

The period was one of general restlessness and confusion, punctuated by outbreaks of disturbance. In Iraq the opposition parties that proved their mettle in the 1948 national uprising were growing in strength and threatening the ancien régime. In Syria, the army which overthrew the civilian government in 1949 was setting a fashion for military intervention in politics. In Egypt, anti-British sentiment was intensified because of the failure to reach an agreement on the withdrawal of British forces from Egyptian soil. In Jordan, the Palestinians were getting restless under the autocratic rule of the old King. The whole area seemed unstable and the Arab people were clamouring for change.

The Arab Nationalists who have in the meanwhile built their hard core nucleus and succeeded in organizing many underground cells mostly among the students of the American University found the political climate especially appealing for the organization of mass struggles in the Fall of 1951. Working under the cover of al-Urwah the Arab Nationalists organized a mass demonstration in support of Egypt when that country's Parliament abrogated the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty and called for the withdrawal of British troops from the Canal Zone. As hundreds turned out to take part in that unlawful demonstration which involved serious clashes with the police, many members of the emerging movement were arrested and several of its student leaders were dismissed from the University.