

REPORT ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENT IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

A Bimonthly Publication of the Foundation for Middle East Peace

Volume 8 Number 6

November-December 1998

NEWS

The Netanyahu government has taken an important step along the road to commencing construction at the disputed site of Jebel Abu Gneim (Har Homa) by issuing tenders for building the first dwellings in the settlement.

The Wye Memorandum specifies a timetable for Israel's redeployment from 13 percent of the West Bank. The chart opposite illustrates the changing composition of West Bank territory as redeployments proceed (see also story page 4).

As of this writing, an authoritative map depicting the areas of Israel's redeployment had not been published. The page 5 map offers an informed illustration of the redeployments agreed to by Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

The expansion of the settler population in the occupied territories is graphically illustrated in charts on page 7.

Also in this issue:

Short Takes 3
Wye and Settlements 4

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Territorial Division of the West Bank According to the Wye Memorandum

	AREAS		
	<i>A</i> <i>Palestinian</i> <i>Civil/Security</i> <i>Control</i>	<i>B</i> <i>Palestinian</i> <i>Civil Control</i> <i>Israeli Security</i> <i>Control</i>	<i>C</i> <i>Israeli</i> <i>Civil/Security</i> <i>Control</i>
Redeployments in 1995-1996 according to the Oslo II agreement	2.0%	26.0%	72.0%
Timetable for first and second "further redeployments" according to the Wye Memorandum:			
Stage I Nov. 16, 1998	9.1%	21.9%	70.0%
Stage II Nov. 16-Dec. 21, 1998	9.1%	26.9%	65.0%
Stage III Dec. 14-Jan. 31, 1999 (including 3% nature reserve)	17.2%	23.8%	59.0%

SETTLER ATTITUDES TOWARD PALESTINIANS REFLECT ONGOING NATIONAL STRUGGLE

The attitudes of Israel's growing settler population toward the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are an important factor in assessing the impact of settlements on the Palestinian community.

Speaking generally, settlers as a whole can be said to view the Palestinian community as an obstacle to the realization of Israeli sovereignty over territories settlers and many Israelis generally consider their own. Similarly, settlers view Palestinians as opponents in the contest for control of the land and other resources in the occupied territories. Therefore, while there are other aspects

of a relationship forged through a century of national struggle and more than thirty years of direct occupation and "living together," the fundamental elements of hostility and national antagonism remain its defining features. The Oslo process has not altered these fundamental attitudes, but it has put a new set of issues on the agenda.

Among a small but growing minority of settlers is a view of the need to establish working relations with Palestinians without either side compromising its ideological predispositions.

ATTITUDES, continued on page 6

TO OUR READERS

One year ago, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright added another diplomatic formulation to the lexicon of U.S. diplomacy—a “time out” in Israel’s campaign of settlement expansion.

“Give me a real war on terror,” she reportedly advised PLO chairman Yasser Arafat, “and I will push Netanyahu on settlements.”

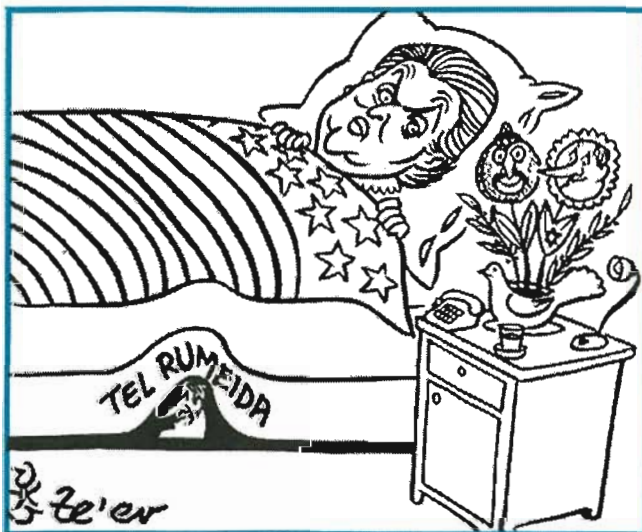
The recently concluded Wye Memorandum formalizes Palestinian commitments to an extensive security framework aimed at meeting both U.S. and Israeli demands for the destruction of the armed Palestinian opposition to the Oslo process. U.S. interest in making Israeli commitments to constrain its settlement growth explicit, however, appears to have waned, along with Secretary Albright’s purported advice to Chairman Arafat.

In explaining the post-Wye U.S. policy regarding settlement expansion that continues without interruption throughout the occupied areas, U.S. officials insist that the Clinton administration opposes all unilateral acts meant to undermine the prospects for a final agreement. Yet nowhere will a sentence be found in which the phrase

“unilateral act” and “settlement expansion” appear. In this respect, there appears to have been a considered decision to *reduce* the profile of U.S. opposition to Israel’s settlement growth after the Wye talks.

In view of the failure of past U.S. public diplomacy aimed at cajoling a slowdown in settlement growth, the U.S. retreat promises to have little practical impact. Indeed, it is possible that the low profile adopted by the Clinton administration is the result of a private U.S.-Israeli understanding to refrain from “provocative” settlement expansion in places such as Jebel Abu Ghneim (Har Homa) or Ras al-Amud. Possible perhaps, but unlikely. The government of Benjamin Netanyahu may, for its own reasons, refrain from initiating construction at Har Homa. Far away from Wye, however, from the West Bank city of Hebron in the south to Elon Moreh in the north to Nili in the west, the settlers’ bulldozers are busy. Construction goes on.

Lucius D. Battle



Ha'aretz, English Edition, Internet Version
October 9, 1998

(Settlement of Tel Rumeida is in Hebron.)

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Merle Thorpe, Jr.
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Lucius D. Battle
President

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SHORT TAKES

Israelis Queried on Settlements

In the context of a permanent agreement, is it necessary to leave all settlements intact or to agree to their removal?

Leave all settlements intact	46%
Remove settlements located in the heart of Palestinian populated areas	17%
Remove all settlements	18%
Remove most settlements	13%

Is it necessary to remove immediately or to leave intact the isolated settlements in the heart of Hebron?

Remove	52%
Leave intact	43%

Do settlements contribute to security or are they a security burden?

	<i>Hebron settlements</i>	<i>All settlements</i>
Burden	55%	45%
Contribute	25%	33%
Neither	18%	21%

Results of a survey of 501 representative adult Israelis conducted by the Dahaf organization in late August 1998.
Yediot Aharonot, August 28, 1998

Settler Attacks on Palestinians

According to a report published by the PA in late August, settlers were responsible for 19 attacks on Palestinians in the Hebron region and 26 in the Nablus area in recent months.

The PA report is based on reports of confrontations recorded by the Palestinian Liaison and Coordination Office and the Palestinian police.

Attacks in the Hebron region included firings at vehicles belonging to the Palestinian police and civilians. Reports of settlers torching Palestinian vehicles and trying to forcibly enter homes were received. Reports of a similar nature were received in the Nablus region, along with reports of settler attempts to establish control over Palestinian lands, as at the Yitzhar settlement, uprooting fruit trees, destroying crops, and contaminating drinking water.

The report claims that settlers pose a threat to Palestinian security as well as to Israeli troops and police officials and should therefore be removed from the occupied territories.

Ha'aretz, August 25, 1998

Five Years After Oslo

Five years after the signing of the Declaration of Principles that jolted the Middle East, Israel continues to adhere to the

order of priorities and the strategic doctrine that existed prior to the signing. It holds that patches of land inhabited principally by Arabs constitute the protective wall that will provide security for the country's citizens, and that mini-settlements of Jews that enflame frictions with the Arabs around them are perceived as a national asset. In exchange for those assets, the government is willing to forsake the prospect of a security strategy that is based on peace.

Ha'aretz, September 14, 1998

Settlement Expansion

CNN: Does this interim agreement prevent Israel from establishing new settlements?

Netanyahu: No, not at all. Rabin, in fact, who was my predecessor and who signed the Oslo accords, boasted that he could build new settlements under the agreement. In point of fact, he expanded the population of the settlements by 50 percent. We're nowhere near there. We're just building as part of natural growth. We're not building new settlements, but we're allowing the natural increase of the population in these communities.

Now, understand that at the same time, the Arab communities also expand. People get married. They have children. I wouldn't dream of telling the Arab communities, in this same contested land—we contest it as much as they contest it, it's part of our national and historic homeland—I would never dream of telling the Arabs, "You can't get married; you can't have children. You can't build houses around the Palestinian towns and villages." Of course, I wouldn't do that. And that is why we think that this whole matter of trying to freeze any construction, freeze life, is, in a way saying that there can't be peace.

We're going to live there in that territory, the Arabs are going to live there, and we're going to have to find a way through peaceful negotiations to have our two peoples live in that very small land between the Jordan and the sea.

Interview with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu,
CNN Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer, September 27, 1998

The Oslo Map

What does a state mean to us if it is on land that is full of settlements and mines? People can't reach each other with security barriers in the streets.

Gaza is separated from the West Bank, Hebron is separated from Nablus. Practically speaking, we are in a situation that does not make it possible for an active or independent Palestinian entity.

Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, spiritual leader of Hamas, quoted in the *Mid East Mirror*, October 2, 1998

THE WYE MEMORANDUM AND SETTLEMENTS

Israel and the Palestinian Authority have agreed in the Wye Memorandum to a revised timetable for the phased implementation of the first and second “further redeployments” (FRD) of Israeli military forces outlined in the Oslo II accords signed in September 1995.

The first of three redeployments was initially scheduled to begin in October 1996. The third redeployment was to have been completed, according to the Oslo II timetable, by October 1997. The Wye Memorandum, signed on October 23, 1998, makes no mention of a date for the third redeployment called for in Oslo II.

The official text of the memorandum curiously omits an agreed upon map detailing the areas to be transferred by Israel to Palestinian control. This is the first redeployment accord in which such a map has not formed part of the official agreement.

After implementation of the Wye memorandum, the Palestinian Authority will control, in whole or in part, 41 percent of the West Bank (see chart page 1). Palestinians expect U.S. intelligence satellites to confirm the extent of Israel’s deployments.

Redeployment Map

Palestinians have pieced together a rather detailed understanding of what areas Israel intends to transfer although no final Israeli redeployment map has ever been formally presented, even at the Wye talks.

Indeed, in the days after the Wye talks, it became clear that the redeployment map remained a work in progress. Numerous accompanying documents to the Wye agreement appeared in the press, but no realistic map was leaked.

At a cabinet meeting on November 5 convened to debate the agreement, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu presented a map and offered to create a ministerial committee, advised by “experts and settler representatives,” to review it. The committee, he said, would be allowed to make “justified changes” in the proposed map.

Many settlement leaders, and some cabinet members, remain opposed to any agreement resulting in an increase in Palestinian territorial control of the West Bank. Netanyahu would like to reduce this disagreement in principle to a debate over which parts of the West Bank should be excluded from Palestinian control.

Despite the absence of an authorized redeployment map, some assumptions can be made about the regions to be transferred (see map, page 5). In general, the Netanyahu government considers the areas around Jenin in the north, and

southwest and northeast of Hebron best suited for transfer to some degree of Palestinian control. By including two separate desert-like areas in the hilly region northeast of Hebron as “nature reserves,” the government has avoided the need to reduce the Israeli presence near the Ramallah-area settlements of Bet El, Ofra, and Ateret.

Israel will remove a number of military camps, including Fahme, Bezek, Sanur, and Majnunei, and Nahal Ginat. Far more new bases will be constructed, however, according to a report in *Yediot Aharanot*, although each will be smaller in size than those they replace. “The small bases will be established throughout the West Bank,” noted the newspaper on October 25, “particularly next to isolated settlements. The intention is not to leave isolated settlements in the heart of Palestinian areas without an army base nearby. The camps to be established, therefore, will separate the territory under Palestinian control from the settlements.”

Affected Settlements

Settlement leaders have presented a list of 18 settlements which they claim will be one-half kilometer from Palestinian-controlled Area A sectors after implementation of the Wye memorandum: Kadim, Ganim, Mevo Dotan, Sanur, Homesh, and Shavei Shomron, north of Nablus; Itamar, Brakha, and Yitzhar, south of Nablus; Ofra, Bet El, and Ateret, near Ramallah; Karmeit Tzur, Telem,

Adora, Bet HaGai, Neguchot, and Otniel, near Hebron.

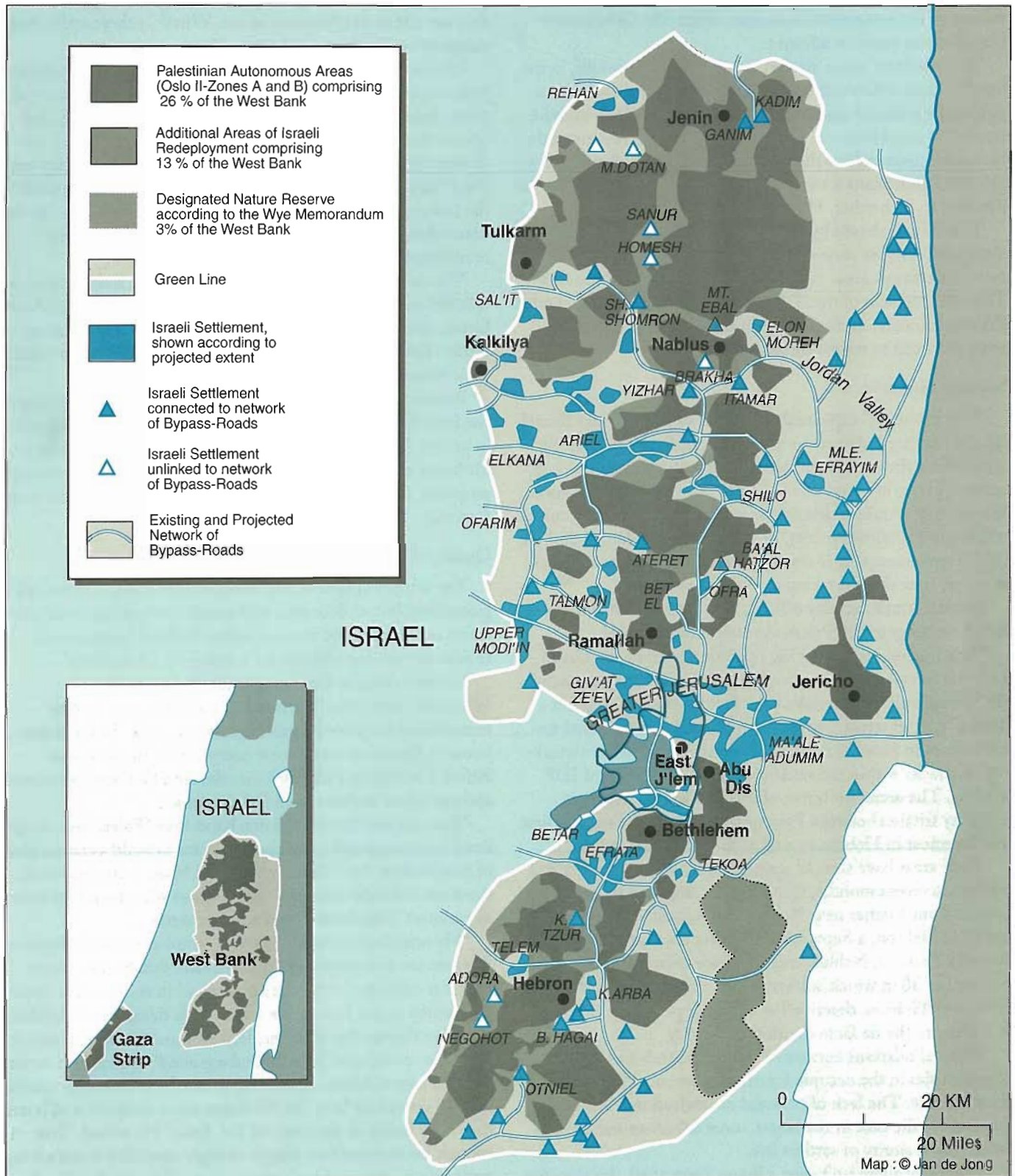
Such a standard, however, does not necessarily consign these settlements to a position of isolation from Israel or envelopment by areas under Palestinian control. Proximity to Palestinian-controlled areas, in and of itself, is not the most salient issue for gauging the effect of redeployment on settlements. All, for example, with the exception of Sanur, Brakha, and Homesh, will be connected by bypass roads, either existing or planned, leading to principal transport routes to Israel. Ten new roads, in fact, are in various stages of planning and construction. In no case will settlements be isolated in the sense of being physically surrounded by Palestinian areas A and B.

Some settlements however, will undoubtedly suffer from the added burdens imposed by the agreement. Sanur, for example, is already almost empty, and it is not likely to survive as a civilian settlement, even under present conditions.

Others including Shavei Shomron, Yitzhar, Itamar, Ateret, Bet El, and Ofra, according to well-informed Palestinians, will not be directly affected by implementation of the agreement. ♦

The official text of the memorandum curiously omits an agreed upon map detailing the areas to be transferred by Israel to Palestinian control. This is the first redeployment accord in which such a map has not formed part of the official agreement.

Current and Projected Israeli Redeployment According to the Wye Memorandum 1998



The need to create a *modus vivendi*, notwithstanding the deep national and ideological schisms between the two communities, is born both of the Oslo process and of the relative success of the settlement enterprise, which the Oslo accords have done so much to advance.

These settlers' main interest is a formula that would, in the words of one settlement leader, "enable people who don't recognize the political aspirations of the other side [to] nonetheless live as neighbors. . . . Once the Palestinians recognize the historical rights of Jews they exclude their own rights. Once we give the Palestinians a state, we negate our own rights. But we live next to each other. How do we do it?"

This view is shared by only a small minority of settlers. Far more prevalent are concerns raised by the prospect of autonomous Palestinian areas outside the direct control of the IDF. The redeployment of the IDF and the expansion of areas under PA control worry settlers living in close proximity to these areas or forced to transit through them.

Security Situation

"The problem," explained one settler of Bet El, near Ramallah, "is that the Palestinians can make our lives a hell. If the area around the settlement will be under Palestinian military control, I fear the prospect of injuries from sabotage and terror. If every trip we take to Jerusalem or to the center of the country will require a military escort, then what is the value of all these [Oslo] agreements? If in times of peace, the security situation is worse, then there is no value to the agreements."

Indeed, Israeli security officials now believe that settlers have been targeted by Palestinian opposition groups.

"The inability to mount big operations within the Green Line has forced the Hamas leadership to order their activists in the West Bank to undertake what is from their standpoint a 'kinder' type of terror," wrote Roni Shaked, who is noted for his sources in Israel's intelligence community. "We are speaking of attacks within the territories against settlers and IDF soldiers. The arena for terror of this sort are places where everyday friction between Palestinians and settlers occurs, first and foremost in Hebron as well as in the Nablus region."

Both areas have seen an upsurge in attacks on settlers and soldiers in recent months, including the August 5 killing of two settlers from Yitzhar near Nablus, the August 20 murder of a settler in Hebron, a September 10 firing on a bus traveling to Joseph's Tomb in Nablus, and a grenade attack in Hebron on September 30 in which soldiers were injured. The constant friction in Hebron, described as a "city of perpetual violence," is leading to the *de facto* division of the city.

Personal relations between Palestinian Arab and Jewish communities in the occupied territories are more the exception than the rule. The lack of personal or institutional contact is particularly the case in the larger, more suburban settlements where the majority of settlers live.

"I feel that there isn't even a house there at all. An absolute

vacuum," declared an Israeli from the New Givon settlement outside Jerusalem, in reference to the sole Palestinian home standing within the settlement perimeter.

"I have no relationship with them," she continued, "not good or bad, even though they are meters from my house. No, they are not at all of interest to me. What? Is there really something interesting happening there?"

This settler's willful failure to acknowledge the Palestinian home in her midst is emblematic of the settler community at large. According to the secretary of the settlement, the land upon which the Palestinian home stands "is Jewish land purchased during the British Mandate. We have a long story with this [Palestinian] family, many complaints and many appeals to the [Israeli] High Court of Justice [which refused to order the house destroyed], but it seems we have not succeeded in removing the family from the house."

"The settlers took land from me [upon which the settlement is built] and now they want to take my house," observed Sabri Greeb, the Palestinian homeowner. "Without any warning, settlers fenced around 40 dunams of land and began to build their homes."

Because of conflicts related to the contest over ownership of the land, Greeb has been jailed thirteen times, spending years in prison. During the *intifada*, Israeli security forces broke into his home five times, apparently to claim the house for security purposes. Greeb petitioned Israel's High Court and won their removal.

Quality of Life

The settlers at Givon, like most settlers today, are not religious Jews, but middle class and secular, whose choice of residence in the occupied territories was dictated by economic considerations and a desire for a better "quality of life."

"I didn't come to live here for ideological reasons," explained one settler. "I wanted to build a house close to Jerusalem. This place [Givon] is very beautiful. To build such a house in Jerusalem would cost many times the price here. Before I built here I clarified that the land had been purchased and not taken by force from Palestinians."

"You can feel that on the one hand they [Palestinian neighbors] want to extend a hand and truly try to build a certain kind of relationship, but suddenly they pull back, 'wait a moment, these are Jews and they took our land, so why should we have any contact with them?'" said another settler.

"My neighbors must understand," implored one Palestinian, "that we are a conservative Arab Muslim family. You know how it is with the Jews—they go around in shorts while there are women in our houses for whom such things are forbidden."

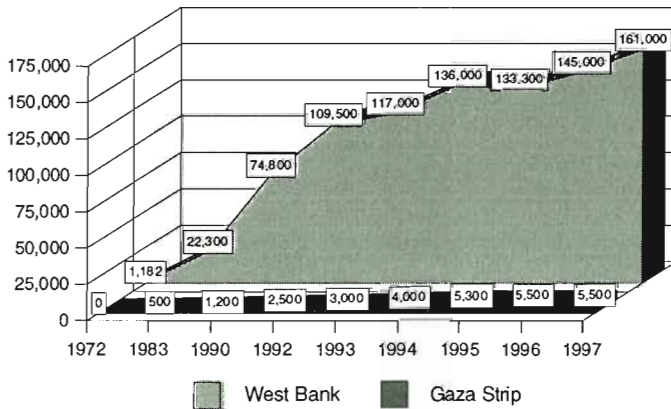
These day-to-day frictions, however, pale in comparison to fears of a revival of a "Jewish Underground" determined to target sites holy to Islam. According to one Israeli security source, such an operation "may be 100 times more dangerous to Israel than a car bomb in the heart of Tel Aviv." He added, "It is enough for three or four people of high capability to set all the territories on fire, and perhaps the entire Middle East." ♦

Population Growth in the Judea Region [southern West Bank], 1992–1996

Settlement	Population				1992–1996 Increase	% Increase
	1992	1994	1995	1996		
Betar	1,603	4,878	5,500	7,500	5,897	370%
Efrat	3,181	4,606	5,300	5,700	2,519	79%
Hebron	345	502	400	400	55	16%
Kiryat Arba	4,765	5,044	5,200	5,300	535	11%
Ma'ale Adumim	13,968	17,745	19,300	20,200	6,232	45%
Regional Council						
Etzion Bloc	5,220	6,507	7,100	7,500	2,280	44%
Hebron Hills	1,923	2,216	2,700	2,900	977	51%
Total	31,005	41,498	45,500	49,500	18,495	60%

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1997; Judea Magazine, Nov.-Dec. 1995.

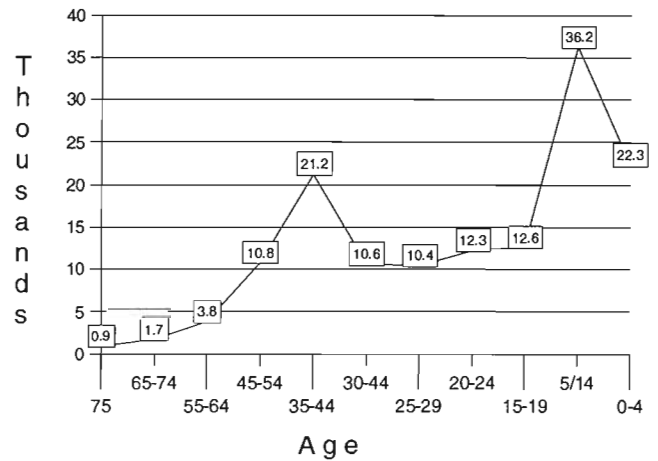
Settler Population, 1972–1997



- Note that the settler population of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has more than doubled during this decade.

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1997.

Population by Age, 1996



- The median national age is 27 years—significantly higher than the median settler age of 20.1.
- 58.5% of the settler population is under 14 years of age; 71.1% is under 20 years of age.

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1997.

SETTLEMENT SNAPSHOT

Water Allocation on the West Bank Favors Settlers

On August 24 this year, a Palestinian Authority (PA) official announced measures aimed at relieving the water shortage in PA-controlled areas of the West Bank. Israel will provide several large water tanks for areas without running water; there will be joint supervision of the quantity of water supplied by Israel to the Palestinians; and joint measures will be taken against the unauthorized diversion of water.

Fadel Quawash, deputy director of the Palestinian water authority, reports that Israel has approved six of forty requests for new well drilling. Quawash charged that the amount of water supplied by Israel to the Bethlehem-Hebron region has decreased from 33,000 cubic meters (m³) a day to 20,000 m³ a day in order to meet settler needs. Israel's coordinator of

government activities in the occupied territories replied that Israel is supplying the Hebron region with 23,000 m³ a day, more than the 17,500 stipulated in the Oslo II agreement. Shortages were also attributed to PA administrative shortcomings.

According to the Oslo II agreement, of the 601 million cubic meters of water available annually in the three main West Bank aquifers:

- 340 m³ (56.6 percent) is earmarked for use in Israel;
- 143 m³ (23.8 percent) for use by the 170,000 West Bank settlers (excluding those residing in East Jerusalem); and
- 118 m³ (19.6 percent) for the 1.2 million Palestinians living on the West Bank.

Comparison of Water Allocation

	<i>Kiryat Arba (settlers)</i>	<i>Hebron (Palestinians)</i>
Population in December 1997	5,800	119,230
Household water supply in 1997	765,120 m ³	3,170,952 m ³
Allocation in:		
February 1997	45,100 m ³	254,660 m ³
July 1997	98,530 m ³	216,230 m ³
Daily usage (per person):		
July 1997	547 liters/day	58 liters/day
July 1998	NA	45 liters/day

Source: Data on water is from the Palestinian Water Authority. Information appeared in *Ha'aretz*, July 31, 1998.

“The policy of the government is to enable Jews to live in all parts of the Land of Israel and in Judea and Samaria. Communities in Judea and Samaria have full right to flower, to develop, and to expand. The government refrains, for known reasons, from establishing new communities, but the expansion of existing communities—why not?”

*Israeli government secretary Danny Naveh
Yediot Aharanot, September 18, 1998*

Foundation for Middle East Peace
1763 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
Telephone: 202-835-3650
Fax: 202-835-3651
E-mail: jeff@clark.net
Internet: <http://www.fmep.org>

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