

# REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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## ISRAEL PREPARES TO LEAVE GAZA . . . AND REMAIN IN THE WEST BANK

April 20, 2005 was an unheralded date in the history of Israel's 38 year occupation of the Gaza Strip, but it is arguably the most important since the conquest of Gaza in June 1967. On this date, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) began dismantling the military infrastructure that is at the heart of the occupation, and whose presence enabled the creation of a parallel system of civilian occupation.

Throughout Israel's short history, civilian settlement and military power have been symbiotic elements of a unified strategic and political-territorial vision. The creation of settlements without IDF protection was viewed as impossible. Similarly, military occupation without settlements was hardly contemplated. When it was, as in Lebanon from 1978 to 2000, public opposition to the deployment of troops beyond Israel's borders forced the IDF to withdraw. Accordingly, the end of the story of Israeli settlements in Gaza was decreed when the IDF began withdrawing in April.

The evacuation of Gaza's settler population, now numbering less than 6,000, at least half of whom are children, will commence in earnest in August and should be finalized within a month. By year's end, Israeli military forces will bring their long sojourn in Gaza, almost certainly including the Philadelphi corridor along Gaza's border with Egypt, to an end, opening a new chapter for the Palestinian citizens of the area.

Why did the tremendous investment in securing Gaza during the decades since 1967 fail to assure Israel's permanent presence? Why do Israelis, particularly Israel's leadership, concede, as Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz's candidly observed, that Israel's settlement effort in Gaza was nothing less than a "historic mistake"? And what lessons does the retreat from Gaza hold for Israel's occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which are coveted by Palestinians as part of their rightful inheritance?

### A Change in Israel's Security Concept

Israel's impending withdrawal from the Gaza Strip is the latest example of a reassessment of Israel's national security requirements that began with the Israeli-Egyptian entente after the October 1973 war. Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai peninsula in 1982 reflected the conclusion reached by Israeli leaders that Israel's security could be *enhanced* by a new doctrine of withdrawal of its soldiers and settlers from Egyptian territory, particularly after the Israel-Egypt peace treaty ended the his-

torical threat of a land invasion by Egypt through Gaza. This change in doctrine occurred less than a decade after Moshe Dayan had famously declared that Sharm el-Sheikh without peace was preferable to peace without Sharm el-Sheikh.

Like the stalemate on the Egyptian front before the 1973 war, the occupation of Gaza after its pacification in the early 1970s was viewed by Israelis as entirely manageable and to Israel's advantage. Israeli leaders, however, never envisioned the settlement enterprise in Gaza as a tool for demographic engineering. Whatever dreams Israelis brought with them to Gaza in 1967 on this score were soon dispelled by Gaza's exploding population and the failure of half-hearted refugee resettlement schemes. Nevertheless, the demographic anomaly of more than a million Palestinians opposed by a few thousand Israeli settlers, who, defended by the IDF, controlled almost a third of Gaza, did not limit Israel's territorial appetite as long as Israelis could pretend that Palestinians had accepted their lot and the costs of occupation were deemed manageable.

The first Intifada that erupted against Israeli rule in the last days of 1987 forced Israel to confront the growing costs of occupation, and nowhere more so than in Gaza. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's disenchantment with Israel's rule over Gaza and the need for withdrawal is said to date to this era.

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## TO OUR READERS

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's belief that Israel must retain strategic control of the West Bank to protect its security, by keeping most of its settlements and forces there after its planned withdrawal from Gaza in August, 2005 is at odds with Israel's own experience and the lessons of history.

When Israel's settlement movement began after the 1967 war, Israeli critics were the first to warn that controlling the Palestinians through settlement and military occupation was a dangerous distortion of Zionism and a threat to Israel. In 1980, Professor Jacob Talmon, an Israeli authority on Zionism and nationalism, wrote a prophetic letter to then Prime Minister Menachem Begin warning that dominating and ruling a hostile population, as the French learned in Algeria, is "not practically possible, nor is it worth the price." "Political subjection, national oppression, and social inferiority" imposed on the Palestinians would be a "time bomb." "Let us not compel the Arabs to feel that they have become humiliated until they believe

that hope is gone and they must die for Palestine."

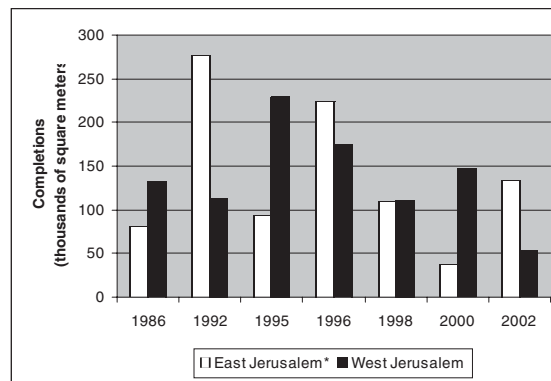
Talmon's warnings were prescient. Today, Palestinian rebellion against Israeli rule is the main threat to Israel. Occupation, settlements, and the resulting violence have taken a terrible toll in lives and resources. Sharon's assumption, described in this Report, that Israel can sustain the costs of defeating Palestinian aspirations for real statehood and a capital in East Jerusalem by unilateral actions supported by military force is a fantasy. Sharon's withdrawal from Gaza because of the unacceptable security costs of Palestinian violence, his opposition to basic Palestinian goals, and his unwillingness to negotiate, encourage Palestinian militants to believe that President Mahmoud Abbas' policies of non-violence, compromise, and negotiations are naïve and that they should prepare instead for the next intifada.

*Philip C. Wilcox, Jr.*

### Israeli Residential Construction Completions in West and East Jerusalem, Select Years, 1986–2002

Construction in Israeli sectors of East Jerusalem peaked in 1992, when it represented 71% of residential building in the city. This figure was due almost entirely to expansion in the settlements of Neve Ya'acov and Pisgat Ze'ev. Israeli construction in East Jerusalem reached a low in 2000, when it represented only 20.4% of residential building. Construction rose dramatically to 71.3% in 2002, focused mainly in the settlements of Har Homa and Pisgat Ze'ev.

There are no significant trends for construction in East Jerusalem as a whole. Different neighborhoods have experienced peaks at different times. This is consistent with Israeli construction methods, which target individual developments, in turn, for large-scale construction.



\* Settlement locales only.

Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem*, 1986, Table X/8; 1992, Table X/20; 1996, Table X/13; 1997, Table X/13; 2001, Table X/11; 2003, Table X/11.

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## DIVIDING THE LAND

Interview with Yonatan Bassi, head of Israel's Disengagement Administration, by Ari Shavit, *Ha'aretz*, July 8, 2005

**Q:** Yonatan Bassi, 40 days before disengagement, is it clear to you what we are facing? Can you tell me what is going to happen?

**Bassi:** "The scenario looks very clear to me. In the two weeks before the disengagement takes place there will be an exodus. The exodus from Gush Katif. The people who are now trickling out at a very slow pace will become a flow. Two days before 'D-Day,' the flow will become a tidal wave. And then, on August 16, there will be a great silence. In my view, when the Israel Defense Forces enters, it will be met by only about a third of the settlers."

"Ganim and Kadim [settlements in the northern West Bank] are already outside. They are all on the way to [moving to the Israeli town of] Afula. We have finished paying compensation to the great majority of their residents. Homesh (in the same area) is expected to move to Kibbutz Yad Hannah. The contracts have already been signed. In the northern area [of Gaza]—in Elei Sinai, Dugit and Nisanit—there are about 400 families who, in my estimation, will all leave voluntarily. What remains is Gush Katif. My assessment is that of the 1,100 families there, about half will leave before D-Day and the rest will stay."

**Q:** Meaning that of 8,000 settlers who are slated for evacuation, only about 2,500 will still be in their homes when the IDF knocks at the door.

**Bassi:** "Correct. But even among those who remain there are many who will board the buses without resisting. Many will be in a situation in which the entire contents of their homes will already have been removed. They will eat breakfast, there will be a knock on the door and they will leave. Very few will resist by force. . . . The one place where things might be different is in Sa-Nur [in the northern West Bank]. Something very bad is liable to develop there."

**Q:** You do not like the idea of demolishing the homes, either. Do you find it horrific, too?

**Bassi:** "I do not like the plan to demolish everything. I really do not like that plan. I do not understand why a Hamas flag on a heap of ruins is better than a Hamas flag on a house that is standing. Symbolically, it may even be worse. It is a kind of symbol of destruction. But in my view it goes beyond that. When all is said and done, we wanted the disengagement to carry some sort of message of a budding of reconciliation. We did not want the message to be one of Nakba ("Catastrophe," the Palestinians' term for what happened after 1948). But here they are going for a bulldozer solution. They are going to send the treads of the D-9 bulldozers over everything. I find that appalling. I find that contrary to history."

"Maybe I am naive. Maybe we need a whole generation of severance so that we can talk with the Palestinians. Still, I hoped that a solution would be found. That the Dutch would

pay or that the Americans would buy, so that the hothouses, at least, would remain. So the houses would remain. But now we are going to leave mounds of ruins behind us. We are going to leave behind us an area that will look like an atom bomb was dropped on it. With monstrosities of the twisted steel of the demolished hothouses. With the jutting silhouettes of the destroyed houses. What can I tell you—I think it is terrible. It is a nightmare. This is not what peace looks like; this is what war looks like."

**Q:** The trauma will not be confined only to these 8,000 particular settlers—it will affect the entire religious Zionist movement.

**Bassi:** "True. But there is a positive aspect to that, too. Since the Six-Day War, and more intensively since the Yom Kippur War, the national-religious public has undergone a dangerous process. It has rejected the rational element in the face of the irrational. Instead of going with [Prof. Yeshayahu] Leibowitz and understanding that the concept of 'am sgula' [a "chosen," "treasured" or "special" people; see Deuteronomy 7:6] is a demand, they went with Rabbi Kook and believed that am sgula is a promise. That we have the beginning of redemption. That we are promised that the third commonwealth will not be destroyed. That we are on track toward the Third Temple."

"I think one of the most important results of the disengagement is that it will force the religious Zionist movement to go back to making rational considerations. There will be a great crisis, a severe blow of faith. It is possible that we will see Haredization (a move to ultra-Orthodoxy) on the one hand, and the abandonment of religion on the other. But in the end, I believe that we will return to the correct balance between the rational basis and the irrational basis, between the metaphysical and the physical."

**Q:** What you're saying is that from your point of view, the disengagement is not only the evacuation of 25 settlements, but also a kind of huge act of education—an attempt to bring about the rationalization of religious Zionism.

**Bassi:** "Just so. We pray three times a day, 'May we see your return to Zion in mercy.' We want to return to the Land of Israel. But the question of whether it is the whole land of Israel or half the Land of Israel or a quarter of the Land of Israel is not a religious question. Nowhere in our sources, nowhere, does the concept of 'not one inch' appear. There is no imperative of 'not one inch.' On the contrary: The concept is one of proceeding slowly, of weighing things realistically. Even if you want Gilead (the biblical area east of the Jordan) to be yours in the end, even if you want Damascus to be yours in the end, you are charged with responsibility for the here-and-now. You are charged with responsibility for the reality in which you live. And if after all the horrors of the 20th century five million Jews have at long last gathered here, we all bear responsibility for them. We must not behave wantonly. And we must also not behave immorally." ♦

## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

**April 1** *Kol Ha'ir* reports that a local Jerusalem court decision has given Palestinian tenants 45 days to evacuate six apartments built on land in East Jerusalem's Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood that a Jewish benevolent organization claims to own.

*Yerushalim* reports that the Israel Lands Administration has issued a tender to construct 40 dwelling units at Har Homa. High bidders are expected to pay \$43,000—\$56,000 for each plot.

**April 4** *Ha'aretz* reports an Israeli plan to turn the largest quarry in the West Bank into a dumpsite. The dump operators plan to deposit 10,000 tons of garbage each month from central Israel. The government has yet to approve the plan. The company stands to earn a profit of \$14,000 per month.

**April 5** *Ma'ariv* reports that in an unprecedented development, the local council of the Etzion bloc and neighboring Jurat al-Shama are cooperating to reduce traffic fatalities along Route 60.

**April 6** Settlers in Hebron stone Israeli soldiers building a wall to protect the home of a Palestinian family driven out by settler harassment. Israeli police arrest eight settlers. (Reuters)

Palestinian shepherds from al-Tuwani, south Hebron, find pellets in the valley between the village and the Ma'on settlement. Preliminary analysis shows the pellets to be a rodenticide. Twenty-two sheep have died and 76 are sick from the poisoning. (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - OCHA)

**April 7** Israeli police close the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif to demonstrators from "10,000 to the Temple Mount," which supports an exclusive Jewish claim to the site. The Islamic Movement calls upon its supporters to protect the site from the demonstrators. The Israeli security service raises the level of alert in Jerusalem amid indications that extremist Jews are planning to attack the mosques on the Haram al-Sharif. (*Ha'aretz*, *Mideast Mirror*, *Arutz 7*)

**April 8** *Kol Ha'ir* reports that the security coordinator of Betar Ilit is under investigation for receiving bribes from an Israeli contractor, also a settler, to permit undocumented Palestinian laborers, including those who have served time for security offenses, to enter the settlement to work.

**April 9** The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) issue two land requisition orders for 69 acres for the construction of a security fence around the Israeli settlements of Avnei Hefetz and Enav. The IDF issues two orders preventing Palestinians from building on land between the settlements and the fence. (OCHA)

**April 10** Palestinians fire more than 80 rockets and mortar shells at Israeli settlements in the Katif bloc. (*Ha'aretz*, OCHA)

**April 12** The IDF acknowledges demolishing 362 Palestinian buildings constructed without authorization in Area C of the West Bank during 2004. (*Ha'aretz*)

**April 13** The IDF injures five Palestinians with rubber bullets during a demonstration against construction of the separation barrier and land confiscation in Bil'in village, in Ramallah. (OCHA)

**April 13–19** Palestinians fire 18 rockets at Israel and Israeli settlements inside the Gaza Strip. (OCHA)

**April 14** The Jerusalem municipality issues demolition orders for approximately 92 houses in Silwan, southeast of the Old City, on the grounds that they lack building permits. The order affects some 900 Palestinians.

**April 16** The *Jerusalem Post* reports that the Jerusalem police will take security responsibility for the Har Adar and New Givon settlements, which are beyond the Green Line and currently under the supervision of the West Bank police in charge of these settlements.

**April 17** The IDF removes two outposts recently built near the Israeli settlement of Kiryat Arba, near Hebron. (OCHA)

**April 19** The Israel Lands Administration issues tenders for the purchase of land slated for the construction of 50 single-family homes in the settlement of Elkana. *Hatzofe* also reports that Elkana plans to build 700 additional housing units, 300 of which have the necessary permits and another 300 that are in the final stages of approval.

The Israeli High Court rejects a petition from Palestinian shopowners on Hebron's Shalala Street to reopen their shops, which were closed following an IDF decision that the shops put the lives of nearby Jewish settlers at risk. The court suggests that the IDF

consider compensating the owners. (*Ha'aretz*)

Israel's High Court, petitioned by Palestinian village councils, issues temporary stop work orders on the separation barrier "finger" in the Ariel region. The 25 km fence is scheduled for completion by summer's end.

*Yediot Abaranot* reports that the occupancy rate in the Atarot industrial area north of Jerusalem has doubled to 60 percent after falling to 30 percent during the intifada.

**April 20** The IDF begins removing equipment from the Gaza Strip as part of its planned evacuation. (*Yediot Abaranot*)

It is reported that settlers in Mevo Dotan and Hermesh, near the settlements in the northern West Bank slated for evacuation, are asking that they, too, be evacuated. (Americans for Peace Now Middle East Peace Report)

**April 21** IDF soldiers fire rubber bullets and tear gas at demonstrators protesting construction of the separation barrier in Bil'in, injuring four Palestinians and two international activists. (OCHA)

**April 22** The IDF requisitions 29.24 acres from Palestinian landowners in Beit Surik for construction of the separation barrier. (OCHA)

**April 25** In Hebron, Israeli settlers attack a group of Palestinian students from a local girl's school. Fifteen of the girls are injured. (OCHA)

A group of Israelis from the Elon Moreh settlement beat and injure a 70-year-old Palestinian shepherd from the village of Beit Dajan as he grazes his sheep. (OCHA)

Amnesty International calls on Israel to investigate incidents of Israeli settlers contaminating Palestinian fields with poisons in the Hebron region. (BBC)

**April 26** In Jabaa village in Bethlehem, IDF troops distribute requisition orders for almost 20 acres of agricultural lands for construction of the separation barrier. (*al-Hayat al-Jadida*)

Newsweek reports that Jack Abramoff, an American lobbyist, has illegally transferred \$140,000 to settlers in the West Bank for the purchase of security-related equipment. (*Ha'aretz*)



## SETTLEMENT TIME LINE

**April 30** Five settlers are arrested and one soldier is injured after the IDF intervenes to prevent stone throwing by settlers at passing Palestinian vehicles near the settlement of Brackha. (*Ha'aretz*)

**May 2** The Israeli cabinet votes 13-7 to confer university status on Judea and Samaria College in the Ariel settlement, less than two weeks after British lecturers sparked controversy by declaring a boycott against Bar-Ilan University for its links to the West Bank college. (*Ha'aretz*)

The IDF proposes building a wall through Hebron to separate the Israeli-controlled area from the Palestinian-controlled area in an effort to ease tension between the sectors. The attorney general has yet to approve the plan. (Americans for Peace Now Middle East Peace Report)

**May 3** A settler from Kedumim chemically contaminates two agricultural water wells belonging to Palestinian farmers from Qalqilya. According to the village council, two horses die after drinking contaminated water. (OCHA)

**May 4** Attorney Hussein Ghanayem accuses the Jerusalem municipality and the Interior Ministry of attempting to execute a major demolition plan East Jerusalem, stating that 20 demolitions of homes have been ordered in Sur Bahir and 18 in Beit Hanina and Shufat. He claims to have evidence that more than 800 Jerusalemite families have received home demolition orders. (*al-Quds*)

**May 6** An antitank rocket is fired in the direction of an Israeli school bus next to Kfar Darom settlement. The rocket misses the bus. (OCHA)

Israeli police report that between January and May, 265 files were opened against West Bank settlers for violence against Palestinians and Israeli police or soldiers, compared to 174 cases during the same period in 2004. (*Ma'ariv*)

**May 8** An administrative detention order is issued against a settler from Yitzhar who opposes disengagement. IDF officials support the detention of scores of right-wing activists. (*Ha'aretz*)

*Ma'ariv* publishes a tender for the sale of 19 "build your own home" residential sites in the Golan settlement of Katzrin.

**May 9** Armed Israeli settlers attack a

Palestinian community inside al-Mawassi. There are no injuries, but two electricity pylons and a gasoline reservoir are damaged. (OCHA)

**May 4-10** At least 17 Palestinians (including six children), three Israelis, and three international activists are reported injured during a week of demonstrations against construction of the separation barrier in the village of Bil'in. (OCHA)

Israeli settlers attack Palestinians and their private property in the Old City of Hebron. Two Palestinians are injured. (OCHA)

Land leveling continues in Bethlehem, Hebron, and Jerusalem governorates in preparation for construction of the separation barrier. (OCHA)

Work continues on the separation barrier at the entrance to Bethlehem and along Road 60 between the Qalandiya and ar-Ram checkpoints. Land leveling to construct a new checkpoint is ongoing south of the current Qalandiya site and continues east of the Qalandiya checkpoint for construction of government offices, a parking lot, and a road. (OCHA)

**May 10** Israeli settlers from Alon Shvut close the only access road leading to almost five acres of agricultural land belonging to residents of Khamat Arfan. (OCHA)

Approximately 16 families are encircled by a fence placed around the Abu Nahiya area, south of Kfar Darom settlement. No vehicles are allowed in or out of the area, but the fence is open at all hours for residents traveling by means other than autos. (OCHA)

**May 11** Attorney Danny Seidemann files a petition with the Israeli High Court requesting that work and entry permits be issued to Palestinians owning agricultural lands in East Jerusalem who are barred from cultivating their lands due to the July 2004 reapplication of the 1950 Absentee Property Law. Attorney General Menachem Mazuz ruled previously that the law does not apply in this instance, but his order has yet to be implemented. (*Ha'aretz*)

Students from the Cordoba elementary girls' school are attacked by settlers in the Old City of Hebron. One girl is injured. (OCHA)

**May 12** Forty yeshiva students from the Elon Moreh settlement enter the Palestinian

village of Ein Bidan during a march to Homesh, one of the settlements slated for evacuation under the disengagement plan. Later, settlers believed to be from Yitzhar enter the village of Ruman, near Tulkarm, and refuse to leave when ordered to do so by the IDF. Palestinians open fire on them. No one is injured. (*Ha'aretz*)

**May 14** More than 12 acres of Palestinian land cultivated with lentils are set on fire by settlers from Ma'on settlement near al-Tuwani village. (OCHA)

**May 16** The Israeli High Court rescinds its April 19 order prohibiting construction of the separation barrier near the West Bank settlements of Ariel and Immanuel until the court's next session on the petitions against the building in that area. (Americans for Peace Now Middle East Peace Report)

The Associated Press announces that Israel plans to start construction by the end of May on the segment of the separation barrier that will surround the settlement of Ma'ale Adumim. The completed barrier will leave the West Bank's largest settlement bloc, and Ma'ale Adumim's 30,000 residents, on the Israeli side of the barrier.

Opponents of disengagement block traffic throughout Israel. The police arrest 292 demonstrators. (*Ha'aretz*)

Bank Mizrachi, which has granted the most private sector mortgages to Gaza settlers, petitions the Israeli High Court to force the government to pay the prepayment penalties on loans that will be closed early because of the disengagement. (*Yediot Aharanot*)

**May 17** The Israeli police arrest and later release three men from an ultra-right-wing Hassidic sect allegedly planning to attack the Dome of the Rock, the third holiest site in Islam. The police said the men were released because there was no evidence that they had taken any steps to carry out the attack. (*Sydney Morning Herald*)

**May 18** Hamas fires more than 30 mortars and antitank shells at Gaza settlements, prompting the first Israeli air attack on Gaza since January. (*Ha'aretz*)

**May 26** Israeli contractors begin leveling land for the construction of the separation barrier in the area of the Ariel settlement bloc. (OCHA)

## East Jerusalem Population and Area, 2000–2002

Israeli Settlement Locales	Population		Area (dunums)	Palestinian Locales	Population		Area (dunums)
	2000	2002			2000	2002	
East Talpiot	12,845	12,591	1,195	Abu Tur	12,987	13,651	658
Gilo	27,637	27,569	2,859	Hirbat Beit Sahur			1,078
Giv'at Ha-Matos	763	1,125	310	al-Tur	19,012	20,169	1,745
Har Homa			2,523	al-Sawana			851
Giv'at Ha-Mivtar	2,912	2,948	588	Atarot	20,620	21,909	3,327
Giv'at Shapira (French Hill)	8,193	6,631	2,018	Beit Hanina			5,294
Ma'alot Dafna	3,645	3,617	380	Bab al-Zahara	4,759	4,771	427
Neve Ya'akov	20,288	20,250	1,759	Beit Safafa	5,463	5,981	1,577
Old City (Jewish Quarter)	2,279	2,348	122	Eastern City	1,680	1,701	96
Pisgat Ze'ev	36,469	38,684	5,467	Har Ha-Mashhit	11,922	12,984	568
Ramat Eshkol	2,917	3,046	397	Ras al-Amud			694
Ramat Shlomo	11,348	12,822	1,126	Ir David (Brekhat Ha-Shiloah)	4,067	4,129	506
Har Ha-Hozvim			653	Isawiyya	9,966	10,703	2,394
Ramot Allon	37,934	38,992	4,979	Jabal Mukabar	12,859	14,050	2,949
Sanhedriyya Ha-Murhevet	5,018	4,994	378	Arab al-Sawahra			2,342
Total	172,248	175,617	24,754	Kafr Aqab	10,451	10,781	2,441
				Sharafat (al-Suhur)	936	978	8,939
				Shayk Jarrah	2,597	2,672	711
				Shu'afat	28,977	31,218	4,277
				Silwan	9,187	9,994	537
				Sur Bahar	10,677	11,757	5,333
				Wadi al-Juz	6,740	7,179	347
				Total	172,900	184,627	47,391

Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem*, 2003, Table III/13.

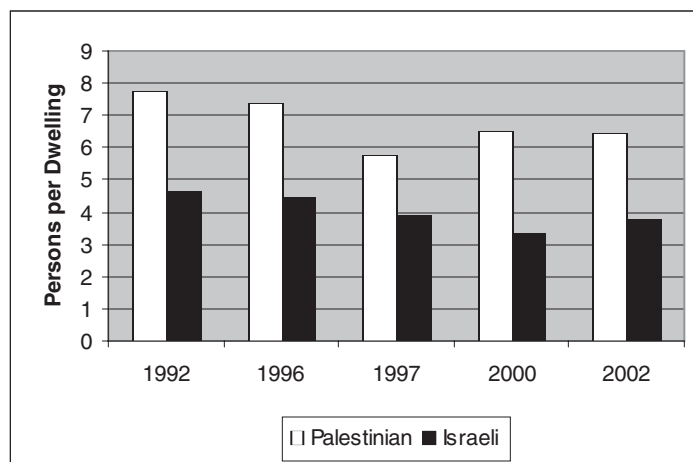
The Israeli population in East Jerusalem increased only 1.95% between 2000 and 2002, reflecting a loss of population in the settlements of Ma'alot Dafna, Sanhedriyya Ha-Murhevet, Neve Ya'akov, Giv'at Shapira (French Hill), East Talpiot, and Gilo. This low rate of increase is part of a trend of stagnation in the Israeli population of East Jerusalem.

The Palestinian population in East Jerusalem increased 6.78% over the same period. Despite continued Israeli efforts to limit growth, the Palestinian majority in East Jerusalem continued to increase. In 2000, Palestinians made up 50.1% of East Jerusalem's population; in 2002, that number increased to 51.25%.

### Israeli and Palestinian Population Densities in East Jerusalem, Select Years, 1992–2002

Population density is significantly higher in Palestinian neighborhoods—on average, 2.8 more persons per dwelling.

Higher densities in Palestinian neighborhoods are attributable to the relatively small size of privately owned building lots, discriminatory planning measures that ban construction more than three stories tall (and only two stories in most cases), and extremely difficult and slow processes for obtaining building permits.



Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem*, 1993, Table III/13; 1997, Table III/14; 1999, Table III/14; 2000, Table III/14; 2003, Table III/14.

The 1994 Gaza-Jericho agreement between Israel and the PLO transferred certain administrative and security functions to the newly created Palestinian Authority. The Oslo process, however, did not change Israel's status in Gaza as an occupying power, its ability to exercise military power, or its policy of settlement expansion. Rather, the Oslo understandings created a new diplomatic and operational framework for Israel to continue reaping what it still believed were advantages of overall control in Gaza without forcing it to modify the historic combination of military security and civilian settlement. Domestic, international, and indeed Palestinian pressure to reconsider Israel's status in Gaza disappeared after 1994. During the Oslo years the settler population in Gaza increased by almost 70 percent.

The perception that the Oslo arrangements reduced the burdens of Israeli rule in Gaza was short-lived. The historical record suggests, not surprisingly, that the increased security-related burdens and costs created by Palestinian rebellion that resumed during the 1990s and erupted with unprecedented intensity after September 2000 forced Israel to reconsider the advantages of continuing occupation. It was only in this context of increasing costs, and not only in human life, that references were made to the demographic folly of Israel's settlement enterprise in Gaza.

### The End of Occupation . . . in Gaza

Israel has been engaged for many years in an effort to relieve itself of the burden of responsibility for the everyday affairs of Palestinians under its rule without compromising its ability to exercise preeminent military control and settle the land. Sharon, however, is the first Israeli leader whose central, declared objective is "to free Israel in the international sphere, from responsibility for the Gaza Strip" by ending Israel's occupation there.

The plan to deploy Israeli forces permanently outside of Gaza, including a preference to surrender control of the Gaza-Egypt border to the Egyptian military, and the evacuation of all settlements, link Sharon's Gaza plan with the Sinai evacuation and Prime Minister Ehud Barak's more recent retreat from South Lebanon rather than the Oslo agreements of the 1990s. As in these cases, Sharon has confronted widespread skepticism that Israel's interests can be maximized by withdrawal rather than by occupation, and by evacuation rather than by settlement. His adoption of these policies, at odds with Israeli practice during its short history, is viewed by its proponents as *increasing* Israel's ability to deter Palestinian

attacks and if necessary to defend itself in the future.

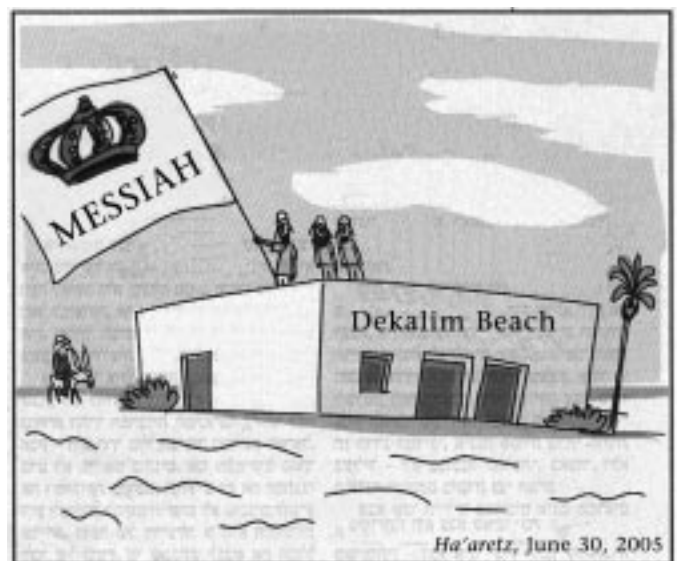
To ensure continued strategic dominance of the Gaza Strip, Sharon intends to use familiar instruments of border control with Gaza as well as a form of deterrence not unlike that which Israel has established vis-à-vis Hizballah along the Lebanese frontier.

Indeed, notwithstanding the draconian security regime imposed on the West Bank, according to Alex Fishman in *Yediot Aharonot*, "The assessment in the general staff is that around Gaza after disengagement, the Palestinians will have an interest in preserving calm so the main focus of the Palestinian fighting will be in the West Bank."

In contrast, the iron embrace between security and settlement in the West Bank appears unbroken. There is scant evidence that Israel is prepared to apply to the West Bank and East Jerusalem the dramatic change in doctrine that enabled the decision to evacuate Gaza or to countenance the creation of the territorial preconditions in these areas for the efficient and effective exercise of Palestinian authority. No alternative to occupation of the West Bank has proved acceptable to Israel's leaders as a means to protect prevailing concepts of national security. In this arena, the IDF is redeploying along the separation barrier and around the four small northern West Bank settlements on the evacuation list in order to *stay*. Most important of all, Israel views the costs of permanent occupation in the West Bank as manageable . . . for now. ♦

**So let it be absolutely clear: the Jewish settlements in the territories are a crime against Zionism. Zionism raised you [the settler leadership] and elevated you, and you have committed a crime against it. The evacuation of Gush Katif is the beginning of our redemption. When the occupation is over, Zionism will rise from the dust and recover and renew its strength.**

**Yossi Sarid, former Meretz chairman, in *Ha'aretz* June 29, 2005**



## Population and Dwellings in East Jerusalem, Select Years, 1992–2002

		Population		Dwellings	
		(thousands)	%	(thousands)	%
2002	Israeli Settlement Locales	175.62	48.7	47.0	62.3
	Palestinian Locales	184.63	51.3	28.5	37.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>360.24</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>75.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>
2000	Israeli Settlement Locales	172.25	49.9	50.9	65.7
	Palestinian Locales	172.90	50.1	26.6	34.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>345.15</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>77.44</b>	<b>100.0</b>
1997	Israeli Settlement Locales	161.58	51.2	41.5	60.9
	Palestinian Locales	154.12	48.8	26.6	39.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>315.69</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>68.10</b>	<b>100.0</b>
1996	Israeli Settlement Locales	160.40	48.1	35.7	60.3
	Palestinian Locales	173.20	51.9	23.5	39.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>333.60</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>59.20</b>	<b>100.0</b>
1992	Israeli Settlement Locales	124.40	48.8	26.8	61.5
	Palestinian Locales	130.70	51.2	16.8	38.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>255.10</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>43.60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: *Statistical Yearbook of Jerusalem*, 2003, Table III/13; Table X/12.

**“I traveled to Ramallah and I saw your [settlement] construction with my own eyes. It is not possible to operate in the territories in a manner that will change the situation before discussions on final status. True, the president promised the prime minister to consider the realities on the ground and concentrations of population—this is very important and the United States stands behind this commitment. But the president added that it is clear to all sides that the final borders will be determined only through negotiation. We cannot sanction creating a new reality on the ground by actions that continue today. I mean by this those activities in Jerusalem and its environs meant to change the reality on the ground. I saw these things with my own eyes and I am very concerned.”**

**“We want very much to support Israel in this critical period, and we recognize the sensitivity of the situation, but it is impossible to sanction the continuation of construction and its influence on the final border. This is very important to us. I traveled close to Ma’ale Adumim, and I saw the construction along the way.”**

United States Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in a conversation with Israeli foreign minister Silvan Shalom, as reported in *Ma’ariv*, June 26, 2005

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