This suggests that in the final analysis the towns' local administrations, by providing new channels for political communication, did better than their city counterparts in adapting, and responding, to constituents' needs. Nevertheless, the fact remains that as a whole, local government in Israel appears to have been more successful than the central administration.

This is especially so when one considers perhaps the largest single source of protest in Israel over the years — the 'communal' problem. The *Edot Ha-mizrach* (Jews from Arab countries) have felt discriminated against since their mass immigration in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Most of the protests in the 1950s broke out in their 'temporary' camps on issues of work and pay.[27] Two of the most violent demonstrations Israel has ever witnessed were *Edot Ha-mizrach* eruptions: Wadi Salib in 1959,

and the Black Panthers in 1971. Indeed, since 'economic' and 'social' issues account for about 60 per cent of all Israeli protests, and Oriental Jews are to be found quite disproportionately at the lower end of the socio-economic ladder, it is likely that overall this group (now a majority of Israel's Jewish population) is involved in a sizeable portion of the country's protests.[28]

How have Oriental Jews fared on the political plane? At the level of national politics, quite poorly so far. In the 1981 general elections to the tenth Knesset, the Labour Alignment placed 13 *Edot Ha-mizrach* candidates among its top 50 seats (the relatively safe slots), while the Likud (which derives most of its support from Oriental Jews) placed a mere nine in the top 50![29] In the case of local politics, however, the picture is dramatically different: more than half of Israel's local government officials are Jews of Afro-Asian origin, and the numbers are even higher in the newer towns and municipalities.[30] Thus, here is yet another (very significant) factor dampening protest against the local authorities, as the groups with the most reason to feel deprived have attained true representation at least at that level of government. It may even be that the lack of any comparable achievement at the national level is but another factor behind the continuing rise of protest addressed to the central authorities.

Conclusion

The general picture emerging from the Israeli data is one of increasing protest mobility and differentiated focus. The *location* of protests, while apparently remaining stationary (in relative terms) over the years, is in fact quite the opposite when the massive demographic shifts are taken into account. Simply put, huge numbers of Israelis have now settled in smaller towns, but when they feel the need to express their grievances collectively, many return to demonstrate in their original 'nest' — the large cities. Others, post-1948 immigrants who moved from rural *ma'abarot* (transit camps) to these towns, seem to have followed suit.

The data also show that public protests in Israel have been increasingly directed at the *level of authority* of the central government, while local authorities appear to arouse considerably less public discontent. This latter phenomenon is especially important, with real public policy significance.

The message of the Israeli public to its government is clear, and it is at least as old as Burke's comment in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790): 'A state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation.' Calls for various forms of systemic change at the central level of government have been made since the mid-1960s, but to little avail. Whereas the reforms and new institutions at the local

level have led to greater governmental adaptability and responsiveness, the lack of any move towards 'territorialism' at the central level has merely led to greater public dissatisfaction with the central governance of the State.[31]

In a December 1981 public opinion poll on political protest, half the respondents (49.7 per cent) chose the answer 'There aren't enough other ways to express oneself to the authorities' in reply to a question on the reason for the high level of public protest.[32] While no distinction was made in the question between the local and central levels of government, one can assume that in the light of the increasing protests made to the central authorities, most respondents had the latter in mind. Altogether, then, the overall evidence points in but one direction: only greater central government responsiveness and institutional change can begin to stem the rising tide of public protest addressed to the central powers-that-be.

NOTES

[1] Ivo K. and Rosalind L. Feierabend, 'Aggressive Behaviors Within Polities, 1948–1962; A Cross National Study', *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. x, no. 3, September 1966, pp. 249–71; Ted R. Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, Princeton, N.J., 1970; Charles L. Taylor and Michael C. Hudson, *World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators*, 2nd edn, New Haven, Ct., 1972; R. J. Rummel, 'Dimensions of Conflict Behavior Within Nations, 1946–59', *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. x, no. 1, March 1966, pp. 65–73; and Samuel H. Barnes, Max Kaase, *et al.*, *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*, Beverly Hills, Ca., 1979.

[2] Douglas Bwy, 'Dimensions of Social Conflict in Latin America', in James C. Davies, ed., *When Men Revolt and Why*, New York, 1971, pp. 274–91; Abraham H. Miller *et al.*, 'The J-Curve Theory and the Black Urban Riots: An Empirical Test of Progressive Relative Deprivation Theory', *American Political Science Review*, vol. LXXI, no. 3, September 1977, pp. 964–82; Eva Etzioni-Halevy, 'Protest Politics in the Israeli Democracy', *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 90, no. 3, Fall 1975, pp. 497–520; and Ann Ruth Wilner, 'Public Protest in Indonesia', in I. K. and R. L. Feierabend and Ted Gurr, eds., *Anger, Violence, and Politics: Theories and Research*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972, pp. 352–58.

[3] See especially Miller *et al.*, op. cit.; Alexis De Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, Stuart Gilbert trans., Garden City, N.Y., 1955; James C. Davies, 'Toward a Theory of Revolution', *American Sociological Review*, vol. 27, no. 1, February 1962, pp. 5–19; and Mancur Olson, Jr, 'Rapid Growth as a Destabilizing Force', *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 23, no. 4, December 1963, pp. 529–62.

[4] Robert A. Dahl, *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies*, New Haven, Ct., 1966; Taylor and Hudson, op. cit.; Michael C. Hudson, 'Political Protest and Power Transfers in Crisis Periods', *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 4, no. 3, October 1971, pp. 259–94; and S. Sundaram, *Vote and Violence*, Rajghat, Varanasi, 1974.

[5] Gurr, op. cit.; George Rudé, *The Crowd in History, 1730–1848*, New York, 1964; and Harold D. Lasswell, *Psycho-Pathology and Politics*, New York, 1960.

[6] Since Israel does not allow absentee balloting for overseas citizens, and yet does not remove from the electoral rolls those citizens who have permanently left the country (*yordim* in the Hebrew vernacular, who are believed to constitute approximately 10 per cent of Israel's entire population), voter participation in effect is about 90 per cent. The June 1981 elections had an official rate of 77 per cent, but that relatively low percentage is a result of well over 100,000 Israelis vacationing overseas. Elections in Israel are usually held in the autumn.

[7] Daniel J. Elazar, *Israel: From Ideological to Territorial Democracy*, Jerusalem Institute for Federal Studies, 1978.

[8] The number 10 was chosen for several reasons: anything below that threshold may not have significant public impact; newspapers do not always report instances of such events when only a handful of participants are involved; and ten adults (men) are considered to be a group in Jewish religion: a *minyan*.

[9] The following were *not* included: election rallies and other events which are traditionally part of the formal political process, unless they involved a breach of the peace, violence, etc.; all forms of protest against an employer on the issues of wages, working conditions, etc., *unless* the protest was clearly directed at government economic policy; regular conferences, conventions, etc., which issued protest resolutions as part of their proceedings; and political pressure which did not entail the physical presence of a group of people (for example, telephone and postal campaigns or petitions).

[10] In Israel, it is not at all easy to differentiate between the central political authority and local government since there is some jurisdictional overlap. A good example is education: the central government provides most of the money, while the local authority is in charge of registration, school supplies, etc. In such cases, every effort was made to discover the exact nature of the grievance and where the authority lay for its satisfaction. In the few cases where this was impossible, the 'addressee' was scored 'central government', since it has the ultimate authority in almost every sphere in the final analysis.

[11] See my 'Political Protest and Systemic Stability in Israel: 1960–1979', in Sam N. Lehman-Wilzig and Bernard Susser, eds., *Comparative Jewish Politics: Public Life in Israel and the Diaspora*, Ramat Gan, 1981, pp. 171–210. This initial article also presents a relatively complete methodological and statistical introduction to the Israeli protest phenomenon.

[12] Ted Gurr considers this medium to be part of the 'facilitation' process which enhances feelings of relative deprivation; see his 'Causal Model of Civil Strife: A Comparative Analysis Using New Indices', *American Political Science Review*, vol. LXII, no. 4, December 1968, p. 1121. Norman F. Cantor in *The Age of Protest*, London, 1970, p. 326, notes how TV facilitates protest in a direct manner. For the precisely parallel phenomenon in Israel, see Ernie Meyer, 'Parents Can Be Unreasonable At Times', *The Jerusalem Post*, 10 September 1975, p. 2.

[13] The increasing 'ruralization' of Israel protest has become even more marked since the 1973 Yom Kippur War. From 1974 to 1979, rural protests accounted for 12 per cent of all such events, almost double the percentage for the 1950s. Instead of being 'nodal' (a few highly concentrated centres), protest is now 'matrixal' — a greater number of nodes (albeit each relatively smaller) spread throughout the country. This enables the protester to go more easily straight to the site of contention (for example, pollution of the Kinneret, settlement in the administered territories), thereby providing a more interesting visual 'story' for television. Indeed, even the small size of the television screen has an effect, since it enables comparatively small groups to appear formidable — assuming that the news editor wants to make them look so, as is usually the case with the need for 'enhancement' of the news.

[14] Cross-tabulation of the other variables tested in relation to 'level of authority' yield a few noteworthy, if not major, results. Briefly, 'central' protests have become larger: in the 1950s, those with more than 1,000 participants accounted for 14.4 per cent; by the 1970s, the proportion was 21.5 per cent. 'Local' protests of that size grew only from 7.9 to 9.4 per cent in the same period. Moreover, 'central' protests are steadily becoming more organized, that is, they are increasingly initiated by some formal organization — from 38.7 per cent in the 1950s to 57.5 per cent in the 1970s, while 'local' protests exhibited in that respect a reverse trend: from 29.2 per cent in the 1950s to 26.8 per cent in the 1970s. However, 'local' protests have become longer: 35.6 per cent of those in the 1950s lasted more than three hours, while in the 1970s the proportion was 52.9 per cent. On the other hand, the duration of such 'central' protests dropped slightly from 39.4 per cent to 35.2 per cent. Both 'central' and 'local' protests have become more peaceful over the same period, although the former are still more non-violent (from 81.2 to 91.4 per cent) than the latter (78.2 to 82.7 per cent). Finally, 'bread and board' issues (economic and especially social problems) are constituting an ever larger share of locally addressed protest (79.3 per cent in the 1970s compared to 55.5 per cent for centrally addressed protest), while political protest is being increasingly directed at the central authorities (35.8 per cent of all such addressed protests were political in the 1970s, while political protest constituted only 2.5 per cent of all locally addressed protest).

[15] Elazar, *Israel: From Ideological to Territorial Democracy*, op. cit., p. 7.

[16] Ibid., p. 20.

[17] Ibid.

[18] It will be interesting to see in the coming years whether direct mayoral elections will have led to a further reduction in protest to the local authorities. In 1978, a local election year, there was a significant drop in this category (from 30 to a mere 18 per cent), but this may have been due to the heightened

sensitivity of the local administration in an election year; in 1979 there was a return to the 'traditional' proportion of 30 per cent.

[19] See Daniel J. Elazar, 'The Local Elections: Sharpening the Trend Toward Territorial Democracy', in Alan Arian, ed., *The Elections in Israel — 1973*, Jerusalem, 1975, pp. 226-27. Strictly speaking, that was the last campaign in which ticket-splitting was possible. Thereafter, the local elections were held one year after the general elections. There is now increasing pressure to revert to the previous system.

[20] Ibid., p. 227.

[21] Elazar, *From Ideological to Territorial Democracy*, op. cit., p. 21.

[22] Elazar, 'The Local Elections . . .', op. cit., p. 227.

[23] Only the Labour Alignment, with its entrenched local apparatus, governs over more people at the local level; but as Table 5 illustrates, its hold is weakening. From a population standpoint, only the nationally ruling Likud exhibited any other increase, and it was minuscule.

One point should be noted here with regard to the population figures especially. Almost half of the local lists' portion in 1978 can be attributed to Jerusalem, where Mayor Teddy Kollek ran on an independent list, despite his allegiance to the Labour Alignment, of which he continued to be a member. Thus the question of whether Jerusalem's huge population belongs in this 'independent' category is arguable. Nevertheless, even without Jerusalem's population, the increase in this category would be sizeable.

[24] Elazar, *From Ideological to Territorial Democracy*, op. cit., p. 9.

[25] For a trenchant contemporary analysis of the disastrous situation of local government in Israel in the 1950s, see Marver H. Bernstein, *The Politics of Israel*, Princeton, N.J., 1957: in chapter 12, entitled 'The Crisis in Local Government', he noted (p. 289) that 'candidates for local office have rarely been distinguished, and the standard of council members has been low. . . . Most local officials have cared little for local administration. They have neglected their responsibilities, but they have jealously retained their posts'.

[26] Elazar, *From Ideological to Territorial Democracy*, op. cit., p. 21.

[27] In this respect, Elazar is wrong in claiming that 'they had very low expectations regarding government services and even lower expectations regarding their ability to participate in or even influence the shape of government policies'. See his 'Israel's Compound Policy', in Howard R. Penniman, ed., *Israel at the Polls: The Knesset Elections of 1977*, Washington, D.C., 1979, p. 36. Not only do the yearly totals show a relatively high level of protest for these early years, but according to a public opinion poll taken in 1950, only among those who had recently immigrated could a majority be found (52 v. 42 per cent) in support of protest over the issue of unemployment; the overall population was only 37 per cent in favour, 56 per cent against: see *Protest over Unemployment*, The Institute for Applied Social Research, March 1950; the results were also reported in *The Jerusalem Post*, 25 May 1950, p. 2. Thus, the new immigrants clearly hoped that the government would take note of, and remedy, the grievances they voiced in their demonstrations; and therefore believed that they might influence policy.

There may be an additional reason why the percentage of protests against local government was high in the 1950s and decreased thereafter. Most of the new immigrants had quite rudimentary conceptions of political authority and

believed local officials to be the 'government', just as they had done for centuries in the Arab countries in which they had lived. Over the years, as their political sophistication grew in Israel, they saw that real political power lay in the central government and directed their protests to it.

[28] No precise numbers or percentages can be ascertained, since Israeli newspapers tend not to mention the communal origin of the protesters unless it is of direct relevance, as in the case of the Black Panthers. In addition, many protests are 'mixed'. See Elazar, ibid., p. 37, for a discussion of *Edot Ha-mizrach* protests.

[29] This poor representation is one of the reasons why a new communal party, Tami, was established immediately before the elections; it became the first purely communal party since 1951 to win any seats (three) in the Knesset.

[30] See Shevach Weiss, *Ha-shilton Ha-mkomi B'Yisrael* [Local Government in Israel], Tel Aviv, 1972, chapter 10; Elazar, 'Israel's Compound Policy', op. cit., p. 26; and Efraim Torgovnik and Shevach Weiss, 'Local Non-Party Political Organizations in Israel', *Western Political Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 2, June 1972, pp. 306, 317. This last study looks at the phenomenon of independent local lists from 1950 to 1959; see also pp. 318–20, where the authors point out that personal, ethnic, or community protest finds its formal outlet in Extra Party Alignment groups which can be viewed as a means for structuring and managing conflict.

[31] This general conclusion tends to substantiate Etzioni-Halevy's thesis, albeit in a way quite different from that of her analysis. She concludes: 'It seems that those who perceive this [political] establishment as being responsive, as well as those who perceive it as being unresponsive, can both develop a solid basis for their contentions, since the Israeli establishment has evolved typical patterns of action which include both responsiveness and rigidity.' ('Protest Politics in the Israeli Democracy', in *Political Science Quarterly*, op. cit., p. 519.) She ascribes this duality to the pattern of protest absorption by the authorities — symbolic flexibility and systemic rigidity. However, the present study suggests that such ambivalence is more in the nature of a dichotomy — between local government 'responsiveness' and central government 'unresponsiveness'.

[32] I commissioned the poll — conducted by Dr Mina Zemah/DAHAF — in the course of my research. In so far as this specific question is concerned, the respondents were offered six possible answers and were allowed to choose up to three (the average in fact was 2¼). Of the six, this answer received the greatest support (49.7 per cent); the second most popular response (42.2 per cent) was: 'Public protest is one of the few ways of achieving anything'.