

REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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NEWS

An Israeli proposal to include unspecified Israeli settlements around Jerusalem in an "umbrella municipality" (UM) has been met with almost universal criticism.

The new plan will invest Israeli civilian agencies with more extensive powers over the development and expansion of settlements included in the UM proposal. U.S. officials have termed the plan "unhelpful at this delicate stage of negotiations." The PLO's UN observer rejected the Israeli action as a "concrete step toward the illegal annexation of more occupied Palestinian lands to the already illegally expanded Jerusalem municipality." (See page 8.)

Israeli officials, however, insist that the proposal, important details of which remain to be approved, "is entirely an internal Israeli matter."

Also in this issue:

A Special Report on Settlements and the Environment

On the Road in the West Bank 3

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THE TERRITORIAL IMPLICATIONS OF ISRAELI FURTHER REDEPLOYMENT

No one knows for sure whether or when an agreement will be signed on the long-delayed first and second redeployment of Israeli military forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as stipulated in the Oslo II and Hebron accords.

In early June, Palestinian leaders Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and Ahmad Quray (Abu Allah) signed the "American Initiative" calling for an Israeli redeployment from 13 percent of the West Bank. Reports in the Israeli press suggest that the extent of the first and second redeployments (as opposed to the third) is not among the outstanding issues still under negotiation.

Haim Gwertzman, a resident of the West Bank settlement of Dolev and a

hydrologist at Hebrew University, is the foremost public authority in Israel on the territorial dimensions of the redeployment proposals now under discussion. "Gwertzman has more material than any other Israeli," explains Yehuda Harel of the Third Way party, which is part of Prime Minister Netanyahu's ruling coalition. "The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has security information. Tahal [the water planning authority] has information on water, YESHA [the settler council] has settlement information, and the civil administration has information about the Palestinian population. Haim Gwertzman has all of this together."

REDEPLOYMENT, *continued on page 4*

PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP FAILS TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTLEMENTS

by Geoffrey Aronson

There is nothing like a drive through the West Bank to grasp the situation regarding settlement expansion today. Israeli leaders, led by Ariel Sharon, with his ubiquitous maps charting every meter of West Bank real estate, are well schooled in the value of an intimate knowledge of the land itself. During the course of the Oslo process, they have used their superior knowledge to great advantage.

The Palestinian leadership, on the other hand, has distinguished itself by its almost total lack of interest in or firsthand familiarity with the situation

on the ground. They have not been able to avoid seeing Ma'ale Adumim or Givat Ze'ev, expanding suburbs of Jerusalem, but if one mentions places such as Dolev or Talmon—the Ma'ale Adumims and Givat Ze'evs of tomorrow—their faces go blank.

The diplomatic path that the Palestinians have joined, and the conditions that characterize it, leave them few options to materially change either the pace or the implications of Israel's settlement policies. Those Palestinians who oversaw the creation of this diplomatic framework either willfully ignored

LAND, *continued on page 6*

TO OUR READERS

The status of the deal forged between the government of Yitzhak Rabin and the PLO is less settled today than it has been at any time since 1993.

The original timetable for implementation of commitments made in the Oslo II accords—and then amended, with U.S. support—as part of Israel's redeployment from Hebron in January 1997, has been distorted out of all recognition.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is promising an Israeli decision before the end of July on the "American Initiative" calling for a 13 percent redeployment from the West Bank and implementation of security agreements concluded late last year. Even if this objective is realized, implementation of the three-stage plan for handing over additional territory to the Palestinian Authority is bound to be delayed until year's end and, in all likelihood, will not be completed before the May 1999 date marking the end of the interim period established by the Oslo agreement.

This stumbling adherence to the Oslo commitments undertaken by Israelis and Palestinians is, however, a consequence of a

serious structural fault in the diplomatic framework that has deepened since Netanyahu's election two years ago.

U.S. policy makers have not yet recovered from the defeat of Shimon Peres. In the absence of Israeli leadership for peace, the Clinton administration has proven unable to pursue a credible strategy for fulfilling even the limited prospects of the Oslo framework. The recent spectacle of off-again on-again U.S. "ultimatums" for acceptance of its redeployment initiative raise grave doubts about the seriousness of U.S. intentions, postponing if not jeopardizing the realization of legitimate Palestinian, and Israeli, aspirations.

President Ezer Weizman shares our concern. He believes the "peace process is limping" and has called for early elections in Israel. New elections may not be the answer to the current stalemate, but some action is essential.



Arabs Decry Need to Labor in Settlements

Pass by most settlements and one can see a number of Palestinian cars parked outside the entry gate. These belong to Palestinian laborers, numbering 12,000: 3,500 who work in the Erez industrial zone and settlements in the Gaza Strip, and 8,500 in industrial parks and settlements in the West Bank, excluding those working in the settlement communities of East Jerusalem.

Palestinian labor in Israeli settlements falls into three basic categories: construction, agriculture, and industry. There have been no studies aimed at estimating the extent of Palestinian participation in the settlement-related labor force. Such

evidence as exists is anecdotal, although Palestinians have traditionally made up the bulk of the workforce engaged in the construction and daily maintenance of settlements throughout the occupied territories.

A Palestinian laborer from the West Bank working at the Eli settlement lamented his fate. "What logic is there to this—that Arabs build houses for Jews on land belonging to Arabs? Why am I doing this? Because I must work and earn money for my family. So I build, and in my heart I pray that tomorrow they will return all this land to Arabs, and I hate myself, but I have no choice."

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ON THE (BYPASS) ROAD AGAIN: THE WEST BANK

The view of Jerusalem from Nebi Samuel has drawn admirers for centuries. The mosque sitting atop the hill north of Jerusalem has in recent years been transformed almost completely into a place of worship for Jews, who, like Muslims, venerate the site as the resting place of the prophet Samuel. His presumptive coffin stands draped in one of the building's lower rooms.

Once an all-but-deserted shrine, today an Israeli army guard screens all visitors, and a gated and fenced parking lot has been constructed next to the homes of neighboring Palestinian villagers. Extensive archaeological excavations around the perimeter of the site have revealed the extensive remains of residential buildings, bathhouses, and courtrooms of an urban compound dating to the Hellenistic era.

History of a different sort is being made on the adjacent hillside, however, where the telltale signature of Israeli settlement expansion is readily evident. Part of the hill-side has been flattened and terraced in preparation for the construction of a new settlement area, Har Shmuel, along Road 45, which when completed will link the approach to Tel Aviv with the Jerusalem region and the Jordan Valley.

Just north from Nebi Samuel lies the suburban bedroom community of Givat Ze'ev, a settlement whose population is now approaching 10,000. In fact, the new settlement construction at Nebi Samuel is sited at the southernmost tip of a massive settlement bloc of almost 30,000 dunams, 80 percent of which Israel recognizes as Arab-owned, including the settlements of New Givon and Bet Horon to the west, a proposed industrial park at the tip of Kalandia airport in the east, and an ever-expanding Givat Ze'ev in the center.

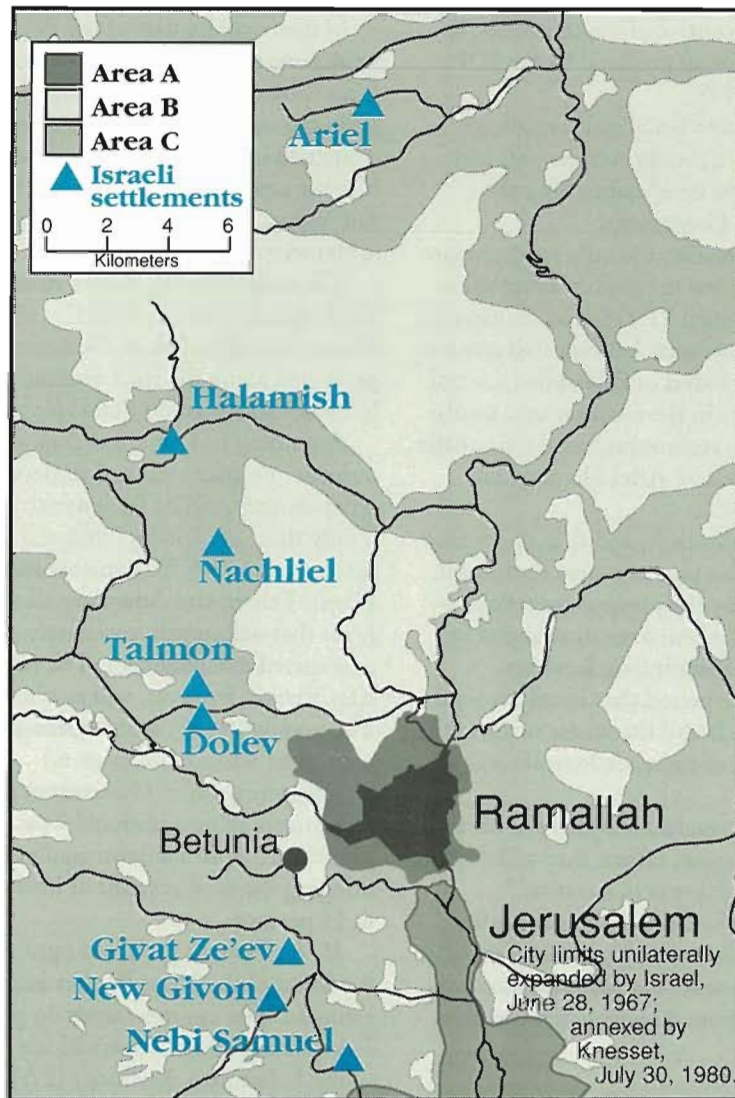
Heading north of Givat Ze'ev, the Ramallah-Betunia bypass road soon enters from the west. This road, constructed as part of Israel's Oslo II redeployment from Ramallah, permits Jerusalem-bound settlers from the Talmon settlement bloc to the north to avoid the Palestinian areas of Ramallah and Betunia.

Expansion is readily apparent throughout this bloc of settlement communities, which includes Dolev (pop. 500), Talmon A and B (pop. 800), Nachliel (pop. 300), and Halamish (pop. 1,000). At Dolev, ground preparation is well under way, and new infrastructure is being constructed on a hill south of the existing settlement. At Talmon, a block of two-story houses is almost completed. Just east of Talmon, a new water tower marks the site of the new settlement of Horesh-Yaron. Thirteen mobile homes were placed at the site last September. At Halamish and at Paduel farther to the north, land is being prepared for future expansion.

At the southwestern approach to the settlement of Ariel, a sign announces a new industrial park, Ariel South, where a new interchange of the Trans-Samaria Highway (Road 5) is being rerouted and expanded. The anticipated 13 percent rede-

ployment currently under discussion will leave this route securely under full Israeli control.

Driving west, except for the IDF checkpoint, the few kilometers to the Green Line along Road 5 have been transformed into Israel, with a gaggle of Arab and Israeli commercial and industrial enterprises catering to the growing population on either side of the disappearing border region—an image on display throughout almost the entire length of the old Green Line border. ♦



According to an article in *Ha'aretz* on May 21, Harel asked Gwertzman to prepare maps outlining the geographical extent of a 9 to 10 percent and a 13 percent redeployment. Gwertzman's maps reflect the following priorities: Israel must retain the entire Jordan Valley, the Judean desert, the area around Jerusalem, and a buffer running east of the Green Line to the central mountain ridge, under which the Yarkon-Taninim aquifer flows; no dismantling of settlements; and no compromise of Israel's strategic military control of the territories, as outlined in the Security Interests map prepared by the IDF. (See *Settlement Report*, January 1998.)

"What I wanted to resolve is how Israel could retain its interests in the territories—security, water, settlements and Jerusalem—while at the same time avoid controlling the Palestinian population," explains Gwertzman.

After accounting for these priorities, the only areas remaining for transfer to Palestinian control necessarily affect some Israeli settlements. The settler council YESHA, to the extent it concedes the need for any redeployment, believes that areas of the Judean desert should be transferred to Palestinian control rather than lands near settlements in the northern and southern regions of the West Bank, the regions preferred for transfer by the IDF, Minister of Infrastructure Ariel Sharon, and Prime Minister Netanyahu himself.

When and if Area B becomes Area A, and thus under complete Palestinian security control as part of a final settlement, the settlements directly affected by the prospective redeployment will become Israeli-controlled enclaves surrounded by areas of Palestinian sovereignty. Palestinians, however, acknowledge that even during the period that Israel continues to retain security control of Area B and the access roads to the affected settlements, the security of these settlements will be impaired.

"If a final-status agreement is reached," explains Gwertzman, "these settlements will not grow; rather, they will deteriorate. I believe their long-term viability is in question."

The example of Netzarim in the Gaza Strip is most frequently recalled in this context. All travel from this isolated settlement proceeds under IDF escort. Yet the population of this isolated outpost has grown from 60 people to more than 200 in recent years.

Territorial Impact of a 9 to 10 Percent Redeployment

According to Gwertzman, approximately 1,700 settlers living in 10 settlements would be affected by a 9 to 10 percent redeployment, out of a total of about 160,000 Israelis living in the 150 settlements in the West Bank.

The affected settlements are divided into two geographic areas. Between Jenin and Nablus lie the outposts of Kadim, Ganim, Sa Nur, Homesh, Yitzhar, and Bracha. South of Hebron are found Beit Hagai, Telem, Adura, and Neguhot (officially classified as a paramilitary outpost that has, however, been transformed into a religious seminary).

Territorial Division of the West Bank
(percent)

	Area's		
	A	B	C
According to the Oslo II agreement	2.0	26.0	72.0
After a 13 percent redeployment	17.2	23.9	58.9

In the northern part of the West Bank, Israel would retain a small zone north of Jenin in order to separate it from the Green Line. There would be Palestinian territorial continuity from Jenin through Nablus. This northern Palestinian bloc would be contained in the south by the Trans-Samaria Highway, which is being expanded to accommodate the growing settlements in this region, as well as trade with Jordan, and is anchored by the settlement of Ariel.

The early-warning station maintained by the IDF atop Mt. Ebal, outside Nablus, would be affected by redeployment in this region, according to Gwertzman. IDF travel would be permitted along the road leading up to the warning station, but Palestinians could build alongside the road.

According to Dutch geographer Jan de Jong, however, the number of settlements and settlers affected by a 9 to 10 percent redeployment will be far fewer than suggested by Gwertzman, if only those settlements that will not have access to bypass roads are counted. Settlements such as Ganim, Kadim, Beit Hagai, Telem, and Adura are all served by existing bypass roads that will remain exclusively under Israeli control after the anticipated redeployment. The settlement of Tzorif, south of Kfar Etzion, however, will not have access to a bypass road. The population of these settlements is less than 1,100. (See map, page 5 and table, page 6.)

Regarding water, Gwertzman estimates that Israel would lose control of an additional 9 percent of the land that lies over the Yarkon-Taninim aquifer east of the Green Line, bringing the total amount of land over the aquifer transferred to 15 percent.

If Netanyahu's preferred option of a redeployment from 9 percent of the West Bank is implemented, Gwertzman estimates that approximately 86 percent of the West Bank's Palestinian population would live solely under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority (PA). The total would reach 93 percent if the Gaza Strip is included.

According to Gwertzman's calculations, today only 37 percent of the Palestinian population in the West Bank live under full PA control (Area A)—588,000 out of 1,561,000.

Implications of a 13 Percent Redeployment

Gwertzman believes that a 13 percent pullback would affect approximately 9,000 Israeli settlers living in 18 settlements. De Jong, however, estimates that 2,000 settlers living in fewer

ISRAELI SETTLEMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The Socioeconomic Impact of Settlements on Land, Water, and the Palestinian Economy

A Special Report of the Foundation for Middle East Peace

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The impact of Israeli settlement and settlers on Palestinian land and water resources is one element in a broad relationship of inequality and dependency established and promoted by the occupation during the last quarter century. While there have been anecdotal enquiries into specific examples of this phenomena—for example, Palestinian construction labor at an Israeli settlement or the effects on an adjacent Palestinian community of sewage produced by a settlement—there have been no studies that focus on the overall economic effects of settlements themselves, singly or collectively, on Palestinians. Nevertheless, some data is available that offers a broad insight into the nature and scale of the impact of settlements on Palestinian land and water resources.

Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza is essentially a contest for control of the region's resources, principally land and water. To the extent that these assets are used by one antagonist, occupation has been structured so that the other loses.

Settlements have long represented an Israeli intention to remain permanently on the land and to control its destiny, necessarily at the expense of Palestinians. Without settlements, as Israelis have long acknowledged, they would be merely an "occupying" army. The implantation of civilian Israeli colonies is, therefore, the primary obstacle to Palestinian self-determination.

All Israeli settlements in the West Bank are currently located in Area C, which is under exclusive Israeli control and which comprises 72 percent of the West Bank. Israel similarly controls approximately 15 percent of the Gaza Strip. In the Golan Heights, the Syrian population of 17,000 is clustered into five small villages abutting the Syrian-Lebanese border. The 32 Israeli settlements control 80 percent of the plateau. One-quarter of the entire Golan—315,000 dunams—is grazing land controlled by settlers.

Assessing the precise effect of the loss and reallocation of Palestinian lands to Israeli settlements is difficult. The World Bank, in a draft of its September 1993 study, "Developing the Occupied Territories—An Investment in Peace," notes:

Confiscation of Palestinian land has enabled Israel to proceed with the construction of settlements and related structures in various areas of the West Bank that were traditionally con-

sidered to be wilderness zones. Most important among these are the eastern slopes and the central part of the West Bank which once housed a variety of wildlife and provided a winter grazing ground for livestock and recreation for the local population. . . . Similarly, building agricultural settlements in the Jordan Valley has gradually deprived the Palestinian inhabitants of these areas of their richest soils and water wells. A similar situation has developed in the Gaza Strip where settlements have encroached upon fertile inland and coastal areas. The Israeli settlement program was not accompanied by adequate and proper environmental considerations.

None of the settlements have developed sewage treatment plants. Sewage is often allowed to run into valleys even if a neighboring [Palestinian] village is threatened. The sewage system of the settlements on the eastern hills and slopes north of Jerusalem has contaminated fresh

water supplies for drinking and irrigation of Palestinian areas up to Jericha.

Agricultural Land

In 1967, 2,300 sq km of the West Bank and Gaza Strip were under Palestinian cultivation. In 1989, that figure had been reduced to 1,945 sq km, or 31.5 percent of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Agriculture comprised 24 percent of Gross Domestic Product in 1966, the same percentage as in the 1980–85 (pre-*intifada*) period. By 1994, the percentage had decreased to less than 15 percent. In 1966, the agricultural sector provided employment for 55,000 Palestinians, or 43 percent of total employment, whereas in the 1980–85 period, there were 40,000 people employed in the agricultural sector, comprising 24 percent of employed Palestinians. In 1993, the percentage of employed persons working in agriculture was 22 percent.

These gross indicators do not lead to specific conclusions regarding the effect of settlements on agricultural employment or production or land under cultivation, because settlements are only one of a number of variables that must be considered when assessing these trends.

ENVIRONMENT, continued on page 2SR

However, there are specific regions, such as the Jordan Valley, where a direct link can be established between the loss of Palestinians' agricultural opportunities and Israeli settlements. The confiscation of agricultural lands and their transfer to settlements result in the loss of agricultural income and employment, although this has never been quantified beyond anecdotal reporting. Contamination by sewage also directly affects Palestinian agriculture in the region around Kiryat Arba and elsewhere. There are also unquantified economic and environmental costs associated with Israeli-owned industries in the occupied territories, such as a recycling plant for used motor oil, stone quarries, and other plants where harmful and toxic by-products are produced.

Water

Access to water, rather than a scarcity of land, remains the greatest obstacle to Palestinian agricultural development. For Israel, water has been a vital precondition for achieving its fundamental challenges—the creation of a vibrant economy to sustain an increasing Jewish community. Without an adequate supply of water, the concept of massive Jewish immigration and settlement would be imperiled, and without immigration and settlement Israel's leadership fears for its future. Water, settlement, and security have thus become complementary pieces of Israel's security outlook.

According to a 1992 report for the American Academy of Arts and Sciences by Miriam Lowi, "almost the entire increase in Israeli water use since 1967 derives from the waters of the West Bank and the Upper Jordan River."

Israel, however, is in the midst of a water emergency. Even with the resources conquered in 1967, it is pumping more water from its aquifers than nature can replace. And in the West Bank, not only is Israel exploiting water for its own population in Israel and the occupied territories, amounting to 15 percent of total consumption, it has also prevented the Palestinian community from increasing its water use to barely 20 percent beyond the amount used in 1967—and only for personal use, not for agriculture and economic development.

Since the beginning of bilateral and multilateral negotiations earlier this decade at Madrid, Israel has sought to protect its continuing control over this resource in the West Bank, which was described by Israel's state comptroller in February 1993 as the "principle reservoir of drinking water for the Dan region, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Beersheba," and the "most important long-term source in the [national] water system."

The water requirements of Israel's settlements are a small segment of this larger mosaic of Israeli exploitation of the water resources in the occupied territories.

At a time when settlers were barely 10 percent of the population in the West Bank (1987), Palestinian consumption totaled 115 million cubic meters (mcm), while settler consumption equaled 97 mcm. A 1993 report by Peace Now noted that "the Jewish settlers' per capita irrigated areas are seven and thirteen times larger than the areas accorded to Palestinians for irrigation in the Gaza Strip and West Bank respectively."

A November 1992 report by the Jerusalem Media and Communication Center (JMCC), "Israeli Obstacles to Economic Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territories," notes that lack of water has forced Palestinian farmers to remove tracts from cultivation and that the digging of new, deep wells for settlements, particularly in the Jordan Valley, has caused subsequent shortages for Palestinian farmers.

Industrial Pollution

Approximately 160 Israeli-owned industrial concerns are located in the West Bank. For Israeli industrialists, the West Bank has, at least in one sphere, enjoyed a comparative advantage over Israel. Environmental regulations on soil, air, and water quality, and restrictions on industrial development generally, have been far less comprehensive and much less assiduously enforced compared with Israel. Combined with state-subsidized incentives for Israeli businesses to locate to industrial parks in and near settlements, the relative laxity of environmental enforcement and monitoring has led to the location of a number of "dirty" concerns to the occupied territories. Factories posing an environmental risk generally use wet processes in packaged food manufacturing, metal coating, and textiles.

The Shomron Municipal Environmental Association (SMEA), a governmental body established by settlements in the northern part of the West Bank to monitor and improve environmental quality, acknowledges that "waste water effluents from these plants and from nearly 100 residential communities in our region, if not properly treated, pose a threat to the groundwater quality in the region. In addition, industrial air emissions and noise generation can be problematic at some factories."

Forty-five businesses operate in the industrial park of Burkan, adjacent to the settlement of Ariel. Most are engaged in the production of fabrics and plastics for export. Palestinians complain that industrial waste generated in the industrial park is dumped on Palestinian land.

"The owners of these factories escape the tighter rules on health and the environment inside Israeli itself, to work on the West Bank, where they get tax breaks," explained Khalil Suleiman, an environmental expert from al-Najah University in Nablus. In addition to Burkan, Palestinians have complained

... lack of water has forced Palestinian farmers to remove tracts from cultivation, and the digging of new, deep wells for settlements, particularly in the Jordan Valley, has caused subsequent shortages for Palestinian farmers.

about the operation of industrial facilities at Ariel, Karnei Shomron, Kiryat Arba, and Kadumim. Of particular concern is the effect of industrial development on the quality of groundwater, which Palestinian investigators have found to be "significantly more polluted" near settlements than elsewhere.

The settlement of Kiryat Arba has been identified by Palestinian investigators as "the main source of pollution in the Hebron area." A tile factory located in the settlement industrial area at one time flushed its waste water through the sewage system, which resulted in numerous problems. The city of Hebron successfully petitioned the court to stop this practice. Now the waste water is trucked off in tanks and dumped on a Palestinian field. The water contains high levels of calcium carbonate, increasing the already high pH level of the land.

The Case of Geshurei Industries

Geshurei Industries, a manufacturer of pesticides and fertilizers, was originally located in the Israeli town of Kfar Saba. Concern about the environmental effects of the factory—on land, public health, and agriculture—resulted in an Israeli court order in 1982 closing the plant.

Since 1987, the factory has been operating across the Green Line, in the West Bank town of Tulkarem, where there are effectively no controls on waste disposal or air pollution. Other Israeli industrial polluters, including those working in asbestos, fiberglass, pesticides, and flammable gases, also relocated to the Tulkarem area. According to a recent report by a Palestinian non-governmental organization, the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment (LAWE), factory pollution directly affects 144 dunams of prime agricultural land and "causes substantial damage to the public health." The Israeli court has ordered some remedial action, including compensation to affected farmers, but the plant remains in operation.

The Society's report notes the following effects of the Geshurei factory operation:

- the decay of a majority of trees and other vegetation around the plant;
- the settling of chemical dust and residue and a liquid substance that leaves a calcium-like deposit on the land and vegetation, causing a decrease in field and hothouse agricultural production;
- the prominence of sodium and salt factory by-products in soil samples of land found to be non-arable, both of which are prominent consequences of waste-water contamination of agricultural land;
- the discovery of sulfamic acid, a starting material for a herbicide used as a non-selective weed killer, in groundwater samples from the area surrounding the factory.

The report also notes that "this is clear evidence of polluting groundwater through leakage of chemicals, and proof of the improper disposal of wastes and by-products."

LAWE documented "a very high ratio of health-related problems among farmers and people living around the factory, including severe headaches, itchy eyes, spastic and chronic coughs, and bronchial asthma." The Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture has recently noted that "the public health of the community has not been well-documented due to decades of military occupation and direct conflict, suggesting that environmentally related health problems may be more pervasive than currently estimated. The long-term impact on soil and groundwater has similarly received inadequate attention."

Tulkarem's agricultural land has historically been a significant factor in the local economy. As a consequence of the harmful effects of Israeli-operated industry around Tulkarem, agricultural profits were reduced by 21.5 percent between 1992 and 1997, according to LAW E. The Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture estimates that 17 percent of Tulkarem's agricultural land has been affected by pollution originating at the six Israeli concerns located in the Tulkarem area. Three of the factories sit on what Palestinians claim to be *waqf* land. Other sites are claimed by private Palestinian owners. Several factories are located less than 100 meters from residential housing.

Settlers have been implicated by Palestinians in what Palestinians term "pesticide attacks," in which settlers destroy cultivated fields by spraying chemical pesticides during the agricultural season. LAW E notes that in one incident in the village of Ptarmus Ayya, settlers sprayed crops of

vegetables, cereals, and olive trees in this fashion.

Dumps

Hundreds of sites for the disposal of trash are located in the occupied territories, including dozens that are unauthorized. There are 246 sites in the West Bank north of Jerusalem alone. Most of the sites are simple and primitive with few if any environmental safeguards, and none is used exclusively by settlements or Palestinian communities. SMEA acknowledges that "sites are improperly maintained, generating odors and smoke which are a nuisance to neighboring residents, as well as posing a threat to groundwater quality."

A site in Jiyous, near the northern West Bank town of Kalkilya, is typical. Sited on 12 dunams, 200 meters from the river bed that serves as a source of drinking water for the village of Azoun, the site opened in 1990 and is administered by Palestinians under the direction of SMEA. It is used principally by the settlements of Karnei Shomron, Kadumim, Tzofim, and Ma'ale Shomron. SMEA is now being pressured by Israeli trash contractors to permit them to use the dump for trash

[Trash disposal] sites are improperly maintained, generating odors and smoke which are a nuisance to neighboring residents, as well as posing a threat to groundwater quality.

generated in Israel, after the Israeli dump they had been using was closed by the government. Residents of Azoun complain of an epidemic of flies in summer and of smoke wafting into the village when trash is burned. They claim that 200 olive trees have been damaged by smoke.

Sites such as the one at Jiyous are attractive trash disposal options for Israeli communities. With disposal costs three to six times greater in Israel, sites in the West Bank offer many Israeli towns a closer, cheaper alternative to dumps within Israel proper.

Israel conducted a Geographic Information System (GIS) study in 1996 as part of an effort to develop a master plan to establish priorities to improve and to consolidate the system of trash disposal in the West Bank. Israel's plan for trash disposal in the West Bank is being devised with no official or informal Palestinian participation.

Quarries

There are literally thousands of stone quarries on the West Bank, supplying 80 percent of the material needs of Israel's construction sector. Many of these stones are used in settlement construction. Israeli concerns operate six West Bank quarries. Most of these quarries have operated for years, but the Palestinian Authority (PA) has also considered the siting of new quarries in Palestinian-controlled areas, run in partnership with Israeli companies.

One of these, at a controversial site in Wadi al-Teen—an important natural grazing area that supports livestock farmers in neighboring Palestinian villages—was to be the new site of a quarry whose operators are relocating from sites in Israel.

The Applied Research Institute—Jerusalem, a Palestinian environmental group, notes in their report, "Wadi al-Teen Quarry and the Systematic Expropriation of Palestinian National Resources," that "the construction of a quarry at Wadi al-Teen will undoubtedly bring environmental degradation, threaten the bio-diversity and wildlife in the area, close off major natural grazing and agricultural areas, and deprive Palestinian farmers of run-off water used for irrigation. Furthermore, the plan will adversely affect the living environment in neighboring Palestinian villages due to dust and other types of air pollution. Most important, this project allows Israel to exploit Palestinian stone, the main natural raw material in the West Bank."

The public outcry over plans to establish a quarry at Wadi al-Teen has recently forced the PA to reconsider the project.

"What is the PA planning to tell those who demonstrated against settlement activity in Wadi al-Teen," asked Palestinian

Legislative Council member Hassan Kreisheh before reconsideration was announced. "How can we tell Israel to stop building settlements when we are granting them even more land to establish quarries?"

Many quarries are located in close proximity to Palestinian residential areas. The clouds of dust produced in the quarries pose certain health risks. Palestinians charge that those residing near such enterprises suffer from increased levels of asthma and acute bronchial infections.

Settlers have organized to prevent the operation of quarries near their residential areas. Together with Palestinians, they have filed a unique, joint appeal to oppose the creation of a new stone-crushing site in the village of Dura, near Hebron.

Obstacles to Settler-Palestinian Cooperation

The mitigation of environmental problems in the occupied territories, including those caused by the existence and expansion of settlements, is viewed by some Israelis as a forum for joint Israeli-Palestinian action. Yet Israeli environmental planners in the territories continue to view Palestinians as junior partners at best. Palestinians, for their part, are willing to cooperate with Israeli communities within Israel's pre-1967 borders,

but they refuse as a matter of principle to participate in joint efforts with settlers.

"Our feeling—in fact, it's more than a feeling," explained the director of the settlers' Judea Towns Association for the Environment, "is that the Palestinian Authority is not interested in cooperating with us." In Hebron, to cite one example, the Palestinian municipality refuses to participate in a waste water

treatment scheme in which some of the treated water will be used by Israeli settlers.

Rafael Eitan, Israel's minister of environment, recently warned that "if the Palestinian Authority doesn't answer our request for cooperation we will carry out the projects essential to protect the environment in Israel and the residents of the territories ourselves, and I will act to deduct the costs from the money forwarded by the government to the Authority."

Palestinians recognize that, even without taking the settlements into consideration, the West Bank and Gaza Strip have myriad environmental problems. "Environmentally speaking," explained Imad Attrash, director of the Children for the Protection of Nature in Palestine, "I am very depressed. We have problems with pollution, sewage, industrial zones situated in residential areas, as well as disposable diapers."

The prevailing sentiment among Palestinians is to treat the environmental implications of settlement expansion as a political issue, one related to the continuing Palestinian refusal, particularly on a popular level, to concede the principle of joint action with settler and settler-oriented institutions. ♦

"If the Palestinian Authority doesn't answer our request for cooperation we will carry out the projects essential to protect the environment in Israel and the residents of the territories ourselves, and I will act to deduct the costs from the money forwarded by the government to the Authority."

than 10 settlements will be directly affected by redeployment.

In the Jenin-Nablus region, Gwertzman projects that a 13 percent pullback would add Mevo Dotan, Shavei Shomron, and Itamar to the list of affected settlements. In the Hebron area, Karmeit Tsur and Otniel would be adversely affected.

In the 13 percent scenario, Israel would lose control of additional areas north of Jenin next to the Green Line, around the Israeli regions of Wadi Ara and Gilboa. Palestinian contiguity would extend from Nablus north to Jenin and northwest along certain points to the Green Line, almost to the Israeli Arab town of Umm al-Fahm. Palestinians would be awarded control in a buffer zone along the Green Line at a few points just north of Tulkarem. The Palestinians would also gain control of the southwest corner of the West Bank, up to the Green Line in the Lachish region, thereby providing contiguity with Hebron for a few isolated Palestinian villages.

Gwertzman believes that the central difference between a 9 percent and a 13 percent redeployment would be the effect on the Ramallah-area settlements of Bet El and Ofra. In the event of a 13 percent move, these two veteran outposts, established by leaders of the Gush Emmunim movement more than 20 years ago and still home to many, are destined to be enclaves, as is nearby Ateret.

Yehuda Harel strongly disagrees: "There will be a way to connect Ofra to Israel by way of a road to the Jordan Valley, and while it is more complicated, Beit El can be linked through a road bypassing Ramallah to the southeast and continuing to Jerusalem. Beit El and Ofra will remain part of Israel."

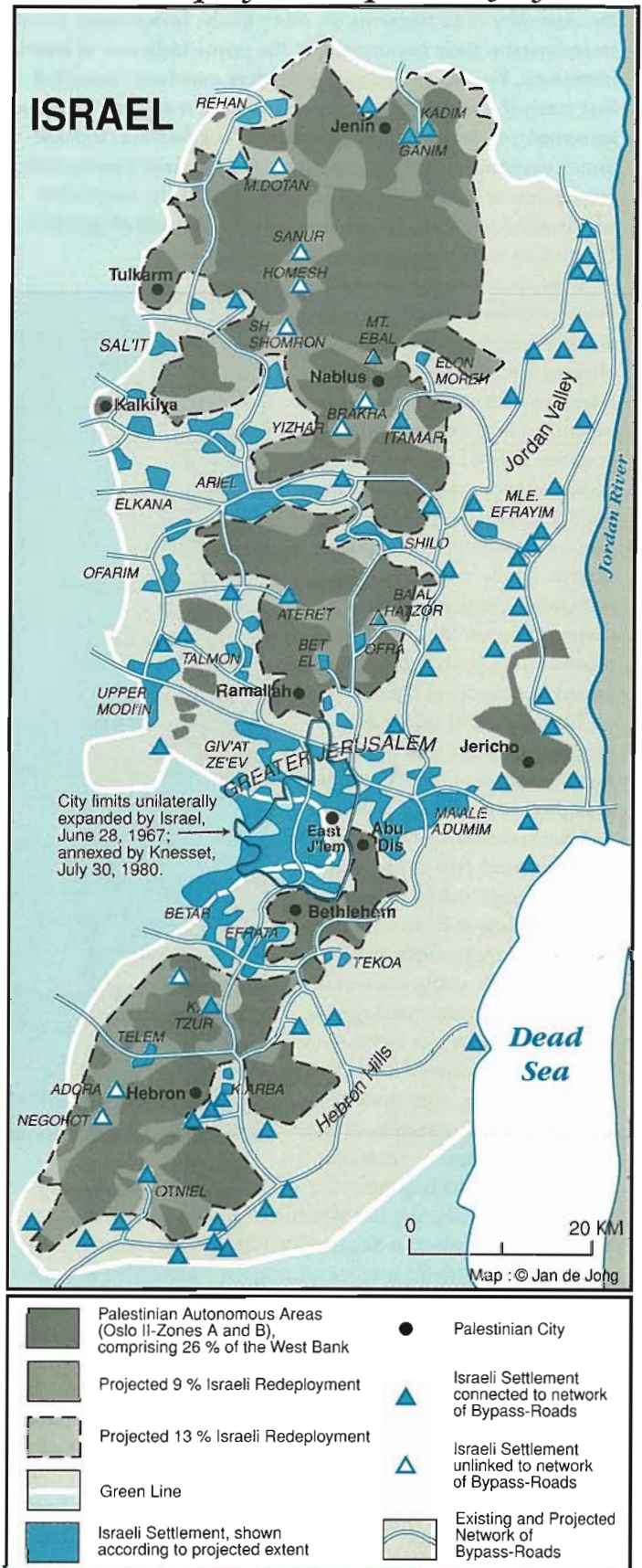
If Harel's standard of access to bypass roads is used to assess the impact of a 13 percent redeployment on Israeli settlements, only Mevo Dotan and Shavei Shomron need be added to the list of settlements isolated as a consequence of a 10 percent redeployment. Settlers themselves, however, recognize that any increased sense of isolation resulting from redeployment will tarnish, in the eyes of prospective settlers, the attraction of the affected settlements.

An additional 10 percent of the land over the Yarkon-Taninim aquifer would be transferred in the larger redeployment, bringing Palestinian control to one-quarter of the land over the vital aquifer. This transfer would involve a sector north of Karnei Shomron and up to Sal'it, in addition to the area above Tulkarem.

The Ba'al Hatzor early-warning station northeast of Ofra would be faced with the same situation as the one on Mt. Ebal unless access is assured from the Allon Road to the east. In fact, such a bypass road was recently completed. Extension of this route to Ofra is only a matter of adding 2 km to the road. The settlement of Shilo further to the north was recently linked to the Allon Road in this manner.

In terms of the Palestinian population, a 13 percent redeployment would enable 89 percent of West Bank Palestinians to live under full PA control—94.5 percent if Gaza is included. ♦

Israeli Redeployment Options—July 1998



the centrality of settlements or, more likely, inexplicably failed to understand their importance as the prime indicator of Israeli intentions. For while Palestinian leaders may have conceded that many if not most settlements will remain as part of a peace agreement, they have failed to confront the fact that the continued existence of these outposts also legitimizes a permanent, preponderant Israeli military role throughout the territories, which will necessarily compromise the realization of genuine Palestinian sovereignty anywhere in Palestine.

There is a widely held belief among diaspora Palestinians conducting talks with Israel that the physical transformation of the land as represented by settlement expansion is of little importance in determining Israel's strategic demands and can (and will) be undone through a political decision by negotiators. The precedent of Yamit and other Sinai settlements, which were destroyed when the Sinai was returned to Egypt, is often mentioned in support of this thesis.

That the Sinai was ceded precisely in order to safeguard Israel's control of the West Bank, including settlement expansion, and the fact that a peace agreement between two strong states such as Egypt and Israel is qualitatively different from an Israeli-Palestinian rapprochement are only two of the many reasons why the Sinai settlement analogy has little relevance to the viability of settlements on the West Bank.

Nevertheless, ever since the demise of the Palestinian delegation to Washington—composed of Palestinians hailing from the West Bank and Gaza Strip who negotiated during the Washington talks preceding the Oslo announcement in September 1993—there has not been any powerful, articulate voice among the Palestinian leadership, arguing, as Gazan negotiator Haidar Abdul Shafi did, that a halt to settlement expansion is a basic requirement of any negotiating framework.

PA chairman Yasser Arafat is briefed infrequently on Israel's settlement policy, and his response is generally stunned silence as he looks at the maps depicting the dimensions of the enterprise. Palestinian Authority negotiators Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) and Ahmad Quray (Abu Ala) have never been on a "settlement tour." If one is to judge by their negotiating

priorities, they have no concept of the role of settlements in the history of Israel's policies in the occupied territories, nor do they believe that such an understanding is required. Settlements can be made to disappear, or to dry up, with the stroke of an Israeli diplomat's pen. Failing that, they have come to believe that the most important objective for this generation of Palestinians, overriding the need to constrain the transfer of Israelis into the West Bank and Gaza Strip, is to establish the foundations for Palestinian sovereignty on whatever territories Israel can be persuaded to surrender.

The "American Initiative," approved in London recently by Abu Mazen and Abu Ala, and now under consideration by the Israeli government, like previous agreements since 1993, contains no meaningful restriction on settlement expansion. The draft agreement does contain an Israeli agreement not to construct new settlements nor to engage in the "substantial expansion" of settlements outside contiguous areas. But these are, in fact, the exact formulations that have been used by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu himself for more than one year. During this period, almost 20 new settlement areas have been established and ground has been broken for thousands of new dwelling units in almost every settlement. (See *Settlement Reports*, March and May 1998.)

The use of these formulations testifies to the failure not only of the Palestinians to contain Israel's settlement drive, it is also a stark reminder of the inability of U.S. diplomacy to impart real meaning to its vociferous demand for a settlement expansion "time out."

The agreement to maintain settlements during the interim period has established a precedent that will be difficult to alter in final-status talks. More Palestinians are beginning to acknowledge that permitting any settlements to remain in final status will obstruct their achievement of any credible degree of sovereignty in the West Bank or Gaza, not necessarily because of settlements themselves—they directly control less than 15 percent of the West Bank—but also because of the extensive security measures required to insure their existence. Such measures include the ever-expanding system of roads linking settlements with each other and with main access arteries to Israel and the permanent presence of the Israel Defense Forces in the territories. ♦

Settlements without bypass road access directly affected by a 10 percent redeployment	
<i>Jenin/Nablus Region</i>	<i>Population</i>
Sa Nur	20
Homesh	204
Yitzhar	235
Bracha	615
<i>Hebron Region</i>	
Neguhot	0
Nahal Adora	NA
Tzorif	NA
<i>Subtotal</i>	1,074
Additional settlements without bypass road access affected by a 13 percent redeployment	
<i>Jenin/Nablus Region</i>	<i>Population</i>
Mevo Dotan	278
Shavei Shomron	649
<i>Subtotal</i>	927
Settler population directly affected by redeployments	
Total for 10 percent redeployment	1,074
Total for 13 percent redeployment	2,001

FROM THE PALESTINIAN PRESS

Israeli settlements cannot create a secure peace, because only real peace can enhance the overall meaning of security, and real peace can only be achieved by a complete withdrawal from all the occupied Palestinian territories. From past experience, settlements proved and are still proving that they are an obstacle to peace and a powder keg ready to explode.

The current policy of the Israeli government continues to sabotage the peace process. This is done through the proposals the Israeli prime minister presents, the *fait accompli* he tries to impose, and his continuous refusal to promise to freeze settlement activities.

It is also done by leaking reports to the Israeli and international media about Israeli projects under way to transform many already established settlements in the Palestinian West Bank into cities, in addition to developing their infrastructure, expanding them, and adding to them thousands of housing units. This will eventually require confiscating more Palestinian land.

Israel believes that this policy might in the future absolve it from carrying out certain measures and steps that have been frozen and that should have been carried out during the interim stage, including completing the redeployment, or might complicate the issue and make it impossible to solve when it is submitted for discussion in the final-status negotiations, if we happen to reach that stage.

Israelis also believe that we might be forced to tackle another new problem represented in the issue of “settlement cities,” whose purpose is to distract our attention from the settlement issue as defined in the signed agreements, by making us wage the settlement battle on another front.

Putting the peace process on its right track requires Israel to abide by international demands concerning settlements in the first place, since no solution can guarantee a secure future so long as there is one single settlement on Palestinian land. But if Israel persists in refusing the international legitimacy resolutions, it will bear the consequences of another solution dictated by the people.

We reiterate that the peace option is still our strategic option and we submit a preliminary practical solution to the settlement problem based on the following issues:

- Israeli recognition that the settlements established in the occupied territories after the June 1967 war were established on Palestinian territories occupied by force and confiscated according to military orders and laws that are devoid of any objective legal basis.

- The immediate suspension of all Israeli settlement activities and plans in the Palestinian territories.
- The preparation of a survey on Israeli settlement activities after signing the agreements, and an Israeli admission that these activities are a blatant violation of the agreements in letter and spirit and of the concept of peace.
- The treatment of settlers who live on Palestinian land as foreigners . . . can be solved within the Palestinian social fabric: by subjecting them to the Palestinian law and its rules on foreigners or by having them apply for Palestinian citizenship to be treated like Palestinian citizens enjoying the same rights and having the same duties as stipulated in Palestinian law as soon as they obtain citizenship.
- The last and best option is to have the settlers leave Palestinian territories and live anywhere else or where they are allowed to stay.

From past experience, settlements proved and are still proving that they are an obstacle to peace and a powder keg ready to explode.

For the future of peace we always look forward to a horizon brighter than the one hidden behind the forests of hostile settlements, which are scattered over our mountain peaks and which provoke our feelings, future dreams, and the peace project. We were never eager to see a Palestinian worker digging the

foundations for a settlement with his own hands or plac[ing] a stone in the structure of these settlements which run counter to his private and national aspirations. We want our workers to work in joint peace projects in the industrial zones, which we worked hard to build along the Green Line.

As for security apprehension or excuses, they are in the first place ours, as the Palestinian people are the ones who live near invading settlers filled with hatred, chauvinistic ideologies, gunfire, and matches ready to start fires.

Despite the fact that we are fully convinced that the settlements and the settlers will eventually leave from every inch of our land, the policy and spirit of peace require—and without delay—courage and objectivity to acknowledge the departure of the settlers and not to simply call for it. International mechanisms to end it must be put in place to create a suitable climate for a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace.

Ahmad Quray (Abu Ala)
Palestinian Legislative Council speaker
in *al-Hayah al-Jadidah* (Gaza), March 29, 1998

PALESTINIAN LEADER LAMENTS RESPONSE TO SETTLEMENT GROWTH

Interview with Palestinian Legislative Council member Salah Tamari, chairman of the council's Land and Settlement Committee, reprinted from *Palestine Report*, May 8, 1998.

Tamari: We are chasing after settlement expansion as a national authority. We lack the capabilities. The Israelis recently announced plans to expand the settlement of Efrat [south of Bethlehem] by 60 percent. Can you imagine what sort of money is available to them? On the other hand, our project to renew the sewage system for the entire district of Bethlehem did not reach \$10 million!

Question: But fighting settlement expansion, should it not be a top priority?

Tamari: The problem is finances. Take the village of Rashaydeh [east of Bethlehem]. It's only ten km away from the Israeli settlement of Ma'ale Amos. The expenditures of this settlement total the expenditures of half of the district of Bethlehem. Rashaydeh, on the other hand, does not have electricity nor paved roads. They have water and an elementary school

but no other facilities.

Question: But the Palestinians could have done a much better job in so many areas? Why haven't they?

Tamari: Let me be honest. I think we even surprised ourselves with our bad performance. My own sense of frustration does not stem from Israeli practices and policies but from the behavior of the Palestinian side. Most of the problems I face don't deal with how to confront settlement expansion but how to deal with the various Palestinian ministries involved.

Our level of performance at the base level is very poor. A minister may comprehend the importance of an issue. But when it comes to implementation, the matter may rest in the hands of an engineer who neither has the vision nor the awareness of the urgency of the matter. If you go to a settlement, you'll find that it is the elite who live there. On the other side, you have a Palestinian villager whose only weapon is that he is holding on to the land. How can we expect him to confront the sophistication of a settlement when he doesn't even have electricity? ♦

The Essence of the [Umbrella Municipality] Proposal

"Insofar as planning and construction is concerned, the relevant Jewish settlements in the West Bank will be functionally detached from the authority of the Civil Administration (the Military Commander) and, in essence, will come under the direct control of civilian Israeli authority. In terms of planning and construction, these settlements will be empirically indistinguishable from those towns and cities in Israel proper. . . .

"Until now, and even after Oslo, there has been a clear, binary distinction between Israel proper (the rule of Israeli law) and the West Bank (despite all discounts, Military Rule). The proposed UM plan entirely blurs this distinction, rendering the green line meaningless—even as a term of reference. . . .

"The term 'Greater Jerusalem' has to date been a rather amorphous, and not terribly binding, declaration of intent. After this proposal the same term will constitute a geographically and ethnically defined entity, clearly expressed in legally defined borders, in which [Israeli] civilian control is exerted over territories previously deemed 'occupied.'"

Excerpts from a U.S. State Department analysis of the proposed plan for an "Umbrella Municipality," including undetermined West Bank settlements, approved by the Israeli cabinet on June 21, 1998.

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