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The Begin Plan for Administrative Self-Rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The following plan, which Prime Minister Menahem Begin presented to US President Carter and President Sadat of Egypt as part of Israel's overall Middle East peace plan, was read out to the Israeli Knesset on December 28, 1977. The Journal reprints it here as it appeared in the *Jerusalem Post* the following day. In his statement to the Knesset Prime Minister Begin stressed that Paragraph 11 of the plan "obviously includes the stationing of Israel army forces in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip." Without the presence of Israeli armed forces, these areas would be dominated by the PLO, he said, and this will not under any circumstances be permitted. "Without this paragraph," he pointed out, "the plan for administrative self-rule is meaningless."]

1. The administration of the military government in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be abolished.

2. In Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district administrative autonomy of the residents, by and for them, will be established.

3. The residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will elect an Administrative Council composed of 11 members. The Administrative Council will operate in accordance with the principles laid down in this paper.

4. Any resident 18 years old or over, without distinction of citizenship, including stateless residents, is entitled to vote in the elections to the Administrative Council.

5. Any resident whose name is included in the list of candidates for the Administrative Council and who, on the day the list is submitted, is 25 years old or over, is eligible to be elected to the council.

6. The Administrative Council will be elected by general, direct, personal, equal, and secret ballot.

7. The period of office of the Administrative Council will be four years from the day of its election.

8. The Administrative Council will sit in Bethlehem.

9. All the administrative affairs relating to the Arab residents of the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be under the direction and within the competence of the Administrative Council.

10. The Administrative Council will operate the following departments: education; religious affairs; finance; transportation; construction and housing; industry, commerce, and tourism; agriculture; health; labour and social welfare; rehabilitation of refugees; and the department for the administration of justice and the supervision of the local police forces. It will also promulgate regulations relating to the operation of these departments.

11. Security and public order in the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be the responsibility of the Israeli authorities.

12. The Administrative Council will elect its own chairman.

13. The first session of the Administrative Council will be convened 30 days after the publication of the election results.

14. Residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, without distinction of citizenship, including stateless residents, will be granted free choice of either Israeli or Jordanian citizenship.

15. A resident of the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district who requests Israeli citizenship will be granted such citizenship in accordance with the citizenship law of the state.

16. Residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district who, in accordance with the right of free option, choose Israeli citizenship, will be entitled to vote for, and be elected to, the Knesset in accordance with the election law.

17. Residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district who are citizens of Jordan or who, in accordance with the right of free option, become citizens of Jordan, will elect and be eligible for election to the Parliament of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in accordance with the election law of that country.

18. Questions arising from the vote to the Jordanian Parliament by residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be clarified in negotiations between Israel and Jordan.

19. A committee will be established of representatives of Israel, Jordan, and the Administrative Council to examine existing legislation in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district; and to determine which legislation will continue in force, which will be abolished, and what will be the competence of the Administrative Council to promulgate regulations. The rulings of the committee will be adopted by unanimous decision.

20. Residents of Israel will be entitled to acquire land and settle in the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. Arabs, residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district, who, in accordance with the free option granted them, become Israeli citizens, will be entitled to acquire land and settle in Israel.

21. A committee will be established of representatives of Israel, Jordan, and the Administrative Council to determine norms of immigration to the areas of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. The committee will determine the norms whereby Arab refugees resident outside Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be permitted to immigrate to these areas in reasonable numbers. The rulings of the committee will be adopted by unanimous decision.

22. Residents of Israel and residents of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district will be assured freedom of movement and freedom of economic activity in Israel, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district.

23. The Administrative Council will appoint one of its members to represent the council before the government of Israel for deliberation on matters of common interest, and one of its members to represent the council before the government of Jordan for deliberation on matters of common interest.

24. Israel stands by its right and its claim of sovereignty to Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. In the knowledge that other claims exist, it proposes, for the sake of the agreement and the peace, that the question of sovereignty in these areas be left open.

25. With regard to the administration of the holy places of the three religions in Jerusalem, a special proposal will be drawn up and submitted that will include the guarantee of freedom of access to members of all faiths to the shrines holy to them.

26. These principles will be subject to review after a five-year period.