

Exploitation of Land and Water Resources
for Jewish Colonies in the
Occupied Territories

By

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OUTLINE

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FOR JEWISH COLONIES IN THE
OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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I - Introduction

The June war of 1967 brought the West Bank and Gaza Strip under the occupation of the Israeli armed forces. Since then, the 1.7 million Palestinians of the territories have been submitted to a variety of repressive measures. Oppression and violation of human and political rights are perhaps inherent in an alien occupation. However, a distinctive distressing feature of this occupation is the occupying power's determination to maintain permanent control over the territories by a systematic policy of colonization and Judaization.

This policy of colonization is being implemented by a systematic practice of seizing private Christian and Muslim Palestinian property, and the transferring of such properties to the exclusive control of the Jews. This amounts to another form of apartheid based on religious discrimination rather than on color as is the case in South Africa. Some of these land seizures are for the purpose of establishing and expanding Jewish colonies in the occupied territories. These colonies are euphemistically called "settlements" in the Gaza strip and the West Bank, and "neighborhoods" in East Jerusalem.

In the resource poor occupied territories, water is a second vital commodity for Palestinians. The area has sporadic shortage of water for geographic, meteorological and demographic reasons. Droughts have been common since biblical times and are worsening now. In this context, the Israeli occupation authorities have virtually frozen water resource

development for the Palestinians and rapidly expanded it for Jewish use in and outside of the occupied territories.

Whereas the Israeli Likud party, other right wing parties and some ultra-orthodox religious parties have made their intentions clear never to withdraw from the occupied territories, some Israeli Labour Party leaders, debate the hypothetical possibility of a "land for peace" trade to be negotiated with Jordan under what is called the Jordan Option. But even these Labour Party politicians accept the predicate that the West Bank which they also refer to by its Biblical name "Judea and Samaria", belongs fundamentally to the Jewish people, to be partly disposed of tactically in accordance with what is called the Allon Plan (and East Jerusalem in any event never to be relinquished). Meanwhile, and the issue of interest here, the ongoing concrete land and water practices of the Israeli occupation authorities in the occupied territories have the practical effect of slamming the door on a negotiated peaceful resolution to the Palestinian Israeli conflict.

The following sections will describe post-1967 Israeli policies of colonization of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, pretexts for seizure of land, the impact of these land policies on the indigenous Palestinian population, exploitation of water resources, and the impact of these water policies on the Palestinian population. Concluding remarks will then be made regarding attempted remedies.

11. Chronology of development of Israeli policies regarding seizure of Palestinian property for Jewish colonies- 1967-1988.

Land is the core of the Palestinian-Jewish Zionist conflict since the turn of this century. The objectives and motivations of the early Jewish Zionist immigrants to Palestine are the same as those of the Zionist activists of to-day. These objectives can be best summarized by this phrase: "dunum after dunum" of Palestinian land for Jewish colonies. . .

If history be the guide, this process will entail further displacement and uprooting of the indigenous Palestinian population. I will describe briefly hereunder the different policies of the successive Israeli occupation governments which have ruled the West Bank and Gaza Strip for the past 21 years.

a. Israeli Labour Government Policies, 1967-1977

The Israeli Labour government concentrated its land acquisition policies in the annexed areas of East Jerusalem and in the Jordan Rift, in accordance with the Allon Plan. This Plan was conceived by the late labour party government minister, Yigal Allon, and served as a guideline for the deployment of Jewish colonies in the occupied territories. The purpose of the land confiscations in occupied East Jerusalem was for the construction of Jewish residential fortress colonies to encircle from all directions the 137,000 Palestinian population of Jerusalem. These large colonies are located as follows: Ramot to the West, Neve Yaacov to the

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North, Pisgat Ze'ev to the North-East, French Hill to the Central-East, East Talpiot to the South-East and Gilo to the South.(1)

In the Jordan Rift, the land was seized for establishing two series of Jewish colonies along the North-South length of the Eastern border of the West Bank. The first belt is located in the Jordan Valley plains. The second is in the highlands over looking the Jordan Valley.(2) For the colonization of the Jordan Rift, the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency formulated a twenty year plan extending from 1975 to 1995. The writer obtained a copy translated into English of this plan, which stated as its two major goals:

- to populate the area with at least ^{80,000} 8,000 Jews by 1995
- to exploit the natural resources of the area - mainly land, water and climatic conditions - for the exclusive benefit of the Jews.

These plans are in an advanced stage of implementation. The Jewish colonies are already in control of approximately 50% of the cultivable land in the Jordan Valley plains as per my on-site physical survey of the areas under the control of these colonies. An extensive infrastructure to serve only the Jewish colonies has been established consisting of an electric grid, telephones lines, access roads, deep-bore wells, irrigation reservoirs, irrigation pipelines and irrigation systems.

These policies are consistent with the explicit political objectives of the Israeli Labour government which

in June 1967 annexed occupied East Jerusalem, and in accordance with the Allon Plan, calls for imposing permanent Israeli sovereignty over one third of the area of the West Bank, namely the Jordan valley and the strategic highlands overlooking the valley. This plan leaves very little land for the Palestinians, but it purports conveniently to solve the so-called Palestinian "demographic problem", by proposing to return the Palestinian heavily populated areas of the West Bank to Jordanian administration. This avoids the annexation of these areas to the Jewish State which would mean giving equal voting rights to the Christian and Moslem Palestinians, and consequently in the view of Labour party leaders, endangers the purity of the Jewish State.

b. Israeli Likud Government policies, 1977-1984

For the Likud, Jerusalem plus one-third of the West Bank were insufficient seizures and control. The Likud party wanted all the West Bank and Gaza Strip. According to its ideology, the West Bank, or "Judea and Samaria" as they call it, are the liberated lands of the Jewish people and an inseparable part of greater Israel. Based on this ideology, the Likud government began seizing land in the Palestinian populated areas of the highlands of the West Bank, mainly around and in between the major Palestinian cities and towns. In 1980, the settlement Department of the World Zionist Organization published its first five year plan 1980-1985, for comprehensive Jewish "settlement" of the occupied territories. This plan clearly stated the purpose for this

new policy of land seizure and colonization, and I quote from the plan "The best and most effective way of removing every shadow of a doubt about our intention to hold on to Judea and Samaria forever is by speeding up the settlement momentum in these territories. The purpose of settling the areas between and around the centers occupied by the minorities [that is the Palestinian majority in the West Bank] is to reduce to the minimum the danger of an additional Arab state being established in these territories. Being cut off by Jewish settlements, the minority population will find it difficult to form a territorial and political continuity."

To complete this new de facto policy of creeping annexation, the Likud government issued military order No. 783 establishing six Jewish Regional Councils in the West Bank which would include only the Jewish colonies and exclude all the Palestinian cities, towns and villages. These Regional councils are an extension of the Regional councils within Israel and fall under the jurisdiction of the Israeli Ministry of Interior. Thus this military order effectively brought the Jewish colonies in the West Bank under Israeli law while kept the Palestinian communities under military government law and rule.

Under this policy of segregation and creeping annexation, what would be the political future of the 1.7 million indigenous Palestinian population? They are apparently to be given three choices: to accept permanent Israeli rule without political and civil rights, or to leave

home and country voluntarily, or to be forcibly expelled, "transferred" as an increasing number of Israeli officials are now openly putting it.

c. Policies of the "National Unity" coalition government Likud and Labour, from 1984 to present

The present policy of the Israeli coalition government is to continue the land acquisition process for a limited number of Jewish colonies agreed upon by the coalition parties and for expanding or thickening existing Jewish colonies. This expansion policy consists of quietly increasing the construction pace of new houses and apartments in existing colonies in order to increase as fast as possible the number of Jews who would be moved to inhabit them in the occupied territories, rather than just increasing the number of Jewish colonies. This would make the Jewish population in the occupied territories a significant minority and would effectively prevent any so-called territorial compromise in any future negotiated settlement of the Palestinian Israeli conflict.

d. Overall results of the above mentioned Jewish colonization policies.

The cumulative results of these Israeli policies of colonization of the occupied territories over the past twenty one years have produced the following :

- 1) Control by Israel of over 52% of the land areas of the West Bank, divided into three percentages: 25% of West Bank area closed to Palestinians for security and military

reasons, 20% declared by the occupation authorities to be so called State lands and therefore allocated for Jewish use only, and 7% of the land area seized and in actual use by the Jewish colonizers, either built on for housing purposes or used for agricultural purposes particularly in the Jordan Valley area. In the Gaza Strip, the occupation authorities are in control of over 40% of the land area of the Gaza area, most of it declared by the occupation authorities to be State land and therefore belonging to Jews. (3)

2) On the 7% of the land area of the West Bank referred to above and seized for direct Jewish colonization, the following Jewish colonies have been built by early 1988: (4)

a) 117 Jewish colonies in the West Bank (excluding East Jerusalem) with over 67,000 Jews.

b) 8 large Jewish residential built in fortress style colonies in the annexed part of East Jerusalem with a total population of 100,000 Jews.

3) In the Gaza strip, 14 Jewish colonies have been established with some 2500 Jews.

The price paid by the Palestinian indigenous Palestinian population as a result of Jewish colonization of the occupied territories and land seizures have been immense. Since 1967 several thousands of Palestinian landowners and farmers have been dispossessed, displaced and impoverished. In the poll conducted in 1986 by the Australian Broadcasting corporation, the U.S. Daily News, and the Palestinian weekly. published in Jerusalem, 22.8% indicated that they have experienced

property and land confiscation. This means that approximately a quarter of the population of the West Bank and Gaza have been dispossessed of all or part of their lands. And the process continues.

III. Israeli pretexts or devices for seizure of Palestinian property.

Jewish colonies are not built in a vacuum. They are built on lands taken from their rightful Palestinian owners by means of a number of ostensibly legal devices. There are three main pretexts that have been used by the occupation authorities for seizing private property from Palestinians:

1) In the annexed areas of East Jerusalem. Palestinian property is confiscated for "public purpose" in accordance with Israeli law. The public referred to here is the Jewish public and the purpose is the construction of residential Jewish colonies in annexed areas of Jerusalem. These land confiscation orders are signed by the Minister of Finance. Since 1967, the Palestinian Christian and Moslem residents of the occupied part of East Jerusalem have been dispossessed of extremely valuable private real estate property in the heart of the Holy City by three waves of land confiscation orders. The first in January 1968 for 1500 dunums for the construction of two residential colonies French Hill, and Ramat Eshkol and an industrial park in the Kalandia area. The second in August, of 1970 for 14500 dunums for the construction of 4 residential Jewish colonies, Ramot, Neve Ya'acov, East Talpiot and Gilo. The third, in March, 1980

1500 dunums for the construction of the large residential fortress colony of Pisgat Zeev.

In the rest of the occupied territories which are under military rule, private Palestinian property has been seized by the occupation authorities by using two additional devices.

2) closure or requisition of private Palestinian land for security reasons, by military orders issued by the military Governor of the West Bank or Gaza. Initially this land is used by paramilitary Israeli units called the "Nahal" for the establishment of the nucleus of Jewish colonies.

Subsequently, these para-military bases are transferred by a decision of the Israeli government for civilian Jewish use.

3) Seizure of Palestinian property by designating certain land areas to be State Lands in accordance with Ottoman law. This law states that any piece of land which is not cultivated for three consecutive years or is not cultivated more than 50% reverts back to the Ottoman ruler or the Sultan. The Ottomans passed this law to encourage farmers to cultivate the land. The Israelis are today using that same law to take away land from their legitimate owners for Jewish colonization. By using this Ottoman law the Israeli occupation authorities have also earned for themselves the title of the new "Sultan" of Palestine.

This device has been used extensively by the Israeli occupation authorities in the West Bank and Gaza after the security pretext was successfully challenged by the

Palestinians in the Israeli High Court in the Eilon Moreh/Rujib land case, of 1980. Suffice it here to emphasize one vital point concerning so-called "state land". The actual practice of Ottoman, British and Jordanian government rule in Palestine clearly treated by far the majority of what Israel now routinely calls "state land" to be privately entitled land.

IV Impact of land seizures on Palestinian population

Since 1967 and as per my on-site surveys of Jewish colonies and interviews with village leaders and mukhtars in the West Bank, the writer has evidence that thousands of dunums have been seized from Palestinians by the occupation authorities and as a result several thousands of Palestinian landowners and farmers have been displaced, dispossessed of their property, impoverished and for many farmers have also lost their source of livelihood. Yet the Israelis continue to claim that no Palestinians have been displaced from their property. In order to test these assertions I have carried out a number of studies and on-site surveys on all lands seized and in actual use for Jewish colonies. I published in the Journal of Palestine Studies, Autumn, 1981, the result of this on-site survey of all lands occupied by Jewish colonies, indicating also previous status of the land and how Palestinian villagers were dispossessed of their property.

In the first survey, I wanted to verify whether the land seized had been in fact private and cultivable or was "state land" in the strict sense of non-cultivated and unused areas.

More specifically, the categories of land ownership considered "private" for the purposes of the survey included:

- a) "mulk" land or private lands having clear title deeds.
- b) "miri" land, which has been actively cultivated for generations by the farmers and registered during the British Mandate at the Finance Department for land tax purposes.
- c) "Jiftlik" or "Mudawwara" lands, which have also been actively cultivated by Palestinian farmers and which in the 19th century were nominally under the title of the Ottoman Sultan and have been recognized by the British and Jordanian governments as private lands. (Prior to the occupation of the West Bank in 1967, the Jordanian government was in the process of carrying out surveys in the West Bank to issue title deeds to the farmers who were cultivating these lands, so as to explicitly recognize their ownership.)

The categories of land included in the survey under "state" included the following:

- a) "Mawat" land or waste land including deserts, forests, and rocky uncultivated mountain tops not owned by individuals.
- b) lands which were once the sites of British Mandate Taggart forts and Jordanian police or army camps.
- c) Lands which have been designated for community purposes and hospitals.

based on the above criteria and categories of land ownership, I found that 95% of all lands seized from Palestinians and transferred for the exclusive use of the Jewish colonies are in fact private lands belonging to individual Palestinian

landowners and farmers, while only 5% of the seized land could be considered public land.

In the course of my studies, the human impact of the seizures became apparent. I found that prior to seizure of cultivated lands, the occupation authorities have systematically bulldozed wheatfields, ploughed under crops, used defoliants to burn crops, and have cut down thousands of fig, olive, grape, plum, and other fruit trees. I will cite hereunder some examples of destruction of agricultural crops that I have personally been a witness to:

* 1977 - Wheatfields belonging to the farmers from Tubas in the Northeastern part of the West Bank were bulldozed by the Israelis. These same lands are now being cultivated by the Jewish colony of Roi.

* 1978 - Wheatfields belonging to the farmers Beit Furik, East of Nablus were bulldozed by Israelis. These lands have been planted with avocado trees for the Jewish colony of Mekhora.

* 1980 - Grapevines belonging to the farmers of Beit Iskaria were uprooted for the expansion of the land for the Jewish colonies of Rosh Tzurim and Alon Shevot in the Beit-Ummar area, half way between Bethlehem and Hebron.

* 1981 - 400 fig and 20 olive trees were uprooted by Jewish colonizers from Ofra, for expanding their colony. The trees belong to the Fare'h family from the village of Ain Yabroud in the area. This incident was prominently displayed in the documentary done by ABC 20/20 and shown in the U.S. in

February 1982.

* 1984 - 400 grapevines were uprooted and lands seized from farmers in the village of El-Khadder near Bethlehem for the construction of the Jewish colony of Efrat.

* 1985 - Fig and olive trees belonging to the farmers from the village of El-Jeeb in the Ramallah area were uprooted and land seized for the construction of the Jewish colony of Givat Ze'ev.

* 1987 - grapevines belonging to the farmers in the village of El-Khadder in the Bethlehem area were bulldozed by the Israelis for the expansion of the Jewish colony of Daniel.

In fact, the destruction of Palestinian villages, homes orchards and crops began right after the 1967 war. The most blatant example (in June 1967) was the complete destruction of three villages in the Latroun salient, Yalu, Beit Nuba and Imwas, consisting of over 6,000 homes. Now the colony of Mevo Horan is cultivating the lands these razed villages estimated to consist of more than 20,000 dunums. In July of 1967, three more villages were destroyed in the Jordan Valley, El-Ajajreh, Sattariyeh, and Makhrouq. Now the colony of Massua rests on the ruins of the village of Ajajreh.

Based on the above, Israeli claims that no private Palestinian lands have been seized and transferred for use to Jewish colonies are belied literally by the evidence in the field.

In my second survey which consisted mainly of interviews with village leaders and mukhtars which were most affected by

seizure of land, I wished to ascertain whether any

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While no rigorous studies have been done on the effect on Palestinian economic development of the land and water policies of the occupation authorities, the qualitative impact is evident. Land is an essential factor of production. The heavily agrarian Palestinian economy depends disproportionately on land and water. These two physical resources have been gradually shrinking and as a result has limited the potential growth of the agriculture sector in the economy of the occupied territories.

V. Exploitation of water Resources

The colonization process of the West Bank and Gaza strip does not only involve the seizure of Palestinian land, but also the exploitation or, more precisely, expropriation, of

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the scarce underground water resources for the virtual exclusive use of the Jewish colonies. This has been done by drilling deep bore wells in all areas of the West Bank and in particular in the Jordan Valley where the Jewish agriculture colonies are completely dependent on these wells for their domestic and irrigation purposes.

According to the report by the State Comptroller of the Israeli government for 1987 and published in the Jerusalem Post, the Jewish Water Company, Mekorot has drilled more than 40 deep-bore wells and is pumping some 42 Million Cubic Meters (MCM) per year from West Bank underground water supplies for Jewish colonies. This quantity already exceeds by 40% the quantity of water being pumped by Palestinians from some 300 pre-1967 existing shallow wells, the volume of which is estimated to be 30 MCM per year. (5) Furthermore, the 42 MCM being pumped by Mekorot for Jewish use in the colonies of the West Bank, is now almost equal to 50% of the total water consumption by the total Palestinian population in the West Bank for all purposes, domestic, agriculture and industry, estimated at 90 MCM per year. This is the water used by Palestinians from all sources which include wells, springs and cisterns.

In some cases, the Israeli wells have been drilled in close proximity to local Palestinian springs contrary to the Jordanian water authority regulations regarding drilling of new wells. This has been the case particularly in the Jordan Valley, where Palestinian agriculture is mainly dependent on

spring water for irrigation. The impact of these well drilling practices have already been devastating economically for two areas in the Valley that I have personally been a witness to. In the first case, in the Northern end of the valley, in the middle 70's, all springs and wells belonging to Palestinian farmers from the villages of Bardala and Ein El-Baida dried up as a direct consequence of two deep-bore Jewish wells drilled in the area by Mekorot to supply water to the Jewish colony of Mehola. After the Palestinian farmers suffered extensive crop losses due to lack of water, and as a result of pressure from the world community, Mekorot agreed to substitute local water losses with limited quantities of water from the new wells. As a result, the Palestinian farmers are now completely dependent on the Israelis for their water needs, and their status has been changed from owners to renters of their own resource. This case was given prominence in a documentary called "whose hand on the tap" shown on British Television and produced by ITV in 1981.

In the second case, water dried up, because of the Israeli wells dug near the site of a spring, is in the village of El-Auja, 10 kms North of Jericho. In the autumn of 1987, in spite of the previous year's heavy rains, the village springs dried, and cultivation in the winter of 1988 was almost totally destroyed. This is the third time the El-Auja spring has dried up since 1979, when a shortage of water destroyed crops with an estimated loss of \$3 million. Informed hydrologists link this water depletion of the el-

Auja spring to the two Israeli wells dug near the site of the spring.

Not only have the Israelis been freely developing new wells in the West Bank and Gaza for their own exclusive use, the military authorities have not issued any new licences, with a few exceptions, for the Palestinians to drill new wells for irrigation purposes. The occupation authorities have also restricted the amount of water pumped by Palestinians from pre-1967 existing wells by enforcing quotas on the quantity of water that can be pumped from these wells. In fact, the Israeli water commissioner in a television interview for a British 1981 ITV documentary called "whose hand on the tap" state quite categorically that Palestinian water consumption in the West Bank will not ^{BE} allowed to exceed 100 MCM per year for all purposes. This Israeli limitation on use of water by the Palestinian communities gives Israel complete control of the West Bank underground water supplies which are estimated at 600 MCM per year, and opens the way for the exclusive exploitation of this vital resources by Israel and only for its own purposes. It is estimated that pre-1967 Israel pumps a full one third of its annual needs of 1.8 billion cubic meters from underground West Bank basins, which extend inside the 1967 Israeli borders to the coastal plains to the West and the Gilboa plains in the North, and also Northeast. Thus limiting Palestinian use of their own West Bank underground water supplies, permits the Israelis to exploit this water for two objectives: first, to

provide water for Israel proper and second, to provide water to the Jewish colonies in the occupied territories. Meanwhile, the Palestinians have to pay the price. They are prevented from developing their own water resources for their own welfare and economic survival -- let alone from having a say in their own water resource management policy.

VI. Conclusion

In the face of this continuous Israeli official policies to dispossess from their property and physical resources, the Palestinians under occupation have used various means to attempt to slow down this process and protect their property. These measures include the following:

* Palestinians have challenged in Israeli controlled courts the occupation authorities land policies. In the early years of the occupation Palestinian farmers and landowners tried to physically block Jewish attempts to seize their land by sitting in front of bulldozers or preventing Israeli surveyors from surveying their property. They protested to the military governors in their areas. They appealed to local courts. However, these methods did not prove fruitful, until May, 1978, when landowners from the village of Nabi Saleh in the Ramallah District, challenged in the Israeli High Court the seizure of their land by the colonizers from the colony of Nevi Tsuf. In this particular case, the Israeli High Court ordered the removal of the fence set up by the Jewish colonizers and the return of the land to their

rightful owners. This was the first taste of victory for the Palestinians. In 1979, it was followed by the Toubas and Beit El case. Although the Palestinian owners lost there on security grounds, yet the Israeli High Court established that civilian Jewish colonies are temporary and by implication should be dismantled should the state of belligerency end. In 1980, the case of the Jewish colony of Eilon Moreh became prominent. In this case the Palestinian owners from Rujib challenged the seizure of their land on alleged security grounds for the establishment of the Jewish colony of Eilon Moreh. In this case, the Israeli High Court ordered the return of the land to the Palestinian landowners and the dismantlement of the Jewish colony after it had been established for some three months. This was the peak of success for the Palestinians in their attempts to use legal remedies to defend their rights and property. However, this did not last long. The occupation authorities revised its tactics and stopped using the security pretext for seizing land and instead in 1981 began using Ottoman laws, by declaring the intended lands to be seized as "state lands" and giving the landowners 30 days to prove the contrary. Furthermore, in 1983 the military authorities passed military order No.1060, denying local civil courts the right to judge any dispute concerning lands, and transferred this authority to Israeli military review boards. This new technique also served the purpose of preventing cases from directly reaching the Israeli High Court, as all cases had to be reviewed first

by these boards. Despite these legal obstacles set up by the occupation authorities to block a fair hearing of the Palestinian grievances in defense of their land and property, Palestinian landowners continued to bring cases to these review boards in almost all instances where land was declared as state land. However, many land cases were never filed or were discontinued for lack of funds or disillusionment.

In short, the court cases have been instrumental in some cases in regaining some lands or in preventing the expansion of existing colonies. It has also forced the occupation authorities to change their tactics regarding seizure of Palestinian property, which helped to expose the occupation realities to world public opinion.

* To protect their lands, Palestinians have also used other non-violent means to hold and protect their property. Planting olive and other fruit trees has been one means, as land planted with trees makes it more difficult for the occupation authorities to claim that the land is not cultivated and therefore "state land" in accordance with Ottoman laws presently being used by the authorities as a legal device for seizing Palestinian land. In 1976, the Mennonite Central Committee initiated a project of mass distribution of olive seedlings to farmers and in a period of 5 years together with another non-government organization, Save the Children, distributed over 1.5 million olive seedlings. This created a momentum for tree planting which brought the number of olive trees planted in the last 10

years to over 4 million.

Another method of preventing land seizure has been the reclamation of rocky lands by clearing rock from the land and planting it with fruit trees. Over 20,000 dunums of land have been reclaimed over the past 10 years. Building houses on the land has also been used as another tactic to protect Palestinian property.

* Palestinians have also resorted to the media as a means to inform the world community of the facts of the occupation and in particular of the violation of property rights of the Palestinian people. A number of documentaries have been produced by American and British TV networks about Jewish colonization of the occupied territories. The documentaries that have received wide coverage are listed hereunder:

"whose hand on the tap" 1981 British ITV

"Under the Israeli Thumb" 1982 American ABC 20/20

"A People without a Land" 1984 British Grenada TV

"The promised Land" 1985 British Yorkshire TV

Though the above measures have not been able to stop Jewish colonization in the occupied territories, they have been able to slow down the process. Such are the Palestinians' definition of success.

In conclusion an ongoing battle over the land is taking place daily in the occupied territories. On one side, the Israeli occupation authorities have and are working feverishly to dispossess the Palestinians and to possess definitively and to integrate de facto into Israel what

remained in 1948 of the historical lands of Palestine, that is the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In 1948, the Israelis succeeded in uprooting 1 million Palestinians from their homes and land, destroying over 350 Palestinian villages, erasing

virtually every trace of Palestinian presence from the areas and villages they were uprooted from, and consequently gaining control of 78% of the historical land of Palestine.

In 1988, the Israeli occupation authorities are now trying to gain permanent control of the remaining 22% of the land of Palestine. On the other side, the Palestinians continue their struggle to protect their property, their resources, their country and their survival on their own land. Despite 21 years of occupation, the Palestinian people have not given up. The uprising of the Palestinians of the occupied territories testifies to this effect.

Footnotes

- 1- For more information and maps about Israeli policies to encircle the Palestinian population of East Jerusalem see article by Ibrahim Matar "from Palestinian to Israeli: Jerusalem 1948 - 1982" Journal of Palestine Studies, Summer 1983.
- 2- For more information and maps about Israeli "settlement policies on the West Bank see article by Ibrahim Matar "Israeli Settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip" Journal of Palestine Studies, Autumn 1981.
- 3- For a complete analysis of the number of dunums confiscated and areas controlled by the Israeli occupation authorities in the West Bank, see book by Usama Halabi "Land Alienation in the West Bank, A Legal and Spatial Analysis" WBDP April, 1985.
- 4- For more detailed information about the number of Jewish colonies, types of colonies, Jewish population in the colonies see Meron Benvenisti, 1987 Report, Demographic, Economic, Legal, Social and Political Developments in the West Bank" WBDP, August, 1987.
- 5- For a more thorough analysis of the issue of water exploitation of the West Bank water resources by the occupation authorities, see Hisham Awartani- Water Resources and Policies in the West Bank" Samed el Iktisadi, Volume 3, August 1980.