

REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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SHARON'S UNILATERAL "DISENGAGEMENT" FROM GAZA

By Geoffrey Aronson

Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon's plan for a unilateral evacuation from the Gaza Strip, along with the possibility of a more limited withdrawal in the West Bank, is now at the center of diplomatic attention.

Sharon's idea marks a turning point in the history of Israeli occupation policy. Most significant, the Gaza Strip [but not the West Bank] has joined the Sinai and Golan as areas where Israel is prepared to endorse evacuation of settlements and military withdrawal as a means of *enhancing* Israeli security.

The plan, details of which are now being developed by a interministerial team working out of Sharon's office, has supplanted the troubled road map, heralded by U.S. president George W. Bush less than one year ago, as the core of U.S. policy.

If the Bush administration is not pleased by Sharon's successful effort to assert control of the diplomatic agenda, it is prepared to accommodate his preferences as long as they are portrayed as consistent with the "vision" of two states announced by Bush two summers ago. One could build a wall through the West Bank 600 kilometers long, as Sharon is doing, and still have plenty of room under the tent created by Bush's ambiguous support for a "Palestinian state." The embattled Sharon, who has long trumpeted his preference for Bush's "vision" speech rather than the road map with its demand to freeze settlement expansion and dismantle new settlements, can find great satisfaction in replacing the road map.

Basic details of Israel's vaunted "disengagement" plan have yet to be finalized, offering third parties a window of opportunity to influence the particulars, if not the thrust, of Sharon's intentions. Israel is refining its ideas with the United States rather than negotiating them with the Palestinian Authority, which the two parties have turned into a moribund shadow of its former self.

For the meantime, Palestinians face a predicament that they have not experienced in such force since the 1980s. They are more than ever objects in this diplomatic game, not its agents. Nevertheless, in any initiative there is opportunity not only for the protagonist, but also for players like the Palestinians, Washington, and even the Europeans to mold it to their own purposes. Sharon may have the reputation of a bulldozer,

but his long history also suggests that he can be compelled to modify his program if others with competing interests show as much determination as he does.

The map on pages 4 and 5 reflects the complex elements and uncertainties that characterize the current situation. The extent of Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip has yet to be determined, but Sharon's intention to end Israel's occupation of that area suggests a complete withdrawal, including the settlement bloc in Gaza's northwest corner and along the international border with Egypt. The extent of Israel's anticipated evacuation of West Bank settlements is even less clear, beyond the removal of three or four locations in the Jenin region. A decision to increase the relative contiguity of the shrunken Palestinian state Sharon envisions will require the evacuation of settlements in the Hebron area.

Sharon may be frustrated in his decision to "shorten the lines" that Israel defends. His plan for a disengagement from Gaza may be sabotaged by any number of visible or unanticipated obstacles. Yet he has changed the face of Israel's occupation by acknowledging that Israel "has nothing to look for in Gaza," and that its settlements and soldiers there endanger rather than augment Israeli security. As important a milestone as it is, an end to Israel's occupation of the Gaza Strip requires a corresponding change in policies in the West Bank for its advantages to be realized. ◆

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Also in this issue:

Settlement Budget	3
Israel's Disengagement Options	4-5
Settlement Time Line	6-7

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TO OUR READERS

Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon's determination to proceed unilaterally on a Gaza withdrawal is fraught with problems. Unless there are agreed upon arrangements for the resumption of full control of administration and security by the Palestinian Authority, border control, an orderly hand over of settlement properties, and cooperation on a host of other practical matters, Gaza could be a continuing focus of violence and disorder.

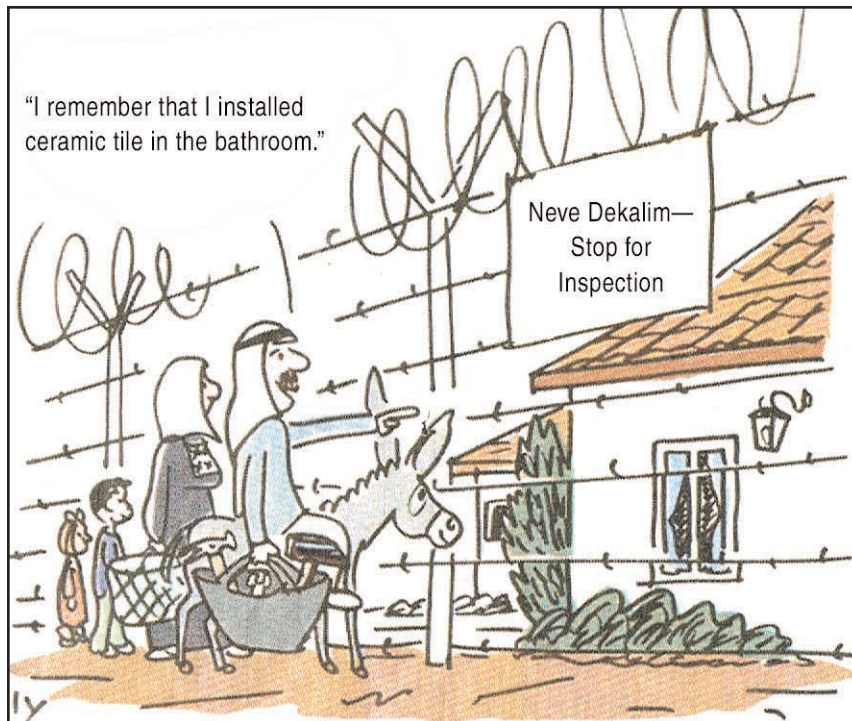
Sharon justifies his plan to act unilaterally in Gaza and elsewhere with the false claim that "there is no partner" for negotiations. Washington has abetted Sharon's strategy by joining in the demonization and humiliation of Yasser Arafat without taking steps to engage and strengthen his hapless prime ministers hoping naively that a more compliant Palestinian leadership will emerge.

For the United States, this variant of "regime change" has been an utter failure. Of course, Arafat is a problematic leader, as

is Sharon, but Arafat's unique role in Palestinian politics cannot be ignored. Doing so further enfeebles the Palestinian Authority, shields Arafat from the need to make decisive choices about peace with Israel—which he has not had to confront—and helps him shirk responsible governance. By acquiescing in the premise that Arafat is the main problem, Washington enables Sharon to forge ahead with his self-serving unilateral approach on the pretext that there is no one with whom to negotiate and to ignore Israel's reciprocal obligations under the road map. The most dangerous manifestation of Sharon's unilateralism is the rapidly expanding separation barrier. This grotesque effort to dominate the Palestinians, preserve Israeli settlements, and foreclose negotiations, darkens the prospects for a real peace between two sovereign states.

Philip C. Wilcox, Jr.

House Hunting in Gaza



Ha'aretz, February 8, 2004

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BILLIONS SPENT ON SETTLEMENT EXPANSION

The non-military cost of Israeli settlement policy since June 1967 exceeds \$10 billion. This sum is a conservative estimate, which excludes all military-related expenses and extensive settlement and related investments in East Jerusalem, where close to 200,000 Israelis now reside, and in the Golan Heights, where Israeli assets were valued at approximately \$10 billion during the mid-1990s. Furthermore, this sum reflects, in large part, only the incremental costs of government civilian expenditures in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

over and above the cost of similar expenditures in Israel.

The figures below are drawn largely from a study of Israeli expenditures in the West Bank and Gaza Strip published by *Ha'aretz* on September 26, 2003. The methodology of reporting only the incremental costs of many government outlays was devised by the newspaper, perhaps in an effort to highlight the marginal costs associated with Israel's settlement policy. Many items below, however, reflect actual, absolute expenditure.

Settlement Costs (excluding East Jerusalem) in U.S. Dollars

Settlement expenditures since 1967 ¹	10 billion
Average annual incremental cost ²	560 million
Government investment in construction (1999) ³	145.5 million
Extraordinary subsidies for Jordan Valley settlements ⁴	89.5 million
Income tax benefits for settlers (2001) ⁵	29.1 million
Income tax benefits (13%) in 60 settlements (2003) ⁶	22 million
Civilian spending per settler (annually)	2.24 thousand
Road construction (2001)	89.6 million
Education (annually)	22 million
Healthcare (annually) ⁷	16.8 million
Electricity infrastructure (annually)	18 million
Water infrastructure (annually) ⁸	11.2 million
Industry development (annually)	9 million
National lottery (annually) ⁹	6.7 million
Tourism development ¹⁰	2.8 million
Housing (annually) ¹¹	98 million

Military Spending Estimates in U.S. Dollars

National defense budget (2003)	9.7 billion
Separation barrier construction budget (2004) ¹²	1.3-2.6 billion
IDF deployment in the occupied territories ¹³	900 million
Direct/Indirect military expenditures on settlements ¹⁴	340-560 million
Settlement-based security activities (annually) ¹⁵	22-44 million
Perimeter defenses around West Bank settlements	11.2-16.8 million

1. Refers to total marginal cost of settlements since 1967. In the 1980s, for example, the incremental amount spent annually on the settlements reached \$223 million. In the 1970s, the annual expenditure was \$112 million.

2. Refers to the annual additional cost for the building of settlements, employment and education of settlers.

3. Throughout the 1990s, there were 32,560 housing starts, with a total investment of \$2.6 billion.

4. Refers to non-military government investments in these settlements.

5. This benefit was canceled in 2003 but was extended and increased for 60 settlements and outposts.

6. Settlements are selected by the Defense Ministry.

7. This item includes spending by the Health Ministry, the four health maintenance organizations (HMOs), Magen David Adom emergency medical services, and the Israel Defense Forces medical corps (which also treats many injured civilians). Other costs include expenditures on bulletproofing vehicles, transportation in bulletproof medical vehicles, laboratory equipment and tests, guarding the HMO clinics, and higher wages in some cases for physicians working in the occupied territories.

8. The water infrastructures in the occupied territories are more expensive than those in Israel, based on meter of pipeline per capita. The primary explanation is that for security reasons, all of the pipelines conveying water to settlements are buried, which translates into a higher cost per meter.

9. The lottery transfers funds to local settlement authorities.

10. Includes projects approved in 2002 by the Tourism Ministry for implemen-

tation during 2003.

11. Over the course of 2002, some 1,000 housing units were sold in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The average grant per apartment was \$15,600, which translates into \$15.6 million for the year.

12. Includes the barrier, surrounding ditches, surveillance, electronic devices, and passages. If the barrier followed the Green Line, it would cost approximately \$780 million.

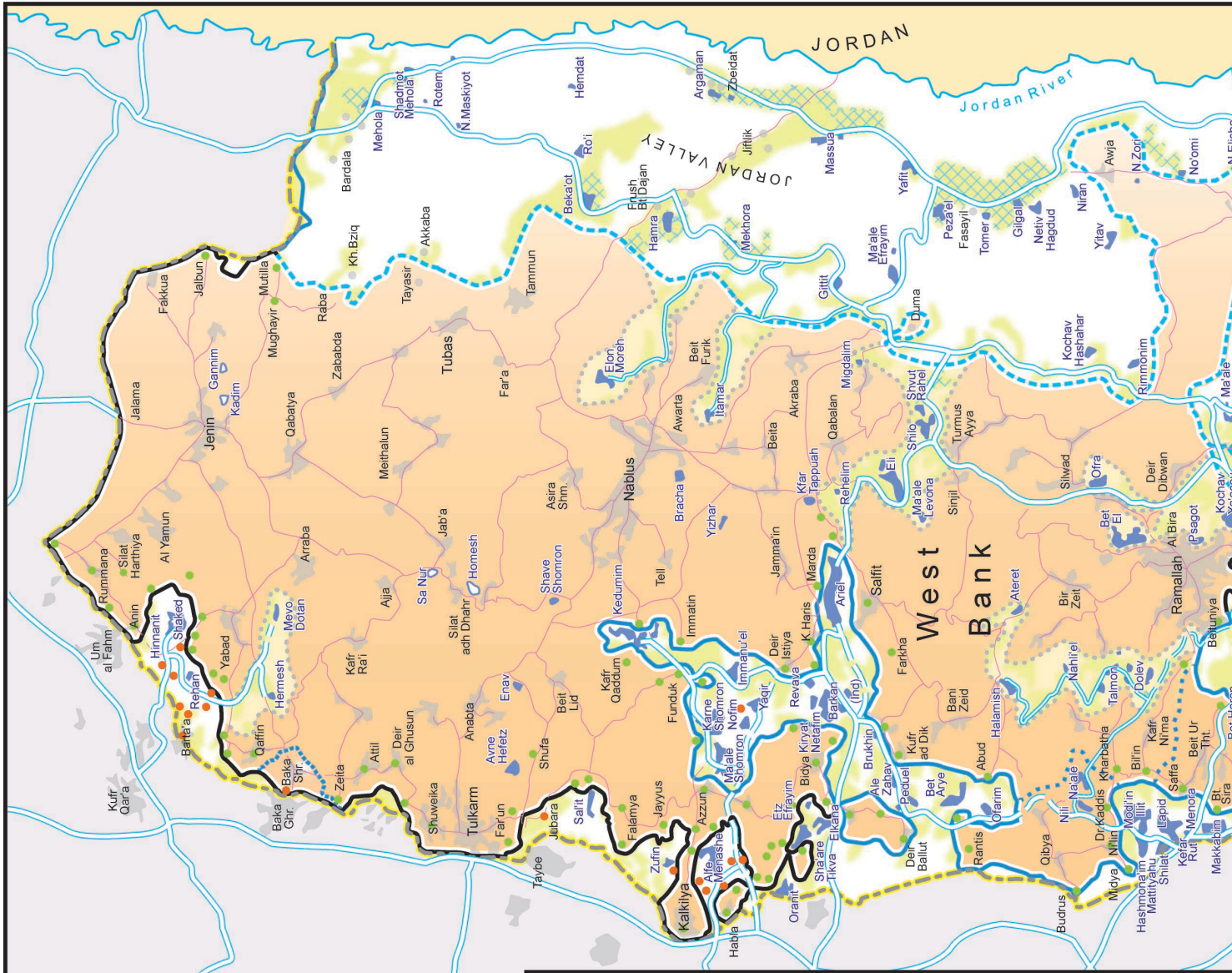
13. This figure refers to the annual cost of maintaining approximately 10,000 troops in the occupied territories during the al-Aqsa Intifada. It is an increase from \$450 million before the Intifada.

14. These expenditures are by the Defense Ministry. This calculation does not include the considerable non-military expenditures that are funded through the defense budget and which do not appear in the information above. It also does not include the considerable expenditures for combating the al-Aqsa Intifada that are not directly related to defending the settlements.

15. These costs include the salary and vehicle expenses for the security coordinator on each settlement. There are about 200 of these positions, paying salaries of \$1,300-1,500 per month. Other security-related expenses incurred by the settlements and funded by the ministry include bulletproofing vehicles, personal protection (weapons and bulletproof vests), building fences, lighting systems, and paving emergency roads and alternative routes to each settlement.

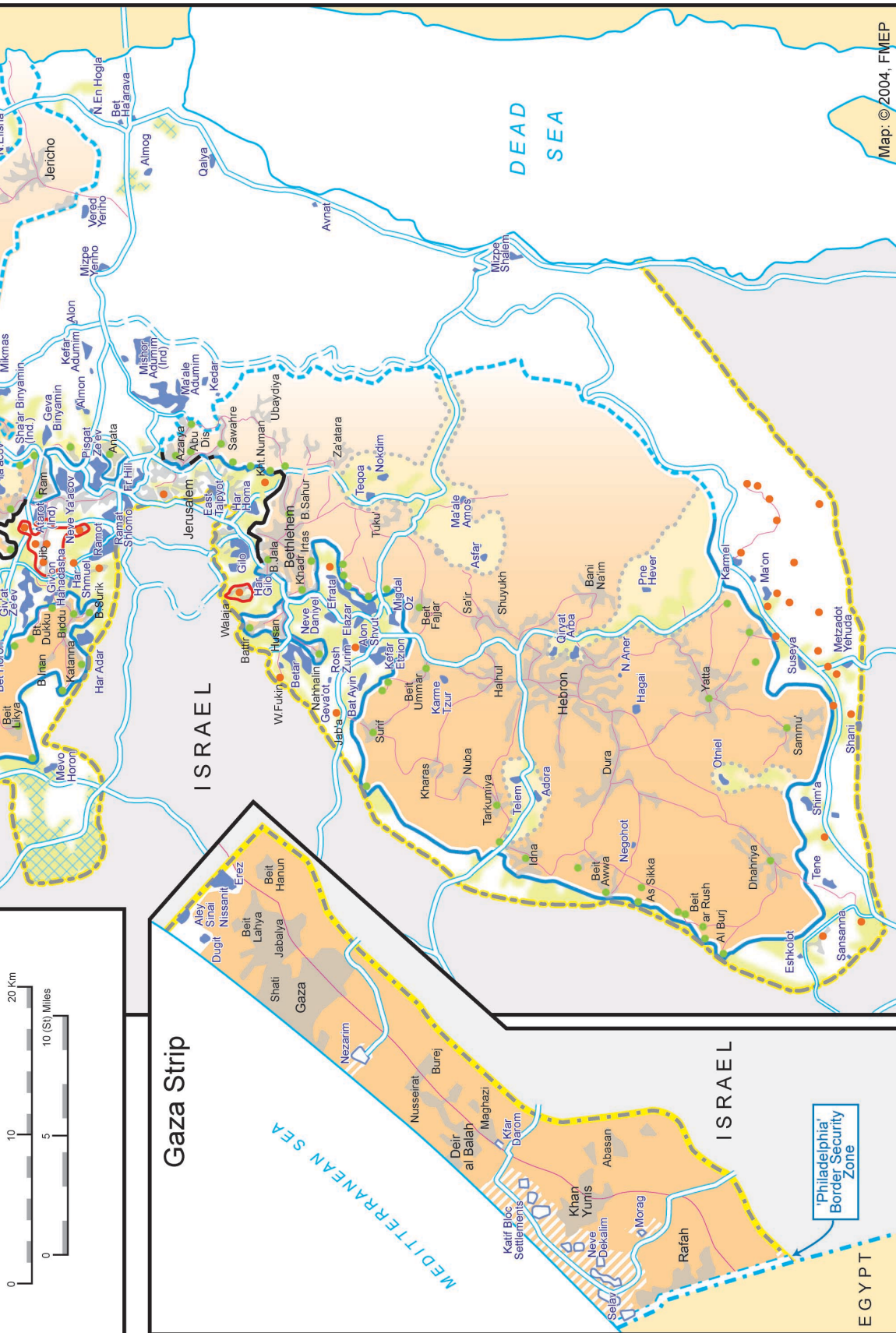
*Compiled by Alise Coen.

Sources: *Ha'aretz*, New Year Supplement: "The price of the settlements," 26 September 2003; *Mideast Mirror*, "Paying for the Golden Calf," 11 May 2003.



Israel's Disengagement Options 2004

LEGEND	
	Green Line Boundary
	International Border
	Completed Israeli Barrier
	Approved Israeli Barrier
	Barrier being dismantled
	Barrier to be cancelled
	Approved Fenced Palestinian Enclave
	Projection of IDF-Recommended Eastern Barrier
	Optional Barrier Extension
	Israeli Settlement
	Israeli Settlement to be evacuated in the Sharon Disengagement Plan
	Highway and Settlement Access Road
	Projected Settlement Access Road
	Palestinian City
	Palestinian Village behind the Barrier
	Palestinian Village cultivating land behind the Barrier
	Palestinian Cultivation in Settlement Bloc
	Israeli Settlement Cultivation



Map Available

Israel's Disengagement Options — 2004

Contact the Foundation for a copy of this color 12 inch x 15 inch map.

SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

November 3 Olive trees are found cut near the settlement of Mitzpeh Yitzhar. Responsibility for the vandalism focuses on the settler population nearby. Arutz 7 reports that left-wing Israelis and the Palestinian owners may have manufactured the incident as a provocation.

The UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) annual report notes a 25 percent malnutrition rate and a 60 percent poverty rate in Gaza. In addition, 12,700 people have lost shelter due to demolitions in Gaza in 2003.

November 4 Arutz 7 reports that an average of 20 shells and rockets have been fired in Gaza at Israeli targets each week since September.

November 5 Hundreds of Palestinian olive trees are cut down in the West Bank despite Israel Defense Forces (IDF) instructions to soldiers to protect groves and harvesters. The YESHA Council and its Council of Rabbis condemn the vandalism. (*Mideast Mirror*)

The Israeli Construction and Housing Ministry reports a YESHA plan showing a projected increase in settlers by 18,000 during 2004, with 36,000 expected by the end of 2005. (*Ma'ariv*)

Ha'aretz reports that a U.S. team examining the path of the security barrier near the settlement of Bet Ayreh is not convinced that construction in this area is necessary to prevent missile attacks against airplanes landing at Ben Gurion Airport.

Yediot Aharanot reports that according to Jordanian calculations, 150,000 Palestinians, 8 percent of the population, have left via Jordan River bridges during the three year intifada and have not returned.

November 10 *Ma'ariv* reports an increase in sales of residential units in settlements west of the separation barrier, which also enjoy cheaper Palestinian labor than projects in Israel. A plot of 350m² that sold for \$80,000 before the intifada is now selling for \$60,000, including a decrease in price of \$2,300 in the preceding six months.

November 11 The UN releases a report stating that only 11 percent of the planned 430-mile separation barrier will follow the Green Line. The barrier will disrupt the lives of 680,000 Palestinians and place 14.5 percent of the West Bank west of the barrier. (Associated Press)

Yerushalim reports that a Palestinian businessman from Azariya has opened a business supplying gas canisters in the Atarot Industrial Zone in East Jerusalem. The completion of the Begin highway, which leads to the industrial zone and establishes a secure transport link to Israel, has heightened interest in the facility.

Ma'ariv reports the Settlement Department of the World Zionist Organization publishing a \$6 million tender for the purchase of 250 mobile homes for settlements.

November 12 UNRWA reports that 189 houses in the Rafah refugee camp were destroyed between October 1 through 20, leaving 330 families homeless. The cost of the damage is estimated at \$9.5 million.

The Prime Minister's Office announces that for "political reasons" Israel will not be implementing a plan to create a connection between the settlement of Kiryat Arba and the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron.

Israel begins construction on the third stage of the security barrier, which is to proceed south from the settlement of Elkana to Carmel, southeast of Hebron.

November 13 Four villagers from Machmas, which neighbors the West Bank settlement of Mikhmas, petition the High Court of Justice against Israeli defense minister Shaul Mofaz for granting legal status to the outpost of Neve Erez, which is built on land that IDF authorities agree belongs to the petitioners. Mofaz had announced that he would not allow outposts on private land, but the petitioners learned that he had included Neve Erez on a list of 10 outposts he wants the ministry to legalize in order to provide them with infrastructure and budgets. (*Ha'aretz*)

An internal government memo is said to admit Israel's failure to implement its obligations under the road map. The memo states that in evacuating West Bank settlements Israel has "sought in every way to whitewash their existence and build more." (*Sydney Morning Herald*)

November 16 It is reported that in the preceding month, the Ashdar company has sold six 330m² lots in the settlement of Alfei Menashe for \$60,000 each, including development costs. To date, Ashdar has sold 120 of 350 lots in the Green Line settlement. (*Globes*)

November 17 *Ha'aretz* reports a halt to the building of outposts after settlers reach a temporary agreement with defense authorities to stop building new ones in return for a freeze on the evacuation of existing ones.

November 18 *Ma'ariv* reports that a poll of Likud Central Committee members reveals that nearly a quarter are prepared to evacuate the Gaza settlement of Netzarim and that another 14 percent have no opinion.

November 20 IDF troops shoot and kill an armed Palestinian crawling toward Netzarim in a Palestinian Authority (PA) uniform. (Arutz 7)

November 21 Palestinians are reported to have fired more than 20 mortar shells at Gaza settlements, including Neve Dekalim, Netzarim, and Kfar Darom, in the preceding 24 hours. (Arutz 7)

November 22 *Ha'aretz* reports the killing of two Israelis near the village of Abu Dis, in Jerusalem's Kidron Valley, while guarding a construction site of the separation barrier.

November 25 The YESHA Council publishes newspaper ads likening Netzarim to the iconic Israeli towns of Negba and Tel Hai, due to the fear that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is serious about plans to evacuate isolated settlements. (Arutz 7)

The Bush administration announces that it will trim \$289.5 million from a \$9 billion package of loan guarantees for Israel to offset spending on settlement activities in the occupied territories. (*Ha'aretz*)

November 27 Israel's Defense Ministry declares 12 outposts "un-regulated" and announces that they will be dismantled once security conditions allow. In a report sent to Washington, the ministry notes that 90 outposts have been identified since November 2002. Forty-three were dismantled subsequently. The ministry told the Bush administration that there were 36 outposts remaining. (Arutz 7, *Yediot Aharanot*)

Israeli deputy defense minister Ze'ev Boim reports that his ministry is in the final stages of granting "legal" status to some West Bank outposts and the approval of a contract to expand the settlement of Negohot. (Associated Press)

November 28 UN secretary-general Kofi Annan releases a report condemning the

SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

construction of the separation barrier, stating that its construction is in violation of international law. (Associated Press)

December 1 In East Jerusalem Israel begins construction on a new settlement, Nof Zahav, which will include 550 housing units, a hotel, and schools, and will split the village of Jabal Mukabbar, home to 10,000 Palestinians. The project was approved in 1993 but postponed because of sensitivity surrounding construction and questions about the land's ownership. (Associated Press, *Yerushalim*)

Ha'aretz reports that two Israeli settlers from Yitzhar have been arrested as suspects in the destruction of 650 olive trees in the West Bank village of Aynbus.

December 3 Israeli housing minister Effie Eitam arrives at "Heroes Outpost" in Hebron, where settlers have maintained a continuous presence since 2003 despite several evictions. (Gush Shalom)

The Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group (PHRMG) reports that its "Settler Violence 24-Hour Hotline" has received more than 215 complaints since 2001. The Legal Unit of the PHRMG currently has more than 120 Palestinian cases involving crimes committed by settlers, including murder, assaults, and shootings.

Palestine Report announces plans by the Palestinian Union of Agricultural Work Committees to plant fruit and olive trees on 200 dunums of agricultural land in Gaza that had been destroyed by IDF incursions. The project has a \$100,000 grant from the Welfare Association.

Peace Now members and other activists clash with police during a demonstration against the construction of Nof Zahav, in Jabal Mukabbar, in East Jerusalem. (*Ha'aretz*)

Settlers and the IDF cooperate in dismantling two uninhabited settlement outposts, one at Ma'ale Rehavam and another near the settlement of Karmeit Tsur. (*Ha'aretz*)

Finance Minister Salam Fayyad presents the 2004 budget to the Palestinian Legislative Council and reports that poverty is above 60 percent, unemployment is at 31 percent, and exports are down 50 percent from 1999. In addition, damage to public structures and properties reached an estimated \$1.2 billion,

with total losses at \$7 billion during the preceding three years. Total expenditure in 2004 is estimated to reach \$1.7 billion and the total deficit \$890 million, or 27 percent of GDP. (*Palestine Report*)

December 5 *Ha'aretz* reports the IDF allowing Palestinian vendors to return to Hebron's central market, which had been closed for more than a year. Approximately 75 shops were closed "to protect the Jewish residents." The decision to reopen followed "new intelligence estimates and security procedures."

The Committee Against House Demolitions reports the destruction of 60 Palestinian buildings in Jerusalem during the first 11 months of 2003, almost double the 36 structures demolished during 2002. In 2000 nine were demolished, compared with 32 in 2001. (*Kol Hazeman*)

Yerushalim reports business owners in Kiryat Arba complaining that onerous regulations are forcing many to close their enterprises.

Kol Ha'ir reports that the Jerusalem Contractors Association has asked the Israel Lands Authority to make West Bank land near the city available for residential construction without issuing public tenders.

December 7 In response to Industry and Trade Minister Ehud Olmert's announcement that Israel will withdraw from most Palestinian areas, Sharon states that Israel will never withdraw from Hebron. He adds that the Ibrahimi Mosque/Macpelah Cave will also remain under Israeli control. (*al-Quds*)

Members of the Knesset's Legal Committee decide that Jerusalem will be described in future legislation as "the permanent capital of the Jewish people" rather than its current description as Israel's "united and complete capital." (*Ma'ariv*)

December 8 Following a UN General Assembly vote demanding a halt to the construction of the separation barrier, the assembly approves a resolution asking the International Court of Justice to rule on the "legal consequences" of its construction. The vote was 90 in favor, 8 opposed, and 74 abstentions. (Associated Press)

December 9 Settlers from Hagai, near Hebron seize 10 dunums of land from the neighboring village of al-Rihiyye. (*al-Quds*)

The Defense Ministry has agreed to pay \$340,000 in compensation to 75 Palestinian shop owners in the market near the Abraham Avinu settlement whose livelihoods had suffered from IDF actions taken after the killing of a Jewish infant in the city in March 2001. (*Ha'aretz*)

December 10 *Ha'aretz* reports settlers evacuating an uninhabited outpost near the West Bank settlement of Na'aleh. It is the fifth, out of six, outposts the IDF is to dismantle.

December 11 A Peace Now analysis of Interior Ministry data shows that the Israeli government's allocations to settlers in 2002 were more than double those for Israelis inside the Green Line. In 2002, four settlements in the occupied territories with a total of 85,000 settlers, received \$44.6 million, or \$520 per capita. In Israel, 66 municipalities with 5,475,000 residents received \$1.8 billion, or \$325 per person. Eleven local councils in the occupied territories with 53,000 settlers received \$47.3 million, or \$887 per person, and 144 local councils in Israel with more than 1 million residents received \$614 million, or an average of \$581 per person. (*Ha'aretz*)

A tender is published for 64 housing units in Pisgat Ze'ev. (Peace Now)

December 12 *Ha'aretz* reports the Binyamin Regional Council's plan to begin populating the Mitzpe Granit outpost, which was previously unmanned and known as Hilltop 468.

Seven Breslover Hassidim are shot and wounded as they leave Joseph's Tomb, in Nablus. IDF sources note that they did not have permission to enter the area. Since the beginning of 2003, the IDF has issued 30 citations for unauthorized entry to the site. (Arutz 7)

December 16 A tender is published in *Ha'aretz* for the construction of 180 housing units in Givat Ze'ev.

The Jerusalem annual statistical abstract notes that 39 percent of the city's population live in settlements in areas annexed to the city in June 1967. In 2002, 5,230 residents left for nearby West Bank settlements, compared to 4,200 in 2001 and 5,800 in 2000. (*Ha'aretz*)

SHARON'S 'SETTLEMENT FREEZE' FACILITATES UNPRECEDENTED CONSTRUCTION

Housing expansion in Israeli settlements continued at an unprecedented pace during 2003, increasing at a rate higher than anywhere in Israel. Compared to 2002, there was a 35 percent increase in housing starts in the settlements, excluding in East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, at a time when Israel's national housing market continued to shrink. For example, housing starts in the Tel Aviv region declined by 23 percent in 2003, and in Jerusalem they fell by 15 percent.

There were 1,849 construction starts in West Bank and Gaza Strip settlements in 2003 compared to 1,369 during 2002. More than one out of every fifteen dwellings begun in 2003 was located in West Bank or Gaza Strip settlements, according to a press release issued by Israel's Central Bureau

of Statistics on March 1. When settlement neighborhoods in East Jerusalem are included, the percentage increases to one in every ten. Construction starts nationally declined by 8 percent in 2003. Just 29,670 dwellings were begun last year, the lowest number since before the phenomenon of large-scale immigration from the Soviet Union began in 1989.

Most settlement expansion continues to occur in the larger settlements around Jerusalem and in those within easy commuting distance of the Mediterranean coast. Significant construction proceeds, however, in many settlements with populations of less than 5,000 that continue to grow at two to three times the national average. ♦

Our plan is to defend our land and our trees in a peaceful manner. Sometimes among our people there are a lot of ideas about what to do against the occupation. We here have chosen a different strategy. In the north, from Jenin until Budrus, there were Israeli and international demonstrators, supported by Palestinians. But here, we think that it's our problem and that we have to defend our land and do something, and the Israelis and international protesters are only supporting us. We're adopting a special strategy, a peaceful strategy. The Hamas here, too. In the beginning, they walked with their green flags in the demonstrations. After the first three demonstrations, we only carry the flag of Palestine. Everyone together. In a totally peaceful way. We also all agreed on one thing: We are not against the Israelis and not against the Jews and not against the soldiers. We are only against the occupation. We are against the bulldozers. And we in Budrus believe that killing is easier than crying. But just crying over the land isn't enough. A peaceful demonstration is stronger than killing. If you stand before the Israeli soldier, right beside him, you'll be stronger.

If someone asks: Why peaceful? I tell him: I've tried all the ways and the peaceful way works best. The worst thing is to kill the innocent. That's the worst thing in the world. They kill day and night and say that we are terrorists. But we need all the world to be on our side. I'm against killing people. All people, Jews and Arabs. I'm not afraid or ashamed to say that. That's why I'm demonstrating peacefully against the fence.

Iyad Ahmed Murar, a leader of protests in the village of Budrus against the security barrier, in "The Peaceful Way Works Best," by Gideon Levy, *Ha'aretz*, February 11, 2004

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