

FRAGMENTING PALESTINE



Formulas for Partition since the British Mandate

INTRODUCTION

May 2013

Over the last 100 years, the Palestinian people have resisted and endured numerous challenges and attempts to fragment their homeland, which have become endemic of their history of oppression. Partition has evolved from misguided attempts to manage the conflict towards systematic attempts to contain and delegitimize the Palestinian historical, national and human rights to their homeland.

Partitions have been used throughout history by imperial powers to colonize, divide up resources and control land between themselves and to assist a retreat from a territory; where conflict makes occupation or colonization unsustainable, occupying powers have engaged in a strategy of 'divide and quit', implementing a top-down solution which physically separates conflicting parties so that forces can withdraw. Such policy frequently involves uprooting indigenous inhabitants through forced transfer. Even after countries are split, violence can still erupt as contested territories are fought over and new states struggle to deal with refugee influx from population transfer, while those who are left behind face persecution as a minority in a hostile state.

Entrenched in World War One (WWI), Great Britain sought to gain allies in order to tip the balance of power in its favor. In the Middle East, it did so by entering into three contradictory and conflicting agreements regarding the post-war environment. Initially, the British-Arab 1915 Hussein-McMahon correspondence promised the Arabs full independence in exchange for support in the war against the Ottoman Empire. Directly contradicting this however were the 1916 Sykes-Picot secret documents between Britain and France meant to divide large swathes of the Middle East, including Palestine, into spheres of French and British influence, while the infamous 1917 Balfour Declaration attempted to attain Jewish allies by supporting the Zionist plans to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Through these contradictions, Britain cultivated the environment which would result in the occupation and colonization of Palestine.

With Allied victory in WWI, the League of Nations delegated Great Britain the 'Mandate for Palestine,' granting it quasi-colonial authority and administrative rights over Palestine, including a provision to uphold the Balfour Declaration – promising "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people... It being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine." Under the Mandate, British authorities oversaw and supported an ongoing appropriation of Palestinian land by Zionist immigrants who sought to make Palestine 'quantitatively and qualitatively Jewish,'¹ while failing to protect the rights of the Palestinians as stipulated in the Mandate.

The contradictory commitment of the Mandate to protect and facilitate the development of the native population on one hand, and provide for the ongoing immigration of exclusivist Zionists on the other, resulted in conflict as the Palestinians attempted to resist this policy. Numerous plans to partition the country followed, regardless of whether the Palestinians themselves consented to the dismemberment of their homeland, as the British and later the international community attempted – unsuccessfully – to foster peace. Zionist military successes in the 1948 War meant that the new Zionist entity was given a free hand to continue the colonization, ethnic cleansing and theft of Palestinian land. The Nakba of 1948, the June War of 1967 and the Israeli Zionist policy have left Palestinians today owning just 8% of their historic land.²

This bulletin will explore the history of partition in Palestine, from the 1937 Peel Commission recommendations through to the current status of Palestine as negotiated at Oslo in 1993 and during subsequent renegotiations. It will illustrate the history of the partition of Palestine as a result of colonization, ethnic cleansing and military aggression by Israel and its political maneuverings, and the effects of this on the Palestinian people.



1915: Hussein Bin Ali - Sir Henry McMahon



1916: Sir Mark Sykes - François Georges-Picot

¹ Kisch, Frederick H., "Letter to Zionist Executive Secretary Leonard Stein, London, 12 December 1922," in Mahdi Abdul Hadi (ed.), *Documents on Palestine Vol 1: 1900-1947*, Jerusalem: PASSIA, 2007, pp. 138-139.

² MEMO, *Data shows that Palestinians now own just 8% of historic Palestine*, 28 May 2013, <http://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/middle-east/6132-data-shows-that-palestinians-now-own-just-8-per-cent-of-historic-palestine>.

THE BRITISH MANDATE

The British civil administration of mandatory Palestine began in 1920, with the appointment of Herbert Samuel as the first High Commissioner of Palestine. The appointment of Samuel was welcomed by the Zionists – as a Zionist Jew, Samuel was outspoken in his support for the Zionist colonization of Palestine, having circulated a memorandum entitled “The Future of Palestine” to the British Cabinet in 1914 suggesting that Palestine become a home for the Jewish people. However, his appointment to the post was not fully supported. Edmund Allenby, the British General who occupied Damascus and Jerusalem during WWI, understood that the Palestinians would not welcome a Zionist policy which would slowly deprive them of their homeland, stating that the Arabs would see it “as handing the country over at once to a permanent Zionist Administration.”³ A telegram from the newly formed Muslim-Christian Association to Sir Louis Jean Bols, the Chief Administrator of Palestine under the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration which preceded the Mandate, underscored this belief, stating that “Sir Herbert Samuel [is] regarded as a Zionist leader, and his appointment as first step in [the] formation of [a] Zionist national home in the midst of Arab people contrary to their wishes. Inhabitants cannot recognize him, and Muslim-Christian Society cannot accept responsibility for riots or other disturbances of peace.”⁴



Allenby, Balfour and Samuel

By April 1920, Palestinian opposition to the increasing Zionist colonization and Jewish immigration supported by Samuel and the British sparked the first Palestinian uprising in Jerusalem, eventually spreading throughout Palestine. The declining economic and political situation for the native Palestinians was made clear in 1929: Sir John Hope Simpson, leading a commission of enquiry into issues of immigration and land purchases, noted that “there is no room for a single additional [Jewish] settlement if the standard life of the Arab *fellaheen* is to remain at its present level.”⁵



John Hope Simpson

Despite this, by 1931 the population of Jewish immigrants in Palestine had almost doubled against their 1922 numbers, and the exclusionary Zionist ideology ensured that any Jewish landholdings would only be leased or sold on to Jews. This policy can be seen as the beginning of the attempted ‘Judaization’ of Palestine, which as a key tenet of the Zionist ideology has resulted in the expulsion and cantonization of Palestinians that we see today. During this time, violent unrest continued to emerge as tensions between Jewish immigrants and Palestinians increased – the 1929 Al-Buraq (Wailing Wall) Wall Riots, a particularly violent episode, resulted in the death of 133 Jews and 110 Palestinians with hundreds more injured.

New Palestinian political parties began to emerge which called for the independence of Palestine and boycotts of the British Mandate authorities. More youth groups were also formed, such as the *Black Hand*, which engaged in armed actions against Zionist colonies and the British Mandate authorities.



Al-Buraq (Wailing Wall), 1929

Frustration of Palestinian ambitions for an independent homeland, and growing fears of Jewish domination, eventually led the Palestinians to engage in nationwide strikes and demonstrations against the British authorities in 1933. The British responded to these demonstrations with force, leaving at least twelve Palestinians dead, and fuelling further animosity against the British. In the years between 1933 and 1936 more than 164,000 Jewish immigrants arrived in Palestine, and between 1931 and 1936 the Jewish population more than doubled from 175,000 to 370,000 people, increasing the Jewish population share from 17 to 27%. Now owning 1.5 million dunums of Palestinian land, David Ben-Gurion, the Jewish Agency Executive Chairman, called the settlers his “army of Zionist fulfillment.” Zionist policies ensured that these 1.5 million dunums of Palestine were to be kept exclusively Jewish, carving away large swathes of the Palestinians’ homeland. Increasing Palestinian fears of ongoing immigration tipping the scales towards Jewish dominance were exacerbated in October of 1935 by the discovery in Jaffa of a large arms shipment intended for the Haganah (a Jewish paramilitary gang), leading Palestinians to fear that if the Zionists did not take over Palestine through numbers, then they would do so by force.

American Support for Partition

Solutions to the new ‘Palestine problem’ came frequently as interested parties – Arab, Jewish and international – sought to either prevent violence, seek peace, or take advantage of the unrest. Separating the conflicting parties through the creation of cantons or by partitioning the land became a common theme in these ‘solutions.’ The earliest notable mention of such a plan was in 1929, with Wallace Murray, the head of the US State Department’s Division of Near Eastern Affairs, writing to Paul Knabenshue, the US Consul General in Jerusalem, about an idea in the Department that the Jews might be given an autonomous region around Tel Aviv. Although the proposal was rejected due to it awarding the Jews the most fertile lands in Palestine, which would further exacerbate Arab grievances, it ushered in the idea of partition as a way to solve the growing tensions in the region. Additionally, it marked the beginning of US support for partition plans to support Zionist colonization, a policy which would be pursued persistently by subsequent US administrations. The British High Commissioner, John Chancellor, noted that “at one time he had flirted

³ Sicker, Martin, *Pangs of the Messiah: The Troubled Birth of the Jewish State*, Connecticut: Greenwood, 2000, p.30.

⁴ Hunedi, Sahar, *A Broken Trust: Sir Herbert Samuel, Zionism and the Palestinians*, London: I.B Tauris, 2001, p.47.

⁵ PASSIA, *The Palestine Question in Maps 1878-2002*, Jerusalem: PASSIA, p.12.

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with this idea [of cantonization] and had soon rejected it as impracticable.”⁶ Zionist leaders also sought to capitalize on the unrest by proposing partitions which would consolidate Zionist gains on the land.



British troops searching Palestinians at Damascus Gate, 1936

1937: PEEL COMMISSION

In April of 1936 a series of Arab-Jewish clashes in Jaffa resulted in a nationwide strike by the Palestinians, later being led by the Arab Higher Committee (AHC). Despite a ban of the AHC by Mandate authorities and the imposition of a curfew, the Arab Revolt swept throughout Palestine. The British responded harshly by enacting ‘statutory’ martial law, resulting in at least 5,000 Arab deaths and over 15,000 injured, alongside 300 Jewish and 262 British deaths. By October, Arab leaders had mediated an agreement which allowed the British to dispatch a commission, headed by Lord William Peel, the former British Secretary of State for India, to investigate the causes for the violence and assess the future of the Mandate in Palestine.

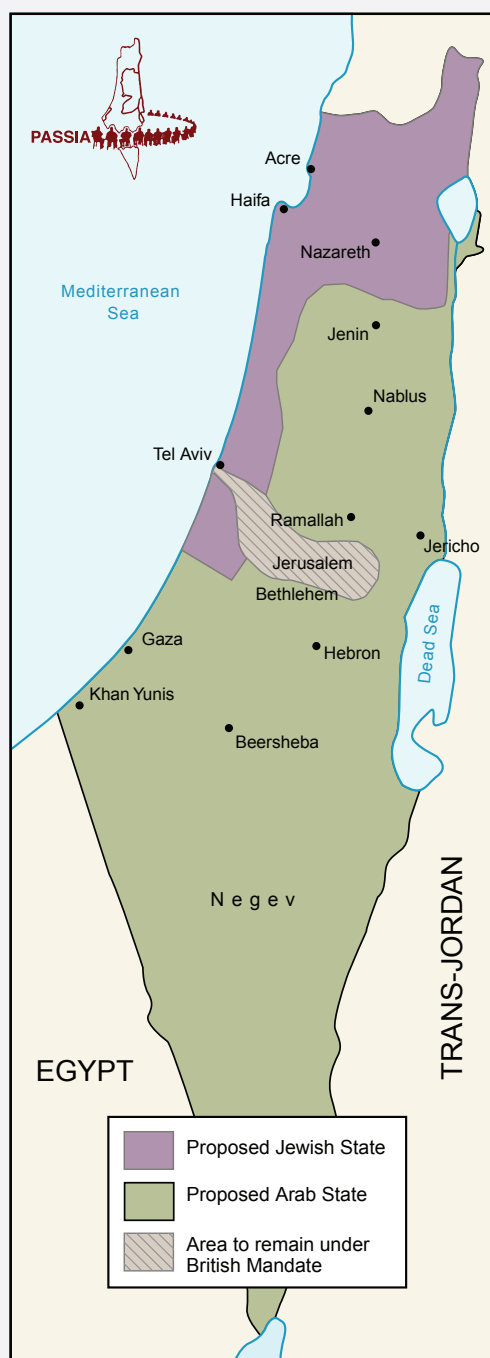
The result of the so-called “Peel Commission” was to recommend to the British Government a policy of partition; in their report the commissioners posited that “if Palestine ought to be divided, it can be divided.”⁷ According to the Peel Commission’s report, nearly 33% of Palestine would be converted into a Jewish state, with an enclave including the two holy cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem and a wide band of territory from Jerusalem and Jaffa remaining under British control. The new Arab state was to be united with Transjordan and paid a subsidy by the Jewish state. Additionally, those Jewish and Arab populations left outside of their new national territories would be compelled to move in a ‘popula-



Lord Peel arriving in Jerusalem

tion transfer’ to ensure the homogeneity of the new states. On 5 July 1937, the British cabinet, led by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, endorsed the report and the idea of partition, thus lending the latter the prestige and support of the British government. Subsequently, it became the key principle for “managing” the conflict in the region.

Peel Commission Partition Plan, 1937



The partition plan, however, was not accepted by the Palestinians who viewed the appropriation of their land by a Jewish immigrant minority as fundamentally unjust as it denied their right to self-determination and their historical attachment to the land. While the Zionist leadership accepted the proposal ‘in principle’ but not ‘in detail’, Ze’ev Jabotinsky’s

⁶ Sinanoglou, Penny, “British Plans for the Partition of Palestine, 1929-1938,” *The Historical Journal*, vol. 52 (February 2009) pp. 131-152.

⁷ Klieman, Aaron, “The Resolution of Conflicts through Territorial Partition: The Palestine Experience,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (April 1980), pp. 281-300.

Revisionist movement rejected it outright, as it sought a full Jewish majority and a Jewish nation-state in Palestine.⁸ By September 1937, the Zionist immigrants had begun a campaign of violence against the British authorities and the Palestinian people. In response, the Arab Revolt began again in earnest.

1938: WOODHEAD COMMISSION

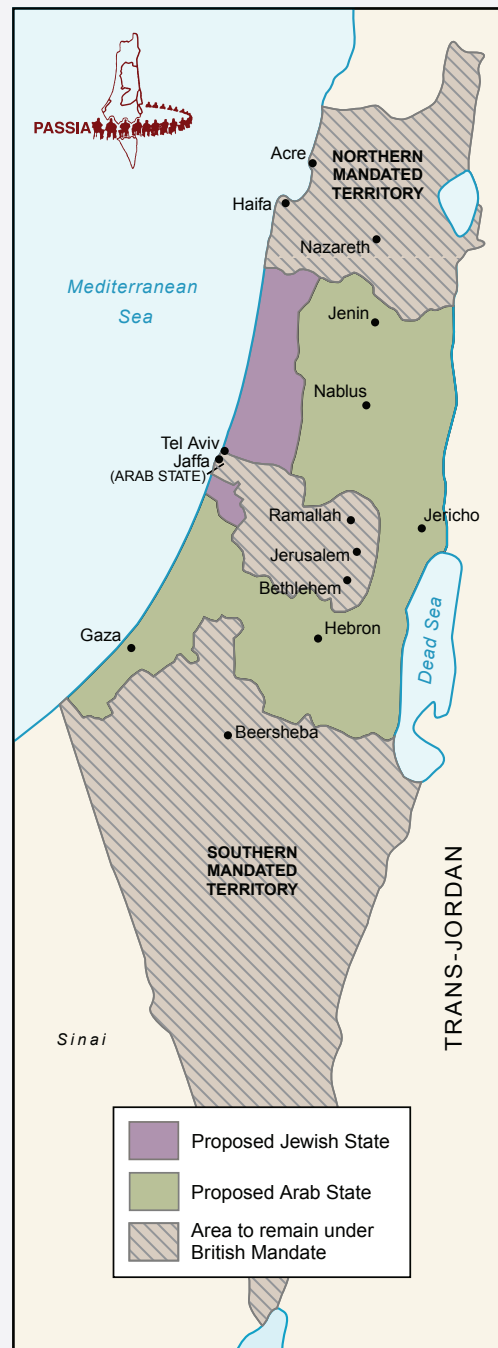
As violence continued, subsequent attempts to “manage” the conflict through partition were made between 1937 and 1947. The 1938 Woodhead Commission, headed by Sir John Ackroyd Woodhead, was tasked by the British government to look for the solution to the ongoing conflict between Arabs and Jews, with instruction to draw up a more detailed scheme for partition based on the Peel Commission’s recommendations. The new Commission operated against the background of bombing attacks against Arabs by the Zionist Irgun gang, as well as increasing armed operations by the Haganah militia forces. The Commission found the principle of partition and transfer unworkable: there existed only a small territory where Jews consisted of a majority, which would still contain around 54,400 Arabs. While the Commission submitted three plans for partition to the government, it noted that the “absence of equality... absence of security... [and] absence of consent”⁹ meant that the plans would be impossible to implement and reprehensible. The Commission advocated the Majority Plan (Plan C), which consisted of a Jewish state of 1,258 km² divided in two parts, extending from Tel Aviv to above Zichron Ya’acov, with a smaller southern section near Rehovot, and containing 226,000 Jews and 54,400 Arabs in total. The Palestinian state would be 7,393 km², expanding from what is today known as the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and including the city of Jaffa, with a population of 8,900 Jews and 441,100 Arabs. Finally, the British would remain in control of all the Galilee, an enclave including Jerusalem and Lydda, and the Negev.

1939: MACDONALD WHITE PAPER

Following the report of the Woodhead Commission, the British government rejected partition as a solution to the ongoing conflict between Palestinians and Zionists. Additionally, coinciding with the report, the government announced that it wished to end the Mandate, and sought a Palestinian-Jewish agreement in order to do so. As such, it invited each side to a conference – the St. James Conference of 1939 – to discuss what form a government of Palestine would take upon the withdrawal of the British. In the event of no agreement, the British would unilaterally implement a policy of its own design.

The Palestinian delegation to the conference refused to meet with the Zionists, citing that doing so would confer legitimacy upon their position. As such, each side met with the British delegation separately and put forward its terms; the Palestinians called for independence, an end to immigration and the withdrawal of the Balfour Declaration; the Zionists wanted continued immigration and the non-confinement of Jews to a minority. The conference ended without an agreement and the British issued the ‘MacDonald’ White Paper on 23 May 1939, called so due to its drafting by Malcolm MacDonald, the British

Woodhead Commission, Partition Plan C, 1938



Secretary of State for the Colonies. The White Paper was to create an independent Palestine governed by Palestinian Arabs and Jews in proportion to their population, while limiting Jewish immigration to 100,000 over five years. After this, further immigration would be permitted only when agreed to by the Palestinians. Additionally, and notably, the White Paper also divided Palestine into three zones: A, B and C. In Zone A, corresponding to about 63% of Palestine, land transfers were forbidden except between Palestinians. In Zone B – about 32% of the country – transfers to non-Palestinians were at the discretion of the High Commissioner. In the final 5% of Palestine land transfers were unrestricted. However, land in this 5% was the most fertile of the country.¹⁰

⁸ Jobotinsky, Vladimir, “Evidence Submitted to the Palestine Royal (“Peel”) Commission, 11 February 1937,” in Mahdi Abdul Hadi (ed.), *Documents on Palestine Vol 1: 1900-1947*, Jerusalem: PASSIA, 2007, pp. 329-330.

⁹ PASSIA, *The Palestine Question in Maps*, op. cit., p.16.

¹⁰ US Department of State, *Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry - Appendix*

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Palestinian-Arab (above) and Zionist-Jewish (below) delegations at the St. James Conference of 1939



Reactions to the White Paper were wholly negative on both sides: the AHC argued that the White Paper stopped short of independence, with the British holding on to authority. This additionally meant that immigration controls outlined in the White Paper would be subject to British decisions and as such there existed no guarantee of a halt to immigration. Zionist groups immediately rejected the Paper and began a coordinated bombing campaign against Palestinian civilians and British government property.

1945: ANGLO-AMERICAN COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY

Following World War Two (WWII), the problem of Jewish refugees again brought the question of Jewish immigration into Palestine to the forefront of the debate. The British Labour Party conference voted to rescind the White Paper and establish a Jewish state in Palestine, reflecting the fact that Britain was keen to absorb as few of the refugees as possible. In November of 1945, an Anglo-American commission of enquiry was created to examine the status of Europe's Jews. It recommended the issuing of 100,000 immigration certificates to Jewish refugees, a lifting of all restrictions on land transfer, and a UN trusteeship – effectively supporting



Chaim Weizmann (l) & Jamal Al-Husseini (r) at the Anglo-American Committee, 1945

further Jewish immigration into Palestine against the position of the Palestinians. In July 1946, British Deputy Prime Minister Herbert Morrison and US diplomat Henry Grady, in response to what they (correctly) perceived as an impending disaster, submitted a revised plan which divided Palestine into Jewish and Arab provinces, similar in design to that of the Peel Commission, except for introducing the option of a future bi-national state. Although the Morrison-Grady federal plan was rejected by the US and the Zionist organizations, British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin proposed a variant of it at the 1947 London Roundtable Conference.

1947: UN PARTITION PLAN - RESOLUTION 181

By early 1947, violence, civil unrest, the economic and physical damages of WWII and the failure of prior British attempts at solving the conflict led the British Government to transfer the problem of Palestine to the UN. At the time, two thirds of the Jewish population consisted of immigrants, making up around 32% of the total population of Palestine (with 29% being concentrated in Tel Aviv), while Jewish landholdings was limited to only 6.6% of the land.

One of the answers of the United Nations to the problem of Palestine was the issuing of General Assembly Resolution 181 calling for the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state, with Jerusalem falling under an international *Corpus Separatum* administration. The partition resolution, proposed by the Ad-Hoc Committee, ignored the proposal of a one-state solution submitted by the Palestinian AHC, which instead would grant the Zionist movement a “state” on 56.47% of Palestine, and the Palestinian people one on 42.88%, with Jerusalem becoming an international zone of the land (0.65% of Palestine). The Zionist state would end up having a population of around 900,000 Jews and 407,000 Palestinian Arabs, and the Arab state of 725,000 Arabs and 10,000 Jews. The Jerusalem district would contain some 100,000 Jews and 105,000 Arabs. Despite the injustice of allotting the majority of Palestine to a minority group of immigrants, the UN disregarded the proposal and passed Resolution 181 on 29 November 1947.

The vote for Resolution 181 in the General Assembly was rigorously supported by the US, which viewed the creation of a state of “Israel” as a way to prevent mass immigration of Jewish refugees to the US. As such, dissenting states were pressured by the threat of a withdrawal of US aid, which in the post-war environment was crucial. A telegram signed by 26 senators with influence on US aid policy was sent to those countries, which largely reversed their opposition as a result.¹¹ All of the Arab states voted against the plan, rejecting it in its entirety.¹² Addressing the Ad-Hoc Committee before the vote, the AHC noted that the “claims of the Zionists had no legal or moral basis” in demanding lands they had lived in 2,000 years ago, and that “The Arabs of Palestine could not understand why their right to live in freedom... should be questioned and constantly submitted to investigation.”¹³ Their opposition was based on

¹¹ Bennis, Phyllis, *Before and After: US Foreign Policy and the September 11 Crisis*, New York: Olive Branch Press, 2003, p. 33.

¹² UN, *United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine*, July 1949, <http://unispal.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/0/4ECBF3578B6149C50525657100507FAB>.

¹³ Bey Hussein, Jamal, “Arab Higher Committee Member Jamal Bey Hussein, Statement Before the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestine Question on Arab Reactions to the UNSCOP Proposals, 29 September 1947,” in Mahdi Abdul Hadi (ed.), *Documents on Palestine Vol I: 1900-1947*, Jerusalem: PASSIA, 2007, pp. 498-499.

IV, April 20, 1946, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/angap04.asp.

the principle that the Zionist appropriation of land was invalid in the face of the Palestinian ownership of the land and right to self-determination in their homeland. The British abstained from the vote, noting they would not support a solution without consent of both parties, and setting a timetable for their withdrawal from Palestine.

United Nations Partition Plan - UN Resolution 181

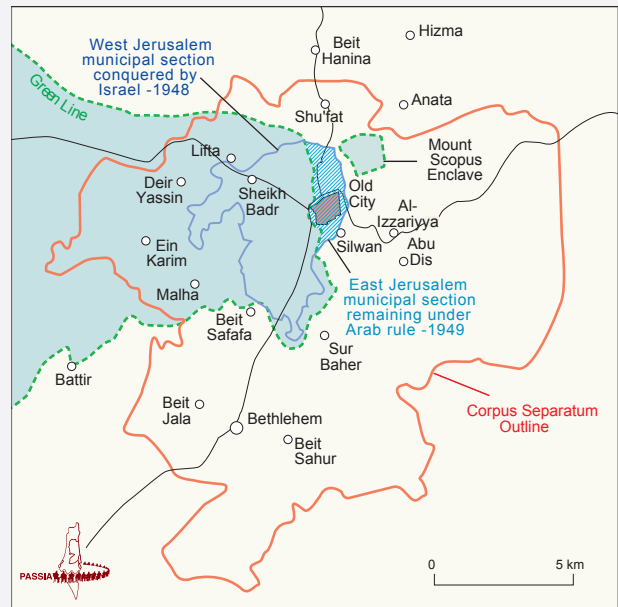


The essence of Resolution 181 ignored the demographic, territorial and historical reality of Palestine, in which Palestinians maintained a majority, both numerically and in land ownership.

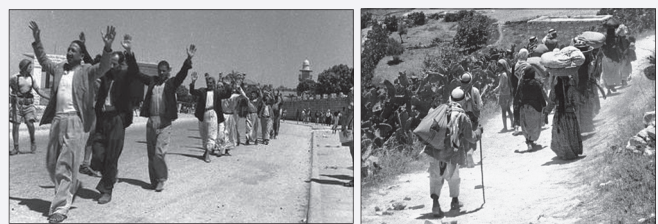
The Zionist colonizers welcomed the UNGA resolution, with the Jewish Agency officially accepting it.¹⁴ However, their

¹⁴ UN, *The Plan of Partition and the End of the British Mandate*, Undated, <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpi/palestine/ch2.pdf>.

Jerusalem and the Corpus Separatum proposed in 1947



actions following its passing underscored their plans to use their military might in order to establish an exclusive "Jewish state" over all of Palestine. Indeed, they carried out a series of ethnic cleansing operations during the 1948 War, such as Operation Danny, which saw the civilian populations of Lydda and Ramle expelled to the Arab front lines. These villages, and over 400 like them, were then systematically destroyed and renamed to erase any sign of Palestinian occupation (Lydda and Ramle became Lod and Ramla) and impose a new Israeli identity. The purpose and result of this was to erase the history of the Palestinians on the land, and therefore consolidate Israeli control of these areas. (Such policies are still observable today in Jerusalem, where Palestinians are being evicted from their homes and streets and areas renamed with Jewish names).



Palestinian exodus, 1948

By the time the British left Palestine on 14 May 1948, 380,000 Palestinians had been forced from their homes by armed groups, violent unrest was raging, and Zionist forces had moved beyond the partition line to secure military control of 70% of Palestine, a 13.53% gain over that which was allotted to them in the Partition Plan.¹⁵



First days of Dheisheh refugee camp, 1948

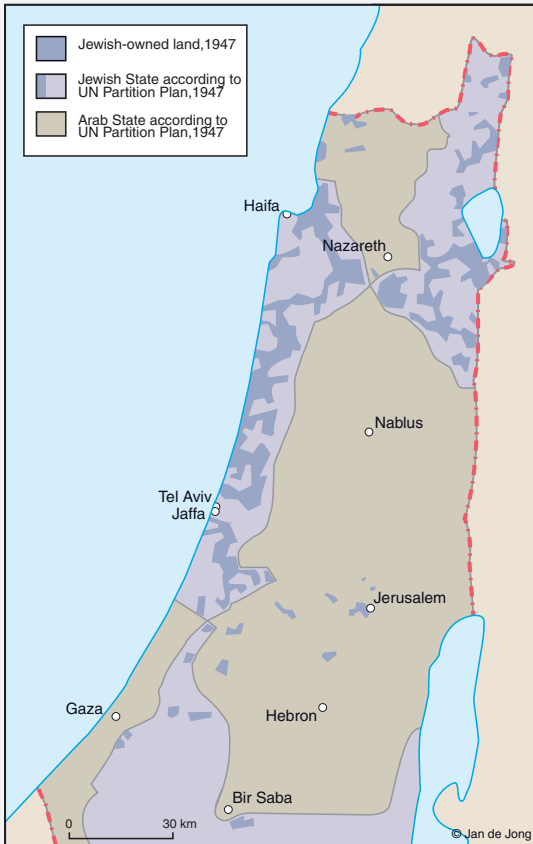
¹⁵ PASSIA, *The Palestine Question in Maps 1878-2002*, Jerusalem: PASSIA, p. 24.

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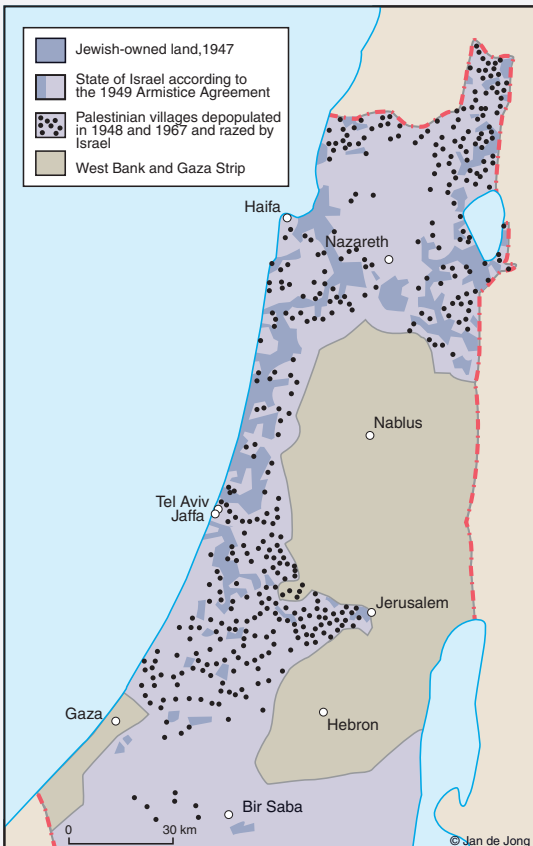
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Landownership in Palestine at the Time of the UN Partition Plan, 1947



Palestinian Villages Depopulated and Razed by Israel



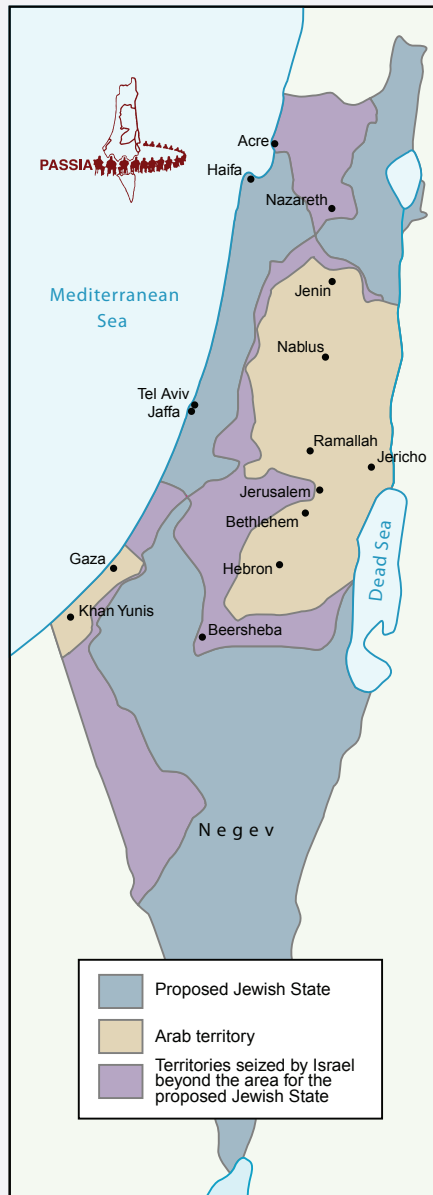
1949: RHODES ARMISTICE LINE

Following the “Declaration of Independence” of the State of Israel by David Ben-Gurion on 14 May 1948, the Arab states mobilized and moved to protect the Palestinians. However, they were very much divided on the issue of Palestine, pursuing different agendas; Jordan sought to annex the West Bank, while Egypt pursued the annexation of southern Palestine. The war would prove disastrous for the Palestinians and the Arab states; by its end in 1949, Israel had expanded its territorial holdings to 78% of mandatory Palestine,¹⁶ and Palestinians had suffered wide displacement, lost their homes and large amounts of cultivated land – in what became known the *Nakba* (“catastrophe”).

The new partition along the 1949 Armistice Line gave what was left of Palestine outside of Israeli control to Jordan and Egypt – the West Bank and Gaza respectively. This new reality divided Palestinians not only territorially –

there remained no access route between Gaza and the West Bank – but also administratively, as they were either given the status of refugee in the new United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Middle East (UNRWA) refugee camps, or absorbed into the Jordanian and Egyptian administrations. By 1950, UNRWA had registered 914,221 refugees.

Rhodes Armistice Line, 1949



¹⁶ Ibid.

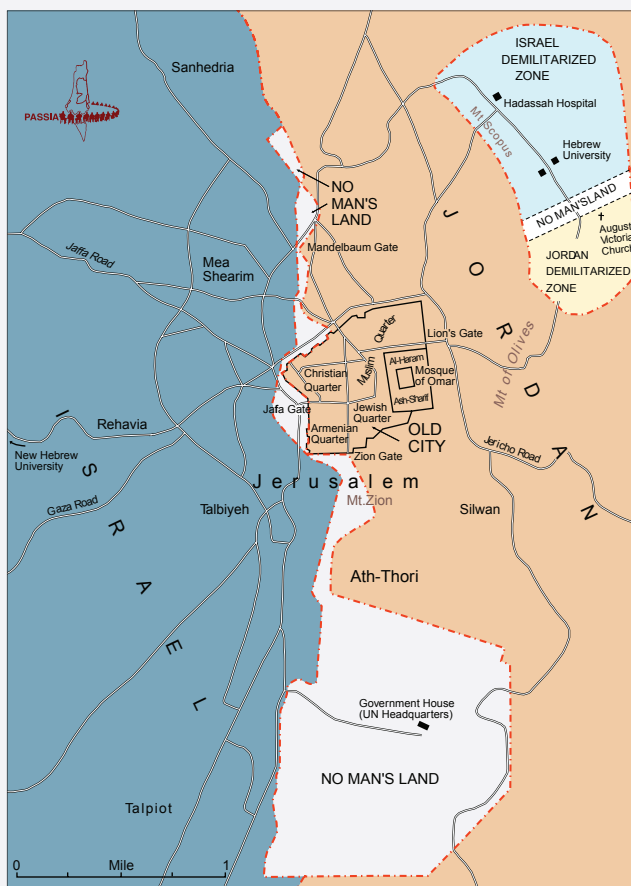
The difference in territory between the 1947 Partition Plan and the 1949 Armistice was vast and its political effects wide-reaching. The 1948 War was an unbridled success for the Israelis, who were able to use their military superiority to achieve their plans of largely cleansing the state of “Israel” of non-Jewish inhabitants and identity, while expanding its border lines. The territories gained by Israel during the 1948 War were absorbed into the Israeli-Jewish national consciousness as inseparable portions of the state itself, not to be bargained away.

Jerusalem After 1948

The historically and religiously significant city of Jerusalem also suffered division as a result of the war, during which Zionist forces ordered the expulsion of 80,000 Palestinians from Israeli controlled West Jerusalem resulting in a loss of 8,907 dunums of Palestinian property.¹⁷ The battle for Jerusalem between the Zionists and the Palestinian and Arab forces reached a stalemate when the Zionists failed to break through Arab lines into Jerusalem's Old City, with the final lines of control cleaving Jerusalem into eastern and western sides and leaving 85% of the city under Zionist control.

Following the Armistice between the Arab League and the Zionist forces, the *de facto* military partition of the city was formalized with the drawing of the 'Green Line', named after the green-color pen used to mark the division on the map, which left some 125 homes stranded in a no-man's land 60-80 meter in width, which ran from north to south through the city. In the areas it controlled, Israel began settling new immigrants, occupying Palestinian homes and violating international laws.

Partitioned Jerusalem, 1948-1967



1956-57: OCCUPYING GAZA

The 1956 'Suez Crisis' marked the changing geopolitical situation in the Middle East; the rise of Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1953 and his Pan-Arabist stance towards the former colonial powers caused Europe to fear about their colonial holdings. Nasser's nationalizing of the Suez Canal in 1956 galvanized those fears, and Britain and France colluded with Israel to intervene and regain control. This offered the opportunity to satisfy the strong expansionist current that ran through Israeli society and leadership; both Moshe Dayan and David Ben-Gurion – then Chief of Staff and Prime Minister – strongly believed that the territory occupied after the 1948 War fell short of the Zionist vision of 'Eretz Israel'.¹⁸ On 29 October 1956, Israel thus launched a surprise attack across the Sinai, and by 7 November had gained control of the Sinai and Gaza Strip, while Britain and France held the Suez Canal. Ben-Gurion immediately declared that Israel intended to absorb both territories and incorporate them permanently into Israel, telling the Knesset, that the 1949 armistice lines were dead and buried and could never be restored.

During the occupation of Gaza over 400 Palestinians were killed, supply lines were cut, curfews were imposed, UNRWA services were disrupted, and food supplies were looted.

However, as the aggressive attack on Egypt ushered in a diplomatic crisis, with the US strongly condemning it, Israel's seizing of the Gaza Strip only lasted until March 1957, when it had to give it up at the behest of the US, which threw its weight behind UNSC Resolutions 997 and 1001, calling for withdrawal and establishing the UN Emergency Force to provide a buffer between Israel and Egypt.

Despite bowing to US pressure, later actions made it clear that Israel still sought to assert its control over the Strip as part of its Zionist drive to claim the entirety of Palestine.

1967: THE JUNE WAR & AFTER

Political and security tensions continued to escalate following the 1956 Suez War. Border skirmishes were common, and the patrons of both Israel and the Arab states - the US and USSR respectively – were warning their allies of their vulnerability against the other. Concerns were exacerbated when Israeli Chief of Staff Yitzhak Rabin threatened the conquering of Damascus. Egypt's Nasser responded to Israeli threats against his allies by deploying troops in the Sinai and closing the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping, and on 30 May 1967, Jordan and Egypt signed a mutual defense pact. The Israeli military pressed for a preemptive aggressive attack and by 4 June the government had made the decision to go to war.

Israel's aggressive surprise attack on 5 June 1967 was devastating to the Arab forces, and the six-day war ended with Israel defeating the Egyptian, Jordanian and Syrian armies and gaining control of over 90,000 km² of territory, including the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, the Sinai and the West Bank, which the Israelis had long coveted for both the fulfillment of the Zionist vision and for its resources. During the war, Israel again employed the strategy of destroying and erasing Palestinian

¹⁷ Ibid., p.110.

¹⁸ Morris, Benny, *Israel's Border Wars 1949-1956*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 410-411.

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villages, creating another 300,000 refugees and keeping some 1.3 million Palestinians under military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, while clearing space for settlements.

Again, after the war the UN called upon Israel to respect the right of return for refugees, but to no avail.

Palestine after the June 1967 War



The tragedy of the 1967 War is that it became the new international consensus that Israel, in order to fulfill its obligations, only needs to withdraw from territories occupied in 1967 – both ignoring the reality of its colonization and occupation of the entirety of Palestine, and sidelining support for a one-state solution. The annexation of East Jerusalem, while not internationally recognized, has proved a sticking point in negotiations; successive Israeli governments have refused to negotiate the status of Jerusalem and to recognize legitimate Palestinian claims to it.

Jerusalem After 1967

Since 1947, Jerusalem has been an unresolved key issue in negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians due to its status as holy city to both sides. Jerusalem was fully occupied and annexed by Israel in 1967, a move which has been almost universally condemned by the international community as illegal under international law. Regardless, Israel has been steadfast in its occupation, passing a Basic Law in 1980 stating that “Jerusalem, complete and united, is the capital of Israel,” and taking numerous steps to solidify its occupation by marginalizing and expelling Palestinians within the city while expanding settlements and increasing the Jewish population.

This ‘Judaization’ policy has seen Palestinians being evicted from their homes to make way for Jewish settlers, with messianic groups forging documents and utilizing the illegal occupation in an attempt to preclude any Palestinian rights in the city.

The Allon Plan, 1967

The vast territorial gains made by the Israelis during the war precluded any effective plan about what to do with them. The West Bank and Gaza were treated as ‘liberated’ parts of Israel, and as such were to be annexed to the Israeli state. However, the Palestinian demographic development meant that complete annexation would not work lest it upset Israel’s ‘Jewishness.’ Israel was faced with the contradiction of wanting to retain and annex as much of the territory as it could, but without the native Palestinian population.

While Israel was outright in its annexation of Arab East Jerusalem, expropriating hundreds of acres of Palestinian property, Gaza and the West Bank faced a more nuanced scheme of settlement, cantonization and repression in order to shift the demographic weight in Israel’s favor and allow later annexation.

An early attempt to contain the Palestinians within the Occupied Territories by cantonizing and surrounding them with civilian, military and paramilitary settlements was the Allon Plan. For Israel, the aim was to provide a buffer zone against Jordan, and create ‘facts on the ground’ in order to legitimate its presence. The residents of Gaza, while they could not be expelled in a mass transfer under the eyes of the international community, were subjected to a harsh military rule in order to encourage them to evacuate. Settlements served to further squeeze the Palestinian population into ever smaller spaces, resulting in a double partition: the fragmentation of the land into the West Bank, Gaza and Israel, as well as internal fragmentation of the West Bank and Gaza into Palestinian and settler zones.

Additionally, it passed UNSC Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967 calling for Israel to withdraw from the territories captured during the war in exchange for peace with its neighbors. This idea of ‘land for peace’ has since prevailed as a new notion of partition, and has formed the basis for future negotiations over the status of Palestine. Again, Palestinians were not consulted in this further legitimization of the unfair partition of their lands by the international community.



UN Security Council voting for Resolution 242, 1967

FRAGMENTING PALESTINE

Formulas for Partition since the British Mandate

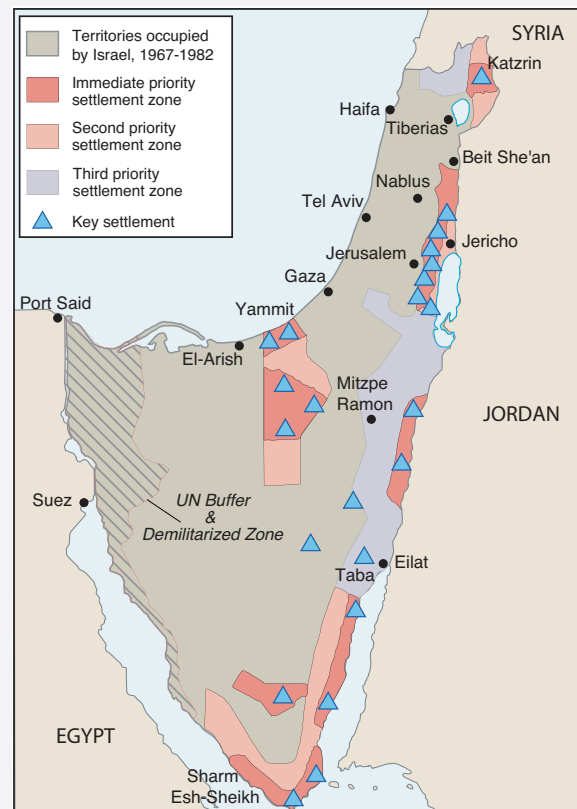
The Allon Plan, 1967



The 1973 October (Yom Kippur) War between Israel and an Arab coalition under Egyptian and Syrian leadership led to an acceleration of Israel's colonization of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, despite the US-mediated 1978 Camp David Accords/1979 Israeli-Egyptian Peace Treaty. The agreement, which demanded that Israel fully withdraws from the Sinai (already home to some 5,000 settlers), recognizes the "legitimate rights of the Palestinian people," and withdraws its troops from the OPT after the election of a Palestinian self-governing authority, was never implemented. In fact, the evacuation of the Sinai settlements resulted in an increased drive to expand on the West Bank and Gaza, and between 1977 and 1981 the number of settlements and settlers more than quadrupled. The agreement stopped short of true Palestinian independence, and as such the PLO saw it merely as a political maneuver by Israel to legitimize its occupation.

Successive plans by Israeli governments to consolidate their control of the occupied land through settlement activity began in earnest in 1976 with the Wachmann Plan under Prime Minister Rabin. The plan sought to maximize Jewish demography and territory by settling 2.5 million Jewish Israelis in the sparsely populated areas of the OPT while encircling the Palestinians. This plan, however, failed to receive widespread support as it did not go far enough for messianic settler groups and nationalists who sought the colonization and annexation of the whole of Palestine.

The Wachman Plan, 1976



1970-80s: SETTLEMENT EXPANSION

By 1973, Israeli attitudes towards the settlements occupying the West Bank had hardened; prior to the Israeli elections in October, the Labor Party decided to support demands for the building of a 'settlement' near Rafah, additional colonies in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), and continued purchases of Arab land by the Jewish Development Agency. The government's adoption of the new hard-line Galili document also underlined this attitude: it planned closer integration of the newly occupied territories through developing the infrastructure, economies and social services of the colonies. With settlers in Palestine living under Israeli law and Palestinians under military law, the occupation created a 'dual system of government', effectively a system of state-administered apartheid.

In 1977, a new Likud-led Israeli government actively pursued the policy of achieving *Eretz Yisrael Ha-Shlem*, or a 'Greater Israel,' which encompassed the entirety of the land of Palestine, swallowing some 13% of West Bank and 33% of Gaza land.

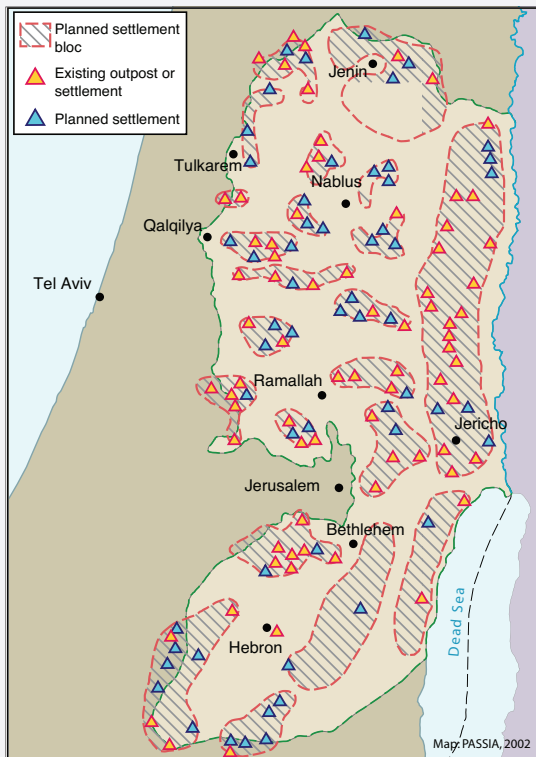
FRAGMENTING PALESTINE

Formulas for Partition since the British Mandate

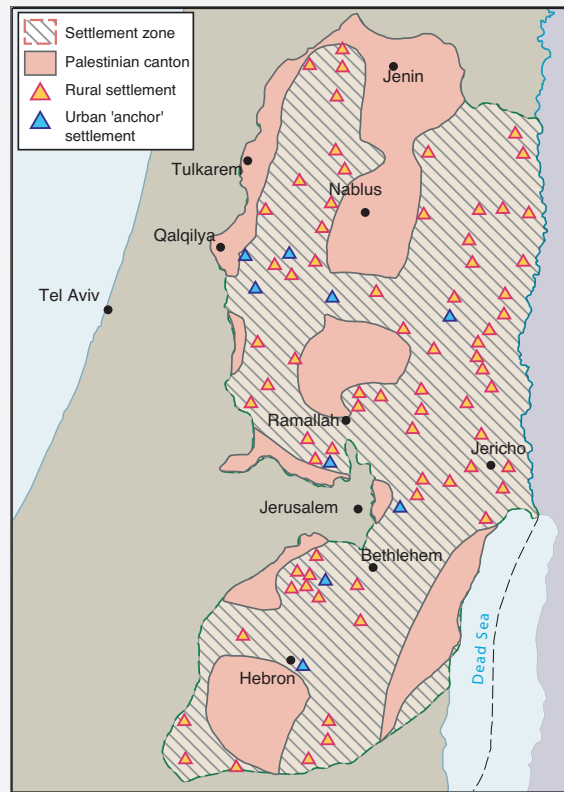


The following Gush-Droblets Plan of 1978 sought to expand on all existing settlements, creating 57 new ones on key communication, transport and water routes, while bringing together all existing settlements in order to surround and isolate Palestinian communities, turning them into enclaves, with the intention of precluding the establishment of a Palestinian state. This “messianic” plan did not receive widespread subscription and thus failed to provide for the financial needs of ongoing colonial settler activity. Following plans sought to address this by attracting the general public through large scale funding and development of settler sites.

The Gush-Droblets Plan, 1978

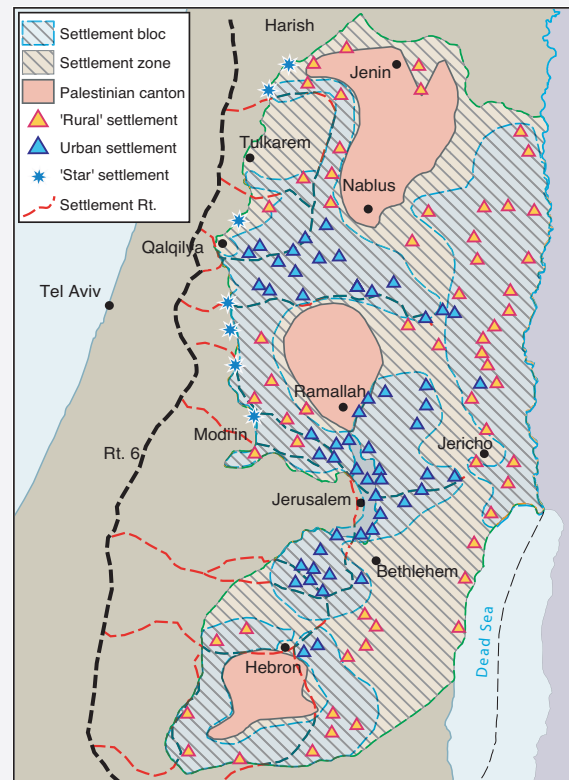


The Sharon Plan, 1978



By doing so as well as by investing in new economic projects within the OPT, Israel hoped to make ceding the land politically untenable as Israelis who relocated to settlements for non-ideological reasons would feel that disengagement would result in the loss of both their homes and livelihoods.

The 'Seven Stars', 1991



The Sharon Plan of 1981 did just this; within two years of its inception, the settler population had nearly doubled from 16,000 due to an influx of funding totaling \$1.5 billion spent on the creation of subsidized 'quality of life' settlements, taking advantage of the growing demand for cheap, urban housing. As a result, settlements, access roads and military camps consumed 41.6% of all of the West Bank and 32% of the Gaza Strip, with Palestinians being forced off the land and into cantons. By March 1991, settler numbers had risen to 185,000. In May of the same year, the Knesset passed a new 'Seven Stars' Plan, which sought to finally erase the political significance of the Green Line by settling on or beyond it, and impeding future growth in areas with high Palestinian population in preparation for their annexation.

Likud-leader Menachem Begin knew that directly annexing the land with the Palestinian population intact would alter the demographics of Israel, turning the state into a bi-national instead of a Jewish one. Hence, successive plans sought to not only further displace the Palestinians, but also to increase psychological and economic attachment of Israelis to the land through a network of settlements, infrastructure and bypass roads, which cut directly through Palestinian land, dislocating farmers from their fields and cutting communities in half.¹⁹

¹⁹ Highway 6, for example, severed 5,000 dunums from the village of Taibeh, 50% of its total. See Adiv, Assaf, Schwartz, Michal, *Sharon's Star Wars: Israel's Seven Stars Settlement Plan*, Jerusalem: Hanitzotz A-Sharara Publishing House (1992), p.25.

The First Intifada, 1987

Growing Palestinian unrest against the occupation peaked when on 8 December 1987 an Israeli military truck collided with cars at Erez checkpoint, killing four Palestinians and injuring seven others. Their funerals quickly escalated into widespread demonstrations throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and clashes with the Israeli army using excessive force went along with wide-scale civil disobedience. Palestinians boycotted Israeli jobs, and products and took control of neighborhoods and refugee camps by barricading themselves and beating back Israeli soldiers with petrol bombs and rocks. During the six-year uprising, over 1,000 Palestinians were killed and more than 120,000 arrested.²⁰ Israel also engaged in collective punishments, closing down universities and schools, imposing curfews, cutting off supplies of water, electricity and fuel, and demolishing or sealing hundreds of Palestinians homes.

However, the Intifada also empowered the Palestinian leadership, bringing its cause to the forefront of international media focus and shattering world opinion of Israel. This, together with the grassroots support for a peaceful resolution to the conflict strengthened those elements within the PLO who called for a state alongside Israel (as opposed to the previous demand to liberate all of historic Palestine). Accordingly, the 19th PNC in November 1988 was able to adopt a resolution accepting the two-state solution based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338 and renouncing the use of terrorism.

The Madrid Conference, 1991

The resultant opening of dialogue by the US with the PLO eventually led to the 1991 Madrid Conference, which saw the first formal peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians. These negotiations intended to result in an agreement on interim

self-government, to be followed by final status negotiations. As a precondition for talks, Israel successfully demanded that UNGA Resolution 3379 (determining that “Zionism is a form of racism”) be revoked and that Palestinians be only represented as part of the Jordanian delegation. The basis of the talks – Resolution 242’s ‘land for peace’ formula and recognition of Israel – meant to give up claims to 78% of historic Palestine. Despite this historic concession of establishing a state on only the remaining 22%, the Israeli government continued its aggressive campaign of expanding settlements as illustrated by the the government’s New Master Plan No. 31 which sought to add some 140,000 settlers over the next five years.

1990s: THE OSLO PROCESS

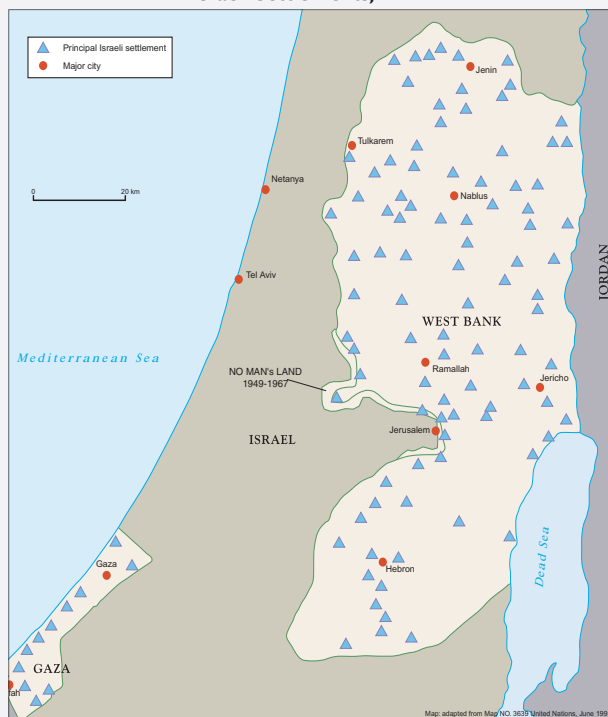
The Declaration of Principles and Oslo I, 1993-94

The absence of progress in the Washington rounds of negotiations set by the 1991 Madrid Conference, and the ongoing Palestinian *Intifada*, led to the opening of the secret negotiations at Oslo in January 1993 between Israeli academics and PLO representatives. The resulting breakthrough, the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements (DOP) signed on 13 September 1993, entailed mutual recognition between the PLO and Israel (which notably did not amount to recognition of Palestinian statehood). Subsequent talks led to the 1994 Gaza-Jericho Agreement – or Oslo I – which provided for the creation of a new Palestinian body that initially gained administrative governance (not *government*) of the Gaza Strip and Jericho, with the final issues (borders, Jerusalem, refugees, etc.) being subject to further negotiations to be concluded after no more than five years.

The Oslo II Agreement, 1995

Talks continued and, on 28 September 1995, Israel and the PLO signed a second agreement, known as Oslo II, or the ‘interim agreement.’ It formalized the Palestinian Authority (PA) as the governing body of the Palestinian people, and split the West Bank into three new zones – Area A, B and C. In Area A, the PA gained control of civil and internal security affairs, with Israel retaining full control of ‘external’, or Israeli, security affairs. Area A was contained to Jericho and six other Palestinian cities within the West Bank totaling only 2%. In Area B, limited to 420 Palestinian villages – 20% of the West Bank – the PA became responsible for civil affairs, with Israel controlling internal as well as external security. In Area C, making up 72% of the West Bank, Israel retained full control. The status of Jerusalem remained unchanged. Further withdrawals – or ‘redeployments’ – of Israeli forces were to take place in three six-month installments over the period of 18 months. The vast Israeli sphere of control was justified by the ‘security needs’ of settlements spread over vast areas of the West Bank, despite a commitment made with Oslo I that “Neither side shall initiate or take any step that will change the status of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip pending the outcome of the Permanent Status negotiations.” Regardless of this, in the period between the two Oslo agreements, Israel did everything to secure its positions in the West Bank, confiscating some 166,534 dunums of Palestinian land between 1993 and 1996. Accordingly, all maps presented to the Palestinian delegation for the Oslo II negotiations were drafted to accommodate settlement growth, resulting in the unjustly small amount of territory allotted to Area A (Palestinian control) by the Oslo II Agreement.

Israeli Settlements, 1992



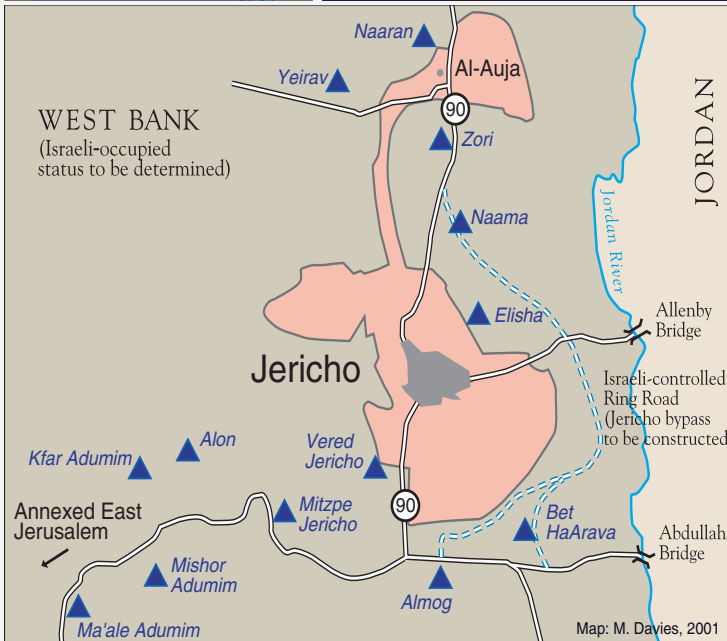
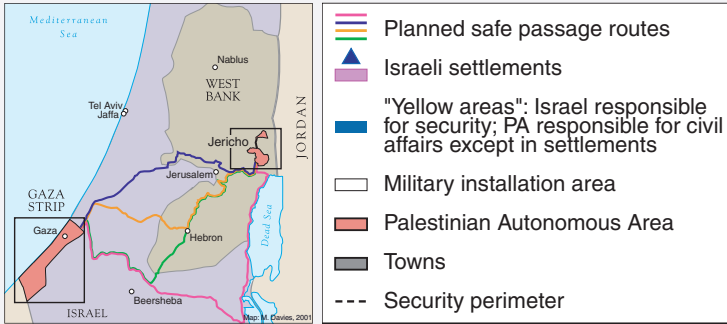
²⁰ *Washington Report on Middle Eastern Affairs*, “The Intifada Erupts, Forcing Israel to Recognize Palestinians,” December 1997, <http://www.wrmea.org/wrmea-archives/190-washington-report-archives-1994-1999/december-1997/2780-middle-east-history-it-happened-in-december-.html>.

FRAGMENTING PALESTINE

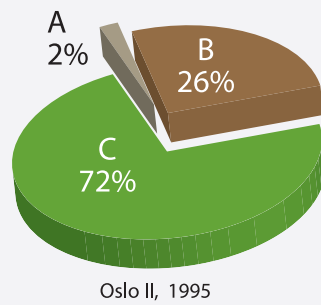
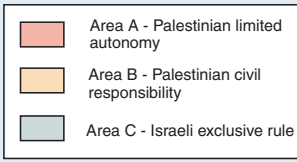
Formulas for Partition since the British Mandate



The Gaza-Jericho (Oslo I) Agreement, 1994



Interim (Oslo II) Agreement, 1995



FRAGMENTING PALESTINE

Formulas for Partition since the British Mandate

Effectively, the outcome of Oslo I and Oslo II was that Israel gained 'legitimacy' for its occupation and security control of most of the West Bank, while the Palestinians were given only limited control of a meager fraction of their land. Out of the 1,000 military orders controlling Gaza, only 70 were revoked and all existing Israeli settlements were retained and continued to paralyze Palestinian movement and development. The Oslo agreements largely subordinated Palestinian needs to the demands of the Israelis, who utilized them to continue appropriation of Palestinian land and control entry to, exit from and travel through Palestinian cities and areas, leaving Palestinian land and communities disconnected from one another. In fact, Prime Minister Rabin himself considered the Oslo agreements to be based on the principle of separation between Palestinians and Israelis, and thus between the Palestinians and the land which the Israelis occupied.²¹

pressure from the UN and US forced Israel back to the negotiating table.

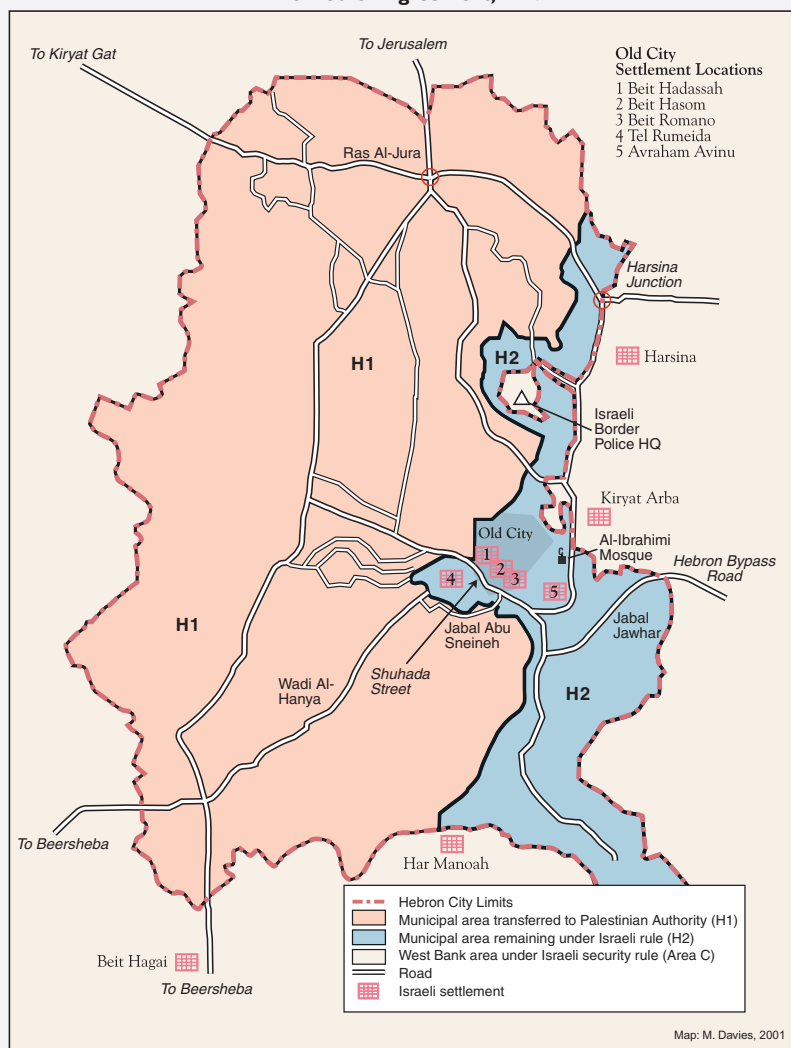
Originally slated to be completed by March 1996, the Hebron redeployment had been delayed by the Israeli government. The February 1994 massacre of 29 Palestinians at the Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron forced the status of the city onto the agenda. The result of the Hebron Protocol of 15 January 1997 was a further partition of Palestinian territory, with the lines drawn not according to Palestinian needs, rights or demographics, but rather according to the existence of settler groups within the city. Hebron was thus split into sectors H1 and H2, with H1 being allotted to the PA under Area A arrangements, and H2 – 20% of the city – remaining under Israeli control and serving some 450 settlers (and thousands of troops serving as their guards).

The Hebron Agreement, 1997

Despite the derailment of the Oslo process brought about by the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Rabin in November 1995, and the subsequent rise of Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing and pro-settlement Likud government, international

The partition of Hebron had devastating effects on the Palestinian inhabitants of the city, with major streets now closed to them and many businesses in H2 inaccessible or left without customers. According to a survey done by the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in 2007, 1,829 Palestinian shops located in H2 have closed since 2000 due to military orders, curfews and the closure regime imposed by the Israeli authorities. As a result, 77% of Palestinians in Hebron live below the poverty line and all are under the constant threat of settler violence, forcing many to move away from their homes. Al-Ibrahimi Mosque also remains in H2, forcing Palestinians who wish to worship there to be treated as criminals as they attempt to pass through the entrance checkpoint.

The Hebron Agreement, 1997



The Wye River Memorandum, 1998

Following Hebron, further negotiations led to the Wye River Memorandum (23 October 1998), providing for the long overdue implementation of Oslo II. By 1998, Israel had maintained its control of 72% of the West Bank and 40% of the Gaza Strip, out of line with previous commitments. The final text of the Memorandum transferred 13% of the West Bank from Area C to Area B, 1% from Area C to Area A, and 14.2% from Area B to Area A. These figures amounted to an Israeli withdrawal from just 13% of the West Bank.

The transfers were made contingent on Palestinian cooperation with Israeli 'security needs', and forced the PA to crack down on political groups and arrest suspects appearing on an Israeli-created list, while settlements continued to grow. Transfers of control began on 20 November 1998, with 2% of West Bank land being transferred from Area C to Area B and 7.1% from Area B to Area A. Netanyahu then suspended the process, leaving the PA with 9.1% of territory, with 20.9% in Area B and 70% remaining in Israeli hands.

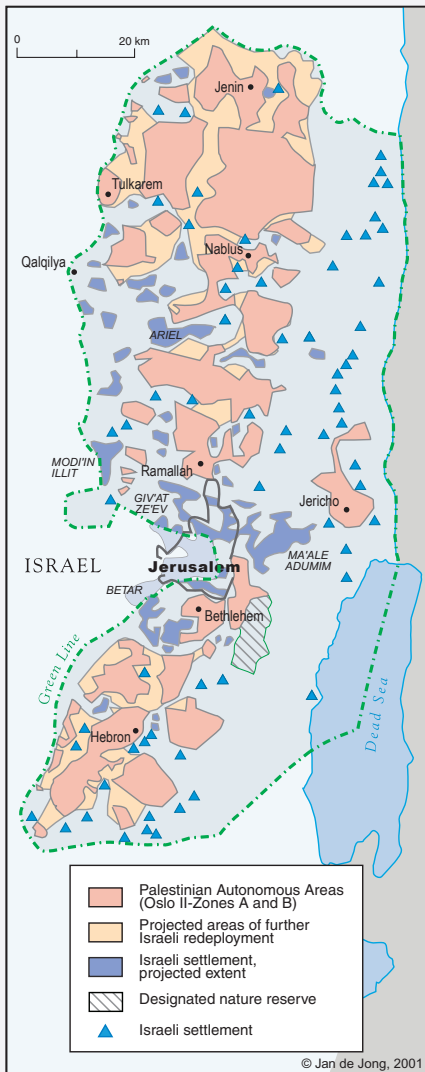
²¹ Said, Edward, *The End of the Peace Process: Oslo and After*, New York: Pantheon (2000), p. 315.

FRAGMENTING PALESTINE

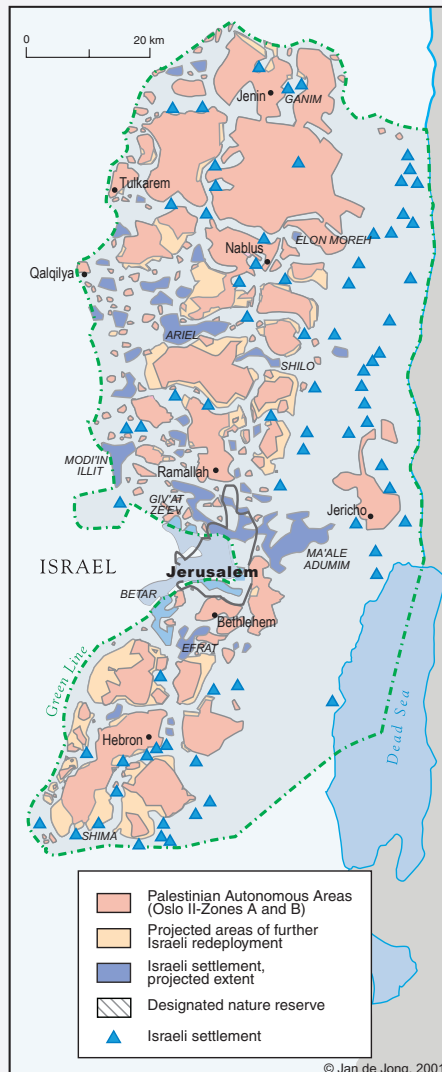
Formulas for Partition since the British Mandate



Wye River Memorandum, 1998



Sharm Ash-Sheikh Agreement, 1999



2000s: CAMP DAVID & BEYOND

According to the Oslo Accords a final status agreement should have been reached within five years, i.e., by the year 2000. On 5 July 2000, US President Bill Clinton announced his intention to invite the two parties to Camp David in order to push for results. President Arafat requested that talks be delayed in order not to weaken Palestinian hopes due to the unsatisfactory implementation of the Oslo Accords. Regardless of his warning, however, invitations were issued, and on 11 July 2000 President Arafat and his team arrived at Camp David.

Camp David Summit, 2000

Unsurprisingly, the talks failed to reach any agreement. Israeli Prime Minister Barak offered to form a Palestinian state on Gaza territory and an unacceptable 73% of the West Bank (27% less than the Green Line borders), which in 10-25 years would expand to a maximum of 92% of the West Bank. Besides this, Israel demanded that Arafat declare the conflict over and make no further demands, as well as to maintain its control of the West Bank's water resources.

In rejecting the offer, Arafat was vilified in the media; many international observers considered Barak's offer as "generous," bluntly ignoring the reality of Israel's occupation. Judged from the perspective of Palestinians'

The Sharm Ash-Sheikh Agreement, 1999

The Israeli elections of May 1999 heralded further negotiations regarding Israeli withdrawal. The new Labor government of Ehud Barak, having pledged in the election to end the conflict with the Palestinians but to refuse to dismantle settlements, allow the return of refugees, accept the pre-1967 lines or agree to Palestinian sovereignty in East Jerusalem, meant that any initiative would be severely hampered by ignoring legitimate Palestinian grievances. The Sharm Ash-Sheikh Agreement of 1999 again involved re-negotiation of the Oslo II redeployments.

The outcome was a series of redeployments and a call for final status talks to begin on 13 September 1999. The transfer protocols called for Israel to move 11% of the West Bank from Area C to Area B, and 7.1% from Area B to Area A. Israel subsequently transferred 7% from Area C to Area B on 5 September, and 2% from Area B to A and 3% from Area C to B on 15 November 1999, and 1% from Area C to A as well as 5.1% from Area B to Area A on 20 January 2000. Soon after, however, as the second Intifada erupted at the end of September 2000, the agreement was halted unilaterally with the invasion of the West Bank and Gaza by the Israeli army ("Operation Defense Shield").

and Israelis' respective rights under international law, all the concessions at Camp David came from the Palestinian side, none from the Israeli side. Firstly, Israel's obligations as defined by international law – withdrawal from all occupied territories (UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338), on which also the Madrid and Oslo agreements were based – were contradicted by Barak's "offer."

Secondly, the terms of the offer precluded the creation of an independent Palestinian state *prima facie*. The territory offered would be demilitarized and surrounded on all sides by Israel, which would maintain the ability to unilaterally invade and crush the fledgling state "in the event of an emergency." The border between Jordan and Palestine would be under Israeli control. In addition, Israel would regulate Palestinian foreign affairs, ensuring it did not enter into friendly relations with states inimical to Israel.

Third, the Israeli proposal planned to annex areas which would lead to the partition of the West Bank into three blocs (northern and southern West Bank and the Jericho area). Settlements and a network of Israeli-only bypass roads would create physical barriers between West Bank cities,

FRAGMENTING PALESTINE

Formulas for Partition since the British Mandate

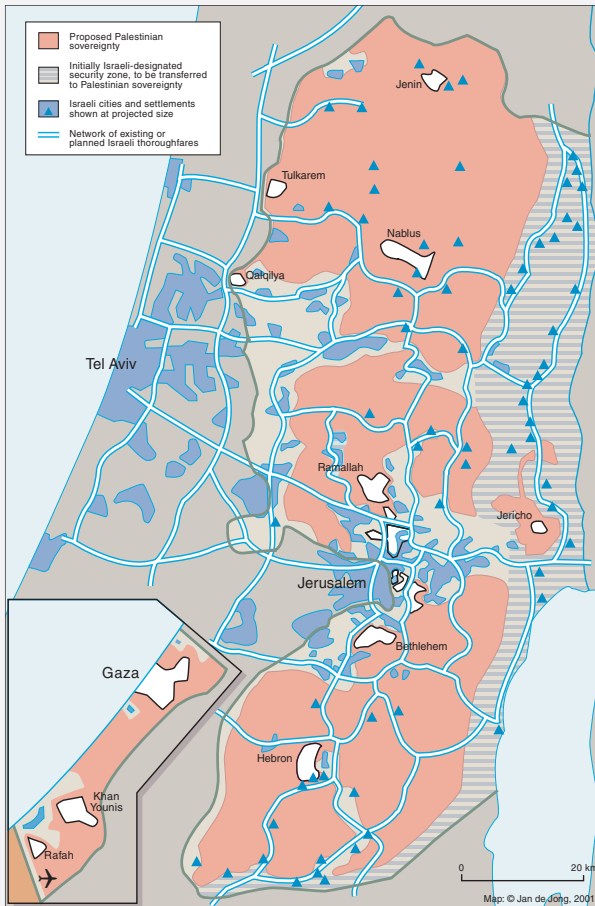
severely hampering movements within and among those blocs. In short, Israel's offer precluded the creation of a viable, sovereign, Palestinian state and looked 'generous' only if observers did not take into account historic Palestinian rights.

The Taba Talks, 2001

While each side accepted the Parameters with reservations, talks restarted at Taba, lasting from 21 to 27 January 2001. The negotiators later stated that they were as close as they had ever been to reaching an agreement, even though many issues remained far from being concluded. However, with Ehud Barak losing the election weeks later, the Foreign Ministry under the new Prime Minister Sharon immediately released a statement denouncing any agreements, stating "that the ideas which were brought up in the course of the recent negotiations conducted with the Chairman of the Palestinian Authority, including those raised at the Camp David Summit and by President Clinton towards the end of his term in office, are not binding on the new government to be formed in Israel."

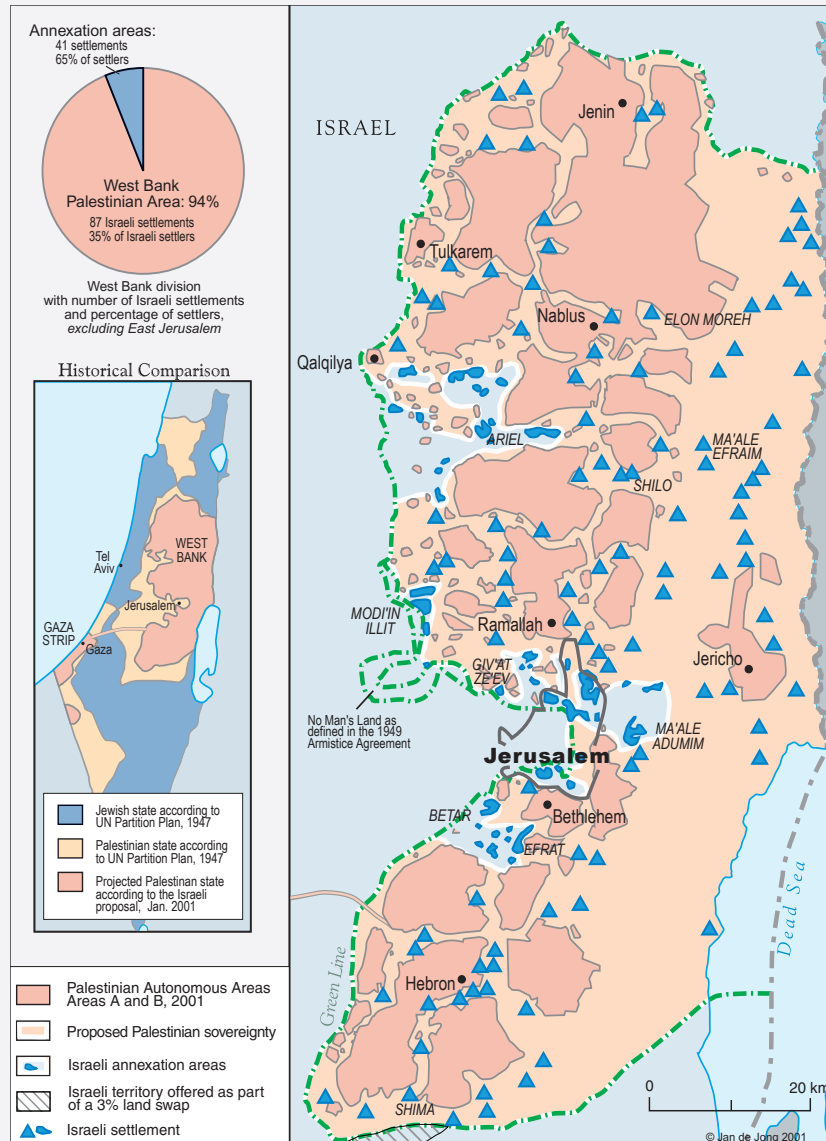
Once again, negotiations between the two sides reached an impasse.

Camp David Projections, 2000



Although the Camp David talks failed, President Clinton remained determined to succeed in the Middle East peace process. Despite the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, Clinton issued his 'parameters' on 23 December 2000 as a basis for further negotiations. The 'Clinton Parameters' proposed a Palestinian state on 94-96% of the West Bank; annexation of settlement blocs by Israel, containing 80% of total settlers; Jerusalem to be an open city, with "What is Arab should be Palestinian" and "what is Jewish should be Israeli;" temporary international and Israeli presence in the Jordan Valley; Palestinian sovereignty over its own airspace; return of refugees to the Palestinian state, or to a third state in line with those countries' sovereign decisions; and a final end to the conflict. The principles did not mention Gaza, but it was later confirmed that Palestine was to receive 100% of the Gaza Strip.

Taba Talks, 2001



FRAGMENTING PALESTINE

Formulas for Partition since the British Mandate



The Road Map, 2003

On 24 June 2002, US President Bush outlined his vision of peace in the Middle East, calling for the creation of “an independent, viable, sovereign Palestinian state living in peace and security alongside Israel.”²² Apparently, the American administration had recognized that the only solution for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was to end the occupation, to halt further settlement activity and to establish a Palestinian state. By 2003, the US invasion and occupation of Iraq propelled a drive to demonstrate to the world that the US administration was serious about making progress on the Israeli-Palestinian issue, and in a response to the intense violence and bloodshed between Israelis and Palestinians since the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000, as well as the launch of the Arab Peace Initiative at the Arab League summit in Beirut in March 2002, the US-led Middle East Quartet (US, EU, UN and Russia) issued its Roadmap for Peace in 2003, setting out guidelines supposed to culminate in a two-state solution within three years.²³ For the first time since the 1947 UN Partition Plan, “the international community succeeded in articulating a single, unified, and comprehensive vision for resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict, which included the creation of an independent Palestinian state” on 22% of historic Palestine.²⁴

The 2003 Road Map for Peace set out three phases. The first was designed to end Palestinian-Israeli violence, freeze Israeli settlement activity (including natural growth), dismantle outposts, strengthen and reform the PA, and ease the harsh conditions created by the Israeli security crackdown since 2001 on the Palestinians. The second phase would lead to the creation of a provisional Palestinian state with temporary borders whereas final negotiations on the permanent borders of a Palestinian state, the refugee issue and the status of Jerusalem would be held in a third and final phase, culminating in international recognition for both states, Palestine and Israel, by 2005. However, since the Road Map was not the outcome of negotiations between the parties to the conflict, neither the Israeli government nor the Palestinians were in fact persuaded that it would ever be fully implemented or that it was anything more than a “diplomatic feel-good exercise.”²⁵

Originally due to be published by 20 December 2002, initially heated Israeli objections – requesting over 100 changes to the map’s structure – prevented this. Further delays came about due to Israeli elections, the war in Iraq, the nomination and installation of a Palestinian Prime Minister and the creation of a new PA government. The Road Map was finally published on 30 April 2003. Upon presentation, the Palestinians cited some concerns over its content but accepted it in its entirety, while the Israeli government – under US pressure – only accepted “the steps set out in the Road Map,” not the Road Map itself, citing 14 key reservations. Among them were the recognition of the Israeli right to exist as a Jewish state (itself a veiled attack on the right of return - UN Resolution 194), the waiver of the right of return and demands that certain aspects of Palestinian sovereignty be subject to Israeli control, such as borders, airspace and the electromagnetic spectrum. The US stated

²² Speech by George W. Bush, 24 June 2002, published by *The Guardian*, 25 June 2002, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/jun/25/israel.usa>.

²³ Sharon Otterman, “Middle East: The Road Map to Peace,” Council on Foreign Relations, 7 February 2005, at <http://www.cfr.org/middle-east-and-north-africa/middle-east-road-map-peace/p7738>.

²⁴ Khaled Elgindy, “The Middle East Quartet: Post Mortem,” Brookings Institution, Analysis Paper 25 (February 2012), p. 9.

²⁵ International Crisis Group, “A Middle East Road Map to Where?” *Journal of Palestine Studies*, XXXII no. 4 (Summer 2003), p. 83-87, at <http://www.palestine-studies.org/files/pdf/jps/5601.pdf>.

that it would take into account Israel reservations, but that that the Road Map as it stood was final and “non-negotiable.”

Recognizing this, the UN Security Council subsequently adopted Resolution 1515 (2003), which recalled Resolution 242 and endorsed the Middle East Quartet’s Road Map towards a permanent, two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A summit meeting to begin implementing the Road Map was held in Aqaba, Jordan, on 4 June 2003.



President Bush, Prime Ministers Abbas and Sharon at Aqaba, June 2003

However, as early as July 2003, the Road Map stalled at its first phase. Ironically, this was one thing both Palestinian and Israeli officials soon could agree on. The Israeli government blamed the Palestinians for failing to rein in the “suicide bombers” and gunmen of Hamas and other militant groups; according to the Palestinians, Israel was not committed to ending its settlement expansion and continued to create facts on the ground by constructing a separation barrier on Palestinian land, hence actively undermining a viable two-state solution. While Palestinians had accepted the Road Map because it specified obligations for both sides and enjoyed international support, they soon believed that it would not lead anywhere and was instead used as a carrot and stick against the Palestinians.

By November 2003, it was clear that the obligations laid out in the Road Map had not been fulfilled. The Road Map remains unimplemented as settlement growth continues and further Palestinian land is confiscated in order to facilitate this. Nevertheless, its stipulations somewhat remain the baseline for Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, though the specific dates in the plan no longer apply.

The Geneva Accord, 2003

On 1 December 2003 the Geneva Accord was formally launched in a ceremony in Switzerland attended by hundreds of people. Israeli delegates include Yossi Belin, Amram Mitzna, Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, David Grossman, Amos Oz, Mossi Raz, and Shulamit Aloni, and Palestinian delegates Yasser Abed Rabbo, Jibril Rajoub, Hisham Abdul Razzeq, and Kadura Fares. Also attending were Knesset members Taleb As-Sana (United Arab List), Mohammed Barakeh, and Issam Mahoul (Hadash). President Arafat sent a letter of support, urging Sharon to back the plan as a path to a complete and just peace but also calling for implementation of UN Resolution 194 on the Palestinian refugees’ right of return. Main points of the Geneva Accord included that Jerusalem be divided administratively (not physically), with Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem becoming part of the Palestinian state, and most Jewish settlements in and around East Jerusalem part of Israel. The Haram Ash-Shar-

if Compound was to be under Palestinian sovereignty, with an international force ensuring freedom of access for visitors of all faiths. The Western Wall and the Jewish quarter would remain under Jewish sovereignty and the 'Holy Basin' area be under international supervision. Most settlements in the West Bank and Gaza were to be dismantled while Ariel, Efrat and Har Homa would become part of the Palestinian state. In addition, Israel was to transfer parts of the Negev adjacent to Gaza, but not including Halutza, to the Palestinians in exchange for the parts of the West Bank.

The Disengagement from Gaza and the Northern West Bank, 2005

Far from being a step in return to the Road Map, the Israeli government announced in 2004 to implement a unilateral disengagement plan from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank, hoping that this would be "a blow to the Palestinians, in that it will force them to give up on their aspirations [to statehood] for many years to come."²⁶ The US fell soon in line with Sharon's plan which expressly intended to sideline the Road Map and indefinitely postpone the Quartet's vision of a Palestinian state.

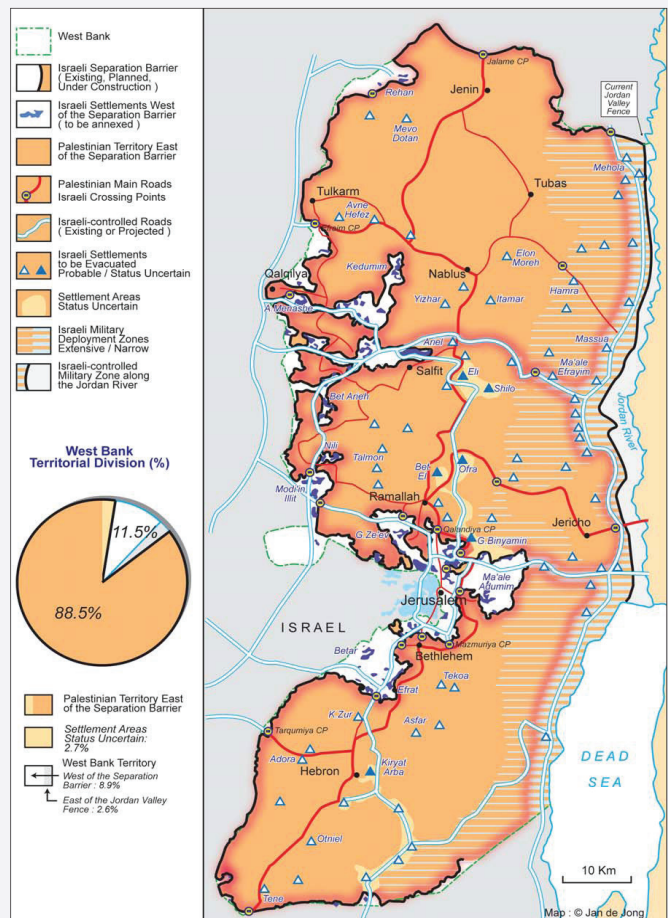
Even with the unilateral withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, the settler population continued to grow steadily, reaching 534,224 by 2010. A refusal to freeze the building of new settlements and the growth of existing settlements is not only contrary to the obligations set out in the Road Map; it also constitutes a creeping annexation more Palestinian land, furthering the partition of the West Bank into colonized settlements and Palestinian cantons. While the separation barrier erected by Israel is the most visible sign of the enclosure of the Palestinian population, its static nature masks the slowly growing separation of Palestinian communities through the expansion of settlements.

The Annapolis Conference, 2007

The goal of the process set off by the Annapolis conference, launched by President George W. Bush in November 2007 in a bid to revive the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and implement the Road Map, was to reach a peace agreement by the end of 2008. Although the event marked the first time both sides entered a conference with a common understanding that the final state of Palestinian-Israeli peace will be a two-state solution, no meaningful achievements on settlements and borders were made in the subsequent negotiations.

Maps presented thereafter by Israel outlining its permanent territorial demands in the West Bank provided for Palestinian territorial contiguity only via roads and tunnels, confirming wide-ranging Israeli security and settlement intentions throughout the West Bank and East Jerusalem that made the creation of a sovereign and independent Palestinian state impossible.

Projection of Israel's West Bank Partition Plan, 2008



PALESTINE TODAY: AREA C

The failure of Oslo and the Road Map to Peace has left the land of Palestine in a state of partition; although it was intended as a temporary measure when it was initially negotiated, the situation looks more and more like a permanent arrangement as times pass by without a peace settlement. Today, Palestinian lands are split between Gaza and the West Bank, with the latter itself divided into areas A, B and C. At present, Area A equals 17.2% of the West Bank, Area B 23.8%, and Area C, which is under full Israeli control, some 59%. These varied zones of control effectively support further settlement development and hamper Palestinian life through limited access to resources, the encirclement of their communities, and the destruction of economic assets. Palestinians living in Area C have the choice between enduring the ongoing hardship under full Israeli occupation or relocating to areas A or B. Since May 2013, the Israeli military has forcibly evicted around 400 Palestinians from their homes in Area C and destroyed numerous Palestinian businesses and infrastructures, leading the European Union to brand Israeli actions as 'forced transfer.' The intention of Israel is clear in action and in words: by removing the Palestinians from the land, it makes way for continued settlement growth as well as for annexation and integration into Israel. The report of the government-appointed Levy Committee published in 2012 called for the annexation of these areas and the legalization of settlements; Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon backed the report, while Israeli Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor Naftali Bennett supported actively calls for Area C to be annexed.

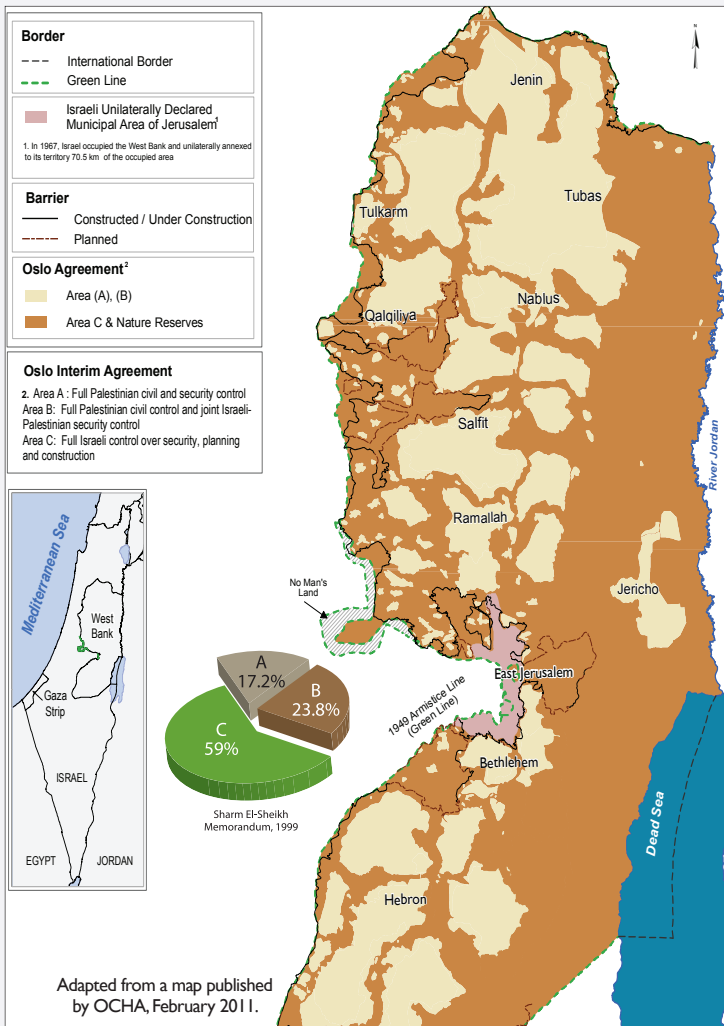
²⁶ Prime Minister Ariel Sharon interview, *Ha'aretz*, Pesach Supplement, 5 April 2004.

FRAGMENTING PALESTINE

Formulas for Partition since the British Mandate



West Bank Area C, 2011

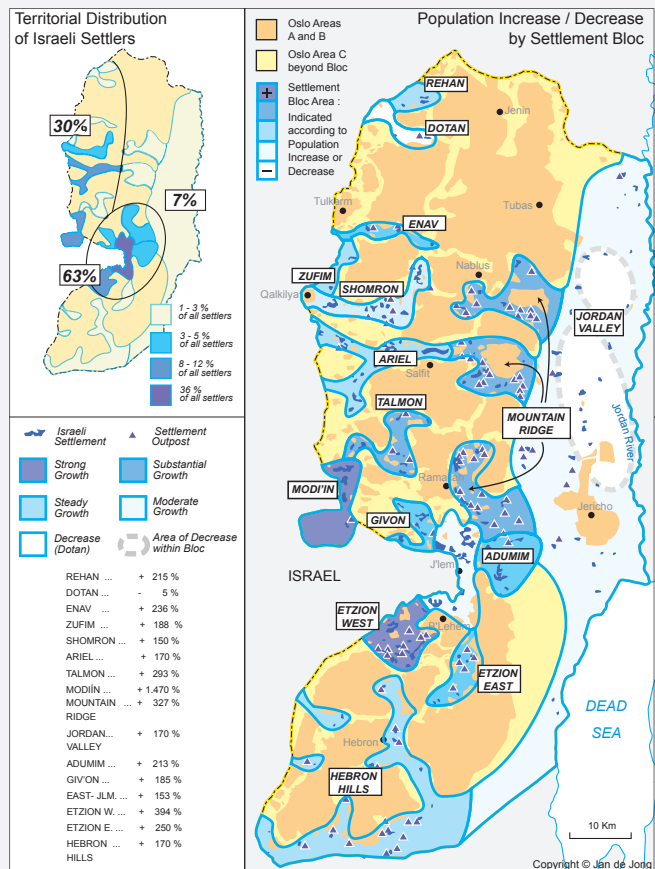


for removing them by declaring the land a live fire zone or an archeological dig site, and for making room for Israeli settlement infrastructure development. Area C contains 63% of the West Bank's agricultural land and the use of military orders to confiscate land not only strangles the livelihood of a large number of Palestinians – denying them the opportunity to be self-sufficient – but also provides a boost to the wealth of the settlers.

The existence of Area C and the practice of continued settlement growth is something which undermines any peace process. The idea of the two-state solution rests on the feasibility of establishing a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. However, by continuing settlement growth and prejudicing the development of Palestinians who reside in Area C, the Israeli government is slowly chipping away at the viability of such a solution. This reality is recognized by virtually all the peace initiatives seeking to bring an end to the conflict.

Additionally, these settlements remain illegal under international law even if Israeli courts decide to 'legalize' them. Allowing settlement of occupied land is criminalized by Article 49(6) of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and numerous United Nations resolutions and International Criminal Court judgments have recognized this fact. By settling land, an occupying state can gradually expel the native population and create conditions under which eventual annexation becomes a possibility.

Israeli Settlements - Population Growth and Concentrations, 1995-2011



Rather than freezing the expansion of settlements – a PA precondition for renewing negotiations – the Israeli government has expanded them. In 2012, settlements in the West Bank increased by nearly 8,000 dunums, approved by military order. This land, whose occupation is 'legalized' by the Israeli state, is acquired through a mixture of purchases, squatting, and expropriation. Expansion is assisted by the nature of Area C control: the 150,000 Palestinians in Area C face impossible hurdles in gaining building permits for housing and infrastructure, as less than 1% of the land is permitted to be developed by Palestinians, resulting in around 94% of building applications being rejected. By doing so, Israeli authorities ensure that the land remains available for the 'natural growth' of settlements, which slowly force Palestinians from their land, and precludes the possibility of creating a continuous and viable Palestinian state.

The fundamental need for housing, water, sanitation, health-care and schooling has forced Palestinians in Area C – as they are legally and morally entitled to – to build 'illegal' housing and infrastructure. These structures frequently face destruction by Israeli authorities, provoking the displacement of people. In 2011, 149 homes were destroyed, and between 2009 and 2011 over 100 water and sanitation facilities. However, this is but one way in which Palestinians in Area C lose access to their land: military warrants also provide a 'legal' pretext

Where to?

The appointment of John Kerry as US President Barack Obama's new Secretary of State for his second term in office has seen yet another drive for restarting the negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, which had broken down in 2010 after a dispute over Israeli settlement construction. Since January 2013, Kerry has been engaged in shuttle diplomacy between Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas, hoping to show progress before the scheduled UN General Assembly debate on the Middle East in September, an event the Israelis fear will strengthen Palestinian unilateral moves towards statehood.

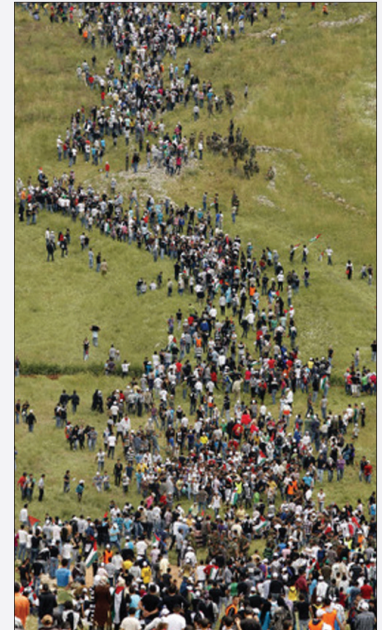
President Abbas has insisted that settlement construction be halted before talks resume, and that Israel recognize the pre-1967 borders as a basis for the negotiation of the frontiers of the future Palestinian state. However, Israel wants negotiations without preconditions and ignores the fact that a settlement freeze is in fact not a precondition but an obligation based on prior Israeli-Palestinian agreements and international law. Notwithstanding the above, in June 2013, Israel approved an extra 1,169 settlement units, while 10 Palestinian homes were demolished, and another eight were occupied by settlers.

While Kerry has offered a \$4 billion incentive plan to the Palestinians to begin negotiations and has simultaneously made veiled threats against any Palestinian efforts to unilaterally upgrade their status in the UN or the International Court of Justice, he has proven unable to reign in illegal Israeli actions which prevent these negotiations from taking place. Considering that those actions are illegal and counter to prior bilateral agreements, pressuring the Palestinians to back down on their just demands for a cessation of settlement activity is immoral and shows that the US is a dishonest broker. Furthermore, while the official position of the Israeli government is to support a two-state solution, Israeli officials have on more than one occasion publicly declared their opposition to it: Zvulun Kalfa (HaBayit HaYehudi Party) has stated that the historic right of the state of Israel is to stretch from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, while Israeli Minister of Industry, Trade and Labor Naftali Bennet has declared that "The idea of a Palestinian state reached a dead end. There has never been so much time invested in something so pointless... we should build, build, build [settlements]."²⁷ Likewise, Kerry's efforts have sidelined Hamas, which has resulted in the movement denouncing the "mirage" of negotiations, complicating even further the negotiation process.

Despite its one-sidedness, partition – or the two-state solution – remains a key part of peace plans proposed by interested international parties. Reflecting this, the official Palestinian policy since Oslo has been centered on the two-state solution and negotiations have therefore remained centered on partitioning historic Palestine and creating an independent Palestinian state within the West Bank and Gaza.

However, in light of the ongoing Israeli settlement policies, support for a one-state solution, i.e., a bi-national democratic state across the whole of historic Palestine, is growing. On 15 May 2013, around 30 prominent members of Fatah published a statement entitled "The popular movement project for one democratic state in historic Palestine."²⁸ Such calls are both a reflection of the stagnation of the two-state solution, and an indication of the belief that the only truly just solution would be one in which both Palestinians and Israelis live peacefully

side by side and enjoy the same rights and privileges. The Israeli government is vehemently opposed to this idea as the resulting state would no longer be qualitatively or demographically 'Jewish' in character, something that is frequently presented as an existential threat to the Jewish people. Moreover, the reference point for the international community, both in the Western and Arab world, is UN Resolution 242, which would result in the implementation of a two-state solution. As such, the idea of a one-state solution remains one which has the backing of certain groups but lacks the requisite political support to become a focal point of the future of Palestine. This said, decades after the first attempts to partition Palestine to accommodate the wishes of the Zionist movement and Western powers in total disregard of the will of the indigenous population, and more than 20 years after negotiations set out to reach a fair resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the result is not partition but in fact an entrenched fragmentation of the territory, of its resources, and of its people. As the creation of a sovereign and viable Palestinian state appears more and more out of reach, it is no surprise that the idea of a bi-national state encompassing the whole of historic Palestine is increasingly discussed as the only solution left to the Palestinians to preserve their geographical, national and cultural integrity.



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Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs, Jerusalem

Tel: +972-2-6264426 / 628-6566

Fax: +972-2-6282819,

E-mail: passia@passia.org

18, Hatem Al-Ta'i Street - Wadi Al-Joz

PO Box 19545, Jerusalem / Al-Quds

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²⁷ <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4393326,00.html>.

²⁸ Amira Hass, "Senior Fatah officials call for single democratic state, not two-state solution," *Haaretz*, 17 May 2013.