

REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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SHARON DECLARES ARAFAT IRRELEVANT—THE END OF THE OSLO ERA

In Ariel Sharon's first public address after Yasser Arafat's December 2001 call for an end to the armed Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation, the Israeli prime minister displayed the elements that have long defined his public image as a pragmatic expansionist.

The forum was Jerusalem's Hall of the People, where Sharon was to bestow the Begin Prize to Ze'ev Hever, head of Gush Emunim's settlement arm, Amana. Among his other duties, Hever spearheads the creation of new settlement "outposts." Sharon, then a minister in Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet, was one of the first after the Wye Agreement in October 1998 to urge Amana to "grab and settle."

The audience was full of Gush Emunim patrons, the heart and soul of

the settlement enterprise, the critical force that has urged the government since September 2000 to militarily defeat the PA.

Here, of all places, noted a report in the right-wing daily *Kol Hazeman*, "the prime minister supplied the settlers with reasons only to worry."

"We have a commitment to make peace, including its painful price," explained Sharon. He immediately added that former prime minister Menachem Begin had himself declared that national unity was the supreme value, and that under no circumstances would there be a war pitting "brother against brother."

In Israel's political lexicon, Sharon was reaffirming his commitment to support the creation of a Palestinian state on territories his listeners, and he as well, consider to be part of Israel's patrimony.

"The talk about peace, in such a war-like time, left the settlement leaders in the room aghast," reported *Kol Hazeman*. "They were the last to believe that the prime minister would 'save' Arafat."

Like his audience that day, Sharon, in his heart of hearts, is a true believer in the continuing struggle of the Jewish state to define its borders in the face of the existential antipathy of Palestinians and Arabs generally. He opposes the two basic premises upon which Oslo is based: he does not believe that Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) can sponsor an agreement defining relations with Israel, nor does he think that the PA and its security

arms can be partners in protecting Israeli security. Left to his own devices, Sharon would gladly turn back the clock to an era when the PLO was best negotiated with through the barrel of a gun. What sets apart Sharon's public career, however, is that his often destructive and radical impulses can be contained by domestic and external forces more powerful and committed than those he can bring to bear.

For example, Sharon's contribution at the Wye Plantation talks in October 1998 was recognized by Washington, which had shunned him since Sabra and Shatila. And at a time when he considered inevitable the creation of a Palestinian state, Sharon became one of the first Israeli politicians to articulate the need to define the borders of the prospective state in such a way as to preserve his expanded notion of Israeli settlement and security interests.

Sharon's map was hardly the same one as Arafat's, but it offered evidence that Sharon could be compelled to adapt to a diplomatic framework he opposed, forcing him to operate tactically within a strategic framework fashioned by others.

Sharon's year-long tenure as prime minister, however, has been defined by the strategic vacuum created in the aftermath of the failure of the Taba talks and the progressive failure of either the Bush administration or Yasser Arafat to rescue the Oslo understandings from Sharon's heartfelt preferences. Under such circumstances Arafat could sing

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TO OUR READERS

As Jeff Aronson points out on page 1 of this *Report*, Ariel Sharon has unofficially declared war on Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian Authority, and the Oslo peace process. By freeing himself from Oslo's constraints, Sharon seeks to fulfill his life-long goal of marginalizing the Palestinians and consolidating Israel's grip on the occupied territories.

Polls still show that most Israelis would accept a viable Palestinian state and abandon settlements in return for real peace and security for the Jewish state. But they no longer believe this is possible. Sharon has brilliantly exploited fear of terrorism to discredit Oslo, demonize Arafat, and justify a "greater Israel" agenda in the name of "security." Arafat's lack of a coherent peace strategy and toleration of violence have contributed to the breakdown and played into Sharon's hands. If the confrontation continues, it will deepen, and further undermine U.S. interests in the region by

nourishing hatred that contributes to anti-American terror.

Sharon will not change course unless the U.S. and a renewed Israeli opposition see a chance for peace and demand a return to negotiations, a prospect Sharon fervently opposes. At this stage, given Arafat's weaknesses, only strong American diplomacy can restore hope for peace. But exhortation to implement the Mitchell plan is no longer enough. A clear, detailed U.S. vision of peace that meets the basic needs of both societies, pursued with energy and empathy, could galvanize a pro-peace majority in Israel, win Palestinian support, sideline extremists on both sides, and oblige both Sharon and Arafat—or their successors—to accept an historic compromise.



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AFTER OSLO

Knesset Speaker Avraham Burg (Labor Party)

Whoever wants a full democracy with a Jewish majority cannot hold onto the entire land from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, because it is a land that has people of another nation with different national aspirations. And whoever wants the whole land and a Jewish majority must give up on democracy, and instead have a dark and oppressive regime. And whoever wants a democracy and the entire land, must give up on his idea of a Jewish state with a Jewish majority.

Arutz 7, November 19, 2001

Tourism Minister Benny Elon

[Avraham] Burg's premise is wrong, as we are not demanding the entire Eretz (Land of) Yisrael. Most of this area, 78 percent of it, already has a Palestinian state—Jordan. We must make it clear that Eretz Yisrael has two sides of the Jordan, and that if the Arabs want a Palestinian state, it already exists, in the form of Jordan.

Our solution [the voluntary exodus of Arabs out of Judea and Samaria] will lead to real peace, with a democratic Jewish state between the Mediterranean and the Jordan. Gandhi [the assassinated Rehavam Ze'evi, founder of the Moledet party that Elon now heads] taught us that there are different types of transfer: The forcible type, which is not desirable or democratic, occurs during wartime. It is sometimes justified as a form of punishment to those who start a war. Just as in the War of Independence, when they brought upon themselves a "nakba" (catastrophe), and we celebrate our independence. If they continue to war with us, then that is what will happen again.

On the other hand, we are willing to negotiate with them over some form of autonomy, with its capital in Amman, and connected culturally and municipally and in other ways to Jordan, but with Israel in control of the borders, sovereignty, and the Jordan Valley. This can be done if they are willing to live with us in peace. But if they are not willing to do so, then the painful price they will have to pay will be transfer.

Arutz 7, November 19, 2001

Uri Elitzur, Head of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Bureau

Two major questions face us: What will be the final borders of Israel, and what will happen with the Arab residents of YESHA? We haven't given an answer to these questions because we don't want to—because if we say that we want our final borders to include all of Judea and Samaria, then the Arabs living there become our headache.

Regarding the Arabs of YESHA, we must say clearly, yes, they are our responsibility. This will be a heavy price for us to

pay in order to hold on to the Land of Israel, but we have to pay it. This doesn't mean that I would rule out transfer, and I don't think it's an unethical solution, but I do think that it's not realistic for the next few decades at least. The main thing is to say that we refuse to give up on the Land of Israel and that we are willing to admit that these 2 million Arabs of Eretz Yisrael are here and they are our headache.

Arutz 7, November 18, 2001

Peres believes that if negotiations are resumed, it will be possible to reach an agreement with the Palestinians which finesses the issue of whether it is a "permanent agreement" or an "interim agreement."

The main problem, he believes, is the settlements. The current map in the territories does not permit security and true peace. Peres supports the removal of all settlements in Gaza. Such a removal, he believes, will calm the strip. Today Israel must destroy trees and fields to confront Palestinians and to maintain large military forces only in order to maintain the settlements.

Ha'aretz, October 12, 2001

Israel will suggest territory in Gaza and the West Bank but it will not remove settlements. Peres explained this week that he does not have a majority to remove settlements. Arafat will establish his state [in these areas] with Israel's agreement.

Yediot Aharanot, November 16, 2001

Labor Party MK Haim Ramon

If Israel announces immediately that she recognizes an independent Palestinian state and calls for its international recognition, she will serve her own interests and make it hard for Arafat and his friends. She will divest herself of responsibility for Palestine's economy, place in the international community's hands supervision of the maintenance of the law and international agreements, and the main thing—Israel will decide the essence of her relations with such a state according to the criterion of the hostility or cooperation it demonstrates toward her.

Separation between the two national entities—to include a security fence and a buffer zone, the consolidation of Jewish settlement in blocs, detachment from the Palestinian population in the territories and control of the border crossings—would be more significant if it were carried out between two recognized states. The boundary between the two states will be a security border, the diplomatic borders will be determined in the future in the framework of a peace agreement between the two states.

Ma'ariv, November 19, 2001

SHARON GOVERNMENT VIOLATES PLEDGE NOT TO ESTABLISH NEW SETTLEMENTS

Every Israel government since the election of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has committed to refrain from the construction of new settlements in the occupied territories. This commitment has not included the expansion of existing settlement communities, whose population has increased to more than 400,000 in more than 200 officially recognized locations in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights. For example, since May 2001 the government of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has published tenders for the construction of 746 apartments in West Bank and Gaza Strip settlements and overseen the construction, from January through June 2001, of 832 new dwelling units.

Despite this ban on new settlement construction, successive Israeli governments since 1996 have overseen, provided protection to, and in many cases formally recognized, the creation of new settlement outposts. In other instances, settlements ordered “frozen” have nevertheless expanded and developed, adding new, permanent housing and infrastructure.

On August 21, 2000, a month before the beginning of the al-Aqsa intifada, MK Mossi Raz of the Meretz party observed that settlers “continue to exert organized control over land in an illegal manner. Their clear intention is to cause an outbreak of violence in the territories that will harm the chance for an agreement. It is time that the army, the police, and the government [then headed by Ehud Barak] stop their groveling surrender to the criminal settlers.”

Settlers insist that their settlement efforts are coordinated with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

“All that has been done has been done with the army’s knowledge and in full coordination with them,” explained a settlement leader.

Government officials and settlers themselves do not define the locations as new settlements. They point out that they are located, for the most part, within the planning areas of exist-

ing settlements. Some are located a few hundred meters from existing construction, yet others are up to 4,000 meters distant. In an earlier era of settlement expansion, during the tenure of Prime Minister Menachem Begin in the late 1970s, officials also argued that existing settlements were simply

being “thickened” by the creation of new settlement locations during a short period when a ban on new settlements was government policy.

On October 12, 2000, Prime Minister Ehud Barak recognized 32 of 42 such settlements established before and during the tenure of his immediate predecessor, Benjamin Netanyahu. Of these, fifteen were legalized; 13 were “frozen,” but more than half continued to develop, adding houses and infrastructure; 3 were moved to new locations nearby; 2 were moved temporarily; water tanks were removed from 3 uninhabited locations, 2 were already empty, and 4 were scheduled for evacuation but remain in place today.

In June 2001 the IDF reported 66 distinct outposts. Almost half of them have been established since the beginning of the intifada in September 2000. *Ha’aretz* reported on November 21, 2001, that 26 new sites have been settled since Sharon assumed power in February 2001.

Many are located at sites along roads and intersections where settlers have been killed by Palestinians. Some are no more than temporary, rudimentary encampments. The placement of most of these outposts, however, reveals a strategic intent as well. The Barak government was prepared to surrender all settlements to the east of

Route 60, which runs in a north-south direction from Jenin to Hebron. Settlers and Israeli officials intent upon complicating such a withdrawal have focused the creation of new outposts in the areas near the settlements of Itamar-Yizhar and Shilo-Kfar Tapuach along this route. These new settlement locations define areas of future settlement expansion in an attempt

Based on satellite photographs, [the United States] has asked Israel for explanations about new construction in the settlements. The United States has used satellites for this purpose in the past, usually keeping the information to themselves. Satellite images show every new building, but they can’t show, for example, whether the buildings are inhabited or are used for civilian or military purposes. Questions submitted by the Americans to the defense minister’s office focus on new construction not only in the settlements themselves but also in areas close to them, “outposts,” as they are known.

The tendency is to continue with everything just as it was—to force the Palestinians to stop the violence and to carry on building the settlements as though nothing has happened. Many in Israel understand by now that this is a no-win formula and that it will be accompanied by constant bloodshed. Whether the sides will continue or stop their old deceptions depends in no small measure on the Americans.

Ze’ev Schiff, Ha’aretz
November 16, 2001

PLEDGE, continued on page 9

SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

June 13 The Land Defense Committee reports that during the first week of June 797 dunums of cultivated land were burned; 4 workshops, 2 green houses, 3 homes and two schools were set on fire by settlers; and two new settlement points were established, one near Jit, village west of Nablus, and another in al-Khader village. *Al Quds*

Israel confiscates 500 dunums of Palestinian land in al-Qarara, near the Gush Katif settlements, in the Gaza Strip. The land will be razed to establish an empty security belt between the settlement bloc and Palestinian areas. *Hear Palestine, Al Quds*

June 14 Settlers set up six caravans between Dayr Samit and Dura in Hebron, the site of a settlement point that was dismantled in 1992. *Hear Palestine*

June 17 Hundreds of Palestinians from Khan Yunis storm the gate to the Neve Dekalim settlement. A 12-year-old Palestinian boy is reported killed when Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers shoot rubber-coated bullets into the crowd. *Arutz 7*

June 18 A settler from Chomesh is killed in a drive-by shooting. *Arutz 7*

June 19 Israeli settlers from Einav set fire to 2,200 dunums of planted fields belonging to the nearby village of Beit Lid. *Palestine Media Center*

June 20 Tanzim leader Marwan Barghouti is reported by IDF radio to have said, "We will continue to besiege the settlers until all of them leave the territories." *Ha'aretz*

Another settler from Chomesh is killed by Palestinian gunfire. *Arutz 7*

June 21 According to a poll in *Yediot Aharanot*, 20 percent of Israeli settlers in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip can conceive of relocating to Israel as the al-Aqsa intifada continues. Nineteen percent would consider pulling out "on condition of being able to obtain a home to replace that which they would have to abandon." Twenty-four percent say they would be unlikely to leave. Fifty-four percent are strongly opposed to leaving.

According to data released by MK Mossi Raz, apartment sales in the occupied territories in 2001 were down 44 percent compared to the same period in 2000. Sales rose in Geva Benjamin, Givat Ze'ev and Ma'ale

Adumim, around Jerusalem—but fell in Al-fei Menashe, Ariel, and Efrat. *AFP, Ha'aretz*

June 23 Settlers from Yitzhar destroy property, burn fields, and set fire to a Palestinian police car in Burin. One hundred fifty settlers from Shilo attack Palestinian residents and burn fields in Sinjil and Turmus. *Palestinian Media Center*

June 24 Israeli bulldozers destroy vast areas of agricultural land, greenhouses and water reserves, in the al-Mighraqa area, south of Gaza, near Netzarim settlement. *Hear Palestine*

June 25 The Israel Land Authority publishes tenders for 38 plots in Ma'ale Adumim. *Ha'aretz*

Israeli defense minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer announces that 15 new settlement outposts on the West Bank will be dismantled for security reasons. *Ha'aretz*

Gunfire is exchanged in Hebron for the first time in one month. *Ha'aretz*

June 27 It is reported that since the start of the al-Aqsa intifada, Israel has demolished 83 houses and shelled more than 2,000 Palestinian homes in Rafah. *Palestine Report*

Ma'ariv reports that urban settlements will now be responsible for marketing their lands directly to developers. Published tenders and national oversight will no longer be required.

June 28 Settlers establish a new settlement point near Saffarin. *Hear Palestine*

Israel bulldozes vast areas in Gaza's Beit Lahya for a new bypass road for Dugit and other settlements. *Hear Palestine*

One settler is killed and another is injured by Palestinian gunfire near the settlement of Ganim, in the Jenin region. *Al Quds*

June 30 Residents of al-Nabi Salah, Beit Rima, Dayr Ghassana, Dayr Nitham, Kfar Ein, and Qarawat Bani Zayd have been without water for more than 20 days. Settlers cut off their supply.

July 2 Israel bulldozes 100 dunums of land in Surif, Hebron, to expand a newly established settlement point. *Hear Palestine*

A tender for the sale of 39 building plots in Elkana is published. *Ma'ariv*

July 6 *Kol Hazeman* reports that 31 settlers have been killed by Palestinians since October 2000.

July 8 Settlers set up caravans in Ramin, north of Einav settlement, and attack Palestinian inhabitants of Beit Lid, Saffarin and Shufa on route to Tulkarem. *Hear Palestine*

July 10 Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon visits the Golan for the first time since taking office and announces, "There will be no real peace if we're not here. . . . Only by expanding the existing communities and enlarging the Jewish population on the Golan Heights will the Jewish establishment here become irreversible reality." *Arutz 7, Israel Line*

July 11 *Ha'aretz* reports that there were more than 700 shooting incidents on roads in the occupied territories in the preceding nine months. Of the 49 Israelis killed on the West Bank, 27 were shot while driving.

July 13 A settler from Kiryat Arba dies after being shot the previous night. In response to the murder, Israeli forces have forbidden Hebron's Palestinian residents from exiting the city by car. *Ha'aretz*

Arutz 7 reports, "Civilians and soldiers are working together in YESHA. Civilian civil patrols on the roads of Judea and Samaria have become more widespread over the past few days. Armed residents patrol and man strategic hilltops in complete coordination with the IDF. An army officer briefs the participants before each mission."

July 17 Israeli forces assassinate a Hamas leader in Bethlehem. In retaliation, and for the first time since the outbreak of the al-Aqsa intifada, Palestinians fire two mortar shells at the Jerusalem neighborhood of Gilo. *Jerusalem Post, Ha'aretz*

July 18 Fourteen Palestinian factions issue statements vowing to target "every soldier and every settler" in the aftermath of a helicopter gunship attack in Bethlehem the previous day. *Ha'aretz*

YESHA announces the start of construction on 200 settlement units in the Neguhot military post near Hebron. Land belonging to the Palestinian residents of Dura is being confiscated for the transformation of the military camp into a settlement. *Al Hayat, Al Jadida*

July 19 Three Palestinians, including an infant, are killed and five are injured in a drive-by shooting near Hebron. An organization calling itself "The Committee for

SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

Safety on the Roads” claims responsibility. *Ha’aretz*

July 23 An 18-year-old Israeli is kidnapped from Pisgat Ze’ev and murdered.

A Fatah group claims responsibility. *Arutz 7*

Ten percent of small and medium-size settler enterprises have closed since October 2000 and an additional thirty percent have stopped conducting business. *Ha’aretz*

July 26 According to the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Law and the Environment (LAW), Israel has demolished 249 homes and destroyed 12,370 trees since September 2000.

A 17-year-old Israeli is killed by gunfire while traveling on the Jerusalem-Givat Ze’ev road. *The Jerusalem Post*

Ha’aretz reports that sales of apartments in Har Homa have significantly risen, following the Housing Ministry’s decision to grant special incentives to prospective buyers. Overall, 730 homes in the settlement have been purchased.

July 28 According to the *Independent*, the 35,000 Palestinians living in the Israeli-controlled sector of Hebron have been under curfew for more than 128 days since last September.

July 29 *The Telegraph* reports that since Palestinians began firing at Gilo from Beit Jala in October 2000, 500 buildings in Beit Jala have been damaged, five people have been killed and more than a hundred wounded in Israeli retaliatory attacks.

July 31 Palestinians fire 26 mortar shells and detonate 100 hand grenades at several settlement communities in Gaza. *Ha’aretz*

Ma’ariv reports that the IDF has requested \$80 million to defend settlements along the Green Line. The funds will be used to purchase thousands of bulletproof vests and security rooms for protection against mortars.

Eli Malka, deputy mayor of the Golan Regional Council, notes, “This has been our best year in the past 15 years—in terms of construction, development, population, tourism, and general serenity. The cloud of uncertainty that has been hanging over our heads for the past ten years has lifted, and there are now at least 14 communities in the Golan that are building and selling plots and

growing. In less than a year, we have absorbed over 300 new families, with more on the way. There is currently not one empty house in the Golan.” *Arutz 7*

August 2 *Arutz 7* reports Palestinian gunfire and grenade attacks against the towns of Beit-Chaggai, P’sagot, Susia, Nvei D’khalim and on the Ayosh junction. Mortar shells are launched at Ali Sinai and Kfar Darom. Ganim and Kadim are reported without electricity, in addition to having to rely on water from tanks supplied by the army. Israel Electric Company technicians refuse to enter PA-controlled Jenin to restore power.

August 5 Settlers occupy and enclose with a fence hundreds of dunums of Palestinian land east of Jaloud. *Hear Palestine*

Palestinians fire on a three-car convoy of settlers traveling near Alfei Menashe. A pregnant woman is killed and five other people are wounded. *Israel Line*

August 6 Israel closes off five large Palestinian towns (Nablus, Tulkarem, Jericho, Ramallah and Qalqilya) and partially closes off three others (Hebron, Bethlehem and Jenin) following the previous day’s shooting.

Official Palestinian sources report that Israeli occupation forces have razed and burned 3,669 dunums of agricultural land since late September 2000. They have also uprooted and burned 26,570 olive trees. *Palestine Media Center*

Israel opens a new settlement road to connect the Karmel and Ma’on settlements. *Hear Palestine*

August 7 A settler from the Jordan Valley is shot and killed while driving between Ariel and the Tapuach junction. *Jerusalem Post*

August 9 Elon Moreh settlers begin clearing Palestinian land in Banoun in preparation for settlement construction. *Hear Palestine*

One Israeli is killed by Palestinian gunfire between Einav and Avnei Hefetz, near Tulkarem. *Israel Line*

August 15 In southern Nablus, Israeli settlers attack Palestinian vehicles with stones and clubs and prevent their crossing at gunpoint. *Hear Palestine*

August 16 Israeli Defense Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer threatens to invade

Beit-Jala and confiscate homes he claims are being used to fire at the settlement of Gilo.

August 17 Israeli forces set up a six-meter-high fence around Husan village, along the bypass road leading to the Betar Ilit settlement. *Hear Palestine*

August 18 The Temporary International Presence in Hebron (TIPH) announces that it is suspending patrols to the area of the old city of Hebron because of settler assaults against its observers.

August 19 The Israeli construction company Mashov announces plans to develop 217 new dwellings in the Givat Ze’ev settlement. Prices will range from \$180,000 to \$280,000, and units will be ready for occupancy in June 2003. *Ha’aretz*

August 20 Settler set up four new caravans in Susia, south of Yatta. In the town of Dura, Israel bulldozes land for settlement expansion. *Hear Palestine*

A tender is published in *Yediot Aharanot* for the construction of 131 dwelling units in the East Jerusalem settlement of Pisgat Ze’ev.

August 21 The Sharon government transfers \$50 million to the Jerusalem municipality for infrastructure improvements in East Jerusalem, part of an effort to equalize services throughout the city. *Ha’aretz*

A Jerusalem official reports that 22 allegedly illegally built Palestinian homes have been demolished in 2001, compared to 17 during a similar period in 2000. *Yediot Aharanot*

Settlers are among the suspects in the poisoning of agricultural animals near the settlement of Itamar. *Ha’aretz*

August 22 *Ha’aretz* reports IDF statistics showing a marked decline in the number of shooting incidents in the occupied territories in the proceeding two weeks—shooting has been directed at IDF outposts rather than settlers and civilians.

August 23 *B’Tselem* reports that between January and August 20, 2000, Israel demolished 9 Palestinian houses in East Jerusalem and 12 in the rest the West Bank. During the same period in 2001, Israel demolished 25 houses in East Jerusalem and 99 in the West Bank. *Newsday*

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the Israeli national anthem, "Hatikva," and it would be to no avail.

In recent months Sharon has had one overriding objective—preventing the presentation of a U.S. plan establishing a framework for a resumption of diplomacy and offering an outline for its implementation. The events of September 11, and the early assumption that U.S. coalition building would necessarily come at Israel's expense, lent this objective even greater import. Sharon faced the prospect of an Israel isolated not only locally and regionally, but also strategically, from the most significant U.S. policy initiative since the Gulf War.

"There is a certain moment when you discover they are working behind your back," noted Sharon in early October, shortly after he astonished Washington by linking President George W. Bush's policies regarding Israel to Neville Chamberlain's appeasement of Nazi Germany.

The instructive example of former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir is closer in time and relevance to Sharon's personal experience. Shamir, who bowed to U.S. pressure not to enter the Gulf War, was forced to go to the Madrid peace conference in October 1991 before being defeated by Yitzhak Rabin who, unlike Shamir, championed the American initiative. Sharon, who viewed Shamir's undoing first hand, is determined not to suffer a similar fate.

Yet if the U.S. campaign against Osama Bin Laden had the potential to disrupt U.S.-Israel relations, it also presented Sharon with an opportunity to expand his campaign against Arafat and the PA.

On September 17, IDF chief of staff Shaul Mofaz declared, "Now, after the terrible injuries in the United States, we have to strengthen the delegitimization of the Palestinian Authority as a organization that encourages terror and gives it sanctuary, not to ease up on it.

"Immediately after the event," Mofaz continued, "I telephoned the American chief of staff with my condolences. He thanked me and said, 'Who but the Israelis can understand what is in our hearts.'"

Indeed, since September 11 Sharon's preferences appear to have been realized. The concern about a regional U.S. strategy prejudicial to Israeli interests has receded. Closer to home, fears of a U.S. negotiating roadmap for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict have been assuaged by entirely manageable statements from Washington, including Bush's "vision" of Palestinian sovereignty, and limited diplomatic initiatives lacking energetic

White House patronage. These developments have proceeded in tandem with growing U.S. sympathy with the operational elements of Mofaz's campaign of delegitimization, including extended incursions into Area A.

The only redline President Bush articulated at a December 9 meeting was to ask Sharon to refrain from deliberately harming Arafat. At a subsequent cabinet meeting, Sharon explained, "I promised Bush I would not touch Arafat, but I can get close to him."

Settlers were the first to advocate that Israel defeat the PA militarily. Over the months they have expanded the notion of "letting the IDF win." Today the settler agenda includes disarming all Palestinians, physically removing Arafat and the PA leadership, and reoccupying Area A cities in the West Bank. There are far fewer references specifically to Gaza, where 7,000 settlers are vastly outnumbered by more than

1 million Palestinians. After all Palestinian elements are disarmed, settler leaders propose that the IDF withdraw from Palestinian cities and, presumably, the Palestinians will be permitted to attend to their everyday, local affairs.

"I believe that Sharon too is interested in disarming the Palestinian Authority, but he believes that he is not strong enough to manage such a step. I fear that he will wait until 70 Jews are killed in one strike," observed Adiel Mintz, a settler from Dolev, near Ramallah, and the recently appointed director general of YESHA.

The Bush administration appears satisfied with a role that recalls the activity of U.S. diplomacy in the 1980s more than Washington's activism during the Madrid-Oslo period. This posture

has presented Sharon with unprecedented freedom to promote his own vision of the future. Within days of his meeting with Bush, Sharon redefined the PA as "an entity supporting terror" and declared Arafat to be "irrelevant." Removing the PA and Arafat from the equation deals a death blow to the entire diplomatic, security, and political framework established, with U.S. support, during the last decade.

Arafat has facilitated this process by failing to challenge Israeli policy in such a manner that would force Sharon to refashion his policies or compel the Bush administration to intervene actively on the Palestinians' behalf.

Sharon's intent to undermine the PA can be confronted. Until now, however, Arafat has not been up to the task, and the Bush White House has not been convinced of the need to do so. ♦

The claim of the left-wing that we have no alternative is wrong. We are not seeking an alternative, because we have a way, a path: The Land of Israel is all ours, and we have to settle it, and we must continue the process of the Jews' return to their land, as told in the Prophets. We have had the privilege to see the Land become more and more settled, and especially since the Six Day War, when we were allowed to return to the important sites of Jerusalem, Hebron, Nablus, Beit El, Jericho, and thank God, the verse is being fulfilled: "You, mountains of Israel, shall bring forth your bounty to the People of Israel who have returned here."

**Kedumim mayor Daniella Weiss
Arutz 7, November 18, 2001**



Source: *Yediot Aharanot*, December 16, 2001

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August 25 Palestinian gunmen kill two Israelis traveling on the Jerusalem-Modi'in highway. *Arutz 7*

August 27 YESHA announces that the settler population in the West Bank and Gaza has increased by 17,000 since August 2000, to a total of 227,000. *Arutz 7*

In response to Israel's assassination of Abu Ali Mustafa, head of the Popular Front For the Liberation of Palestine, the head of security for four Nablus area settlements is shot and killed. *Arutz 7*

August 28 After two weeks of relative calm, Gilo comes under renewed fire. Israel reoccupies Beit Jala, taking over a number of buildings reportedly used by Palestinians to fire at Gilo.

PA leader Yasser Arafat orders gunmen to stop shooting toward Gilo. *Arutz 7*

August 29 Settlers shoot at a Palestinian car driving near the Anatot military camp in Anata, northeast of Jerusalem, killing one civilian and injuring two others. An organization calling itself Elazar takes responsibility.

August 30 Israeli forces under the cover of heavy gunfire penetrate PA-controlled Abu Snaina, in Hebron. *Hear Palestine*

August 31 *Yerushalim* reports that a proposed electronic security fence around the settlement of Efrat will be financed in part through private American contributions. ♦

PLEDGE, continued from page 4

to remove from settlements like Yizhar and Itamar the potentially fatal designation as "isolated settlements." A similar logic is apparent in the Talmonim bloc, northwest of Ramallah. New settlement areas in the south Hebron hills and the Etzion bloc, on the other hand, appear aimed at making political statements about the vitality of the settlement enterprise.

Defense Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer declared on June 25, 2001, that 15 of these outposts were security risks and would be dismantled. The IDF reported in July that 12 outposts, most of which were uninhabited, had been evacuated voluntarily, including 5 that were subsequently occupied by IDF personnel. Peace Now reported in October 2001, however, that only one settlement site had been evacuated. U.S. sources confirm that an undetermined number of these outposts remained under settler control. At others, civilians were replaced by military personnel. Past experience suggests that civilians will eventually return to these sites.

"Our position is simple," explained Pinchas Wallerstein, head of a regional council of settlements in the central region of the West Bank. "Outposts that arose for security purposes, which the army is willing to take over, we have no

New Settlement Outposts

Year	New Outposts
1996	8
1997	2
1998	13
1999	19
2001	29*

* Including one in the Gaza Strip.

objection to their removal. But regarding those that arose for settlement purposes there is no way that we will agree to evacuate them."

In early December, it was reported that more than 50 outposts will be connected to Israel's national electricity grid, a move described by *Kol Hazeman* as "another step in cementing their viability as [settlement] communities."

"An outpost is like a baby," explained Avigdore Leiberman, a member of Sharon's cabinet. "Connecting them to the electricity network is like growing teeth. Ehud Barak granted the outposts a seal of approval, and everything that has happened since is both natural and acceptable." ♦

COMMENTS ON THE CURRENT SITUATION

Bush Speaks on Palestine

The American government also stands by its commitment to a just peace in the Middle East. We are working toward a day when two states, Israel and Palestine, live peacefully together within secure and recognize borders as called for by the Security Council resolutions. We will do all in our power to bring both parties back into negotiations. But peace will only come when all have sworn off, forever, incitement, violence and terror.

Remarks by U.S. President George W. Bush
to the United Nations General Assembly,
November 10, 2001

Powell Calls for an End to Israeli Occupation

In the absence of peace, Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has been the defining reality of Palestinians' lives there for over three decades, longer than most of the Palestinians living there have been alive. The overwhelming majority of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza have grown up with checkpoints and raids and indignities.

Israeli settlement activity has severely undermined Palestinian trust and hope. It preempts and prejudges the outcome of negotiations and, in doing so, cripples chances for real peace and security. The United States has long opposed settlement activity. Consistent with the report of the committee headed by Senator George Mitchell, settlement activity must stop.

For the sake of Palestinians and Israelis alike, the occupation must end. And it can only end with negotiations. Israelis and Palestinians must create a relationship based on mutual tolerance and respect so negotiations can go forward.

Israel must be willing to end its occupation, consistent with the principles embodied in Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and accept a viable Palestinian State in which Palestinians can determine their own future on their own land and live in dignity and security. They, too, will have to make hard compromises.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin L. Powell,
excerpted from remarks at the
McConnell Center for Political Leadership,
University of Louisville, Kentucky,
November 19, 2001

The Link between Settlements and the Intifada

Taking strong issue with proponents of a harder line, Meretz lawmaker Ran Cohen, himself a reserve army colonel, said that, "after 14 horrific and terrible months of violence, with murderous terrorist attacks, we finally, finally were succeeding."

"There were three weeks in which the violence was down by nearly 95 percent. For some of the people in the government this was perhaps an uncomfortable situation. The government says it wants seven days of quiet, then it does everything it can to assure that there will not be seven days of quiet. Why? Because if there were seven days of quiet, it would have to freeze settlements—and the settlers, in fact, have this government by the throat."

Ha'aretz, January 16, 2002

Kurtzer Criticizes Settlements

On December 19, 2001, U.S. ambassador Dan Kurtzer, in a speech at an Israeli economic conference, said that Israel needs to invest money in its future, in infrastructure and the development of Arab Israelis, and not in areas that do not contribute to its economy, such as settlements.

Ha'aretz, December 20, 2001

The Golan Is Booming

Eli Malka, deputy mayor of the Golan Regional Council, notes, "This has been our best year in the past 15 years—in terms of construction, development, population, tourism, and general serenity. The cloud of uncertainty that has been hanging over our heads for the past ten years has lifted, and there are now at least 14 communities in the Golan that are building and selling plots and growing. In less than a year, we have absorbed over 300 new families, with more on the way. There is currently not one empty house in the Golan."

Arutz 7, July 31, 2002

YESHA's Ideological Offensive

First and foremost we need to free ourselves from the conception that "occupation corrupts." Most of the people do not want to be "occupiers" or "destroyers." We will embark on a massive campaign of conceptual change that will explain that we are not occupiers of Judea and Samaria [the West Bank], because a people cannot be occupiers in its own country. The People of Israel returned to its country and they call the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria "colonies!" Take the most moral and just idea and turn it into something that is the least moral and just. This is a distortion of the Zionist idea. We need to return to the fundamentals.

Adiel Mintz,
director-general of
The Council of Jewish Communities in
Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District [YESHA],
Kol Hazeman, December 21, 2001

CONFERENCE OF HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE FOURTH GENEVA CONVENTION: DECLARATION

A conference of High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention concerning the application of international humanitarian law in the occupied Palestinian territories took place in Geneva on December 5, 2001.

The four Geneva Conventions were adopted in 1949 by the representatives of 48 states convened at Geneva. They are today one of the major sources of international humanitarian law and they are binding upon 189 signatory states. The Fourth Convention aims at protecting the civilian persons in enemy hands, notably those residing in occupied territories.

3. The participating High Contracting Parties reaffirm the applicability of the Convention to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem and reiterate the need for full respect for the provisions of the said Convention in that Territory. Through the present Declaration, they recall in particular the respective obligations under the Convention of all High Contracting Parties (para 4–7), of the parties to the conflict (para 8–11) and of the State of Israel as the Occupying Power (para 12–15).

5. The participating High Contracting Parties stress that the Fourth Geneva Convention, which takes fully into account imperative military necessity, has to be respected in all circumstances.

6. The participating High Contracting Parties see the need to recall basic humanitarian rules with regard to persons taking no active part in the hostilities, which shall be treated humanely without any discrimination, and to recall the prohibition at any time and in any place whatsoever of acts of violence to life and person, torture, outrages upon personal dignity and of arbitrary or extra-judiciary executions.

8. The participating High Contracting Parties call upon the parties to the conflict to ensure respect for and protection of the civilian population and civilian objects and to distinguish at all times between the civilian population and combatants and between civilian objects and military objectives. They also call upon the parties to abstain from any measures of brutality and violence against the civilian population whether applied by civilian or military agents and to abstain from exposing the civilian population to military operations.

The conference was attended by 122 participants, of which 114 were High Contracting Parties and 8 others were participants and observers. Three of the 189 High Contracting Parties, including the U.S. and Israel, declined to take part in the Conference.

The Conference published a Declaration reaffirming the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem. The Declaration, excerpts of which are published below, was supported by all the participating states, and thus constitutes a reference document representing a broad consensus of the international community.

12. The participating High Contracting Parties call upon the Occupying Power to fully and effectively respect the Fourth Geneva Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to refrain from perpetrating any violation of the Convention. They reaffirm the illegality of the settlements in the said territories and of the extension thereof. They recall the need to safeguard and guarantee the rights and access of all inhabitants to the Holy Places.

13. The participating High Contracting Parties call upon the Occupying Power to immediately refrain from committing grave breaches involving any of the acts mentioned in art. 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, such as wilful killing, torture, unlawful deportation, wilful depriving of the rights of fair and regular trial, extensive destruction and appropriation of property not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly. The participating High Contracting Parties recall that according to art. 148 no High Contracting Party shall be allowed to absolve itself of any liability incurred by itself in respect to grave breaches. The participating High Contracting Parties also recall the responsibilities of the Occupying Power according to art. 29 of the Fourth Geneva Convention for the treatment of protected persons. ◆

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INTIFADA REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS OCTOBER 2000–DECEMBER 2001

Firing incidents at settlements	736	Injuries to Israelis within Israel	443
Firing incidents at Israeli vehicles	1,369	Reported breaches of law by settlers:	
Mortars fired at Gaza settlements	600	West Bank	140
Incidents involving grenades	778	Gaza Strip	10
Roadside explosive devices	447	Apartment sales of new apartments in the West Bank and Gaza Strip January–August 2001 [5 percent of national total]	507
Palestinian civilians killed by Israeli civilians One was an infant.	13	New housing starts in settlements—January–June:	832
Israeli civilians killed in the Occupied Territories by Palestinians Nine were minors under the age of 17.	83	Settler Population (excluding East Jerusalem):	
		January 1, 2002	213,672
		January 1, 2001	203,067
Injuries to Israelis in Occupied Territories	555		

It is incumbent on all parties to create the optimal conditions to defeat terror. A determined decision to fight terrorism entails facilitating and enabling the efforts of the Palestinian Authority to this effect. It cannot be achieved by targeting the PA, its institutions, and leaders. Other measures, such as the collective punishment or re-occupation of a civilian population, land confiscations, and assassinations are also detrimental to this end, self-defeating, and inherently wrong. The deplorable phenomenon of suicide bombers has to be decisively stopped.

The elected leaderships on both sides remain the relevant addresses for a peaceful resolution. A unilateral resolution by one party does not alter the fact that the PA and Israel are the only partners for peace.

From an open letter to the EU presidency on the occasion of the Laeken Summit December 14, 2001, signed by Israelis MK Yossi Sarid, chairman of the opposition, the Meretz Party, and Yossi Beilin, former justice minister, the Labor Party; and Palestinians Yasser Abed Rabbo, PA minister of information and culture, and Dr. Nabil Sha'ath, minister of planning and international cooperation