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From "One Dunam and Then One More" to "Territory for Peace"

Arnon Soffer

FROM "ONE DUNAM AND THEN ONE MORE" TO "TERRITORY FOR PEACE"

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It is not clear if the Zionist experiment has succeeded! Only time will tell! Fifty thousand Zionists tried to change the Jewish people. Could it be done? Has it worked?

Yigal Allon, 1978 (to the present author)

Fifty thousand Jews, headed by the leaders of Zionism and later by the leaders of Israel, by intuition, or out of bitter personal experience in the Diaspora, understood that the Jewish people needed an area of land of their own. Among nations attached to their terrain for hundreds and thousands of years, the Jewish people stood out as an exception, cut off from their land. Did this fact injure the "genetic" quality that ties a nation to the land? Has the end come to this short period in which a minority group imbued with the ideology of reconstituting its connection with the land (the wish to be "like all nations") and the people have reverted to "type"? Is Priester Wright correct in stating that "the Diaspora is stamped into this people through and through: the Jews did not want sovereignty, the idea of the state was remote from them, and they did their best to get rid of it"?¹

The purpose of this article is to illumine the attitude of the Jew of Eretz Israel towards land and territory in two time periods:

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- The first period, from the onset of modern Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel to approximately 1975-1982, was characterized by great efforts to create a territory for the Jewish people, to expand it, and even to establish a firm settlement base; this was the period of "one dunam and then one more."
- The second period, from approximately 1975-1982 until the present, is the period of "territory for peace," territory for votes at the polling booth, over-generous giving away of national resources, and increasing disdain for the connection between territory and the past: a period of "one dunam and then one less."

The article examines the attitude to territory on the regional level, particularly in the strategy of the peace talks. On the internal level, the attitude of the Arab sector to land, the policy of population dispersal, party activity, the attitude to agricultural land, and the position of the academic community on the question of land are explored.

Theoretical background: The human being as a territorial animal

A wide array of literature deals with the subject of territory as one of the basic needs

for human existence. Ardrey states at the opening of his book:²

The human is a territorial animal, just like every mockingbird that sings in the night... We act as we do for reasons linked with our evolutionary past, and not necessarily with our civilized present...

Mellor³ claims that this need developed in humans when they passed from nomadic life to agriculture. Many researchers pursued the attempt to explain the close and incontrovertible link between national sovereignty and territory. Gottman devoted an entire book to the subject⁴ in which he states that the chief purpose of history is to define and delimit a piece of terrain for those who dwell in it and wish to gain absolute security, to fulfill their desires and better their lives. To reach this goal and to prevent others from invading this piece of terrain, political instruments have to be made that will facilitate its defense. Hence, territory, those who live on it, and political organization are one. Moreover, the need to demarcate territory necessitates security and an army, and also dialogue with neighbors, which in turn led to the development of international law and diplomacy.

Knight holds that territory in itself is passive, and its importance and significance are acquired by virtue of the deeds of people and the importance they ascribe to it. Regarding those who see the terrain and its landscapes as a living entity in itself, possessing its own influences, he argues that their approach, too, originates in a psycho-cultural concept set in their minds.⁵ Anderson, speaking of nationalism arising from territorial ideology, highlights several points of importance for the Israeli context. In his view, territory has a firm connection with the past in that it conveys the past to the present and helps it in defining its loci. He states that nationalism and territory go hand in hand, and both have a time dimension. The fascinations of the past help nationalism to retain its attractiveness in the present.⁶

Other scholars have added identification with a certain place as an important value in human society, claiming that reciprocal relations exist

between people and their territory: on the one hand, people are shaped by their history, and on the other, people's art and concepts shape the territory.⁷

People are linked to their land and feel fierce emotions about it to the point of readiness to sacrifice themselves in its defense.⁸ We may summarize with the words of Vasquez, who states that whether or not we accept the view that the human being is a territorial creature, and that the human's tendency to fight for territory is an inherited trait, it is a fact that 70-90 percent of all wars in the world have to do with territory! He contends, therefore, that geographical factors play a central part in the behavior of nations.⁹ Vasquez in fact adopts a position in support of Ardrey's statements regarding our territorial imperative as humans.

Gottman emphasizes the process of decline of full sovereignty that a state has over its territory owing to new developments, technological and other, such as the aircraft, missiles, the nuclear threat, communications, the mail, tourism, freedom of shipping in rivers, and air pollution. These attenuate the importance of the border and weaken sovereignty.¹⁰

Duchahek¹¹ continues Gottman's line of thought regarding the weakening of sovereignty in the modern era, and presents examples of additional causes for it: international trade, international investments, transfer of energy, water and technologies from one territory to another, migration of workers, drug smuggling, a common solution to health problems, and air and water pollution. He too is uncertain about whether sovereignty will endure in face of the cracks that have appeared in it. Gottman sums up the issue and states that in spite of the inroads into sovereignty, the primal psychological-emotional tie of people to their territory will continue to exist in the future too, and the human will be willing to sacrifice everything "to defend his sacred earth that he inherited from his forefathers"¹² In fact, Gottman too adopts the conclusions of Ardrey, who states that for all the modernity and the rationality, there is a moment in the life of every nation when it will behave according to universal laws of the territorial principle.¹³

Territory: Autonomy, Irredentism, and Independence for Minorities

Different nations, tribes and minorities all over the world demand self-expression and self-determination, or social, cultural and territorial autonomy, and even secession into an independent state. These demands are reflected in violent disputes in the cases of Kurdistan, south Sudan, Biafra (in the recent past), Northern Ireland, Chechnya, Nagorno-Karabakh, Tibet and Timor, and in demands for autonomy in Quebec, Corsica, Scotland, Belgium and elsewhere. In recent times, minorities have been successful in Eritrea, in Slovakia, in states around Russia, and in the former Yugoslavia.¹⁴

The leading factors in the move to secession, usually with concomitant violence, are generally connected with the presence of a minority living on its own territory (commonly on the fringes of the state). To take the step towards secession also requires a critical demographic mass, a leadership establishment to direct the move, and succor by external elements in financing and international support. A sound economic foundation will undoubtedly be an additional catalyst in the process. Other factors, no less important in their contribution to such a move, are a feeling of repression and deprivation, together with harsh memories of the past - although sometimes it may actually be the opposite: enrichment of the minority by the discovery of oil in its terrain, for example, can motivate a call for secession, which will prevent sharing the profits with others (as in Scotland, south Sudan, and Biafra). Any weakening of the central forces also promotes the move to secession. For example, the fall of the Soviet Union brought an end to the empire and the creation of independent states around the periphery, such as Turkmenistan, Armenia, and so on. The weakening of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad led to renewed insurgency by the Kurds in the north and a Shi'i rebellion in the south; another instance is the dissolution of Yugoslavia in consequence of the weakening of the rule in Belgrade.

Various historical examples may be found of secession by a minority in which this or that factor played a part, but in all cases territory has the star role, and there is no case of secession in which the territorial foundation is absent: the

voluntary passage of a group of people from one territory to another in a neighboring state.

"One Dunam and then One More": From 1882 to Approximately 1975-1982

For over a century, Zionist leaders (of all political shades) took all possible measures to obtain a national home, and to establish territorial domain. The term "one dunam and then one more" substantiates more than anything the fundamental concept of acquisition of a national treasury of land. Expansion of the territorial area and pioneering settlement around its boundary provided the ideological content of this concept.¹⁵

The Zionist leadership declared war on the 1936 White Paper as an obstacle to territorial expansion and to filling this territory with Jews, namely *aliya* (Hebrew for immigration, literally "going up" to the Holy Land). For the same reason, the leadership made great efforts, right up to the eve of Israeli statehood, to improve the Partition proposals, and to back up its efforts with suitable settlement. In the course of the 1948 War of Independence, this tendency continued by means of defense, improvement of the battle lines, and also the capture of terrain across wide areas of the country - in the Galilee, the Negev, and from the lower slopes of Mount Hebron in the east to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

The history of Eretz Israel up to the establishment of the State of Israel is a long series of acts to consolidate the connection of the Jewish people to their soil in the land, from the founding of Rishon LeZion and the other early *moshavot* by the *Biluim* until the conclusion of the War of Independence.¹⁶

With the establishment of the state, this strategy continued in full force on two fronts: on the external front, a struggle was waged against the neighboring Arab countries, who refused to countenance the Jewish existence in their midst, to defend existing territory and even to improve positions in it (for example, in the demilitarized zones of Nitzana, Tel Katzir-Gadot, and others), and there was even a readiness to go to war in order to fully secure the water potential of the state (in the Jordan river and Lake Kinneret), water also being an integral part of

territory, coupled with the need to defend it. On the internal front, legal measures were enacted such as the Property of Absentees Law (1950) (which determined that Arab property would become state domain if its owner was not resident in his abode on the appointed day) and other land laws (such as the Fallow Lands Law and the Land Acquisition Law: Ratification of Actions and Compensation 1953), intended to legally settle the addition of millions of dunams to the national treasury in consequence of the War of Independence.¹⁷

Actions of Jewish settlement that were carried out were meant to validate the occupation of land in problematic areas - such as abandoned or vacant regions (in the northern Negev, the Jerusalem Corridor, and facing Judea and Samaria (the West Bank)), or those where the Jewish presence was very sparse (Galilee). To this end, the governments of Israel did not refrain even from such measures as land appropriation, having in view the supreme goal of realizing the national vision and strengthening the connection of the people to the land.

At the end of the Six Day War the Israeli leaders, and their younger successors, pursued the same strategy of enlarging and settling Jewish terrain: in the Jordan Valley (the Allon Plan), on the Golan Heights, in Judea and Samaria, in the Gaza Strip and in the Sinai Peninsula. Settlement began with simultaneous bottom-up and top-down initiatives (the latter by all Israeli governments). The Likud government, which took power in 1977, adhered to the same perception, and encouraged massive settlement in Judea and Samaria, in the Golan and in the Gaza Strip. During the tenure of this government the "outposts" (*mitzrim*) project in the Galilee was implemented (at the initiative of leaders of the Labor party, with the hearty participation of the Likud government).¹⁸ But in this period, a shift began in the attitude to values of land and resources. This process gained increasing impetus in the 1980s, and it reached its peak in the 1990s.

"One Dunam and then One Less": From Approximately 1975 to the Present

A series of global political events and processes, together with local geographical, security, economic and social changes, caused a

modification in the attitude of the Jews of Eretz Israel to land and to national resources (such as water).

A. On the External Front: Trade in Territory and Resources

The 1973 Yom Kippur War set off an earthquake in the territorial concept of Israel. Following that conflagration, Israel, under the exigencies of war, conceded (minuscule) areas on the Golan Heights, and in the first stages of the disengagement agreements in Sinai began, an ongoing process of withdrawal from Sinai, thereby setting a precedent for the future.

In the unending war against terror (hijacking of aircraft, murder abroad, infiltrations over the border) it became increasingly clear that there was a heavy price to pay for victory in the Six Day War, and readiness steadily grew to concede territories in return for peace with the enemy. The slogans "Peace Now" and "Areas for Peace," which floated in the air, were, like all slogans, vague in meaning: "areas" - which? Those occupied in 1967? All the territories taken in that war? "Peace" - what sort? Warm? Cold? Full? An armistice? "Now" - Abandonment of land immediately? After negotiations? In stages, over a generation or two? Yet not the precise and defined significance of the slogans is important but the political perception that crystallized among the Israeli leftist groups which they expressed: essentially, the willingness to concede land.

In the Lebanon War that began in mid-1982 a rift opened in the nation. True, the bitter recriminations that were voiced focused primarily on the war, but the fierce public debate that erupted centered on the necessity of territory in general.¹⁹ The Gulf War, about ten years later, deepened the polemic in the Israeli public, tipping the scales in favor of the view that in the missile age there was no longer any importance to territory and boundaries. A foremost proponent of this view was Shimon Peres, who published a book in this spirit. In it he argues:

The relations of nations in the past derived from the quantitative dimensions of the world: size of territory, amount of

wealth in natural resources..., geographical location. Competition for acquisition of these dimensions gave rise to conflicts... At the end of the twentieth century, relations of nations stem from the qualitative dimensions of life...²⁰

Peres no doubt did not intend to give up territories within Israel, but his message to millions of his followers was crystal clear: in our times, territory is losing its importance. This approach runs diametrically counter to the way in which the international community behaves. Vast Russia, for example, refuses point blank to relinquish a few square kilometers in Chechnya; France will not give up Corsica; China will not yield Tibet; Indonesia tightens its grip on the island of Timor; such is the case in dozens more of places.

The fall of the Soviet empire, the rising power of Iran, the strengthening of Islam generally and of extremist Islam specifically, all these imparted additional force to the ideology of decline of importance of land in the modern era. These international upheavals generated pressures to end the Arab-Israel conflict. In 1992-1996, under American insistence, the slogan "peace in return for territories" became a formal Israeli and international position.²¹ The Madrid Conference, the Oslo accords and the peace agreement with Jordan all bewitched large segments of the Israeli public too into believing that there was in fact truth in the slogan "the end of territorialism" (on the pattern of "the end of history").

The danger of such an approach is that it signals to the other side that even before the negotiations are concluded a large part of the Jewish people are willing to concede territories. There is room in the course of negotiations to give up terrain in return for other gains, such as strategic improvement, give-and-take deals of various kinds, money, even assurances of peace vouchsafed by suitable arrangements. All is legitimate within the conference hall. But territorial concession may not be turned into a national ideology, especially prior to negotiations. The causes of such behavior are to be sought in the "hereditary flaw" of the Jewish people. Bereft of territory for two millennia, the members of this nation exemplify the world over,

today as in the past, cosmopolitanism and detachment from the land.

It cannot, of course, be ignored that control of millions of Arabs (2.5 million people in 1997) in the Gaza Strip and Judea and Samaria has become increasingly difficult, to the point of impossibility, witness the Intifada (1988-1993). Still, there is a great distance between withdrawal from the major population concentrations in these areas, when it is a matter of a strategic move for security purposes, and absolute withdrawal from the entire terrain of Judea and Samaria!²²

The areas of the Judean Desert, the Jordan Valley, the southern slopes of Hebron, the narrow waist of Israel alongside Qalqilya and TulKarem and the terrain encompassing Jerusalem - these parts cannot be treated lightly because their importance in security and ecological terms is decisive. Some possess social and religious significance that cannot be disregarded. For geographical reasons it is unthinkable to consider a return to the situation in which the densest urban conglomeration of the State of Israel is concentrated in the narrow waist between the "Green Line" at Qalqilya and the Mediterranean, with no "green" space to serve as a reserve for any future addition of a highway, a power line, a water or oil pipeline, or future systems that cannot be envisaged at present.²³

All the aforesaid is in no way meant to recommend the sealing of this or that frontier, but to indicate a blemish in the territorial perception of many in the Israeli public who are willing to trade in territory as a negotiable commodity.

Simultaneously, the age of "one dunam and then one less" has generated another process: at its first stage, many Israelis began to evince understanding for the other side; at its second stage, they identified with their cause; and at the next stage, they joined them, shoulder to shoulder, in the war against "the settler Jew" - and all this still before the peace agreements had been signed, before the main obstacles had been removed. This drift has direct and indirect implications for the connection to territory and land, and for the readiness to stand firm regarding parts of the land that are vital for the security of Israel.

The Oslo accords likewise produced a new process: a group of economists, backed by water experts, lecture us both in writing and verbally that it is not worth being obstinate about the water of the highland aquifer in Judea and Samaria, that the importance of this water in the Israeli economy in the near future will be negligible, and that there is a substitute for it.²⁴ This approach is also reflected in the agreement with the Jordanian kingdom on the Kinneret and Jordan river water. For the first time in the history of Israel, its government agreed to share the rights to Kinneret water with a neighboring state.²⁵ In 1916-1923 the British conducted tough negotiations with the French to obtain full rights to the Jordan and Kinneret water for Palestine. In the 1950s the government of Israel engaged in a political struggle with the United States over Eric Johnstone's peace plan for the distribution of the Jordan water, and in 1964 Israel fought over the same issue against Syria. In all these instances the goal was to ensure exclusive control of Jordan and Kinneret water.²⁶ In 1994 representatives of Israel signed an agreement making a neighboring Arab state its partner to this water.

One may be generous on the question of water; water may be desalinated, and it may also be imported. It is even possible that some day desalinated water will be cheaper than water drawn from a well near Qalqilya. But whoever waives the principle on this matter knows where his concessions begin and does not know where they will end. Perhaps Syria will once again squat just ten meters away from the Kinneret waterline. Can anyone believe that it will agree to less than what has been agreed with Jordan? And the Palestinians - will they agree not to regard the treaty with Jordan as a precedent that covers them too?²⁷ The government of the United States, rich in water, and mighty in economic and military power, was ready to desalinate water for Mexico as a substitute, but did not give away a single drop of water from the Colorado river and the Rio Grande.²⁸

On the Internal Front: Material Fatigue

In Israel of the 1980s and 1990s, especially in the secular community, there are signs of great weariness with the struggle that has been ongoing now for about a century.²⁹

Many are unwilling to sacrifice their lives or their children's lives for holy graves, sacred stones or "lands that are not ours" (Joseph's Tomb, the Cave of Machpelah, the Western Wall and... southern Lebanon or the south of the Gaza Strip). Among secular people, many lack the understanding shown by Anderson regarding the great importance of the past and its symbols for the significance of territory in the present.³⁰

Population Dispersal

All Israeli governments undertook to act for population dispersal. In the days of the "state in the making" the reasons given for this were ecological, social and economic, but it was always as clear as day that this policy was no other than the natural continuation of the strategy of realizing the right to *Eretz Israel* through settlement.³¹ What academic research presents methodically was felt by every leader intuitively. It was clear that if the Galilee was not settled by Jews it would not be Jewish. For this reason too the Arab population after 1948 was evacuated from the border zone with Lebanon and Syria, and a major effort was invested in Jewish settlement in the Galilee.

The struggle for Judaization of these regions was, in fact, an evident struggle over land.

Certainly, population dispersal is an extremely difficult task, especially in the age of a democratic society with notable advantages for the great central metropolis (the core areas) at the expense of the periphery. The models that guide the planners in Israel at present are taken from Holland, France, Japan and Britain, and those in charge of planning forget time and again that Israel is not Europe, nor is it Canada. If there are no Jews in Lower Galilee, the Iron Valley, the Taibe area and the northern Negev, others will fill the void that is left.³²

By 1995 the situation had arisen in which 75 percent of Lower Galilee residents were not Jews. A still more extreme case prevails in the northern Negev, a region of Beduin distribution, and in the Iron Valley. With data like these it cannot be said that the work of Jewish settlement is complete.

In What Does the Danger Lie?

Human history is replete with examples of irredentist or autonomy-seeking processes and of a loosening of central sovereignty over a minority in marginal regions, particularly in areas where the minority constitutes a majority.³³

In recent years there has been a deceleration in the realization of population dispersal policy, as expressed in National Masterplan 31, and in messages conveyed to the Planning Authority and to the government of Israel. Above we noted several of the factors causing this. The assumption is that the Arabs of Israel are at last integrating into Israeli society, that they no longer constitute an irredentist and/or autonomy-seeking threat, and that what has been invested so far by Jewish Settlement in the Arab territories inside Israel is enough to prevent undesirable processes in the future.³⁴ There is also a feeling among security elements that Israel has sufficient capability to stop any violent move that threatens its existence or that presents a danger from within through an internal *Intifada*. Evaluations along these lines were also voiced by security elements just before the 1973 war, just before the outbreak of the *Intifada*, and also, regarding the dependability of the Palestinian police, just before the disturbances of September 1996. Such evaluations, therefore, should be treated with some measure of caution, and trust should be placed in "the territorial instinct," if this is not flawed.

For the fifty years of Israel's existence, the Arabs of Israel have displayed loyalty to the state, and perhaps they are indeed exceptional among all other minorities in the world. But only perhaps. On the other hand, developments may lead to what happened in Bosnia, Cyprus, Corsica, Northern Ireland or many other places where minorities live. In all these places, proper relations prevailed between the majority groups and the minorities, until a certain moment when they changed - usually with startling rapidity.³⁵

National Masterplan 31, a plan for absorbing a million immigrants from Russia, utterly ignored such a possibility, and directed the newcomers primarily to the Greater Tel Aviv area.³⁶ Only after the Dan region was full to overflowing was it decided to establish the town of Modi'in, which

was supposed to absorb about another quarter of a million people, despite the fact that the highways of the center were already choking with the traffic. The slogan of the planners, the builders of the Tel Aviv metropolis (which includes the entire center of the country), is: "What is good for Tel Aviv is good for Israel!"³⁷ A. Gonen and R. Hamaysi went to extremes, proposing that instead of dispersing the population, it was worth transferring groups of Israeli Arabs to the coastal plain, and turning Arab settlements such as Kafr Qasem, Taibe, Baqa al-Gharbiya and Tamra into large Jewish towns.³⁸

My position is that the Jewish-Arab struggle has not ended yet, and that it will continue in various ways for a long time to come. In such a reality, a thickening of the Arab sector in Israel's "narrow waist" (between Rosh Ha'ayin and Barqa'i junction) may bode catastrophe, because the Jewish north-south continuum in these sections may be reduced even more — between Qalansuwa and Tira or between Kafr Qasem and the sea to less than 10-12 kilometers. The Arab continuum in this sector begins at Amman, crosses Judea and Samaria as far as Taibe-Qalansuwa, and reaches up to Kfar Yona. Every kilometer at the interface of these two continua, either way, is critical and should not be treated lightly. Professor Gonen has an explanation for this revolutionary approach, namely that we live in a democratic egalitarian state in an age of peace...³⁹ Not only misplaced prophesying is evident here, but also the absence of a feel for the territorial component in the life of the nation.

Territory and Internal Politics

Since the establishment of the state the party in power (then Mapai) has learned how to bring the vote of the Arab sector to its side. For this purpose it patronized its "own" Arab parties, and also enlisted the support of the various security mechanisms, the labor exchanges, and the entire ruling establishment.

In the 1960s the Arab sector began to "mature," and today it is less subject to manipulation than in the past. On the other hand, the parties have perfected their persuasive methods in the Arab sector. In the 1960s and 1970s, for example, the Arab sector gave many votes to the National Religious Party, a circum-

stance that may raise eyebrows: whatever could the Arabs want with a Jewish nationalist religious party (the NRP)? How could it happen that when a new Interior Minister was appointed from a party such as Shas (mainly representing orthodox Jews of Moroccan origin), this party became the darling of the Arab sector? And so on.⁴⁰

Is there any connection between the votes won by these and other parties and the illegal building in the Arab sector? In the mid-1980s about 6000 illegally-built houses accumulated in the Arab sector! This figure is a great national stain, and it has obvious territorial significance. At a certain stage these houses acquire legitimacy. What is the national price that Israel pays for this? Why is authorization granted again and again for expansion of the limits of Arab settlements, while inside the settlements many vacant areas are to be found, on which high-rise building could be carried out? Why have a few dozen Bedouins obtained hundreds of thousands of dunams, some of them national land, at Zarzir, at Tzalmon, at Ka'abiye, and in dozens more places?⁴¹

The answer is obvious. The political parties in Israel, through their representatives in the government, have played and continue to play games with the lands of Israel. As the Arab sector grows, its electoral power gains strength, and its demands mount. This, in turn, enhances willingness to pay the price. We may drive this point home with several examples of demands concerning land presented by the Arab parties to the Labor government in a document they delivered to it after the 1992 elections. Some of the sections are in the process of implementation, others have been shelved for various reasons.⁴² The document includes many sections, but we shall focus on those whose concern is territorial, and whose fulfillment will be a major step on the road to secession of lands of the Arab sector from the State of Israel:

Section 8 of part 1 of the document (sections accepted by the Labor party): "The Ministry of Education will study the establishment of a higher educational institute whose language of instruction will be Arabic." The meaning of this demand is the creation of an Arab university in Israel. At first glance we may envisage hundreds and thousands of Arab students clustered

together and quenching their thirst for knowledge. In the reality of Israel and of the Middle East we are entitled to expect that they would devote a considerable part of their time to demonstrations, strikes, and protests against what is taking place in Judea and Samaria, Gaza and Algeria, against deprivation, and for the right of return (of Arab refugees), against Israeli army actions in Lebanon or in Syria and the non-appointment of an Arab Chief-of-Staff, and for a change in the national anthem and the national flag, and so on and so forth - hundreds of causes, all justified from the viewpoint of the Arab sector. Such a university, being a place of concentration of Arab students, would sooner or later become a catalyst for non-academic activity, and liable to turn into a hotbed of agitation in various directions.

Section 19: "The Committee will re-examine the problem of houses built without a license." In the past, several committees were set up to discuss the subject. How many more committees must yet arise for the subject to be learned? How much more time is needed to bring this affair to a close, as already agreed? By the time this committee too sums up its findings, more years will pass, and in that time the number of illegally built houses will swell from thousands, as it stood at the time of the second Markovich Committee, to tens of thousands.⁴³

Section 24: "The Committee will deal with the status of Arab population concentrations and structures that are not recognized and are not known, called the 40 villages." The reference is to the dozens of illegal Bedouin groupings, for the solution to whose problems a consolidated plan already exists; all our comments regarding Section 19 apply here too.⁴⁴

All the above sections, adopted, as noted above by the Labor party, are dwarfed by the second part of the document, containing the principles that the Labor party refused to accept.⁴⁵

Section 7: "Annulment of the Seven Stars project in Wadi Ara, intended for the establishment of Jewish settlements." This is a public demand for a halt to populating with Jews an area in Israel proper (within the Green Line; there is no parallel demand that Arabs will not settle in purely Jewish concentrations). Since the forma-

tion of the Labor government in 1992 and until 1996 the settlement at Tal-Iron in Wadi Ara has been frozen, and the idea of establishing the town of Iron in the region has been struck from the agenda.

Section 9 is one of the most interesting of the document: "To carry out a survey of Islamic holy places in Israel." On the face of it, this is an attempt to survey all the abandoned Arab villages that were destroyed during the War of Independence. It involves hundreds of settlements, most of which were razed entirely, and in many of which now exist hundreds of Jewish settlements, such as Tzipori, Kfar Shamai, Sasa, Baram, Yir'on, and more. What purpose will such a survey serve, if not to locate the mosques, and then demand that they be restored "for religious purposes only," with the assistance of Saudi and other funds? Examples of such mosques are Sidna Ali in Herzliya and Hasan Bek in south Tel Aviv. In 1996 a demand was presented to restore the mosque in ancient Caesarea, and a cat-and-mouse game has been going on between Arabs and the police at Kfar Hittin, where unflagging efforts are being made to re-establish the mosque, by virtue of the fact that this place has great Islamic significance as it was here that the Arabs overthrew the Crusader kingdom. It is reasonable to suppose that after the restoration of the mosques their immediate surroundings will likewise be refurbished, and then the place will be populated by refugees who will stream back under the "law of return" or in the framework of "present absentees" (refugees of 1948 who remained in Israel, and account for 20-25 percent of the total Arab population in Israel).⁴⁶

Section 4 speaks of the establishment of an Arab division in the Ministry of Education, and section 2 discusses recognition of the Islamic college at Um al-Fahm. The former will propel us towards separation of the Arabs of Israel from the state in the sphere of education and the latter will bring about the creation not simply of an Arab university but of an Israeli *al-Azhar*.

In sum, Arab electoral power, translated into practical terms, points to what the Arab leadership in the State of Israel, in its various branches, is striving for, and it leaves nothing to the imagination. The demands inherent within these sections attest more than any other evidence to

where the wind is blowing among the leaders of the Arab sector, and that everything stated about its full integration into Israeli society is nothing but fond hopes.

The Crisis of Agriculture and Open Space

The crisis in agriculture experienced in Israel in recent years is not unique to that country. The western European countries have been suffering a similar crisis for decades, but there the governments decided to protect farmers by grants of subsidies which at times amounted to 70 percent of their income, the aim being to keep the lands of their country (Bavaria in Germany, for example, or Normandy in France) as green, as beautiful and as well tended as they had been since time immemorial. Hundreds and thousands of farmers who live there, and constitute the fundamental assets of the society of those countries, dwell in their villages and preserve their social, cultural, and historical color. It has been agreed in the European Union that towards 2000 these subsidies will come to an end, and it is clear to all that millions of acres of terrain that were agricultural will cease to fulfill this purpose. The intention exists to turn these lands into open and variegated terrains. The government of Israel at its various planning levels - the Agriculture, Environment, and Interior ministries - also leans towards this strategy, with the aim of preserving this land as a national treasure, which will also ensure a high quality of life and green rings around the great metropolises of Israel.⁴⁷ But here it must be asked if the European and American model can be applied in Israel: the answer is that it cannot!

As long as two societies live in Israel, so different in their economic, cultural and national outlook, there are things that cannot be adopted from the west. Law enforcement in Israel is different, so it is hard to foresee that the law will be applied against hundreds of penetrations of Arabs into open spaces throughout the state, especially around its fringes, and particularly prior to elections, a time when "there is no law and there is no judge." And whoever stays for a year or two on an open space will stay there forever.

All the calculations of the Ministry of Agriculture about profitability of production refer to western society with western models. It has been proven repeatedly all over Israel (and the Middle East) that what is good in the west is not necessarily good in the east. The Arab *fallah* with all his family or his village play by market rules and profit-making rules that are different from those common in the west. For him it is certainly worthwhile working an open piece of land (with or without permission). For this reason the *daman* system is prevalent in Israel and the Middle East, whereby a contractor pays in advance for the fruit on the tree or the future produce, and those who work the land in all their various forms make fortunes by methods unknown to the west. Economic considerations are joined, in some cases, by national considerations, among them those of "present refugees" or returnees from abroad, who will wish to realize their right of return to their old village or to the country generally.

The conclusion, in my view, is that a people concerned for its soil and its homeland must take steps to protect its national treasure according to models that suit it and the environment in which it lives, and not according to western models that are alien to the place.

A nation concerned for its existence must understand that beyond the economic and agricultural significance, there is also cultural and territorial significance, and this has to be subsidized because it cannot be measured in western market prices. Miscomprehension of this point attests to a flaw in the territorial perception of the Jewish people; similarly afflicted are the best professional minds in the budgeting branches of the Interior and Agriculture ministries. For all these reasons, it is essential to subsidize agriculture in Israel, and these subsidies may be financed by all the land-hungry urban bodies - the computer and electronics industry, the Stock Exchange, attorneys engaged in land transactions, building contractors' associations, and municipal authorities - all bodies that knowingly or not are taking us back to the "*shtetl*" (small Jewish township in eastern Europe) and to detachment from the land.

These bodies must see to it that the agricultural sector, and the cooperative and private rural

settlement, flourish - even without any national-economic reckoning, because they protect Jewish terrain better than the Israel Defense Forces, the Israel Police and the General Security Services. Add to this the aesthetic value of green fields and the fact that farmlands create a sort of block preventing the city from encroaching on all sides; furthermore, one day a world conflict in some form may erupt, as a result of climatic changes or a political crisis, and we will need our agricultural potential as a vital emergency reserve.⁴⁸

Territory and the Academic Community

Academe in Israel carries different public weight from that in other countries. In Israel, academics fill consultancy roles for the government, and submit working papers with recommendations to all ministries. They are involved in the economic, political, security, welfare, educational and communications systems. Their opinions, their outlook and their publications reach all the decision makers. Thus their view, as expressed in their academic publications, has an effect on all creative activity in Israel.

Hence it is important to examine the position of the scholars of the Arab sector in Israel on the territorial issue, within the complex of relations between Jews and Arabs, and to see if this subject has an effect on their conclusions. What is to be sought in the literature dealing with the Arabs of Israel, and analyzing political, social, and economic processes?

First, one must look for a discussion on the connection between demography and territory, and the implications of demography for politics. In the Muslim sector in Israel natural increase has been among the highest in the world throughout the 50 years of the state's existence. A large number of children causes a fall in per-capita income (mainly in societies where the women do not usually work). This has further implications for the supply of work in Arab settlements. Low work supply in villages gives rise to the need for lengthy travel to work (the case in Israel). A low formal income entails non-payment of taxes to state and municipal authorities. The latter, for their part, must contend with difficult problems arising from the rapid lateral expansion of the settlement (due to high natural

increase, slight migration and the norm of low-density single-story building). And since the local authorities have no income, the municipal system buckles. The "villas" built at the edge of the village sometimes remain without a reasonable infrastructure of roads, sidewalks, water, sewage, electricity, cable, shops, etc. There is a chronic shortage of basic services and school classrooms (45-60 percent of the population in the Arab sector settlements were and still are children and youth), crime increases, and the accusing finger is pointed usually at the establishment alone (and its hands are not quite clean in the matter!). So much for the local and municipal level.

Large-scale expansion of the Arab settlements leads to the formation of Arab metropolises with hundreds and thousands of residents (up to 130,000 in the Nazareth metropolis), and increases the sense of territorial power, with all that this entails.⁴⁹

Rapid demographic growth of a minority in defined territorial spaces produces electoral strength and other obvious strengths. When these strengths are accompanied by a feeling of bitterness and frustration on an economic or national-religious basis, a springboard is created for the formation of extreme movements, such as extremist Islam and others.⁵⁰ In border areas, such as the settlements of the Little Triangle, when on the other side of the border live relatives and refugees from 1948, these things have an impetus of their own.

In fact, the Arab sector turns to foreign embassies and international bodies for assistance on political and regional affairs, hence the possibility exists for acts to be performed at a time of crisis (economic, political, or military) in the State of Israel — a violent outburst, an *Intifada*, a demand for secession or moves towards it.⁵¹

The combination of natural increase, the advantages of expansion, growing territorial control and educational, religious, legal, social and political means of isolationism (on both sides) creates the conditions and territorial and political instruments for secession. There are places in the world where this happens quickly, through error or impatience and the like, but usually it is a slow process that the public hardly

discerns - their leaders also (especially those whose field of vision reaches just as far as the end of their term of office).

The conclusion is that the territorial element requires major consideration in any serious discussion of the Arab sector in Israel.

It is very possible that what has been described is entirely theoretical, but anyone engaged in political facets of the Arab sector is expected to turn his or her attention to these questions. A researcher familiar with processes of majority and minority, and the importance of territory in them, and who does not address them, is not entitled to lodge complaints with the government of Israel over the "Judaization of the Galilee," land confiscation, and so on. A researcher who does not place land at the center of his or her research will not reach reliable conclusions on municipal issues in the Arab sector either.

In a survey of 20 monographs and books on the Arabs of Israel, mostly published in the 1990s and accounting for the greater part of research written on the subject, we found the following conclusions: the great majority ignore the significance of territory for the entire set of relations between Jews and Arabs. This is conspicuous principally in books on discrimination, equal rights, politics and history.⁵² These subjects cannot be divorced from territorial questions. The issue of discrimination is in part one of center and periphery, and what goes for the Jew in the Galilee goes for the Arab in that region too. There is no discussion of the likelihood of irredentism or territorial autonomy, which has worried the Jewish leadership throughout the years, and which initiated the strategy of "Judaization of the Galilee". Had there been any serious treatment of this factor all the conclusions about Jewish-Arab relations in Israel would appear quite different. Landau's book is the only one that ascribes importance to this subject and tackles it.⁵³ True, most researchers feel obliged to include a map of the distribution of the Arabs of Israel, or statistical tables in this regard, but most do not know what to do with these two important sources.⁵⁴ With others, even this is missing, and the omission is particularly glaring when the book in question concerns the Islamic awakening in Israel.

