

REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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NEWS

The protests and confrontations sparked by the killings in Hebron threaten to overwhelm the diplomacy of rapprochement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The *Settlement Report* is publishing in this issue articles that offer background information on the ideological milieu of religious settlers and the effect of the massacre on the Rabin government's policies toward settlers. (See page 1.)

Jerusalem's new mayor, Ehud Olmert, a former Likud minister, is charting out an aggressive settlement policy aimed at assuring permanent Israeli sovereignty in the annexed sector of the city. (See page 3.)

The Golan Heights is experiencing an unprecedented upsurge of settlement construction and investment. (See page 7.)

From time to time, the *Settlement Report* produces a section called "Settlement Snapshots," which aims at giving the reader a broad sense of everyday commentary and events in the territories. (See pages 4 and 5.)

Jonathan Kuttub, a Palestinian attorney with extensive experience in opposing Israel's settlement policy, provides important background on this issue. (See page 8.)

HEBRON KILLINGS FORCE SETTLEMENTS ONTO THE ISRAELI-PLO PEACE TALKS AGENDA

The rampage by a settler at Hebron's Ibrahimi Mosque on February 25 has forced the settlement issue into the center of Israeli life and has prompted calls for its inclusion in Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

In a February 28 Knesset debate on the massacre, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin offered a passionate repudiation of the murders: "This killer sprang up from a small and limited political framework within the nation. He grew up and flourished in a quagmire whose sources are overseas, and here too. They are alien to Judaism. They do not belong to us. To him and those like him we say today: you are not part of the Israeli community."

Rabin announced a series of measures aimed at isolating a small number of the most violent settlers:

- The imposition of administrative detention (detention without trial for 3 months) on 5 members of the extremist Kach party;
- The barring of a few dozen settlers from specific locations in the territories;
- The confiscation of government-issued weapons and the revocation of personal gun permits from fewer than 100 settlers.
- The consideration of banning extremist parties like Kach, which is already excluded from Knesset elections.

MASSACRE, continued on page 2

MASSACRE IN HEBRON PUTS EXTREMISM OF RELIGIOUS SETTLERS IN SPOTLIGHT

by Geoffrey Aronson

In death as in life, Baruch Goldstein, who killed 30 or more Palestinians in Hebron, enjoyed the admiration and acclaim of his friends and neighbors. At his funeral procession in Jerusalem, and his burial later in the settlement of Kiryat Arba on the outskirts of Hebron, hundreds of his comrades and ideological soulmates shouted "Death to the Arabs." They praised him and his final, bloody actions.

Israeli television showed scenes of rejoicing among the throng of well wishers, said to number almost 1,000 in Jerusalem.

"All Arabs should be treated like this," said one. "He's a hero," it was said of Goldstein, and the massacre was "a gift that he gave the Jewish people for Purim"—the holiday that had just begun that celebrates the deliverance of the Jews from a biblical Persian plot to exterminate them.

Goldstein was a member of Kach, an anti-Arab group of Jewish fanatics, numbering a few hundred and centered in the West Bank settlements of Kiryat Arba and Tapuach, 15 miles south of Jerusalem.

But the ideological antipathy toward

ZEALOTS, continued on page 6

TO OUR READERS

Merle Thorpe, as reported in our last issue, died on February 13, 1994. His inspiration and resources made the Foundation's report possible. This is the first issue without him and his dedication to peace in the Middle East, which he believed depended on a resolution of the settlements issue.

In the last months of his life, and at a time when the issue of settlements had faded from the front pages, Merle reaffirmed his belief in the continuing centrality of a resolution of the settlement question to any durable reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians. His decision to provide for the continuation of the *Settlement Report* was an expression of this commitment.

So, too, was his decision to award a special prize to ten individuals whose contributions Merle felt were essential to reconciliation. (See announcement insert.)

Hebron has drawn attention once again to the problem that settlements pose—a problem that will not disappear with the flourish of a pen in Oslo or Cairo.

The recent and ongoing calamity in the occupied territories provides a window of opportunity to confront this central issue. Israelis, Palestinians, the Clinton administration, and all others committed to realizing the promise of Oslo must not permit this opportunity to pass.

The greatest monument we can build to Merle Thorpe is to continue his work. The *Settlement Report* will do its best to maintain the standards of excellence and accuracy he established.



MASSACRE, *continued from page 1*

In addition, a government plan for an unprecedented curfew in the settlements in Hebron and nearby Kiryat Arba in the days following the incident was announced but not implemented.

These methods of controlling militant settlers have been used on a limited basis in the past. Their imposition now occurs against a backdrop of unusual popular Israeli antipathy toward settlers as a whole, sparked by the massacre—and the fear of retaliation by Palestinians it has produced—and the calls for more forceful measures.

Faisal Hussein, PLO chairman Yasser Arafat's West Bank representative, is one of many Palestinians calling for a revision of the Oslo accord, which excluded settlements and settlers from the diplomatic agenda until negotiations on a final settlement begin. "What was acceptable before is not acceptable now," said Hussein. "There is no way of taking peace and the settlers together. It's either the settlers or peace."

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who has called for a reevaluation of the need to maintain Gaza settlements, warned that the settlement of Kiryat Arba, where the assailant lived, is a "hot-house for murderers."

Rabin, however, has rejected all calls for a

general disarming of settlers or any move to evacuate Hebron. "Israel," Rabin declared in the Knesset on March 1, "will not change its fundamental positions regarding the security of the State of Israel and its citizens, including the Jewish settlers in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza." Rabin's steadfastness was noted approvingly by Likud members such as Ariel Sharon, former minister of housing and construction.

The PLO has criticized Rabin's policies as "hollow" and is demanding the disarmament of all settlers and dismantling of unspecified settlements.

In Washington, however, Israel's ambassador, Itamar Rabinovich, hinted that a formal Palestinian demand to revise the terms of the Oslo agreement would jeopardize the entire diplomatic process.

This refusal to tamper with the existing diplomacy was seconded by the U.S. State Department. At a March 1 appearance on Capitol Hill, Robert H. Pelletreau, the newly appointed assistant secretary of state for Near East affairs, praised the measures promised by the Rabin government. But he warned that the PLO would only be mollified by them "if [Israel] implements them fully and the implementation goes beyond tokenism to really address the question of militant settlers." ♦

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JERUSALEM'S NEW MAYOR ADOPTS BEGIN-SHAMIR SETTLEMENT POLICIES

A new generation of Israelis—younger and more politically strident than their predecessors—has assumed the leadership of Jerusalem. Ehud Olmert, now in his mid-forties, was first elected to Israel's Knesset at 27. He served Yitzhak Shamir as minister of justice and was the Likud government's principal spokesman before the international media. He was the moderate face of the expansionist Shamir government.

The 1992 victory of Yitzhak Rabin stole the scene from such Likud heirs to power as Olmert, who during municipal elections late last year set his sights on the top post in Jerusalem.

Olmert led a Likud list that in November defeated Teddy Kollek. Kollek was widely seen as having grown too old and outlived his political usefulness after almost 30 years as mayor.

Kollek's defeat was also a loss for Rabin, who had declared the vote to be a referendum on his decision to negotiate the political future of the occupied territories with the PLO.

Olmert's victory was viewed as a popular expression of no confidence in Rabin's policy of rapprochement, at least among Jerusalem's relatively conservative electorate.

Rabin greeted Olmert's victory warily: "There is political significance to the change in Jerusalem. It will clearly not be a positive influence on the efforts of the State of Israel throughout the world."

As Jerusalem's new mayor, Olmert had a quick, uncompromising response to Washington's December protest of a plan to build 13,000 new homes in Jerusalem and its West Bank settlement suburbs. "I never thought they [Americans] were the ones to decide the fate of Jerusalem," replied Olmert provocatively. The city's future, he added, "won't be determined by the State Department, but by what is done here. I don't lose equilibrium when I hear there is an American position on Jerusalem. It only proves we have to do more."

Kollek's Legacy

Olmert believes, as did Kollek, in the value of determining Jerusalem's future through the creation of settlements—"facts on the ground"—to preempt Palestinian demands to make Jerusalem the capital of their presumptive state. He describes the Labor government's agreement with the PLO as a "dark cloud over the city" and believes that as a result of the Oslo agreement, "it is almost inevitable that at the end of the day we will be pushed to terms and a timetable for the establishment of a Palestinian state."

Olmert, together with all his coalition partners on the municipal council, opposes the agreement. He favors controversial housing developments for Israelis on the Mount of Olives and Ras-al Amud.

"We will bring 100,000 more Jews to East Jerusalem, and we do not need to be afraid about it," declared Shmuel Meir, who heads the Jerusalem branch of the National Religious

Party. "We will work to strengthen the Jewish population there and to build thousands of new apartments."

"We must prove to the Arabs our mastery over this land," explained another of Olmert's associates.

In his first post-election meeting with Prime Minister Rabin, Olmert lobbied for approval of the planned eastern beltway—a 14-kilometer road that includes a tunnel under the Palestinian town of Al-Azzareyeh, just east of the city on the West Bank.

According to a report of the meeting in the Jerusalem weekly *Kol Ha'ir*, Olmert "suggested to Rabin that financing for the \$200 million project come from the American [loan] guarantees, but the chances for this proposal are unclear because a large portion of the highway lies outside Jerusalem, and its northern section is even in the West Bank."

Palestinian Construction

"From the Palestinians' standpoint," notes Olmert, "Jerusalem will be on the agenda as soon as agreement is reached on 'Gaza-Jericho first.' Their objective is clear—to realize their rights in this city, as they see them. Their program is to produce facts in the eastern part of the city, whose result will be Palestinian sovereignty there."

Olmert, in contrast, is basing his five-year term on the premise that he "will administer Jerusalem according to the understanding that we are speaking of a city under Israeli rule and sovereignty." Like Kollek, he is certain to issue his fair share of demolition orders for this illegal construction. But he has acknowledged that the focus of his efforts will be to continue the campaign of large-scale housing development that has already created an Israeli majority in East Jerusalem.

"I will expand Jerusalem to the east, not to the west," promised Olmert before his election. He has considered the option of expanding the city's border eastward into the occupied West Bank, in the direction of the settlement of Ma'ale Adumim, an action that planners have long considered, but have rejected for political reasons. In any case, the Rabin government's creation of "territorial continuity" between Ma'ale Adumim and Jerusalem accomplishes the same objective without the political fallout that would attend outright annexation.

Olmert also favors additional housing for Israelis all along the pre-1967 cease-fire line, which once divided the city, "to ensure that the city will remain a united city under Israeli control for eternity."

"Although I can't make political decisions on the issue of Jerusalem," he explained, "these are the responsibility of the national government—I can make things happen on the ground, like building along the old border and creating continuity of Jewish settlement in East Jerusalem. My decisions on these issues will influence the options available to the government for a political solution for Jerusalem." ♦

“SETTLEMENT SNAPSHOTS”

“There are 500 separate escort missions in Judea and Samaria just to escort [Israeli] pupils [living in settlements] to school. Sometimes a soldier has to drive with them on a bus, and sometimes military vehicles have to escort them. Safeguarding traffic requires a tremendous effort, both on major traffic axes and on smaller roads. One must bear in mind that we are talking about 1,000 kilometers of roads just in Judea and Samaria; 350 km of main traffic axes are used by both Israeli and Palestinian vehicles.”

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin
Voice of Israel, December 13, 1993

“My feeling is that this agreement will bring us nothing because it doesn’t tackle the key issue of settlements.”

Haidar Abdel Shafi,
Associated Press, December 13, 1993

Al-Hayat: Do you expect the settlements around Jerusalem and in the West Bank to be dismantled?

Hanan Ashrawi: Of course. . . . There will now be a Palestinian entity which will consist of Jericho and Gaza at the beginning and then extend to include the rest of the Palestinian territories occupied in 1967. That means that, under the new reality, the settlement activity will not only stop but will also recede, in my view. I believe that there will be a reversal process as far as the settlements are concerned. This really means that, in the ultimate solution, the settlements must disappear. Their dismantling is essential.

Al-Hayat: Including the large settlements around the main Palestinian cities in the West Bank?

Ashrawi: Of course. The settlements were planted as a wedge, firstly to prevent any possible future agreement and, secondly, to prevent, through land partition, the establishment of a Palestinian state and also to control the various areas and resources and impose an Israeli fait accompli.

Interview with Hanan Ashrawi,
former spokeswoman for the Palestinian
peace delegation, *Al-Hayat*, October 18, 1993

“Whatever one may think of the Jewish settlements established in the West Bank and in Gaza, it should now be clear that they are obstacles to peace. Their proponents cynically (and preposterously) maintained that they would encourage Jewish-Arab amity. . . .

“Despite the position of many American Jewish organizations in the years the Likud was in power that settlements are not an obstacle to peace, the Israeli settler

movement (Gush Emunim and others) and the Israeli public were always clear about the primary purpose that settlements were to serve: To make it impossible for any Israeli Government to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians that entails territorial compromise. . . .

“Because there cannot be a peace with the Palestinians that grants them nothing, the inevitable consequence of settlements is to block peace and to assure perpetuation of violence and bloodshed.”

Letter to the editor of the *New York Times*
by Henry Siegman, Executive Director,
American Jewish Congress, December 29, 1993

“It is clear that according to Halacha (Jewish religious law), a soldier who receives an order that runs contrary to Tora law should uphold the Halacha, and not the secular order. And since settling the land is a commandment, and uprooting the settlements is breaking the commandment, the soldier should not carry out an order to uproot settlements. This government does not lean on a majority of Jewish support, but rather on Arab votes. According to the Halacha it does not have the authority of a majority, and therefore government directives to uproot the settlements do not have the authority of the majority of the people.”

Former Chief Rabbi of Israel, Shlomo Goren
National Religious Party newspaper, *Hatzofeh*,
December 19, 1993

“We call upon all people to announce confrontation in all means and ways. Let our motto be ‘the best defence is offense.’

“Do not allow settlers to attack you. Attack them before they attack you. Kill them before they kill you.

“If the settlers and the Israeli military forces think that our intifada has ended and theirs has just begun, they are clearly mistaken.”

Fatah leaflet issued in West Bank
Agence France Presse, November 17, 1993

“It is in the West Bank, then, that we shall confront the essential contradiction locked into the Declaration of Principles: The Rabin government accepts the principle of a territorial solution; but it has locked into the agreement the key manifestation of its predecessor’s very determination to prevent such a territorial solution: the settlements.”

Joseph Alpher, analyst at the
Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies,
in the *Jerusalem Post*, January 28, 1994

TEN HONORED FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE

A great many individuals qualify as major players in the search for peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Some are widely known and one or two may even receive Nobel Prizes. But credit for progress toward Israeli-Palestinian mutual recognition and Middle East peace belongs as well to countless lesser-known Israelis, Palestinians, and Americans, who, among others, have labored for those goals. To symbolize the contribution of this legion of activists, the Foundation for Middle East Peace has chosen ten men and women to receive a special Foundation peace award. In recognition of their distinguished service in the cause of peace, for their courage and determination over many years, the awardees will each receive \$5,000.

MAHMOUD ABBAS (Abu Mazen)

The Palestine Liberation Organization Executive Committeeman has emerged as a top PLO leader by negotiating the Oslo agreement with Israel and reaching out for Israeli-Palestinian peace.

HANAN ASHRAWI

The articulate spokesperson for the Palestinian negotiators at the Washington peace talks whose portrayal of PLO purposes in the peace process has greatly improved the worldwide image of the Palestinian people.

MORDECHAI BAR-ON

The former Knesset member and chief of Israeli armed forces education now chairs the New Israel Fund and is an energizing force in Israel's growing peace movement.

YEHOSHAFAT HARKABI

The retired general who directed Israel's Military Intelligence and Strategic Research has led in recommending acceptance of the PLO as his country's negotiating partner.

FAISAL HUSSEINI

The head of the PLO's dominant West Bank faction is widely acclaimed for his moderate leadership of Palestinians and his work in advancing the peace process.

SARI NUSSEIBEH

The Palestinian philosopher whose detailed model for a two-state solution to the conflict now includes a set of blueprints for Palestinian self-government.

MATTITYAHU PELED

The retired Israeli armed forces general who pioneered in proposing and working to achieve Israeli reconciliation with Palestinians as his country's best means of assuring its long-term security.

GAIL PRESSBERG

The U.S. Jewish community leader who co-directs Peace Now's Center for Israeli Peace and Security has championed support in the United States for a future two-state solution.

NABEEL SHAATH

The Cairo businessman and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's aide in numerous negotiations has used his authority wisely in pursuing moderate Palestinian objectives.

DEDI ZUCKER

The Knesset member and proponent of human rights for Palestinians in the territories occupied by Israel is a vigorous advocate for just treatment and a fair peace.

The Foundation's purpose in honoring the recipients is to give public recognition to their work and to encourage them and others to build upon the recent mutual recognition. Many issues await resolution: territorial boundaries, the status of Jerusalem, Israeli settlements in the territories occupied by Israel, and the fate of Palestinian refugees from the five wars since 1948. It will take more courage and determination of the kind the award recipients have shown before the remaining issues are resolved and peace can be achieved.

Merle Thorpe, Jr., President

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"SETTLEMENT SNAPSHOTS"

Shaykh Ahmad Yasin, the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] spiritual leader, said this morning that his movement would accept a cease-fire with Israel provided that the use of firearms against Palestinians stops. Yasin added that Hamas will not stop its activities until the Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip are evacuated.

Israel Defense Forces Radio,
December 24, 1993

"Only God knows why Netzarim was established in that place [Gaza Strip], but we established a rule for ourselves: every settlement, including those in the least comfortable locations, will remain in place. This includes Netzarim, with all the military and security arrangements that need to be organized in order to defend it."

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Yossi Beilin,
January 4, 1994, *Ha'aretz*

"We all want to get out of here already," said Private Yariv, 18, an Israeli stationed in Khan Yunis in the Gaza Strip. "We thought this was our land, but after coming here with the army, we realize we have no reason to be here."

Associated Press, December 14, 1993

"Hassuni Family Hides From a Pogrom— The Army Looks On"

... The religious settlers laid siege to a house of a Palestinian family named Hasunni. For over one hour they pelted stones and heavy cement blocks at the house, under the very eyes of a unit of soldiers and of the commander of Israeli Police for the Judea District, Moshe Mizrahi, who in the process told this correspondent that 'any stone throwing is a crime and thereby a sufficient reason to detain any settler committing it.'

In fact, only three besiegers were detained. They were ordered to get into a police car and at once let out through the car's other door. . . . Others were at the same time told that they had an opportunity 'to relieve their feelings' which they did whole-heartedly. . . .

During all that time, dozens of Israeli army soldiers, policemen and Border Guards were mixing with the crowds of religious settlers. Nothing could escape their attention. A commander of the battalion of soldiers on the scene and an officer in the rank of a colonel were present, serenely listening to two teenagers bickering over who was better at stone throwing. When the teenagers realized I was a journalist, they showed me their ID

cards, proudly requesting to have their names published. Here they are: Yaron Ben-Yitzhak and Shimon Re'uvani.

Israeli weekly newspaper, *Ha'olam Ha'ze*,
November 3, 1993

"The photographs of the Jewish pogromists of Hebron which appeared in the Hebrew press and showed them aiming their weapons at Palestinians are a severe indictment against the weakness of this feeble [Israeli] government. At its meeting yesterday, after the Attorney General, Michael Ben-Yair, defined the Judea and Samaria Settler Council as an "inciting institution," the government did nothing except make some feeble declarations.

"Those who shot their guns should not be regarded as miserable settlers, fearful for their future. They should be regarded as violent, cowardly bullies, exploiting the protection offered by the Israeli army to frighten the peddlers in the Hebron market and endanger the innocent Palestinian passersby.

The residents of Kiryat Arba, now suspected of having killed an innocent Arab driver, are the kind of people whom we know exactly how to characterize when they riot in European cities. They deserve no sympathy, no understanding, no empathy, only denunciation and disgust. They were given weapons so as to be able to defend themselves, not to realize their crazy fantasies about their being cowboys and the Palestinians being American Indians. They should have no right to carry weapons as they abuse them. This feeble government which does not dare to confiscate the weapons of those Jewish goons bears responsibility for their actions.

"An Inciting Institution," Yosef Lapid
Ma'ariv, December 6, 1993

A country-wide poll conducted for Israel's ruling Labor party showed a surprising public readiness to leave Israeli settlements in the West Bank under Arab sovereignty in the context of a peace agreement.

Of those Israeli Jews polled, 40 percent was prepared to forsake settlements; 46 percent was opposed. Among Labor voters alone, the rate of support reached an overwhelming 70 percent, while among Likud voters, 65 percent—a solid majority—was opposed.

According to the Israeli newspaper *Yediot Aharanot*, "Among Labor voters there is a majority for abandoning settlements in Judea and Samaria in return for a peace agreement. . . ."

Yediot Aharanot,
December 3, 1993

Arabs and the complementary belief in the divine nature of Jewish settlement in the territories is shared by 30,000 religious settlers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, a vocal minority among the 130,000 settler population. Since the conquest of the territories in June 1967, these religious settlers have been the main source propelling both the consolidation of a political coalition supporting colonization of the occupied territories as well as the expansion of the Jewish settler presence.

Rabbi Israel Ariel, a prominent spiritual leader among the religious settlers, who along with black-garbed followers of one or another Hasidic rabbi form the core of the fanatic right-wing settler movement, called Goldstein a holy man, a righteous man who redeemed the "People of Israel."

Rabbi Moshe Levinger articulated the thoughts of many settlers who believe that killing a Gentile is acceptable, and indeed welcome, in order to promote a Jewish renaissance in the land God promised to Abraham. Levinger, asked to comment on the loss of life in the Ibrahami Mosque, noted that he was sorry about the death of any living thing. The sorrow he felt toward those Arabs killed, he said, was the same sorrow he felt toward a fly swatted against a wall.

The world inhabited by Goldstein, Ariel, and Levinger revolves around a moral code born of what is interpreted by leading rabbis as the divinely ordained process of Redemption of the Jewish People in the "Land of Israel."

"It was not [Theodore] Herzl or [David] Ben Gurion who established our state," Rabbi Shlomo Aviner has written, "not the political or practical Zionists that did it, but God Almighty."

The Rabin government has caused a crisis in the ranks of the faithful. Rabin's election suddenly placed the question of a diminution of Jewish authority in the occupied territories on the political agenda. His Labor-left coalition, which depended on the support of Arab parliamentarians, is essentially secular. It is "spiritually rotten," in the words of Rabbi Benny Allon. Rabin, these settlers believe, is intent upon destroying all that they have built in the territories, both physically and spiritually, thus putting the entire Zionist enterprise at risk.

Revitalizing Zionism

The age of redemption is said to have begun with the return of the Jewish people to Zion after long exile. And since Israel's victory in 1967, God's will has been to see a Jewish kingdom that includes the West Bank—Judea and Samaria—and a third temple to be constructed on the ruins of Jerusalem's Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock—hallowed Islamic shrines.

Jewish settlements throughout the territories captured in 1967 are viewed as vital, temporal expressions of God's will.

The settlement movement Gush Emunim—the Bloc of the Faithful—was born out of the crisis in Israeli confidence caused by the October 1973 war. Its mission was to revitalize the core value of the Zionist enterprise—settlement—in the heartland of Jewish history, in Judea and Samaria. Hebron, Sebastia, Betar, and Bet El were the territorial signposts on which Jewish redemption was to be written.

Gush Emunim zealots see the Gentile world as a whole—but most particularly the Arabs who live in land they believe God promised to the Jews—standing in the way of their sacred vision. Rabbi Israel Hess cited the Old Testament books of Samuel, Genesis, and Deuteronomy for his belief that these modern day sons of Amalek (descendants of Esau) deserve to be annihilated as were their forefathers.

This blend of religious obscurantism, racism, and political elitism is not unique to these sons of Abraham. Its power in Middle East history unfolding today is no less significant than those who claim other forms of divine inspiration.

The rabbis of the Committee of Rabbis of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District are the spiritual, and thus the political, guides to action for the majority of religious settlers who consult them on matters large and small. They, in turn, look to the writings of Rabbi Abraham Yitzhak Kook and his son, Rabbi Yehuda Tzvi Kook, for guidance.

At a 1992 symposium on how Jews should relate to "resident aliens [Arabs] in the Holy Land," Rabbi Zalman Melamed, chairman of the Committee of Rabbis of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District, explained that "there can be no dispute that it would

be ideal if the entire Land of Israel could be settled exclusively by Jews. Every dunam of its land is destined to be worked on by Jews alone."

More than a year before the Oslo agreement, the Committee of Rabbis of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District issued an appeal which read: "It has already been ruled by our rabbi, Tzvi Yehuda Kook of blessed memory, that any decision, Jewish or non-Jewish, to rob us of any part of our land can have no validity because the Will of God will prevail." Any expectation of making peace with Palestinians, who were referred to as "animals in human shape," is "a delusion inspired by Satan."

Despite what Prime Minister Rabin has said, the actions of Baruch Goldstein were, in the world of religious settlers, those of a rational man. In their community little value is accorded to an Arab life.

Goldstein's choice of the Ibrahami Mosque in Hebron during Ramadan prayers reflected cool calculation and a sophisticated appreciation of the crippling effect his murderous act would have on the rocky Israel-PLO rapprochement.

"Goldstein was a success," said the Israeli journalist Haim Baram. "There is no doubt the interim agreement is no longer viable. Oslo is passé." ♦

... religious settlers have been the main source propelling both the consolidation of a political coalition supporting colonization of the occupied territories as well as the expansion of the Jewish settler presence.

SETTLEMENT CONSTRUCTION CONTINUES IN GOLAN HEIGHTS

The Labor government of Yitzhak Rabin is maintaining the Likud's unprecedented pace of settlement construction in the occupied Golan Heights. Rabin is implementing his expansive Golan program with quiet determination, even as he seeks a negotiated peace with Syria.

This traditional Labor Party strategy was noted in an August 20, 1993, article on the Golan in the newspaper *Yediot Aharanot* headlined, "Quiet, We're Building": "Someone opened the pipeline. Frozen budgets were freed, and permits for grants and loans were signed. . . . We're not talking about small renovations and essential expansion. Even Yehuda Wallman, head of the Golan Council, says that a building drive such as this hasn't been seen for 26 years."

Ten days before the January summit between Syrian President Hafez al-Assad and U.S. President Bill Clinton, Israel's Minister of Housing and Construction Benjamin ben Eliezer inaugurated a new 500-unit housing development in Katzrin, the Israeli "capital" of occupied Golan. Most of the units were sold last year at subsidized prices through an oversubscribed lottery. (See *Settlement Report*, July 1993.)

The new homes are part of approximately 2,000 units begun during the Likud era and completed after a temporary construction freeze instituted by the Rabin government that ended in March 1993. Not included in this figure are "build your own house" schemes and private-sector housing developments in many of the region's 32 settlements. The finished units will draw an additional 8,000 settlers to the Golan, where 12,600 Israelis now reside.

Continuing and expanding public expenditure on settlement-related infrastructure is evident in a number of sectors. Investment in new roads and improvements is estimated by settler representatives to be \$15 million this year. The Jewish Agency's Settlement Department, in charge of housing construction in small settlements (and not towns like Katzrin,

where most construction is planned), is spending \$9 million.

Last October, the United States deducted \$437 million from this year's provision of \$2 billion in loan guarantees. Expenditures for settlement construction in the Golan were not included in this amount, and no penalty was assessed for construction there.

Investment in existing and new industrial and agricultural enterprises continues under government sponsorship, despite a declaration by the minister of finance last year that the government no longer favored long-term investment in the region.

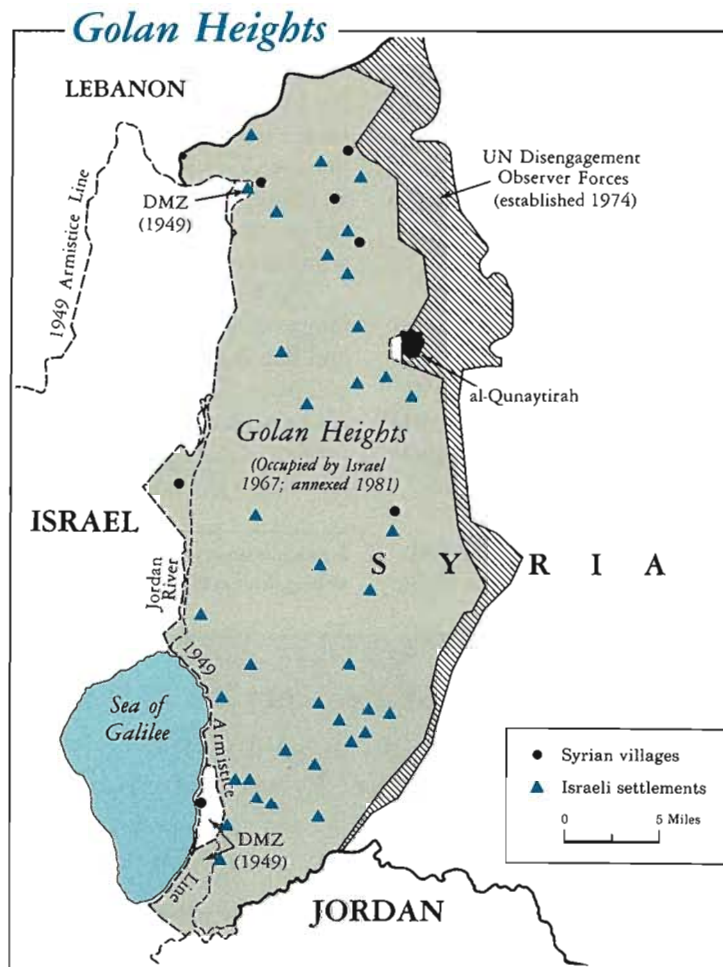
Industrial development ranges from a new chocolate factory expected to employ 100, to an eyeglass enterprise, both located in the industrial area of Katzrin. The Golan Heights Winery will double in size during the coming four years with a \$4 million investment. Forty new dairy sheds are to be built, including one larger than any in Israel. The \$5 million cost is 85 percent state funded. On Mt. Hermon, a multimillion dollar improvement to the existing tourist and ski facility, designed by Austrian engineers and built by local Syrian Druze laborers, is being implemented.

This program is proceeding all but unnoticed—except in Damascus.

A December 23 editorial in the Syrian newspaper *Tishrin* noted, "Undoubtedly, settlements are no longer just an

obstacle to peace. . . . They are also an indication that Israel continues to pursue a position that can in no way promote peace. Any party that is concerned about the peace process, and wants to remove the impediments to peace, cannot pursue positions that jeopardize this very process. . . ."

Golan settlers, however, are not as certain of their government's commitment to the continuing existence of Golan settlements under Israeli sovereignty. The manager of the Mt. Hermon site explained that the Rabin government is throwing money at the settlers in an effort "to keep our mouths shut" as it negotiates a Golan withdrawal. ♦



ILLEGAL SETTLEMENTS, INTOLERABLE ACTS

Israeli apologists have attempted to portray the massacre in Hebron as the result of the actions of a single individual or, at worst, a very small group of extremists, numbering about 20, who need to be restricted and disarmed to solve the problem, placate the Palestinians and ensure that such massacres will not be repeated. In fact, this massacre was the direct result of a long and established pattern of behavior relating to all the settlements, their erection, maintenance, the laws and procedures applying to the settlers and the attitude of the Israeli officials and governments to them all along. . . .

Since their establishment, these settlements have succeeded in eventually obtaining massive support from the Israeli government, sometimes begrudgingly, in finances, infrastructure, services, laws and procedures recognizing their privileged status and, of course, protection by the Israeli army. Settlers are armed and have acted as lords and masters in the occupied territories and have acted in a most racist and arrogant fashion toward Palestinian Arabs. . . . Jewish settlers have openly carried out pogroms of neighboring villages and have asserted themselves individually as the "law of the land."

Their attitude toward law and order has also been instructive. They have repeated that "it is not important what Gentiles say, but what the Jews do." They have made a pattern of establishing "facts on the ground" and have been continuously rewarded by the acceptance of their actions by the Israeli government and the acquiescence and tolerance of the international community. . . .

Most dangerous, however, is the settlers' feeling that they are above the law, or rather that they are acting under a higher

divine mandate that justifies their conquest and lordship over Arab land, property and lives. Curfews and area closures do not apply to them. A separate lane speeds them through army checkpoints. . . . Palestinians have learned to fear the unpredictable behavior of a settler with a gun: He may claim to be a civilian acting in "self-defense" when shooting indiscriminately; he may be acting as a reserve army soldier—military orders give soldiers wide power and discretion over Palestinians; or he may be acting under direct divine orders, as only he understands them.

The long record of settler violence and murders is well known. Al-Haq, the Palestinian human rights organization, has documented 17 murders by settlers since the beginning of the Intifada. Equally established is the Israeli leniency and tolerance toward such violence. When tried at all for such murders, settlers have escaped with a few months' prison terms or were later pardoned, as has happened with those who committed the mini-massacre in the Islamic University of Hebron and who are now living in Kiryat Arba. . . .

The lesson of this massacre is that the state of Israel can no longer afford to continue this policy but must bite the bullet and face decisions it has avoided for years, if it is interested in real peace. This is done by disarming all the settlers and beginning the painful process of dismantling all the settlements instead of scapegoating a mere 20 of the leaders of the Kach movement in Hebron alone.

— Jonathan Kuttab

Jonathan Kuttab is a founder of the Palestinian human rights organization, al-Haq. This article appeared in the *The Washington Post* on March 2, 1994.

"What is the point of maintaining a settlement with 28 families that needs workers from Thailand, that needs an army platoon to guard them, that needs to have their road guarded by patrols? Where is the logic? What is the point?"

*Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, February 11, 1994,
speaking about the Gaza settlement, Netzarim.*

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