Grass fire: outbreak of the social protest, its operation style and the results observed in the short term

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Abstract

In recent years we have witnessed outbreaks of social protests in the Middle East. A social justice protest of the middle class began in Tel Aviv in the summer of 2011, marked by a style and strategy of nonviolence. The protest grew and came to involve a socioeconomically weaker population. Another significant social protest in Israel occurred in 1971, in Jerusalem, led by the Israeli Black Panther group, who protested social deprivation. Both social protests were fueled by an outcry for social justice; both gained the public's attention, as well as a response from the government. In this article, I will compare different dimensions of these two protest cycles using the methodology of Historical Comparative Analysis. I found that both protests were able to raise public awareness of the issues and their agenda for change. I further found that the Black Panther protest created significant change in social policy that lasted approximately twenty years. On the other hand, the 2011 social justice protest did not gain significant results in welfare policy in the short term.

Keywords

Protest, Social Protest, Social Justice, Social Change, Welfare Policy, Social Movements, Social Deprivation

1. Theoretical Framework

Protest involves resistance. "Social protest is defined as contentious action undertaken collectively in response to perceived injustice or unfair action on the part of those who hold legitimate political and economic power" (Tilly, 2001, p. 14397). The terms "protest movement" and "social movement" are difficult to define because of the diversity of structures and goals of the activities of such movements. Indeed, in the literature, these two terms have sometimes been used interchangeably. For example, in a book by Jenkins and Klandermans (1995), which contains a chapter entitled "The Politics of Protest Movements," the authors prefer to define "social movements" (p. 5) and not social protests., Yet protest initiatives can nonetheless be classified into several types (Crossley, 2002). A social movement can be an outcome of the dynamics of protest,

and can emerge as a result of organized collective action (Tarrow, 1998). Different terms have also been used in reference to the dynamics of social protest in research on anti-establishment political behavior. These terms include "challenging groups" and "interest groups," as well as "protest groups," the term typically used by political scientists (Alimi, 2008). In addition, some scholars have referred to the collective organization demanding change as a "protest cycle" (Tarrow, 1989, p. 9). In this article, I will refer to protest activists and their leaders as a "protest group," with emphasis on the protest cycle component of their organizations, and its achievements.

Protest groups emerge out of the structural and organizational reality of a society and its economy on the one hand, and in the social-psychological context of its citizens on the other (Jenkins, 1983, 2005; Piven & Cloward, 1977). Protest activities are defined as "the use of disruptive collective action aimed at institutions, elites,

authorities, or other groups, on behalf of the collective goals of the actors or of those they claim to represent" (Tarrow, 1989, p. 8). Political protest is "an expression of criticism or lack of confidence by individuals and groups about the government, its institutions, or the policies it adopts (Dahan-Kalev, 2006). Social protest is an activity in which organized groups of citizens attempt to achieve a goal, mobilize resources, and implement strategies for the purpose of enacting change in their social, political, and economic circumstances (Biddix & Park, 2008).

Social protest may be expressed in various ways: sending letters; publishing pamphlets; organizing sit-ins, hunger strikes, or other demonstrations; holding banners and placards; and even engaging in acts of violence such as burning tires, blocking roads, lock-in protests, or property damage (Dahan-Kalev, 2006). Numerous studies on the organization of protest movements have shown that media networks play an important role in recruiting people to participate in the protest activities of their cohorts. Sometimes protests begin spontaneously, and develop the political slogans to support their activities at a later stage (Gamson, 1995).

1.1. The Growth of Protest Movements

In this section, I will attempt to identify how protest movements succeed in growing from a protest of individuals to a collective movement, that is, how they succeed in organizing a significant mass that can make waves in the media and eventually lead to social change. The following are three main elements of the process.

Identifying a personal problem as a collective problem. This entails causing a sense of personal frustration and distress to be perceived as a common problem shared by a large number of citizens. The goal is for the problem to be placed on the national agenda. In order to turn personal distress into collective action, it is necessary to recruit many citizens and build an organizational infrastructure and leadership (Coleman, 1990; Zuckerman-Bareli & Benski, 1989).

Reinterpreting the social situation as unjust. This involves raising public awareness of the injustice of government policies, and releasing information that will change perceptions of norms that are supported by the government. This process includes the redefinition of expectations from the government, and a belief in the power of citizens to change an unjust situation (Zuckerman-Bareli & Benski, 1989).

Building organizations. This involves the acquisition of resources, recruitment of members, and the establishment of means and methods of operation, communication, and media work, as well as strategies of action and regulations (Jenkins, 1983; Zuckerman-Bareli and Benski, 1989). Piven and Cloward (1977), however, argue that the protest movement must be capable of disruption, even in the absence of highly developed organizational capacities.

1.2. The Style of Protest

Protests can take different forms and adopt various strategies. One type of protest seeks to change policies that protestors perceive as incorrect or as conflicting with the public interest. These protests are waged by critics of the government, who believe that government policies are inequitable, and demand that alternative policies be adopted. The success of these protests derives from the fact that the protestors usually come from the socioeconomically stronger sectors of society. As a result of their economic and social advantages, they are able to effect change through non-revolutionary, nonviolent strategies. Another type of protest is directed at the establishment on behalf of a segment of the public who argue that government policy is discriminatory and unjust. These protests are waged by people who perceive themselves as deprived and inferior in status. This type of protest is usually waged by marginal populations who have a relatively poor capacity to organize as well as little accessibility to sources of power (Dahan-Kalev, 2006).

The distinction between a violent protest and nonviolent, peaceful resistance is complex and difficult to define (Trudy, 2008). However, the literature presents a range of protest strategies that use different degrees of violence. The following are two approaches that represent opposite extremes of the continuum.

The "social action" (or direct action) approach was developed by Saul Alinsky (1971). He wrote *Rules for Radicals* as a guide for future community organizers to use in uniting low income communities in ways that would empower them to gain social, political, and economic equality by challenging the those agencies that perpetuate their inequality. Alinsky compiled the lessons he had learned through his personal experiences of community organizing from 1939-1971. The "social action" approach is based on the assumption that because wealthy people will not voluntarily give up their money, status, or power, it is necessary to struggle for justice and social equality by fomenting social tensions and drawing attention to the social problem (Cnaan, 1988). Thus, it is an activist approach that uses tactics of disturbing the peace and exposing conflict, and sometimes tends toward violence to create change. These protest activities start with nonviolent tactics, which can gradually escalate to the level of violent protests, such as blocking roads, harassing decision-makers, burning tires, and occupying property (Alinsky, 1971; Cnaan, 1988).

Nonviolent protests are at another extreme of the continuum. It has been argued that this approach achieves results no less effectively than social action (Shaykhutdinov, 2011). Nonviolent protests may include writing articles, and organizing sit-down strikes, hunger strikes, marches, and demonstrations. This approach to resistance originated with Mohandas Karamchand (Mahatma Gandhi) in India, who was known for initiating the "March against the Salt Tax,", where 80,000 citizens marched 400 kilometers until

they reached the sea coast. Afterwards, he organized demonstrations in nonviolent resistance to the British occupation. According to Gandhi, noncooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as cooperation with good (Gandhi, 2011). Following these protests, India gained independence from the British. In the United States, the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. followed Gandhi's path, and initiated a nonviolent protest against racial discrimination and for civil rights. This nonviolent social protest led to a breakthrough in the struggle of African Americans for equal rights in the United States (King, 2001; Netzley, 1999).

1.3. The Success of Protest Movements

How successful is a protest in achieving its goals? "This is a complex question. First, there is no clear methodology for providing satisfactory answers; second, the goal of the protest is not always clear" (Lyman-Wiltzig, 1992). Burstein, Einwohner, and associates discuss the importance of further research on the relative success of political movements. They support a bargaining perspective of success, an analysis that emphasizes the interactions between social movement organizations (SMOs) and their targets (political institutions) (Burstein, Einwohner, and Hollander., 1995).

According to Gamson (1990), "success is an elusive idea". Gamson argues that it is "useful to think of success as a set of outcomes, recognizing that a given challenging group may receive different scores on equally valid, different measures of outcome" (p.28). He proposes to examine two dimensions of success: first, the extent to which the challenging group gains acceptance from its antagonists; second, whether the beneficiary group gains new advantages (p. 29). In this context, four potential outcomes can be identified:

(a) *Full response* – the protest group gains full acceptance as well as many advantages;

(b) *Collapse* – the protest group gains neither acceptance nor advantages;

(c) *Co-optation* – the protest group gains acceptance without advantages;

(d) *Preemption* – the protest group does not gain acceptance but gains advantages (Gamson, 1990).

Full response and collapse without advantages are relatively clear outcomes. One outcome can be viewed as total success, and the other can be viewed as total failure. The analytical problem remains with regard to the intermediate outcomes: co-optation and preemption. Co-optation attests to the establishment's recognition of the legitimacy of the protest group's activity, but it does not yield substantial advantages, as the leaders of the protest movement receive benefits in exchange for giving up on advantages (gains) for the populations that they have represented in the struggle. In the scenario of preemption, on the other hand, the challenging group may gain certain tangible advantages, but their adversaries do everything

they can to delegitimize them (Gamson, 1990).

"In many cases, after a protest the government is interested in giving the impression that it cares about the problem presented to them. Therefore, the government acknowledges that the problem exists and needs to be dealt with. However, after acknowledging the problem in principle, the government prevails over the protest group in that it imposes its own definition of the solution and the policy that needs to be adopted" (Hofnung, 2006, p25). Thus, the success of the protest movement is measured not only in terms of the government's acknowledgement of the existence of the social problem, but also in terms of whether policy makers are made to accept the solutions proposed by the demonstrators (Hofnung, 2006). The impact of a social protest can thus be evaluated by examining the process by which decision-makers devise social policy (Spicker, 2006).

It has been argued that when protest movements have intentionally disturbed the peace, they gained more advantages for their target populations than did movements that refrained from using these strategies (Gamson, 1990). In the 1990s, Deri found that in the "tent cities protest is Israel, the protestors succeeded to a certain extent in dictating what issues the government should deal with. However, they did not succeed in dictating how the government should do this. So the ability to influence the public agenda should not be constructed as the ability to influence government policies" (Deri, 1992, p. 39).

Even though the number of studies on social movements has increased in recent years, a need remains for new research that employs comparative analysis, which can better focus on the impact of social movements (Giugni, 2008). In light of the continued relevance of Israel's two major social protests, which took places at two different periods of time, it is worthwhile to present a systematic comparative examination of their achievements.

2. Method

My study employed the historical comparative analysis approach (Neuman, 2011). A broad range of historical comparisons have been conducted in the social sciences; much of the knowledge accumulated and constructed in the field of social policy can be attributed to historical comparison (Amenta, 2003). Most of these studies share the following characteristics: (1) causal assessment; (2) examination of temporary processes; and (3) a systematic comparison of events, which are limited to a small number of subjects (Mahoney & Rueschemeyer, 2003). An example of the application of this method to the study of social movements is Linders' comparison of an American social movement and a Swedish movement, which were assessed in terms of their ability to change social policy (2004). While this approach has certain disadvantages in terms of reliability and validity, and even though it has not developed as rapidly as information technology, it is a recognized method for examining social movements (Qyen, 2004).

Data about the protest of the Israeli Black Panthers were collected from professional literature published over the past forty years. Data regarding the "social justice protest" of the summer of 2011 were gleaned from articles published in the press and in the electronic media. Information was considered reliable, and was cited, only if it was published at least twice, in two different sources.

Three dimensions of success will be defined in this paper: a) acceptance of the protest by the government and policy makers; b) placement the problem on the public agenda, and success in raising public awareness of the need for change; and c) the advantages gained for the populations represented by the movement: both in terms of the acceptance of the protestors' definition of the social problem, and the changes effected in welfare policy in accordance with the demands of the protestors.

The questions driving my research were: (1) how did each of these social protests grow and develop? (2) to what extent did one movement succeed in relation to the other?

3. Description of the Social Protests

3.1. Background of the Black Panther Protest

Dahan-Kalev (1991) describes the two main population groups that composed the Israeli population at the time of the outbreak of the Black Panther protest in 1971. The Mizrachim were those Jews who had arrived in Israel with the major wave of immigration from Middle Eastern and North African countries in the 1950s. The other group were Jews of European or American origin, which was a more established population who dominated public life in Israel. The socioeconomic status of most Mizrachim was relatively low, and there was clear inequality between them and the Ashkenazim in terms of income, consumption, employment, and education. During the period that preceded the protest, there was a major wave of immigration from the Soviet Union. When those immigrants arrived in Israel, they received discounts on the purchase of cars as well as housing benefits. This policy intensified the sense of deprivation among the Mizrachim and widened the ethnic gap. As a result, many younger Mizrachim, some of whom were youth in distress, felt frustrated and claimed that they were not being treated equally (Bernstein, 1979). The Black Panther movement was initiated by a street gang, whose members sought to protest the living conditions in a disadvantaged Jerusalem neighborhood (Turczyner, 1972), Musrara, in which Mizrachim lived in abandoned buildings close to the hostile Jordanian border of Jerusalem.

3.2. Background of the 2011 Social Justice Protest

The social justice protest of 2011 emerged in response to recent social and economic developments. Researchers of economic and social policy agree that in the last few decades Israeli governments have adopted free market and neo-liberal economic policies (Cohen & Mizrahi, 2011). Many scholars argue that as a result of these policies, Israel's welfare state has collapsed. The beginning of the twenty-first century was defined as a period of belt-tightening and austerity in Israel (Doron, 2007). Eligibility criteria for unemployment benefits and income maintenance were further tightened, and there was a sharp reduction in the payment of child allowances. As a result, the number of beneficiaries of government support declined, and there was a short-term increase in the scope of poverty (Flug, 2003; Inbar & Wasserstein, 2007). While government expenditure for personal welfare services declined, despite an increase in social needs, within a decade, the price of apartments in Israel increased by 70% (Greenstein, 2011; Katan, 1996). In another source of economic pressure on the middle class, parent participation in the cost of early childhood education in Israel is much higher than in other developed countries in the world (Holler & Gal, 2011).

4. Part A: Comparison of the Growth Process in the Two Protest Groups – The Style of Protest Activities, and the Extent of Their Acceptance

4.1. Milestones in the Growth Process of the Two Groups

The Black Panther protests began with a handful of participants at the end of 1970. The protestors were a gang of Mizrachim youth from poor neighborhoods in Jerusalem, whose activities were assisted by social workers from the Jerusalem municipality. The Panthers sought to organize protest activities against the oppression of the government, whose members were mainly of Ashkenazi background (Bernstein, 1979; Cohen, 1971; Shemesh, 2011). A demonstration was held in Jerusalem next to the city hall, to protest ethnic discrimination and the socio-economic gap. The demands of the Black Panthers were clearly articulated: (1) elimination of the slums; (2) free education; (3) free housing; (4) elimination of institutions for juvenile delinquents; (5) higher income for large families; (6) full representation of Mizrachim in all government institutions. The protestors attempted to organize a larger demonstration, and requested a permit in accordance with accepted procedures. After their request for a permit was denied, the police made preemptive arrests of seven activists at dawn. This incident was published in the press, and a demonstration was staged with hundreds of participants, including students and intellectuals who opposed the attempts to silence the protests. The government continued its attempts to delegitimize the protests in various ways (Bernstein, 1979). Subsequently, thousands of people

joined demonstrations in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and throughout the country, which were all coordinated with the leaders of the Black Panther movement (Bernstein, 1979). "The most violent protest was held on 18 May 1971. As the police used full force against the protestors, the problems of oppression and ethnic discrimination were acknowledged as a social problem" (Shemesh, 2012).

The 2011 social justice protest, which began as dissent against housing policies, was initiated by Daphne Leef and several other young people. On 14 July 2011, Leef created a Facebook page and announced that she would be moving to a tent on Rothschild Boulevard, one of the principal streets in the center of Tel Aviv, and she invited her friends to join her. On 15 July another handful of tents were set up on Rothschild Boulevard, and on 16 July 50 tents had been erected by protestors. On its second day, the National Union of Israeli Students joined the protest, and by 17 July, the Hashomer Hatzair youth movement joined as well. Eventually hundreds of citizens set up tents in Tel Aviv and many other cities throughout the country. On 23 July, tens of thousands of protestors marched from the Habima Square in Tel Aviv to the Tel Aviv Museum of Art. On 6 August, 300,000 citizens participated in a protest march. The social protest was thus a combination of a tent occupation, marches, and mass demonstrations.

The demonstrators protested under the banner, "The people demand social justice". They claimed that young adults in Israel - the future generation of Israeli citizens - have served in the army, acquired a higher education, and work hard and they are unable to purchase an apartment yet and are forced to live in austerity while tycoons make a fortune with government backing. The leaders of the protest group published press releases and gave interviews to the media, with the assistance of articulate demonstrators who had access to the media and to senior academic scholars. All of these activities were conducted without any violence, with the exception of one demonstration where the protestors closed a major street in Tel Aviv, and eight demonstrators were arrested in clashes with the police (Amram, 2011). A guillotine was erected on Rothschild Boulevard to symbolize the violence used by the protestors in the French Revolution. In response to this, the chairman of the National Student Union stated that the student population he represents will never resort to violent tactics against the state. He claimed that the protest is motivated by love for the country, and by a desire to stay rather than emigrate elsewhere (Hason, 2011). The expressions of distress, however, did not focus on specific issues. No goals were defined, and the protestors did not present clear demands to the government (Segal, 2011). Indeed, the variety of terms used in reference to the protest represent the ambiguity of the protestors' demands (Hartman, 2011a, 2011b).

Thousands of citizens identified with the protestors, and there was a broad consensus about the problem they raised. Thousands of people came to stay in tents, and tens of thousands participated in the demonstrations, which received extensive media coverage. Among the protesters, there was a consensus with regard to strategy: to use civilized language, that is respectable and conforms to the norms of values of society, and to avoid inflammatory or violent speech. . The local authorities also supported the protestors: at first, the protestors were allowed to set up the tents, and the municipality provided them with water and mobile sanitation facilities.

The leaders of the social justice protest demonstrated their knowledge and savvy for public relations and skillfully used their connections with the media. They also provided opportunities for residents of peripheral areas and marginal, disadvantaged populations to vent their discontent. They successfully explained the unjust situation of citizens that brought them to demonstrate, and thus placed social issues at the top of the public agenda.

In examining how the leaders of the two protest movements organized their activities, it is important to bear in mind that the Israeli Black Panthers did not succeed in establishing themselves or in carrying out organized activities. As a result, disagreements often emerged among the leaders. Whenever discord prevailed and threatened to dissolve the close-knit group, the leaders organized another demonstration in order to reunite and recruit new participants (Bernstein, 1979).

In the social justice protests of 2011 the leaders also had disagreements, and sometimes it was unclear who was in charge (Ohion, 2011). Nonetheless, they succeeded in raising money and resources for the demonstrations, and they were even able to coordinate the messages they conveyed in the media. The members of the leadership attempted to organize a united front and expand their activities. They travelled all over the country to support protestors, in an attempt to convey the message that "We're all together." In fact, the leaders even attempted to focus attention on weaker populations, rather than on the predicament of their own socioeconomic class (Amram et al., 2011; Levi, 2012; Segal, 2011).

About two weeks after the protestors set up their tents, they held a demonstration attended by about 150,000 participants. In a mass rally in Tel Aviv, the leader of the protest, Daphne Leef, argued that it was a protest of consciousness. The organizers of the protest all went up to the podium one after the other and presented their demands, which now extended beyond the demand for accessible housing. The demonstrators demanded a welfare state, workers' rights, equal educational opportunities, and improvement in the working conditions of doctors. One leader of the protest, Stav Shafir, demanded "free health care for everyone" (Amram et al., 2011). Despite the confusion regarding their demands, and despite changes that ensued as the protest continued, the leaders succeeded in establishing a professional commission headed by Professors Avia Spivak and Yossi Yona, as an alternative to the Trajtenberg Committee established by the government in response to the protest. Spivak and Yona outlined their assessment of the main problems that need to be addressed,

and the desired solutions to those problems. However, the government never spoke with Spivak-Yona Commission.

4.2. Style of the Protests: "Nonviolent Protest" versus "Social Action" Protests

The Israeli Black Panther protest can be defined as a "social action" protest, which was accompanied by disruptive tactics (Cohen, 1971). The members of the group were familiar with Alinsky's writings. They received guidance, support, and assistance from a social worker who adopted a radical approach to community work. Their struggle was militant, and even reached a level of violence that went beyond the boundaries of the social action approach. The demonstrators constantly clashed with the police, and in the final stages of the struggle they threw Molotov cocktails during demonstrations (Shemesh, 2012). By contrast, the approach adopted in the 2011 social justice protest can be identified as nonviolent resistance. This approach was based on marches and written materials, and accompanied by declarations of the leaders that violence would not be used. Although there were two isolated attempts to deviate from this approach, the leaders of the protest publicly dissociated themselves from acts of violence.

4.3. The Establishment's Refusal to Accept the Social Protests

In the case of the Black Panther protest, the media and the public at large supported the struggle of the Mizrachim, although there was not a broad consensus regarding the method of action (Bernstein, 1979). By contrast, the government delegitimized the Black Panthers, and policy-makers showed tremendous panic (Lev and & Shenhav, 2010). The spokespersons of the government were not prepared to publicly acknowledge the legitimacy of the issues raised by the Black Panthers, and after the preemptive arrests of the leaders, additional methods to stem the protest were used. A concerted effort towards the individualization of the protest was adopted, where the government argued that the issues raised by the Black Panthers were specific problems experienced by a small group of youth. The government offered to provide vocational training for these individuals, and undertook to deal with their personal problems and criminal records. The police opened files in which the youth were labeled as potential delinquents, described as "undesirable," and as having connections with the radical Left and Communism. The protestors were arrested, tried in court, and fined (Bernstein, 1979).

Government responses to the social justice protest in 2011 were also hostile. Following the demonstration in Tel Aviv under the banner "the people demand social justice," the police decided to forcibly disperse the demonstration. Government spokespersons attacked the leader of the protest, Daphne Leef, and her friends: "This is a protest of sushi eaters and Nargila (hookah) smokers". They even attacked Leef personally, claiming that she never served in the army ("some little punk can't tell Bibi to go home".. In an interview on Channel 2 news, the Minister of Information and Diaspora Yuli Edelstein said: "These are despicable people who are totally out of touch with reality. They have no idea about the demands they're making. It's a group of people that latch onto the real demonstrators, they're anarchists". Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin warned the social protest activists against falling into anarchy (Wolf, 2011). In October 2011, representatives of the government ordered the police to begin forcibly evacuating the protest encampments (Nahmani, 2011; Paylor, 2011).

In conducting my research, I have sought to identify evidence of attempts by the government to accept the protest groups, in each of these cases. I tried to determine whether there were any negotiations between the government and the leaders of the protest, in order to grant formal recognition for the protestors and integrate them into the government process (Gamson, 1990, p. 32). I found no evidence for any attempts at negotiation or recognition for either protest group.

5. Part B: Comparison of the Success of the Protest Groups - Awareness of the Problem, Willingness to Effect Change and to Change Welfare Policy

5.1. Raising Awareness of the Social Problem

The Black Panther protest as well as the social justice protest, clearly succeeded in raising social awareness. For several months, the press (and in the case of the 2011 protest, the electronic media) discussed the demonstrations, the protest in general, and the problems that the protest groups identified. Both movements achieved interim results: they placed the social problem on the public agenda (Bernstein, 1979; Cohen, 1971; Dahan-Kalev, 1991; Hofnung, 2006; Levi, 2012; Segal, 2011).

5.2. Achievements Following the Black Panther Protest

Statistical analysis of state budget data revealed that following the protests, there was a substantial increase in allocations for the issues that the Black Panther sought to promote (Iris, 1978). Even though the government did not want to give the protestors credit for this (Hofnung, 2006; Trajtenberg, 2011), they did attain numerous short-term and long-term results. For example, in an address to the Israeli Parliament while the Black Panther protests were taking place, MK Michael Hazani informed the Knesset that the Minister of Finance had agreed, with the approval of the Prime Minister, to finance a program for the construction of

day care centers for children (Hofnung, 2006). Later in 1971, generous budgets were allocated to the Jerusalem municipality and to other local authorities. A budget increase of over 50% was approved to finance programs for marginal youth (Hofnung, 2006), and budget increases amounting to tens of millions of dollars were allocated for social programs and housing. In addition, a service for youth in distress was established at the Ministry of Education, and National Insurance payments were linked to the average wage in the economy.

As a result of the Black Panther protests, a Prime Minister's Commission for Children and Youth in Distress was established on 21 February 1971 (Avizohar, 1994; Turczyner, 1972). Nonetheless, the Black Panthers intensified their demonstrations between February and April 1971, which succeeded in diverting public discussion from the issue of delinquency to the issue of distress (Avizohar, 1994). Doron (2005) argued that the Prime Minister's Commission for Children and Youth in Distress was established as a result of the increased awareness of social gaps, economic distress, and severe feelings of deprivation among Israelis of Middle Eastern and North African origin. The perception of the Black Panthers as a threat to the stability of the regime in Israel also likely contributed to the establishment of the commission. The commission was headed by Professor Israel Katz, a social worker specializing in welfare policy and Director General of the National Insurance Institute at the time. Professor Katz was assisted by Professor Avraham Doron of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who was known as an advocate of social and economic policies that promote social-democratic welfare as a balancing force against the pressures of the market economy (Doron, 1987). Following the recommendations of the Katz Commission, numerous changes were introduced in welfare policy and a social-democratic approach to welfare was adopted. The prime minister at the time, Golda Meir, adopted all of the Katz Commission's recommendations and established the Welfare Authority (Avizohar, 1994).

The Katz Commission proposed to expand the Compulsory Education Law and to promote informal education programs in peripheral areas, as well as to provide additional support to disadvantaged areas. It also recommended establishing an income maintenance system and adopting a reform in child allowances (Rotter, 1973), in addition to a change in public housing policy (Sleifer, 1973). Unemployment insurance was instituted in 1973, even though defense expenditures increased that year (Avizohar, 1994).

5.3. Achievements Following the 2011 Social Justice Protest

During the course of the social justice protest, the demonstrators and their consultants made efforts to block the passage of the National Housing Committees (NHCs) Law, which would have fast-tracked construction plans and placed the authority for approving building projects in the hands of regional committees. The protestors were afraid that the law would benefit the wealthy rather than ordinary citizens. "We firmly oppose the law"; "You're talking about real estate. We're talking about our homes."; "Start working for us" (Amram, 2011). On 2 August 2011, the demonstrators repeated their demands for affordable housing and to block the passage of the NHC Law (Aharoni, 2011). However, the very next day the government expedited the passage of the law, and the demand to enact a law defining "affordable housing" was rejected (Nahmias, 2011). When real estate prices began to decline, the governor of the Bank of Israel argued that the decline is dangerous to the economy, and took action to preserve existing high prices by lowering interest rates (Ozeri, 2011). Rental prices increased, as did the overall price of real estate (Levy, 2012). Six months after the tent city was erected, as the tents were being removed, the demonstrators voiced their opposition to the new economic measures that the government continued to impose, such as increases in the prices of electricity and public transportation. In addition, they protested against the government's failure to ease the burden for the struggling middle class. The demonstrators claimed: "The law for free education from age three was passed, but the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services are paying the price" (Kampinsky, 2012). Thus, the leaders of the protest asserted that they had not succeeded in achieving results. Their immediate demands were not met, and previous policies remained in effect.

In response to the social justice protest, the government decided to establish a Committee for Social and Economic Change headed by Professor Manuel Trajtenberg. Professor Trajtenberg is an economist, and served as economic advisor to Prime Minister Netanyahu until 2009. He is well-known for his approach, which is consistent with government's free-market economic policy (Lahav, 2011). Trajtenberg further appointed Professor Eugene Kendall, current economic advisor to the Prime Minister, who supports the existing neo-liberal policy. As soon as the committee was appointed, it received instructions to refrain from deviating from the existing state budget. The main points of the report the Trajtenberg Committee produced included recommendations relating to long-term processes and structural measures. The procedures outlined for implementation were: establishing teams, establishing committees, removing barriers, and reducing bureaucracy. When Trajtenberg presented the conclusions of the committee in the Knesset on 4 October 2011, MK Nitzan Horwitz and Professor Yossi Yona claimed that the conclusions were a continuation of the government's neo-liberal policies, and that there were no indications of change. Daphne Leef, leader of the protest movement, expressed her disappointment with the Trajtenberg Report in the media: "The demonstrators asked for a root canal, and all they got was a teeth cleaning" (Hartman, 2011b).

The recommendations were not implemented as part of a

comprehensive social-democratic welfare policy. For instance, the Trajtenberg Committee recommended adding a new tax bracket for the wealthiest citizens (Trajtenberg, 2011). On 7 December 2011, the Ministry of Finance considered overriding this decision (Arlozorov & Besok, 2011), but the government decided to adopt the recommendation nonetheless. A tax for wealthy citizens, amounting to two percent, was imposed on anyone whose income from any source exceeded NIS 1,000,000, but on 24 January 2012, the tax was repealed (Arlozorov, 2012). The Trajtenberg Committee recommended lowering the price of diesel fuel in order to reduce living expenses, but the price of diesel fuel for transportation has risen since then (Israel Purchasing and Logistics Managers Association, 2012). One partial outcome of the protests which might be implemented in the future is a decision in response to the protestors' demands: "We want free public education from age zero" (Amram et al., 2011). At this stage, policy makers have instructed the Ministry of Education to institute free public education from age three as of the 2012/13 school year. Despite this one policy change, on the whole, it appears that the 2011 social justice protest did not yield significant outcomes in terms of welfare policy in Israel.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

In the summer of 2011, the social justice protests began with the middle class, and expanded to more deprived population groups. We can say that "it was like a fever," or a "grass fire": everyone wanted to go (Polletta, 1998). In recent years we have witnessed outbreaks of social protests around the world and in the Middle East in particular. As social scientists, we have a duty to investigate and learn about the development of these social protests and their results (Burstein, Einwohner, and Hollander., 1995).

The demonstrators in Tel-Aviv were protesting the social injustice arising from the lack of affordable housing and the excessively high cost of living. Following the protest, a Social and Economic Change Committee was established by the Israeli government, but as I have discussed above, it did not institute significant changes in Israel's social and economic policies, which have increasingly deviated from "welfare state" policies in the years preceding the protests. This disappointing outcome raises the question: How do protest groups emerge, and do protest activities yield visible results at the level of welfare policy?

To answer this question, I compared the 2011 social justice protest with the protest of the Black Panthers in 1971. Like the 2011 protest, the Black Panthers also demonstrated against social deprivation and demanded social equality, but that protest took place forty years earlier, against a different social background, and the style of the protest activities was rather different. In light of these differences, I evaluated the development of each protest, its impact on the public and policy makers, and the outcomes of the protest in terms of social policy.

There were two main difficulties involved in conducting this study: First, the literature has revealed considerable ethical and professional difficulties entailed in research on social movements, particular protest movements that are based on a social action style and that involve "ugly " tactics (Gillan & Pickerill, 2012). Second, the 2011 social justice protest is still part of the current discourse in Israel and has not yet been examined in retrospect.

The historical comparison method itself has limitations, as well. Qyen (2004) argued that "unfortunately, the social comparison method did not develop at the same pace as information technology" (p. 276). Qyen argued that as a result, despite the abundance of information in the present, there is no way of formulating uniform answers that are methodologically acceptable. Indeed, difficulties were encountered in the attempt to compare two movements that existed at different times, during totally different technological periods. The two movements emerged against different backgrounds, and each one had a unique style of action. Despite the drawbacks of this methodology, historical comparison revealed similarities and differences between the two protest movements. It was indeed possible to conduct a comparative analysis of both movements and their outcomes.

There are those who claim that the success of a protest movement can only be measured fifteen years after the event (Goldstone, 1980). Conversely, it can be claimed that after such a long time, other factors may come into play to shape social and economic policy and that it is therefore more practical to draw conclusions immediately after the protest. Proponents of this approach claim that if the protest yields results, the first signs of those results are apparent in the short term.

Examination of the growth of the two Israeli protest movements revealed that both of them emerged out of personal distress; on this basis, both groups challenged the government and demanded social change. Analysis of the results of the protests revealed that there was progress in terms of two of the components described in the professional literature: the protests shifted the focus of the problem from a personal problem to a collective problem; the leaders succeeded in sparking the reinterpretation of the social situation as social injustice.

The third component of success I examined here, on the basis of the literature, was the movement's ability of to build organizations and institutionalize. I found that the Black Panthers had organizational difficulties, and that their activities were usually spontaneous and impulsive. The organizational activity of the 2011 social justice protest was more professional. They organizers made good use of the mass media, were able to raise funds, and responsibilities were divided effectively, although they did not establish an office or settled organizational institutions.

Even though the Black Panthers lacked organizational skills, they succeeded in raising public awareness of their problem to the same extent, and even achieved better outcomes than did the social justice protestors. This finding is consistent Piven and Cloward's argument (1977), which

maintains that even without suitable organization, tactics of disruption yield better results.

It can be argued that the responses of the government were similar in both cases examined here, despite the gap of forty years between the two protests. In both cases, the government made various attempts to delegitimize the leaders of the protest. The organizers were slandered, and the police forcibly vacated the demonstrators. For the most part, the leaders who initiated the protest were the targets of these attacks. In sum, both protests were not accepted by the government.

7. Is There Evidence of Change in Israel's Welfare Policy?

Conclusions on this issue should be presented with caution, because it is difficult to compare the outcomes of a protest that occurred forty years before the social protests of the summer of 2011. Clearly, placing a social issue at the top of the public agenda can be considered a significant intermediate outcome of a social protest – and both movements succeeded in achieving this goal. However, the demonstrators in both groups sought justice, equality, and sweeping changes in welfare policy.

To some extent, government policy-makers accepted the definition of the social problem raised during the two periods of protest, when they appointed a special committee to investigate the issue. Differences in the composition of the two committees, however, indicate larger trends. In 1971, the committee consisted of social workers and professors who were committed to welfare policy. The committee formed by the government in response to the second protest, in summer of 2011, consisted of economists who advocated for the current government's neo-liberal economic policy, and received instructions not to deviate from the government budget. After the protest of the Black Panthers, the government implemented immediate changes, and there was a substantial modification in welfare policy in accordance with the demands of the demonstrators. After the 2011 social justice protest, there was no change in social-economic policy or in welfare policy. The results of the 2011 protest were thus an example a common situation presented in the professional literature, where the government portrays itself as responding "compassionately" to a protest, while it is not really prepared to change existing policies (Hofnung, 2006).

According to Gamson (1990) the success of the Black Panther protest can be categorized as "preemption," because the protestors succeeded in achieving substantial results for deprived populations even though the protesters themselves were never accepted by the government. In contrast, the results of the 2011 social protest can be categorized as "collapse," because the protest's message was neither accepted by the government, nor did it succeed in attaining substantial outcomes for the population it represented.

8. What is the Explanation for the Different Outcomes of the Protests?

Why was there a rapid and far-reaching change in the 1980s in favor of a welfare-oriented government policy, whereas the status quo continued after the 2011 protest? On the one hand, it is possible that the different outcomes can be attributed to the different styles of the two protest groups. Doron argued that "a Prime Minister's Commission for Children and Youth in Distress (the Katz Commission) was established following the protest of the Black Panthers, who were perceived as a threat to the stability of Israeli society and government" (Doron, 2005, p. 451). Can it be concluded that the intensity of the protest, the violence, and the panic that ensued in the government (Lev &Shenhav, 2010; Shemesh, 2011) were the factors that led to an immediate change in welfare policy? In comparison, the 2011 social justice protest was based on a nonviolent approach. This supports Gamson's claim that protest movements that intentionally disrupt routine life have succeeded in achieving better results for their target populations than movements that avoid violence (Gamson, 1990). On the other hand, the research literature includes evidence that does not support this argument. A study of 238 protest movements in 106 countries over the past fifty years revealed that ethnic protests showed a greater tendency to use violence – but that the results of those protests were the same as those of nonviolent protests (Shaykhutdino, 2011). Therefore, even though the Black Panthers achieved better results than the social justice protestors in 2011, their success was not merely due to the "social action" protest tactic that they used. "Expanding welfare budgets may also be a result of both protests and downward business cycle, , , burgeoning unemployment rates and growth of poverty" (Swank, 2006). So, it is possible that other interfering factors affected the social protest's achievement of results.

Another possible explanation for the difficulty that the 2011 social justice protestors encountered in achieving results has been proposed by Professor James Sadanius, who visited Israel at the time: "Despite all of the media attention given to the social justice protest, and notwithstanding the broad public support that they received, there has to be a stronger leadership, and the demands of the protestors need to be formulated more clearly if they want to translate their protest to real social change" (Hartman, 2011a).

Other possible factors that may have influenced the attainment of results could be the ability of the government to suppress a social protest in various ways, as well as the tenacious adherence of decision-makers to existing neo-liberal economic policies. It would be worthwhile to further examine all of these explanations in future research.

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