

SETTLEMENT MONITOR

EDITED BY GEOFFREY ARONSON

This section covers items—reprinted articles, statistics, and maps—pertaining to Israeli settlement activities in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. Unless otherwise stated, the items have been written by Geoffrey Aronson for this section or drawn from material written by him for Report on Israeli Settlement in the Occupied Territories (hereinafter Settlement Report), a Washington-based bimonthly newsletter published by the Foundation for Middle East Peace. JPS is grateful to the foundation for permission to draw on its material. Major documents relating to settlements appear in the Documents and Source Material section.

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SHARON'S ENDURING AGENDA: CONSOLIDATE TERRITORIAL CONTROL, MANAGE THE CONFLICT

From Settlement Report, January–February 2004.

Ariel Sharon, prime minister of Israel, stands unchallenged as the architect of Israeli policy in the occupied territories. No foreign leader has challenged him effectively. No plan exists able to thwart his intentions. No Palestinian or Arab antagonist has demonstrated a capability of imposing a contrary vision or agenda, and in Israel no effective political challenger has yet appeared with a platform that questions his legacy.

Sharon has succeeded in turning the geopolitical map of the occupied territories to his advantage to a degree he could not have imagined when he assumed the premiership in February 2001. The basic instruments of the Oslo era—the PA and those areas under its nominal control—survive only as shadows of their abbreviated existence. And Yasir Arafat, the only Palestinian leader capable of making and enforcing a peace agreement with Israel, has been de-

clared persona non grata by Israel and the United States.

Sharon's plan for "disengagement" now unfolding in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza Strip, illuminates not only what is transpiring today but also what Sharon intends to establish in the months and years ahead. Not since the early days of Israeli rule in the occupied territories has an Israeli leader been able to play such a dominant role in establishing the foundations that Sharon believes will consolidate permanent Israeli rule over these areas.

The map that Sharon is tirelessly fashioning out of stone and concrete in the occupied territories demonstrates far more clearly than any speech the breathtaking, if fanciful, vision still driving Israeli policy. Building upon the pattern of settlements that Sharon and other Israelis have been constructing for almost three decades, Israel intends to preserve the territorial advantages of its 1967 victory by maintaining direct, permanent control over half of the West Bank and perhaps 20 percent of Gaza. Because of demographic concerns, Sharon prefers that the burden of ruling 3 million Palestinians be imposed upon a Palestinian state

in those parts of the West Bank and Gaza that Israel does not desire for security or settlement purposes. If anything is new at all in Sharon's call for disengagement, it is the complete absence of concern for the character of the Palestinian state he intends to impose. Israel has conditioned much of its diplomacy during the Sharon era on an extensive list of internal political and security requirements to be fulfilled by the PA, requirements that were adopted at face value by the Quartet and feature prominently in the road map.

Managing, Not Solving, the Problem

Sharon is under no illusion that the implementation of his vision will in itself end the conflict that has been a central feature in the lives of both peoples for almost a century. This is a luxury he does not allow himself.

The stage upon which Sharon performs has never been hospitable to solutions aimed at ending the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Rather it has been shaped by a dynamic cycle of Israeli rule and Palestinian resistance that has characterized the occupied territories since Israel's 1967 conquest. Sharon has failed to "sear [defeat] into Palestinian consciousness," the standard set by his chief of staff for Israeli policy toward the ongoing Palestinian rebellion. He has not removed Arafat as symbol or statesman, nor has he been able to protect Israelis from Palestinian terror. Continuing Palestinian resilience in the face of the most draconian Israeli policies in the history of its rule has forced Israelis to confront the high costs of occupation and compelled Sharon to revise his policies, if not his objectives, in the hope of removing the sense of permanent crisis characterizing Israeli rule in the occupied territories.

In June 1977, Israeli foreign minister Moshe Dayan explained that the presumption that Israel's conflict with the Palestinians could be "solved" was fundamentally flawed. "The question," explained Dayan, "was not, 'What is the solution?' but 'How do we live without a solution?'" Sharon is a loyal heir to this view. He too believes that the antagonistic passions and interests driving Israelis and Palestinians cannot be permanently resolved short of a Palestinian surrender. Like Dayan, Sharon's actions and policies do not betray an aspiration to solve the problem, that is, to end the conflict. Rather, they are inspired by a belief in an existential, all but inexhaustible contest with the Palestinians and the Arabs generally that can at best be managed to Israel's advantage.

Sharon's proposals, explains *Ha'Aretz's* Aluf Benn, are "not a peace plan but an update of the goals of the war against the Palestinians—and a guarantee that it will continue after the withdrawal." Israel's policies in the occupied territories have been guided by an unwavering strategic purpose, first articulated by Foreign Minister Yigal Allon, who in 1969 noted, "We are creating a Land of Israel that is whole in the strategic context and that maintains a Jewish state demographically." The policies devised to support this objective, however, have always been characterized by improvisation and adaptability. "Deciding not to decide" was the slogan adopted to describe this policy in the early years of Israeli rule. Sharon's latest ideas are yet another manifestation of this policy, which promises endemic conflict and a continuing cycle of bloodshed. They signal much less a well-conceived "plan" than the tactical response of a fighter in the ring, jabbing and feinting in the hope of keeping his opponent on the ropes.

Time Is on Our Side

One of the most remarkable effects of the belated Palestinian revolt against occupation beginning in 1988 and erupting again in late 2000 has been its erosion of Israeli confidence in the future, symbolized most vividly by the growing intensity of the split in elite Israeli views about the proper response to the continuing insurrection. Sharon does not share this pessimism. "History teaches us," he explained at a little-reported 9 December 2003 speech before the Israel Business Council, "that since the beginning of Zionism, and even since the creation of the state, that time is on our side. . . . From the earliest days of the Yishuv [modern Jewish community in Palestine], when there were 56,000 Jews at the time of the Balfour Declaration, and less than 660,000 when the state was declared, we established a state in all of its glory. We also absorbed millions of immigrants and now number 5.5 million Jews. . . . Even if the mission appears to be impossible, I am sure that even today time continues to work in our favor."

Sharon long ago resolved to his own satisfaction the "demographic threat" posed by permanent Israeli rule in the occupied territories and the source of much consternation among Israeli Jews today. "I am definitely for a democratic Jewish country," Sharon explained in a 10 September 1976, radio broadcast. "The question is, can we see a democratic Jewish state in the Land of Israel

today? . . . If we take the Alon Plan, which certainly blessed Kiryat Arba and the settlements in Gush Etzion, Tekoa, and Ma'ale Adumim, we are speaking about a Jewish democratic state that has 1.2 million Arabs. If I take the plan of Gush Emmunim, then the difference is very small. They are talking about a Jewish state that has 1.6 million Arabs. That is to say, if we sincerely want a Jewish democratic state we have to return to the patriotic borders of 1947. If we want a Jewish democratic state we have to return to the partition policy of 1947. . . . Therefore, in my opinion, one should be most careful when talking about what is called a Jewish democratic state."

Sharon has always been confident that the management of the lives and politics of Palestinians in the occupied territories could be married to a strategy of expanding Israeli settlement and strategic military control throughout these areas. In 1976, Sharon believed that Palestinians in territories that Israel coveted could find their political identity in Amman. He was one of the first Israeli leaders, together with Shimon Peres, to conclude reluctantly that an ersatz state called Palestine cobbled out of bits of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem could preserve Israeli hegemony in these areas and square the circle created by the impending establishment of Jewish-Arab demographic parity between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

Unlike the religious partisans of Greater Israel, however, Sharon has always been a champion of the kind of pragmatism that David Ben-Gurion demonstrated in his diplomatic and military efforts to consolidate Jewish power in Palestine.

In Sharon's speech to the Herzliya Conference in December 2003, there was no talk of Greater Israel, no claim to rule the West Bank based on God's promise to the Jewish people, no grandiose promise to end the conflict. There was only the imperative of security, that elusive concept at the heart of Israel's long and bitter engagement in the occupied territories, established by Israel's founding generation and championed by Sharon.

Sharon himself has been thinking about the strategy of compromise followed by Ben-Gurion in Israel's early years. Sharon's recent speech read by Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, marking Ben-Gurion's death, noted, "Ben-Gurion's greatness was not only in his visionary rhetoric but to limit it to what was possible under the circumstances of the day. Ben-Gurion said, 'Let's assume that

with military means we could conquer all of western Eretz Israel [the West Bank]. Then what? We'll be one state. But that state will want to be democratic. There will be general elections. And we'll be a minority. . . . When it was a question of all the land without a Jewish state or a Jewish state without all the land we chose a Jewish state without all the land."

Like Israel's founders, Sharon is enthusiastic about the future of Israel and Zionism. Like them he has not been blinded by an ideological commitment to Greater Israel. And like them, he has always been prepared to make what he views as a tactical retreat when the balance of forces dictates—to wait for another day when the equation becomes more favorable.

It was not necessary to listen to Sharon's Herzliya speech in order to understand his intentions, which are taking shape every day in the hills and fields of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and along the deep-rutted roads of East Jerusalem. His unilaterally imposed disengagement plan is hardly new in substance or in strategy. Almost every plan in the occupied territories for the last forty years—the creation and expansion of settlements foremost among them—has been a unilateral Israeli action designed to enable Israel to remain in the territories. It could be argued that even the territorial divisions sanctified in the Oslo agreements were imposed by Israel upon Palestinians, who pressed unsuccessfully for a total Israeli withdrawal. Indeed the Oslo territorial division of the West Bank into areas A, B, and C approximates the separation barriers now under construction.

Sharon's commitment to refrain from creating new settlements is belied by continuing state support for the consolidation of up to 100 "outposts" established since 1996. His promise to evacuate these "unauthorized" new settlements establishes a distinction recognizable only in Israel (and perhaps in the White House) that formalizes the "legality" of scores of settlements established during the last eight years, notwithstanding the fact that all civilian Israeli settlement in these areas violates international law. The promise not to confiscate more Palestinian land for settlement expansion is betrayed by scores of military-ordered confiscations for the separation barrier, whose trajectory is determined by settlements, by numerous instances of outright land theft by expanding settlements, and the fencing off of lands according to military orders issued years if not decades ago.

Sharon's statement at Herzliya that no special economic incentives encourage settlers to move to settlements cannot survive a casual reading of Israel's daily newspapers, which are full of advertisements touting such offers. Sharon's commitment to restrict settlement expansion to present "lines of construction" offers a new linguistic formulation for an old expansionist story. Together these elements portray a continuing program of government-supported settlement expansion throughout the occupied territories.

Like his predecessors, Sharon is prepared to recognize the limits of Israeli power and if necessary to make "painful concessions" in order to consolidate Israel's considerable territorial gains. Sharon, it will be remembered, spoke of "room for considerable retreat in Sinai for real peace" years before Israel's withdrawal from Sinai and its peace agreement with Egypt. At the Camp David talks in September 1978, Prime Minister Menachem Begin agreed to Israel's withdrawal from Sinai and all of its settlements only after receiving Sharon's approval.

Today, Sharon's pragmatism is expressed in a willingness to acknowledge that a policy intended to secure Israel's hold on the occupied territories will require the evacuation of some settlements, sacrificed in the face of Palestinian resistance in order to establish the minimal territorial conditions for the creation of a weak Palestinian state that he believes Palestinians will have no choice but to accept.

Like the separation barrier, the Palestinian state at the heart of Sharon's plan for disengagement is an idea that Sharon has embraced, if only in order to transform it into an instrument necessary for the implementation of his own fantastic, ill-fated vision. The coming months promise to be decisive, challenging not only Palestinians but the international community, as the defining features of Sharon's map take concrete form.

THE TERRITORIAL IMPLICATIONS OF SHARON'S "DISENGAGEMENT PLAN"

This piece by Geoffrey Aronson was published by the Palestine Center, 18 February 2004, as Information Brief 101.

Israeli PM Ariel Sharon is seriously contemplating the evacuation of a number of functioning settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Sharon's consideration of settlement evacuation represents a significant watershed in the history of Israel's occupation of these lands conquered in June 1967. A strict analysis of the territo-

rial implications of such a policy offers an opportunity to address the relevance of such a move to the prospects for creating a viable Palestinian national existence in territories evacuated by Israel.

Published reports since the beginning of 2004 present two related options for settlement evacuation. The first includes the evacuation of the settlements of Ganim, Qadim, Homesh, and Sa Nur in the West Bank and the settlements of Netzarim, Kfar Darom, and Morag in the Gaza Strip. The second option, published in Israel's English-language *Ha'Aretz* newspaper on 2 February 2004, highlights Sharon's decision to initiate the planning of the evacuation of the Gaza Strip's entire complement of settlements.

Option I

The West Bank Settlements

Ganim and Qadim are two small settlements southeast of the Palestinian city of Jenin along the northernmost section of the road from the Palestinian town of Tubas. According to the latest official figures (December 2002), Ganim has a population of 170; Qadim has a population of 149. An Israeli military base south of the settlements has recently been relocated closer to the Green Line. To the southwest, Homesh and Sa Nur abut a section of Route 60 southwest of Jenin along what has historically been the principal transport route linking Jenin with the West Bank's major Palestinian urban and commercial markets. Both are sparsely populated; Homesh has 198 inhabitants, Sa Nur has 33.

Assessment: Israel's evacuation of these four settlements and two military bases (the one south of Ganim and Qadim and another near the Palestinian village of Sanur, whose security rationale would be undermined by the settlements' evacuation) would have a limited local impact on the region north of Nablus. It would mark a restoration of Palestinian control over Jenin's historic territorial hinterland reaching the Green Line region to the north; Ya'abad and the outskirts of Tulkarm to the west; Nablus to the south; and Tamun and Tubas to the east. This area, however, would remain without the vital transportation links necessary to assure territorial contiguity. Its development and management of everyday life would remain constrained by the continuing presence of settlements and the associated checkpoints along major roads. Thus Shavei Shomron, Einav, and Avnei Hefetz will continue to obstruct the route to Tulkarm and Nablus; Elon Moreh will remain east of Nablus, with

an Israeli army facility overlooking it from the northeast, and the separation barrier to its west near the Mevo Dotan, Hinnanit, and Shaked settlements.

The Gaza Strip Settlements

The settlements of Netzarim, Kfar Darom, and Morag are integral parts of a territorial strategy aimed at assuring Israeli control over the principal north-south transport route linking the major Palestinian population and commercial centers of the Gaza Strip. It is difficult to envision a continuing Israeli strategy aimed at controlling this route, which has caused such hardship to Palestinians, in the aftermath of the evacuation of these settlements.

Israeli withdrawal from Netzarim (population 382) and Kfar Darom (population 338) would permit Palestinian assumption of control over Road No. 4 from Erez in the north to Gaza City and south to Khan Yunis, resulting in a significant improvement in the daily lives of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. Netzarim's evacuation, along with the considerable military facility abutting it, would further result in unobstructed Palestinian territorial continuity from Erez to the southern outskirts of Dayr al-Balah.

Morag (population 170) abuts the main road between Khan Yunis and Rafah. Its evacuation would make possible the creation of a territorially cohesive area from the Khan Yunis-Rafah line east to the border with Israel. Under this option, Israel would remain in the west along the coastal zone comprising the Katif settlement bloc, and would also continue to control a narrow border strip separating the Gaza Strip from Egypt.

Assessment: As a result of this limited redeployment, Palestinians would considerably enhance their control over Gaza's main transport linkages and expand Palestinian capacity to create in Gaza a unified and coherent territorial presence, but a significant portion of the coastal area as well as the border with Egypt would remain outside their control.

Option II

The option for the evacuation of all civilian settlement in the Gaza Strip is qualitatively different from the more limited redeployment outlined above. This option covers two settlement blocs in addition to the Gaza settlements mentioned above. The bloc in northwest Gaza Strip, contiguous with Israel, comprises the settlements of Nisanit (population 943), Aley Sinai (pop. 360), and Dugit (pop. 76). The Katif bloc houses the bulk of Gaza's 7,000 settlers.

Assessment: Evacuation of these areas would restore all Gaza, with one notable exception, to Palestinian control, returning to Palestinians potentially significant agricultural, recreational, and tourist assets and qualitatively enhancing the prospects for the creation in Gaza of a nationally cohesive entity.

The area that Israel will retain is the border area separating the Gaza Strip from Egypt. Israel has already expanded its control over this area since the intifada began in October 2000, and it is unlikely that it will be included in any unilateral redeployment and settlement evacuation. Denying Palestinians sovereign control over this critical border significantly impairs their ability to exploit fully the advantages of an Israeli evacuation of all Gaza Strip settlements.

GAZA SETTLEMENTS POPULATION, JANUARY 2004

Settlement	Increase Since	
	2002 ^a	1990 ^b / %
Aley Sinai (1992)	360	145 / 76.4
Belolah (1993)	217	72 / 49.7
Bnei Atzmon (Atzmona)	567	122 / 62.9
Dugit (1996)	76	11 / 6.9
Gadid	324	8 / 18.3
Ganei Tal (1993)	377	27 / 7.71
Gan Or (1992)	321	102 / 46.6
Katif (1993)	346	184 / 113.6
Kerem Atzmona (outpost)	NA	NA
Kefar Darom	338	190 / 128.4
Kfar Yam (1993)	NA	NA
Morag	170	55 / 47.8
Netzarim	382	252 / 193.9
Netzer Hazani	410	56 / 15.8
Neve Dekalim	2,501	1,431 / 133.7
Nisanit (1994)	943	620 / 191.9
Peat Sadeh (1996)	95	-16 / -14.4
Rafiah Yam (1993)	149	25 / 20.2
Shirat Ha Yam (outpost)	NA	NA
Tel Katifa	NA	NA
Total	7,576	3,284 / 68.8

a. The latest year statistics available is 2002.

b. Unless otherwise noted.

Sources: www.geocities.com/m_yericho/yishuvim.htm; Knesset Center for Research and Information; "Figures of the Occupation in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza," Ministry of Interior letter to Labor MK Yuli Tamir, 28 May 2003; List of Localities: Their Population and Codes, Jerusalem. Technical Publications, Israel, Central Bureau of Statistics. Prepared by Lily Pirouzian for *Settlement Report*, January-February 2004.

**NEWS REPORT ON ILLEGAL
OUTPOSTS PROMPTS CALL FOR
PROBE OF WORLD ZIONIST
ORGANIZATION**

The following article by Nacha Cattan appeared in Forward on 2 January 2004. The introduction below was written by Walid Khalidi for JPS.

This item throws light on an aspect of the ongoing Israeli colonization of the occupied territories that is almost totally neglected in the U.S. mass media: the role of American Jewish philanthropic organizations in financing such colonization with tax-exempt charitable U.S. dollars. The issue attained prominence within American Jewish institutional leadership circles after Ha'Aretz reported on 26 December 2003 that the Israeli deputy defense minister had admitted before the Knesset State Control Committee that government ministries had been funneling U.S. charitable donations to the "illegal" outposts in the West Bank that Israel had undertaken to dismantle in compliance with President Bush's road map. The conduit used by the ministries, according to Ha'Aretz, was the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) or the World Zionist Organization (WZO). Both of these organizations, though Jerusalem-based, are largely funded by American Jewish tax-exempt contributions. WZO is the body established by Theodor Herzl at the First Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897, and the Jewish Agency had its origin in the League of Nations Mandate over Palestine in 1922.

While reserving judgment on the accuracy of the Ha'Aretz story, senior American Jewish leaders strongly criticized the action of the Israeli government if the allegations were true. It is interesting to note, however, that what was criticized was not the funding of colonization across the Green Line per se, but only the funding of "illegal" outposts not "authorized" by the Israeli government. (The issue can here be raised as to whether there can be any settlements which are not, in the last analysis, authorized by the Israeli government.) To put the "legality" issue in some perspective, it should be recalled that until the Clinton administration, all U.S. administrations except Reagan's had been consistent in considering the colonization of the occupied territories to be in violation of the Geneva Convention and therefore of international law—which continues to be

the international consensus. This item additionally introduces the reader into the fascinating universe of the interlocking Jewish/Zionist Diaspora institutions involved in the funding of Israel with all the points of American domestic and international law that it poses and that still await serious scholarly investigation. The reader may want to refer to JPS 125 for the resolutions on settlement (resolutions 18–22 under the section "Settlement and Zionist Fulfillment") in the 34th Zionist Congress, held in Jerusalem 17–21 June 2002.

American Jewish communal leaders are calling for an investigation into the activities of the World Zionist Organization [WZO], a Jerusalem-based confederation of Diaspora Zionist groups, following an Israeli news report alleging that the body was funneling money to illegal settlement outposts.

The Israeli daily *Ha'Aretz* reported on 26 December that Israeli government ministries were using the WZO as a conduit for government funds used to pay for trailers and permanent structures built on hilltops in the West Bank without government authorization. WZO officials denied the *Ha'Aretz* report, saying that the body's settlement division, which they say is fully funded by the Israeli government, only supports activities beyond the Green Line that are legal.

According to the *Ha'Aretz* report, government funding of illegal outposts was acknowledged last week by Israel's deputy defense minister, Ze'ev Boim, in testimony to the Knesset's state control committee. "What was not publicized from that meeting," wrote veteran *Ha'Aretz* political reporter Hannah Kim, was the itemization of the funding, including "the financing of the cost of caravans and even the erection of permanent structures by the Housing Ministry and the Jewish Agency."

The reference to the Jewish Agency was corrected to read "World Zionist Organization" in the paper's English version. Conflating the two institutions is commonplace in Israeli conversation and reportage.

"If it's true, I think it's horrendous," said Seymour Reich, a former president of the American Zionist Movement, the WZO's main American affiliate.

"It sounds like the Iran-Contra situation," said Reich, who is also a former chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. "It's harmful to the image of the WZO, and particularly to American Zionists who are part of the WZO. It gives an image of an improper use

of money and putting a roadblock in the road map.”

Other critics included Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the newly renamed Union for Reform Judaism, whose Arza/World Union offshoot is a member of the WZO; two top leaders of United Jewish Communities, Marvin Lender and Richard Wexler, and the head of another WZO affiliate, Charney Bromberg of Meretz USA. All of them noted that they did not know if the allegations are true.

The WZO, founded by Theodor Herzl in 1897 as a vehicle for creating a Jewish state, is a confederation of Zionist organizations around the world that support Israel financially and politically. Its offshoot, the Jewish Agency for Israel, with which it shares offices and executive officers, is a social-service agency largely funded with charitable dollars from American Jewish philanthropic federations, channeled through United Jewish Communities.

The WZO and the Jewish Agency operated as a single institution governed by the Zionist organizations until 1971, when they were separated in a complex agreement that created a separate Jewish Agency board dominated by philanthropy leaders. Under the agreement the agency's land-settlement department was divided in two, with the Jewish Agency retaining control of rural development inside Israel proper and the WZO taking charge of settlement in the territories.

Ha'Aretz's Kim quoted the head of the WZO settlement division, Avraham Duvdevani, telling the Knesset panel that his “division transfers funds both for the development of the Negev and the development of the settlements,” referring to the territories.

However, Kim reported, the combined budget of the two settlement departments for 2003 was reported in the Knesset hearing to be about \$30 million, of which only about \$2.3 million went to rural development in the Negev. There was no indication of how much of the rest was believed to have reached illegal outposts.

Critics said the alleged illegal activity—by an organization theoretically controlled by American and other Diaspora Jews—is particularly egregious at a time when Israel has promised its closest ally, the United States, that it will comply with the urgent request to dismantle unauthorized outposts. News of the WZO's alleged involvement in funding the outposts shocked and angered members of the world Zionist movement,

who said it could create the appearance that American Zionists stand in opposition with their own government.

“I believe it's an abuse of the Zionist ideals to be doing this,” said Yoffie, a onetime director of the Reform Zionist movement. “All Zionist organization parties that participate in the WZO are in some sense implicated. It discredits the WZO.”

Several executives of the Jewish federated system, which donates roughly \$200 million yearly to the Jewish Agency, endeavored to distance North American federations from the WZO. They said that federation funds forwarded to Israel by the United Jewish Communities [UJC] do not finance WZO activities and that the Jewish Agency has significantly reduced its own allocations to the WZO.

“There's been a real separation,” said Peter Friedman, budget and planning director of the Jewish Federation/Jewish United Fund of Metropolitan Chicago. “I get the Jewish Agency budget and not the WZO budget.”

Wexler, UJC's financial relations chairman, told the *Forward* that the relationship between the WZO and Jewish Agency should undergo “careful evaluation [and] examination.” Wexler, who also serves as chairman of the North American Council of the Jewish Agency, said the WZO's ties to Israeli politics have complicated Jewish Agency appeals to American donors. Issues surrounding “political activities of the WZO get in the way of a rational discussion of the unmet needs,” he said.

About the *Ha'Aretz* report, Wexler said, “If true, it would be a terrible thing.”

Lender, a longtime federation leader and former chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, said that the alleged illegal activity of the WZO could be harmful to the federation system because the boundaries between the two bodies “are anything but clear. . . . That's enough reason for the WZO to stay away from this. They shouldn't be raising any questions or doubts about where UJC money is going.”

Lender said American charitable dollars do reach the WZO, mainly to fund some educational programs.

“We have to respect the policy of our government here,” said Lender, who also chairs the executive committee of the Israel Policy Forum, a pro-peace group.

Bromberg, executive director of Meretz USA, lambasted the WZO and called its alleged illegal activity one example of “a general corruption of principle and oversight

that exists throughout the Israeli body politic.”

Bromberg called for the immediate cessation of WZO funding to all settlements. He said the world Jewish community is in disagreement over the construction of settlements, and therefore activity beyond the Green Line prevents people who would otherwise support the WZO.

Although the UJC does not have any structural ties to the WZO, such ties are maintained by Keren Hayesod–United Israel Appeal, a similar Jewish fundraising body that operates in countries outside the United States. Funds allocated by the Jewish Agency for WZO programs are required to come from monies collected by Keren Hayesod outside the United States because of complications in American tax law and tacit agreements between federation leaders and the Internal Revenue Service.

Keren Hayesod’s world chairman, Harvey Wolfe, declined to comment. Shoel Silver, president of UIA–Federation of Canada, a Keren Hayesod constituent, distanced his organization from the WZO. “The UIA as a practice does not fund settlements directly, and it doesn’t fund the WZO,” he said.

The spokesman for the Jewish Agency and the WZO, Yarden Vatikay, dismissed the *Ha’Aretz* report as a political maneuver by Israel’s left wing. He said that the WZO settlement division is not funded with Diaspora dollars but solely by Israel’s government ministries. “This department is not like the other [WZO] departments,” he said. “It’s a governmental body put under the umbrella of the WZO 37 years ago.”

SHORT TAKES

From Settlement Report, January–February 2004.

Israel’s settlers are devising a political alternative to government and opposition ideas that rests upon the following geostrategic principles: no Palestinian state west of the Jordan River, no division of sovereignty in Jerusalem, no Palestinian return to Israel.

One YESHA proposal for the occupied territories rejects concessions on “any part of land, settlement, or outpost.” Palestinians will remain under Israel’s complete security control, but Israel will not be responsible for their civic affairs. In place of a Palestinian state, which the settlers oppose, a plan promoted by former MK Hanan Porat proposes an internationally supported campaign of emigration. Those

choosing to remain will be classified as “residents” with either Jordanian or Egyptian citizenship.

Veteran settler leader Israel Harel proposes ensuring Israel’s Jewish political majority by withdrawing Israeli citizenship from the state’s Palestinian citizens. “We should take the Arabs on both sides of the Green Line as one body and the Jews on both sides as one body, and give the Arabs Jordanian citizenship and the Jews Israeli citizenship.”

Another version of the Porat plan proposes the division of Israel and the occupied territories into ten cantons, two of which—Gaza and the West Bank—will be Palestinian. Palestinian representatives to the Knesset will be limited to assure a Jewish political majority in the parliament.

—Yedi’ot Aharonot, *25 November 2003*;
Jerusalem Report, *15 December 2003*;
Ma’ariv, *25 November 2003*

An increase in the settler population of 17,000 in the Golan Heights will be fueled by 1,500 approved units, half of which are already completed.

Construction is under way in 17 of 32 settlements. In Merom Golan, 115 units are under construction. In Matzok Oravim, a new settlement, 360 units; in Ani’am, 115; Qidmat Tzvi, 24; Yonatan, 60; Kefar Haruv, 115; Kibbutz Geshur, 115.

The largest Golan settlement, Qatzrin, with a population of 7,000, is currently planning an expansion to 20,000, including an initial 430 units in the “build your own house” scheme. The main industries in the kibbutz are agriculture and industry, including deciduous groves and flowers for export on an area of 150 dunams, a 1,000 head herd of cattle, and two factories.

—Yedi’ot Aharonot, *3 September 2003*

“I must be frank. The demographic picture is very stark. Within the next decade or so, Jews will be a minority in the area of Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip. As Israeli settlements expand and the population increases, it becomes ever more difficult to see how two people can be separated to two states. . . . The fact is, the settlements continue to grow today, encouraged by specific ongoing government policy.”

—Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs David Satterfield, at the State Department conference “The United States, the Middle East, and the 1967 Arab-Israeli War,” *12–13 January 2004*, as reported by Ha’Aretz, *12 January 2004*