

SOVEREIGNTY / Political Journal

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A Word from the Editors

This premier issue of “Sovereignty” represents the culmination and fulfillment of many years of activities in the field by “The Movement for Israel’s Tomorrow” (Women in Green). The long years of grassroots activism on behalf of the restoration of Jewish life to our nation’s heartland, were accompanied throughout by protests against the capitulations to the Arabs and activities against domination of our land by Arabs and their anti-Israeli allies. Our accomplishments and frustrations in this daily struggle led us, inevitably, to the arena of public policy; thus, we initiated a series of activities in recent years designed to promote the vision of Israeli sovereignty over Judea and Samaria.

The importance of promoting an alternative political vision to the regnant Oslo framework, imposed years ago by the Israeli Left, cannot be overstated. While the Right does not sit still, its achievements are limited in scope – one more acre developed here, one more caravan there; in contrast, the Palestinian Authority, using vast resources placed at their disposal by the international community, determines facts on the ground, thereby molding Israeli and international consciousness. Little by little, a Palestinian state de facto is being established in the territory of the Land of Israel, and the government of Israel has not responded to this challenge with any clear ideological, political or practical policy.

Therefore, as part of the struggle to make Israel's case, and along with the practical battle to hold on to the Land, we are launching this "Sovereignty" journal. This groundbreaking publication is a direct outgrowth of the Sovereignty Conferences that we have organized in past years. The thousands of attendees at those public conferences heard many prominent politicians and intellectuals issue a clarion call for the application of Israeli sovereignty over Judea and Samaria.

In the pages of "Sovereignty" we will carry on an ideological and practical discussion centering on the basic and essential questions raised by the issue of sovereignty: What is a viable alternative to the idea of the 'Two-State' solution? How do we cope with the demographic specter? Should we consolidate and promote only one idea, or perhaps raise several different scenarios? How will the world respond to an idea which is not compatible with the conventional wisdom of the Oslo accords? All these questions, despite their importance, must not obscure the primary and basic principle: We seek to extend Israeli sovereignty to include Judea and Samaria for one simple reason – this is our Land, the Land of Israel, the historic Biblical homeland of the Jewish People. This basic principle takes precedence over all other explanations and considerations, true as they may be.

The print version of "Sovereignty" was widely distributed all over Israel (100,000 copies in Hebrew), as well as abroad (in English) among designers of policy and shapers of public opinion, including American members of Congress and European members of Parliament. We are pleased to add the electronic version and we invite you to take part in this public relations effort and ideological project by sending us your thoughts about the issues raised in this journal. You can send short articles and letters to the editor by email to ribonut@gmail.com.

We hope you enjoy our journal and find its contents to be relevant and enlightening.

Editorial staff of "Sovereignty"

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Every Day Without Israeli Sovereignty Advances the Palestinian State

Geula Cohen, Israel Prize Laureate

Israel Prize Laureate, Geula Cohen calls for accelerated and frequent action, both within the Knesset and outside of it, until the "historical crack" is found, through which the application of Israeli sovereignty over Judea and Samaria can be advanced.

In a conversation with "Sovereignty", Israel Prize Laureate, Geula Cohen, warns that "every day that

passes without the application of sovereignty advances the establishment of the Palestinian state. The correct and proper solution is Israeli sovereignty over Judea and Samaria,” she says and calls for extra-parliamentary action in addition to the parliamentary action to advance the idea.

“The road to achieving this does not only pass through conventions and committees but also through parliamentary preparation and waiting for the appropriate historical opportunity to pass the sovereignty bill. There needs to be a group of MKs who will present the bill and bring it up at the right time to pass it in Knesset. That requires parliamentary work. There is no group in the Knesset currently dedicated to this purpose. This must be their official goal, a goal which they push and raise in Knesset, even if the bill fails again and again,” she says and recalls the days when she passed the Golan Heights bill and the Jerusalem bill. Then too the bill passed after failing and being rejected and waiting for the right time.

“The infrastructure must be prepared and then the matter must be raised on the agenda every single day, because you never know when this bill’s day will arrive. When I tried to raise the Jerusalem bill, I went from MK to MK to prepare for the political moment. As long as there are leaders like Yehudit Katsover and Nadia Matar, the matter won’t come off the agenda. They stand guard and I see them looking for the historical crack in order to raise the matter on the agenda. But that isn’t enough. It requires work inside the Knesset as well, and there, MK Orit Struck from Hebron and others are acting from the inside.”

Nonetheless when she looks at the structure of the Knesset, Geula Cohen is convinced that the current political reality will make the task easier than ever. Netanyahu’s public opinions regarding the establishment of a Palestinian state don’t particularly impress her. She estimates that MKs will be able to create a majority which will pass the sovereignty bill and turn it into a done deal which will be forced on Netanyahu. “Politics is about seizing opportunities. There are times where that which was impossible yesterday is possible today. The world didn’t want a Jewish state either, so what? If the MKs get a majority, it will be a done deal.”

“Netanyahu already spoke of 2 states so it will be difficult to pull the move off through Netanyahu himself, but today there are a few fighter MKs that I don’t think will let him pass it. Netanyahu himself doesn’t dare raise it on the agenda, and why doesn’t he pass it or raise it on the agenda? Because he can’t, and maybe he doesn’t really want to either.”

In regards to the issue of the status of the Arabs of Judea and Samaria “the day after sovereignty is applied”, Cohen is convinced the autonomy solution will work. In her opinion the Arabs themselves will also eventually agree to such a generous offer as that. “We have to give them the option to rule themselves in a manner that will allow for national existence, cultural existence, their own education system, everything besides government and security. Eventually Palestinian parties can also be persuaded that they are receiving something just short of a state. There are parties we can cooperate with. When I raised the Jerusalem bill there was also turmoil and chaos. People warned that a war will break out and eventually it turned out that the Arabs took it much easier than we had warned ourselves.”

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Apply Sovereignty Without Fear of the Demographic

“Demon”

Uri Ariel, Minister of Housing

In a special interview for the 1st issue of “Sovereignty”, Minister of Housing Uri Ariel states: “The alternative to the Leftist ‘Two-State’ vision is one state west of the Jordan River - the State of Israel.” To those who fear the nightmarish demographic scenario, he offers reassuring solutions.

According to Minister Ariel’s vision, “Sovereignty must be applied, although possibly in stages; initially, in Israeli-controlled ‘C’ areas – which comprise most of the area and have a few tens of thousands of Arabs – and then move forward towards full sovereignty.”

Minister Ariel is not impressed by the demographic threat that many people fear – that, at the moment sovereignty is applied over Judea and Samaria, the Arabs of the region will fulfill their right to vote for Knesset, and by doing so will change the appearance and character of the state.

“First of all, there is such a thing as non-citizen residents. We have the example of Jerusalem which has 300,000 Arabs of which about 10,000 are citizens, while the rest are residents with no voting rights. Out of 10,000 only 3,000 actually vote, meaning about 1% [of the entire Jerusalem Arab population]. This is going on after these people have been living here for nearly 2 generations. Some of them were born here, speak Hebrew and wear jeans. Meaning they live our lives and not the life of someone who was recently conquered, and still they aren’t rushing to vote. They don’t vote for two reasons – because they don’t identify with the State of Israel, and because they are threatened and even murdered [by other Arabs who oppose voting]. In light of past events I don’t foresee a problem [of Arabs rushing to vote].”

Minister Ariel is well aware of the allegations hurled against this approach, allegations covered by the pretext of fear of apartheid and concern for civil rights. “Even if there are those who claim we must grant them citizenship – because otherwise it will be apartheid – there is a solution. Whoever wants to receive citizenship will apply and will have to meet certain criteria, such as understanding the language, declaration of solidarity with the State of Israel, etc. These things are acceptable and are common practice all over the world. No one receives a Green Card without going through the process, just because they want to be an American.”

This attitude sounds dangerous. It sounds like it makes us dependant on whether or not the Arabs choose to vote. What happens if one day an Arab leader rises and tells the hundreds of thousands of voters “let’s meet the criteria, let’s vote and change the character of Israel”?

“That’s why there’s also the second element that needs to be incorporated, the regional-proportional elections. About half the Knesset will be elected via proportional elections, such as those we have today, while the other half will be elected based on regional elections, according to constituencies. Since we, meaning the government and the State, are the ones who would set up the constituencies, the State could decide, for example, that Jenin will be part of Afula’s constituency, and Qalqilya will be part of Kfar Saba’s. That way their chances of getting an Arab MK in will be limited. In constituencies like these I estimate that ultimately, Jewish candidates will be elected.”

Nevertheless, there will still be distinctly Arab areas and constituencies in which a majority for an Arab representative will form.

“Such a move might lead to the election of a few more Arab MKs, and they might even double their numbers from 11 to 20, but in my opinion, we as a state, can take it. It isn’t a threat to us. If we recall

the demographic balance from the beginning of the State in comparison to our current situation, we can conclude that we can give much broader and better responses.”

Ariel is well aware that such a move will not occur overnight, nonetheless he finds importance in placing the vision as the goal: “This is the vision. It won’t happen tomorrow or the day after. I certainly congratulate ‘Women in Green’ for raising the matter and it is becoming an important discussion in the public discourse, a discussion which presents infinitely better alternatives to the various Oslo options which have brought us nothing but trouble.”

The gradual sovereignty idea Minister Ariel recommends, surprisingly, receives warnings from the Israeli Right. They warn and point out that international response to a partial move over the area may be the same as their response to a complete move. Therefore, it might be better to simply go for the wider option. Ariel does not accept this attitude.

“The problem isn’t the world; it’s us, the citizens of the State of Israel. We haven’t prepared ourselves enough to allow for a full move on the entire area. Those who think that this can be done forcefully are wrong. This requires emotional preparation and we have a lot to do on that front. Unfortunately the PM is currently explaining why there should be two states west of the Jordan River. By doing so he is severely damaging the Jewish consciousness and the Jewish identity. Granted, we aren’t talking about a decision or a committing move, but when the PM says these things time and time again, it has an effect. We must act to change hearts and minds on the matter. We need to invest less in infrastructure and more in the human consciousness infrastructures, so that the entire People of Israel will want what we have been doing for a generation already.”

And what about the world? Is there a chance they’ll “buy” such an idea? Or perhaps we shouldn’t pay them any attention?

“We should absolutely pay attention to them, but first we must pay attention to the people sitting in Zion and to the entire Jewish People and only after that, the world, and I suggest we do that in the correct order, and not mix things up. If we as a people, the absolute majority of us, believe that it is ours and that we should be here, we will be able to face any international pressure. But if things stand as they are today, with large divides among the people on these basic matters, it will be difficult to face even mediocre and small pressures.”

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Sovereignty in our Homeland

Rabbi Gideon Perl, Gush Etzion Regional Rabbi

Since the Creation, the Land of Israel was chosen as the resting place of the Divine Presence, where the Holy Temple would be built. Later the Land was promised to our patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and to their descendants after them. At Mt. Sinai when the People of Israel received the Torah, the choice of the People of Israel as the Chosen People, who would one day be established in the Land of Israel as “a kingdom of priests and a holy people”, was finalized. This destiny was set as a condition for the People of Israel, that by keeping the Torah and its commandments they would inherit the Land forever, but if they should ever stray from the path, they won’t be able to live in it, and if they transgress against the strictest prohibitions, the Land would expel them from it.

And sure enough, after hundreds of years, the Israelites were exiled from the Land of Israel, due to those very transgressions. And for 2000 years the People of Israel have kept away from their Land by Divine commandment. Since then, until just over 100 years ago, no permanent government rose in the Land, and the Land remained barren, and no nation settled in it or established a state, including the Arabs who falsely claim that they had been settling the Land for thousands of years.

Since the Jewish pioneers returned and began establishing communities in the Land, it has given its blessing, and as the communities grew and established themselves, the Land gave its fruits bountifully. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook ZT"l stated back then that Ezekiel's prophecy, "There is no greater disclosed end than this... and your fruit you shall bear for my People the Israelites, etc." was coming true! And the Land has become even more bountiful since the establishment of the State of Israel, and it is giving its fruits in quantities that were unheard of since the days of Joshua Bin Nun and David and Solomon's inheritance of the Land.

Later on came the Age of the Ingathering of the Exiles, including the immigration of Russian Jewry, which seemed to be like "The Redemption", and despite the difficult security situation which exists in the Land, immigration continues from prosperous countries as well! Only blind eyes can't see the unique Divine providence in all these stages, the stages we call Footsteps of Salvation.

All the days of their exile, the People of Israel prayed and asked G-d to return them to their Land, "And our eyes will behold Your return to Zion in mercy." In light of the prophecies regarding future redemption, the Jewish People have always expressed their yearning for the Land of Israel, and for the construction of the Temple, not just in the daily prayers, but in the Sanctification of the Sabbath and the celebrations of the holidays.

We have never given up hope of returning to our Land, and to our whole Land. Even some of the secular Zionist movements committed to the aspiration to establish a state in our Land, within the borders mentioned in the Torah. And the majority of the first pioneers who arrived in Israel weren't particularly observant, yet devoted themselves wholeheartedly to the inhabiting of the Land, despite the many troubles with savage tribes which attacked them constantly.

And so writes Rabbi Jacob Harlap ZT"l in his book, *Salvation Springs*, "Just as we have faith that all destinies will be fulfilled and none of them will be missed, so we have faith that the last generation, just as it has begun to repeat the transgression of '...they scorned the desirable land...' (Psalm 106), and after 2000 years of wandering from one exile to the next, remembered Jerusalem and all its scriptures, and with every courage and vigor they leave the lands of exile and immigrate to Zion, and at the point of risking their lives, build up our holy Land, so will rise a fresh vibrant generation, that will fight equally hard to revive the holy practices, to complete the melody, the song of existence in all eight capillaries, that not a single note of fulfilling the Written and Oral laws will be missing, along with all the holy customs of Israel, etc... "

And indeed in our generation Rabbi Harlap ZT"l's hopeful-prophecy has come true in part. The generation of the sons returned and built communities throughout our Land and holds on to it at the point of risking their lives, in the face of our enemies who wish to destroy us, as we hear from their "spiritual shepherds" and as they teach their children in their schools.

One of the leaders of the Labor party, A.D. Gordon, also wrote a letter from the Galilee (1912) regarding the dream of a Jewish state in our Land: "Man! A day will come... A day will come and your sons and

daughters will dream a dream, and the dream will be grand. And your sons and daughters will come and ask for the solution to their dream in the land of their forefathers. With all the might of their spirits and bodies they will seek the solution, they will dig it up from the ground like treasure... And as much as they seek and work, so they will grow larger and stronger until they are quite impressive... Then Israel will once again bloom, then it will rise again and revive and become a people.”

No one ever dreamed of “two states” in Israel's Land! And all those dreamers, who made the establishment of the state possible, are turning over in their graves today when they hear their descendants and the heads of state negotiating with murderers over mock agreements that aren't worth the paper they will be written and signed on. That is why it must be clear to all, first of all to ourselves, the ones who live in our Land and its leaders and ministers and advisers, and then to the rest of the world, without fear or doubt, to say the truth, that we have returned home, to the entirety of our Land, from the Great Sea to the Jordan River, from Lebanon to Eilat – this entire Land is our homeland and we are sovereign over it, ever since we became a people. We are not “foreign conquerors”, and this ownership can not be taken from us.

We have been blessed by the graces of G-d to return home, and we must sanctify our home in its entirety, and to declare publicly for all the world to hear, we have returned home and we are the only sovereigns over this home. There is no other authority over it.

Our teacher Rabbi Zvi Yehuda ZT”L taught that this is our right by inheritance, the right of the People of Israel for all its generations. That is why no Israeli government has the right to trade our Land, which belongs to all the People of Israel, past, present and future. The current Israeli governments are temporary and fleeting in comparison to the eternity of Israel and they do not have the authority or the permission to give up the eternal promise, “and to your descendants I have given this land!”

We hereby call on the government representing the People of Israel to declare sovereignty over all the portions of Judea and Samaria and to sanctify them publicly, just as was done with the Golan Heights back in the day. This is how the government will show its true greatness, demonstrate courage and bring true honor to the People of Israel, both in the Land of Israel and in the Diaspora.

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The Leftist Vision is Not the Only One

An interview with Rabbanit Shulamit Melamed, director and founder of Arutz 7 radio and website

During the 20 years that have passed since Oslo, it appears that the media has played a significant role in turning the ‘Two-State’ vision into the sole diplomatic option which can be discussed. Any other offer has been swept under the carpet after being painted as hallucinatory, insane and hopeless by the media. Today, 20 years later, the hegemonic media has been tattooed by the Right-wing, traditionally inclined media. First among them is Arutz 7, which memorably started its way on board the ship E'retz Ha'Tzvi and currently maintains a news website. We discussed the possibility to effect change in the media arena with the director – and essentially the mind behind the establishment of the channel – Rabbanit Shulamit Melamed.

Rabbanit Melamed starts off by refusing to accept the attitude which says that the media has successfully eliminated any option of putting an alternative idea to the Leftists' on the agenda. "According to polls there is a large leakage of supporters from the 'Two-State' camp. People don't want that option. After Gush Katif people realized how unsuccessful it is. An overwhelming majority of the Israeli public doesn't trust the other side and therefore they prefer to leave things as they are."

Rabbanit Melamed continues and reminds us of an old project run by the channel, where a long list of Israeli Right-wingers was asked about their alternative vision to the 'Two-State' solution. The participants of that venture raised quite a few ideas, but perhaps the multiplicity of ideas also presents a problem. "The issue of the alternative to the 'Two-State' solution must be raised constantly. It must be spoken of non-stop. The major conference held by 'Women in Green' for example, was excellent. We must initiate more and more ideas, and more and more opportunities to talk about it. The problem is there isn't any one idea which is agreed upon by everyone. The question of whether to present one unified Right-wing idea, or several ideas, is not a simple one. I doubt if we can decide. Maybe a group of politicians and specialists should sit down together and come up with a joint formula which they will present to the public."

When asked about her personal vision regarding the future of Judea and Samaria, Rabbanit Melamed draws a clear distinction between the immediate and distant future. "In my long-term vision, only Arabs which are loyal to the State of Israel and to the People of Israel will remain in the Land of Israel. People ask how that will happen and I don't have an answer. I'll just remind them that before the Six Day War, no one even dreamed that things would happen the way they did, and also before the Iron Curtain fell, no one thought it would happen. G-d has His ways."

On the other hand, in the immediate future, she believes things can be left almost as they are now. "In the meantime we must present a different interim solution for the areas we can, meaning we should apply sovereignty over Israeli controlled 'C' Territories and allow the Arabs autonomy in their areas. As far as I'm concerned, the situation today is better than any other option raised by the Left, and later on, as time goes by, we can take steps that will weaken their side."

Rabbanit Melamed appears unimpressed by the question of Arabs voting for government. "They can vote for Jordan or their autonomy, their municipal authorities." She adds, in a side note, "We must constantly remind the Israeli Arabs that if, G-d forbid, there are two states, they will be in the other state. They should think long and hard if it is in their best interests to vote in favor of that option or not. If they think they can tip the scale one way or the other, they should be aware that it may harm them."

When Rabbanit Melamed wants to point out specific times that the channel has been able to affect the media and cause a change of opinions, she recalls a small example which she sees as a parable: "In the early days of the channel, there was a broadcaster on Kol Yisra'el, the Voice of Israel channel, who expressed an opinion on his show that was 'too Right-wing'. He was fired because of that, and we hired him. The mere fact that I could absorb him and give him a stage proved to them that they weren't the only players on the court. In the early years, I used to tell the broadcasters and editors over there that they, in the other media, often throw people away because they no longer serve their purpose, and sometimes those are exactly the people we need."

"Today it's obvious to the media that if they don't broadcast certain information or material, someone else will. In the past it was only us, but today, thank G-d, there are more media outlets. It's clear to them that they can no longer hide information. That didn't used to be the case."

Nonetheless, she is well aware of the need for diligent, step-by-step hard work in order to create a shift in public opinion. “It is very difficult to change public opinion. Until recently, when people said ‘we heard in the media’ they meant Channel 2, Channel 1 and Kol Yisra’el. But the understanding that they aren’t the only media, but rather only part of the media, is slowly seeping through. There is more media, different media.”

Another direction of influence is with the interviewees and decision makers. “There is no doubt that today, ministers, MKs and various agencies have to answer our questions as well. That didn’t used to be the case. You couldn’t embarrass them. Granted, there are still a few that avoid answering us, but most agencies are required to respond and they do, and they take our criticism and the things we write about them seriously.”

Rabbanit Melamed sums up the Right-wing media’s job and divides it in to two aspects: “We have a dual job – both to embed our ideas in the general public and reinforce those who are wavering and need reinforcement.”

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Land of Israel Loyalists Don’t Have to Present an Alternative

Deputy Foreign Minister Zeev Elkin

The Deputy Foreign Minister considers the statement according to which “the entire area is ours” as a principle which does not require explanation or justification, and suggests that we learn the “Salami Technique” from the Palestinians. (The Salami Technique implies that it is easier to take the salami slice by slice and not all at once).

20 years after the Oslo Accords, which collapsed with a loud bang and a tragically high blood price, the alternative question keeps coming up. Does the Israeli Right have an alternative to the Leftist vision? When the question is presented to the Deputy Foreign Minister, MK Ze’ev Elkin, he seems almost surprised. As far as he is concerned, it is the Left that needs to provide an alternative.

“There’s no question here. It might be weird but in my opinion, those who are opposed to the ‘Two-State’ solution are exempt from providing an alternative, because the basic axiom should be that this area belongs to us. There isn’t an equal situation where everyone offers an option and we choose the best one. We are talking about an area which has always been Jewish, historically, more so than Tel Aviv and Ashkelon. Our entire return here is based on the fact that the land belongs to us. If we give up that principle, then in the next stage they can ship us off to Uganda. Therefore anyone who wants to remove us from here has the obligation to present evidence as to why that would be a better idea. In the meantime, all the evidence points in the other direction. Everyone who tried to remove us from here has led us into an even worse situation than before. Therefore I truly do not accept the claim of those who demand that I present an alternative to the ‘Two-State’ idea.”

“We have something to learn from the Palestinians. The ‘Salami Technique’, for example.”

Elkin’s clear statements do not stop him from addressing the complexity of stating that ‘this land

belongs to us'. "Once that becomes the basic attitude, we can begin to think about how we solve the problems we have. Obviously we should aspire to apply sovereignty. In the meantime, with the interim agreements, we are in a very problematic situation as far as I can see. We had a disagreement with the Palestinians over all of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, and we gave them control of all of the Gaza Strip and 40% of Judea and Samaria, while on our end we received nothing, not even the things upon which there is Israeli consensus. With this attitude we only increase their demands."

In Elkin's opinion "we have something to learn from the Palestinians," as he puts it, "and that is the 'Salami Technique' where they say 'we'll take what they are willing to give and then we'll continue to demand the rest.' I think the State of Israel should slowly change the record and try, first with the Israeli public and then with the world, to clarify that it is illogical for things to continue being one-sided. At least the areas which clearly will be ours, we must annex now and not wait for a permanent agreement."

Elkin is careful to emphasize that he has no intention of drawing maps at such an early stage, but rather, to establish a principle and attitude, according to which "any place upon which there is Israeli consensus or Parliamentary majority, and the world understands that it will be ours, we should get the world accustomed to the idea that there is no reason why we shouldn't take these areas now. The Palestinians didn't wait for the Messiah either. In the past they learned a lot of things from us, from the Zionist movement, and now we should learn a few things from them."

"As long as the Middle Eastern map hasn't stabilized, there's no point discussing the future status of the Palestinians."

And what about the target program? What about the demographic demon and the fear of voting rights for the Palestinian population? Elkin doesn't ignore these questions, but doesn't rush to give absolute answers either. "Any attempt to create a plan which will provide answers for all the questions regarding the future of the Palestinian population and other excellent questions, any such attempt is doomed to fail," he says. "We see what's happening in the Middle East and don't know how to properly estimate what will happen in two years or even two months. Until the regional map re-stabilizes, we cannot plan how the Palestinians will come into play. We don't know what the borders will be and what the nature of the Middle Eastern states will be like in the near future. That's why I tell everyone who demands a laid-out plan that when there's an earthquake, you don't start pouring the foundations of a house, but rather you wait until things calm down in order to see how the land lies and, only then, begin planning."

Elkin, an experienced parliamentarian and now a leading diplomat, is careful not to step on any political landmines and refuses to answer when asked what future scenarios in the Middle East may or could affect the Israeli-Palestinian arena. He says he has several such scenarios up his sleeve, but "the current political reality is sensitive and every scenario that could open channels for the Palestinians could cause unnecessary tensions. There's no need for that. It's better to let the Middle East create the reality and then build a plan on in it the future, rather than build a plan and then try and force the Middle East to align with it, as was the case with those who tried to create a New Middle East."

"I'm between Bennett and Livni," says Elkin and clarifies, "Bennett says there isn't a Palestinian problem and that no one cares about it but us, and on the other hand, Livni believes that because the entire world cares, we have no choice but to concede everything to the Palestinians. I'm in between. I believe Livni is correct in identifying the problem. In all my meetings I have unfortunately discovered that it really doesn't make sense that such interest is taken in the Palestinian issue, but we aren't judged by sensible standards. The world treats the entire State of Israel as The Jew. The entire historical attitude of

gentiles towards Jews is now directed towards the State of Israel. Incidentally, this is why anti-Israelism is a new form of anti-Semitism. The Palestinian issue generates more world interest and receives higher priority than it merits. Granted the PA, Israel and even the Gaza Strip are currently the most stable places in the Middle East, yet the world is convinced that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the source of all evil. Meaning there's a problem here, but unlike Livni, I don't believe that because of a problem we should give up on all Israeli interests just so the world likes us. This requires a form of coping that will require a change in perception. It's difficult and there aren't 100% guaranteed results, but Zionism never gave up in the face of hardships."

"The Right has forsaken diplomacy. This is the time to step into the ring."

Elkin's words take us back to the early days of Zionism, where he finds relevant points for today as well as the "division of labor" between the Right and Left in recent years. "In the early days of Zionism, the political Zionism people believed that first the political groundwork must be laid and only then could the state be established, while the practical Zionism people said that as long as there aren't large numbers of Jews on the ground there won't be a state and therefore communities must be established. Reality proved them both right. In order for the State of Israel to rise, both schools of thought were necessary. The Right today has invested many years in practical Zionism, impressive community-building in Judea and Samaria, developing Jerusalem etc., but the diplomatic arena was left to the Left, and that was a mistake. We don't live separately from the rest of the world and we can not achieve much without affecting the world and bringing it closer to our point of view. It is an art, it is work and it is an investment that depends on the attitude and the funding. These days I'm working on creating a new body which will act as a sort of Jewish Agency to distribute information from such a point of view."

With such political and diplomatic views, it seems difficult to run the Office of the Commissioner of Israeli PR while your PM is talking about the 'Two-State' vision as a diplomatic goal. Elkin does not deny it. His job is complex and not simple. "When asked for my personal view I don't hide it. I state things clearly. I know that it's common practice for Right-wingers who reach the top to start talking about things appearing differently from that position. I do not accept that approach. Things in the Foreign Ministry appear exactly as they did when I was Chairman of the Coalition. It's the same concept. I may see different ways to deal with issues but my approach has not changed."

"Even when I present the diplomatic position of the PM, which is the official position, I point out that this position is challenged in Israeli politics. I explain the root of the conflict. After all, there is a large segment of the Israeli public which is skeptical about the 'Two-State' idea, and I point out, rather than hide the fact, that I am part of that segment."

He adds and tells of the ideological change he is trying to lead in the Office's work. "I try to add a more activist facet to our PR work. It's time to stop apologizing and justifying. We have things to be proud of and things to complain (against the Palestinians) about and not just listen to them complaining against us. I'm talking about the Palestinian propaganda, the Palestinian support of murderers who are currently in Israeli prisons and the huge salaries that they send them. These are things that no intelligent person in the world will accept and when they hear about it they're shocked. Similarly, when I have criticism towards the Europeans' conduct, I express things clearly. I make it clear to them that when they, the supporters of the Oslo Accords which forbid unilateral moves, now support the Palestinians' unilateral moves in the UN, the significance for us is that, in the future, whoever comes to us, talking about dependable international guarantees, will be reminded that certain countries' guarantees cannot be trusted, since they support violations of agreements that they themselves pushed for and supported."

Is there an attentive diplomatic ear in the world today to anything that isn't a 'Two-State' solution?

"What they are willing to hear about are the problems of the 'Two-State' idea. I present them with a simple task – you talk about a diplomatic process but notice that as far as the average Israeli citizen in Ashdod or Be'er Sheva, there is a very simple test; whether he feels more or less safe since the Oslo Accords – and the answer is clear and unequivocal. Before the Oslo Accords there was more safety, meaning the "peace" process has hurt the safety of all Israeli citizens. Such a presentation speaks to our discussion partners around the world and influences them."

"The 'Two-State' enthusiasts on our side have led the Palestinians to be stubborn and unwilling."

"The world has locked onto the 'Two-State' idea because, for a long time, our own leaders, initially Leftists but eventually others as well, turned to the world and said that 'Two-States' are an Israeli interest. That's how it came to be that world leaders who are considered our friends say that it's an Israeli interest because there's a fear of a bi-national state and the demographic threat, and if it's our interest then why are we asking the Palestinians for anything in exchange for fulfilling our interests. The result is paradoxical – those who wanted the 'Two-State' vision, but wanted things in exchange, lost their bargaining chip when they presented the vision as our interest, postponing the agreement because the Palestinians won't give in to their interest. It turns out G-d runs things in an interesting way, and it could be that there is value to this destructive action when it hardens the hearts on the other side and postpones the danger of the agreement."

Elkin has difficulty hearing the ideas proposed by his friends on the Right regarding granting full citizenship to the entire Arab population in Judea and Samaria. "The issue of a bi-national state disturbs me. It isn't simple and we will have to address it. It is wrong to ignore it. The simplistic solution I hear from some of my friends on the Right who talk of granting citizenship and equal rights to Palestinians in our state is a very dangerous solution. According to this solution, in the next elections Yossi Beilin will get elected, if we're lucky, who will immediately return everything we annex. Therefore it's clear to me that after we annex the area we won't be able to avoid providing a solution to the Palestinian population. They need to belong to something."

In conclusion, Elkin returns to the stages idea, the 'Salami Technique', which is available to us to learn from the Palestinians. "We can annex a lot of this area today without this problem. We're talking about the Israeli controlled 'C' Territories which include 60% of the region and less than 100,000 Palestinians live in them, which means annexation without a demographic threat. That's why, with the 'Salami Technique', there is no demographic problem with the first stage of annexing these areas. The problem will arise later, when we talk about annexing the rest of the area, but by then there might be other plausible solutions that we can't think of today because we're in the middle of an earthquake in the Middle East. That's why, with some humility, I say 'I don't know' instead of giving a simplistic solution which isn't really a solution. In the Middle East it is better not to support immediate methods but rather, to wait and see how things develop later on and then we can start thinking and worrying."

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'Occupied Territories?' There is no Historical or Legal Basis for That

An Interview with Former Ambassador Alan Baker

While the world repeatedly states that Judea and Samaria are occupied territories, international law expert and member of the Judge Levi committee, former ambassador Alan Baker determines that the international law is opposed to these statements.

Let's start from the bottom line - are Judea and Samaria occupied territories or not?

"As I wrote in the Levy Committee report, together with Judges Levi and Shapira, we believe that Judea and Samaria are not occupied territories. The term 'occupation' has a very clear definition in international law and in international treaties. Occupation means one country conquering from another sovereign country during a time of war, when the conquering country has no rights or claims over the land it has taken and it conquers it for no reason with the intention of swapping back the land at the end of the conflict or some other arrangement. The situation here is not like that. The land was taken from Jordan who never sat there as a sovereign but rather annexed it in 1951 after Israel's War of Independence."

The Jordanian annexation was done without any international authorization?

"Not only without any international authorization but with the entire Arab world opposing the annexation as well as the rest of the world, with the exception of 2 countries – England and Pakistan."

What was the reason for this international opposition?

"The Partition Plan spoke of creating a new Arab state along with a new Jewish state and the Arab world opposed the Jordanians expanding their sovereignty and engulfing more land."

So there really was no consent to the Jordanian annexation, but perhaps there is validation for it because, for a long time, Jordanians ruled the area, even if it started with international disagreement. Especially since there was no opposition raised by any actual body which claimed ownership of the area.

"We're only talking about 16 years between '51 and '67. We aren't talking about hundreds of years where things stabilize in history. The Jordanians annexed. Even though no one protested beyond the original opposition, it did not legitimize the fact that the Jordanians had no sovereign holding there. That reality was reinforced in '88 when the King of Jordan announced that he gives up all possible rights in the 'West Bank' for the Palestinian people."

We can not ignore your last words, 'for the Palestinian people'. That's the reason he gave up. That cannot be ignored.

"We see it as further evidence of the fact that Jordan never had sovereign rights in the first place. The meaning is that we entered a disputed area, an area to which we hold historic and legal rights from long ago, and with the power of international documents such as the Balfour Declaration, the San Remo Declaration, the UN charter and the mandate given to the British by the League of Nations. All these show that the Jewish people have always had rights to this area. Therefore it is not occupation according to the international definitions but rather a unique situation."

So there aren't any similar cases around the world?

"Correct. This is the perfect example of a 'one-of-a-kind' situation."

So there isn't any historical precedent we can learn from and perhaps that's working against us?

"It isn't working against us or for us. It's a unique situation which must be addressed. We aren't denying

that there have also been Arabs in the area since 700 AD. Granted, we were here 1,500 years before that but we're placing claim vs. claim and that's why we agreed in the Oslo Accords to negotiate for the future of the area. No reasonable person thinks that the Arab residents will disappear or become Zionists and hand over the land to us. Obviously we have to reach some sort of agreement. There is an opinion which says we should apply sovereignty over the entire area and the Palestinians will be under Israeli sovereignty, perhaps in autonomy. That's one of the options. Personally I doubt if that's practical but I'm not rejecting the idea."

You mentioned the UN charter in the list of international documents. What exactly does it say?

"The UN charter from 1945 has an Article 80 which states that all agreements and commitments made previously by the League of Nations are still valid, meaning the San Remo commitment and the Mandate also remain valid according to the UN charter. That is a very important fact. That is a legal source for international recognition of the rights of the Jewish people to the land."

How is it possible that the very same UN, which recognizes in its official charter our right to the land, conducts itself in such a pro-Palestinian manner?

"That is because the UN is guided by the interests of its member countries. Decisions are made there by majority vote, even if they are completely absurd and have no factual or legal basis. We have to remember that these decisions aren't obligatory. They are simply an expression of the political opinion of those who vote in favor. There is no binding resolution which states that the land belongs to the Palestinians. The fact that the UN treats the area as "occupied Palestinian territories" is a pipe dream. It has no legal or factual basis. The land never belonged to the Palestinians. There is no Palestinian state and there is no legal or historic document which grants Judea and Samaria to the Palestinians. That is just a political expression by most of the countries that voted for it."

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In Praise of Normalcy

Adv. Betsalel Smotrich, Regavim

(Regavim is an organization working to ensure responsible, legal and accountable use of Israel's national lands and the return of the rule of law to all areas and aspects of the land and its preservation)

"Along with expectations and hopes for applying sovereignty by the 'sudden' path, we must train ourselves for the 'gradual' path."

In doing repentance, our sages taught that there are two paths – the 'gradual' path and the 'sudden' path. It seems that this is also regarding group repentance. The application of sovereignty over the entire area of Judea and Samaria and the completion of this chapter of redemption that began with the Six Day War can come in one of two ways – either suddenly or gradually. The annexation of Judea and Samaria can be implemented suddenly if a window of opportunity opens, as a distinct act – as a reaction to some political or security event, or in a moment of "the appearance of an internal quality by some great spiritual influence that must be sought in the depths of the unknown" – (Rav Kook, the Lights of Repentance, Chapter 2), but it could be, and perhaps it is even more reasonable and suitable to the gradual path, in which we have the merit to live – and it will come in a gradual process of training hearts and deeds, step by step, part after part, until complete application of the law and even official political annexation.

For ourselves, we must evaluate both possibilities. On the one hand, we must present the demand for

annexation in its complete form, to assure that it remains an option on the table, ready for immediate implementation, in its entirety, when a suitable opportunity arises. But in parallel we must also prepare the land for annexation in phases and act every moment to promote the gradual process, step by step, by another law and another procedure, another article and another supporting opinion.

About one year ago we in Regavim, established The Adam and Adama Center (Center for Man and the Land) – for Zionism, Law and Society, as a legal research institute for the purpose of formulating the legal basis for settlement in Judea and Samaria and to bridge the difference, if not the gap, between the accepted legal world in Israel and the very obsolete law that is practiced in Judea and Samaria. The legal difference that applies in Judea and Samaria presents many obstacles to settlement development on a practical level, but what is much worse is that it causes strategic and cognitive damage by distancing the settlement project from the simple person and representing it as something foreign, strange and alienated.

The first phase on the road to public legitimacy of the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria is its normalization. Bearing in mind the dominance of legal considerations in the Israeli experience, legal normalization is a critical component of legitimization and public support of the settlement project. It is within the framework of this insight that we established the Center for Man and the Land and we act within its framework to develop the law that applies in the area, to update it and to suit it to the present reality, to create a judicial discussion that is supportive of the communities and will be implemented in the legal, academic and public fields.

When we present the Center to like-minded friends, we are asked "isn't it more correct and easier to act for full application of Israeli law in Judea and Samaria? Isn't it a waste to invest in developing the law that exists today to make it more suitable and approachable to the public when it is clear that full application of Israeli law will reflect full normalization of the Jewish communities in Judea and Samaria in the legal level and will achieve one of our central goals?"

This is indeed a relevant question. But the answer to it is inherent in the two paths that we mentioned. If only we could merit the sudden redemption, when annexation would occur all at once. As mentioned, it is good that there are those activists who work toward continually toward this goal. But naturally, annexation would require much preparation. The annexation of an area that is etched in the public consciousness as "occupied territory" – is an act that is considered to be against international law and as such might put Israel in a very problematic position in the world. But annexing territory to which we claim many legal rights could be in accordance with international law. The annexation of normal recognized territory, in which Israeli society is active, carries out business, etc., is not like annexation of a "black hole" that no one knows how to deal with and when you get yourself involved in it you must search high and low for some lawyer who by chance may know the law that applies there and will know how to extricate it from the legal knot that it is in.

Today, annexation is considered to be a drastic step, almost outlandish, and between the present reality and the annexation there is a conceptual chasm that is extremely difficult to cross. In order that official annexation will indeed come to us, we must prepare our hearts, mainly to bring it as close to reality as possible. We must make it so that the ultimate act of official annexation will become a small step, one that will be relatively simple to take.

In summary, we will not be sorry, of course, if we merit the appearance of the sudden redemption (which will make the Adam and Adama Center superfluous), but until then we must act to promote

annexation in the gradual path and pray for the sudden path even while walking the gradual path.

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We Succeeded in Settlement, but Failed in Diplomacy

A talk with Israel Harel, former head of the Council of Judea Samaria and Gaza (Yesha)

Israel Harel admits to neglecting the long-term political vision of applying sovereignty over the area and instead, making do with battles over much smaller goals.

Israel Harel, one of the founders of the Yesha Council, and former head of the Council from 1980-1995, believes that the continual struggle to develop the areas of Yesha for Jewish settlement, and later the effort to establish dozens of Jewish communities and populate them, has distracted the ideological Right from the need for organized thinking complemented by long-term political action.

Speaking of the first days of the Yesha Council, he relates that every one of the founders did indeed share the vision of applying Israeli law over the entire territory, but "we lacked the political-diplomatic understanding of how to go about it. We had the ideological drive, but not enough understanding of how to apply this drive. We did not have a burning need to establish political acceptance of the communities. We hoped that the fact of the settlements' existence would necessarily bring about the application of the law, because there would be no choice but to do so."

Today, many years later, he still appreciates action in the field, but he also admits responsibility for neglecting this policy. "I don't know if we would have succeeded to have the law applied, but there is no doubt that the lack of political understanding is one of the reasons that the law was not applied. Today, when the prime minister from the Likud party declares a "vision" of two states, and Likud does not fall apart as a result, and the Jewish Home party sits together in a coalition with this Likud, it is difficult for me to see how it will be possible in the foreseeable future for the law to be applied." Even if there is a sense of having missed an opportunity, Harel continues, "consciousness must be raised and we must work on a grand political process. "Even if it is late, we must devote all of our energy to this."

When he relates to the course that should be taken now, Israel Harel says that he believes that the ideological Right, and especially the residents of Judea and Samaria, must not bury their heads in the sand. It is important to internalize the fact that the Oslo Accords have granted the Palestinians, in theory and in practice, areas A and B and as he defines it: "Today, from the point of view of international law – and the Oslo Accords are international agreements in every way – even if Itamar Ben Gvir was the prime minister he would not be able to change this policy, unless we are willing to isolate ourselves from the entire world. Like North Korea, or Iran. And even worse than that. And then, not only will the world ostracize us. Also internally, from the point of view of minimal national consensus, there would be a total breakdown. Today we can attempt – even this process meets with internal opposition that will not be easy to overcome – to act in order to have the law applied over Israeli controlled Area C (which is 60% of Judea and Samaria)."

For this reason, such a process can be realized "only if the entire nationalist camp will join in the effort," and the parliamentary arena is the field of action. In this context he mentions, of course, Naftali Bennet,

who has declared in the past that this is his plan. In addition to the Jewish Home, a few Likud party MKs can also be enlisted, and with Shas' new situation, some of them may join as well. "In my opinion," he says, "more than a few Shas people who have left the religious Zionist camp may well return to it."

"For the process to take shape, we must take action, by the investment of a great deal of human and material resources, the power of the political center and public legitimacy. If there is any party that should have assumed responsibility for the project, it is the Yesha Council. Today, the Council does not deal with establishing new communities. Such things simply do not exist. When another fifty or one hundred housing units are added to an existing community, this is simply not the same momentum of settlement activity that existed in the past, in the days when, within a decade and a half, almost two hundred Jewish communities were established in Judea and Samaria."

So then, what field of action remains for the Yesha Council? The political. So either the Council doesn't understand its main role today, or it has become apathetic.

"Apparently both things are true to some extent. And of course, there are not enough people of stature to conduct meaningful political processes. Another problem the Council has faced is the problem of legitimacy. The Yesha Council does not enjoy enough legitimacy within the communities. It is suspected, and in my opinion rightly so, that it did not fight hard enough to prevent the uprooting of Gush Katif. And worse: there were even elements within the Council that cooperated with the expulsion forces. Nevertheless, among the general public, the media and the government, it does have stature and if it succeeds in shaking off the sins of the past plus its present total lack of activity, it might be able to consolidate the supporters of Yesha in the Knesset to take such a direction."

Is there a realistic chance for such a political vision to succeed?

"Since in any political struggle there always appears a window of opportunity, we must prepare for it ahead of time; so that it is always relevant and on the agenda. And then, when the time comes, we must be ready to bring it to fruition before heavy media and international opposition arises. For example, at the height of the Second Intifada (which should go down in history as the 'Terror War'), it would have been natural and logical to respond by imposing Israeli sovereignty. There were some faint peeps calling for this, but no one took the lead. Politics means applying pressure. I suppose that in the time of the Shamir government, if he had had enough pressure put on him, it would have been possible to arrive at these sorts of achievements. He had more courage and ability to stand up to outside pressure than any of our other prime ministers. It was indeed a missed opportunity for him, but for us as well. Yes, I also thought that actions in the field were more important than political or judicial or public relations activity – but nevertheless I did initiate the 'Nekuda' journal and even served as editor for most of the years of its publication."

"The uprooting of the Jewish communities from northern Sinai shook me severely. Only then did I understand that we actually repressed – I repressed – the fact that a flourishing community can be erased by the blows of a bulldozer. Yes, I am also responsible for not preparing the field for such possibilities and the result was lack of action."

As mentioned, Harel sees the ministers and MKs of Likud and the Jewish Home as a target for public pressure of this sort. "Make sure that the issue remains on the agenda," with the hope of finding that window of opportunity so that the political process can be carried out at the right moment. As the actual outline of the arrangement, Harel emphasizes that he does not find it problematic to grant full citizenship to the tens of thousands of Palestinians who reside in Israeli controlled Area C. "First of all, whoever thinks it is possible to annex without granting citizenship is living in a fantasy world. Secondly, I

think that they will be more loyal to the State than a significant number of Arabs who are citizens of Israel today."

Are you actually giving up the vision of our return to the entire territory?

"I'm not giving up anything. I don't know what history has in store for us in the future. But as of now, in the global era in which we live, the world reveres international law and as part of the Oslo Accords that Israel signed, these territories have been transferred to Palestinian Sovereignty. For the first time in the history of the Jewish people, a legal government has ceded parts of the Land of Israel to foreign sovereignty, and not as a result of defeat in the field of battle, and as long as the present consciousness prevails in the world, a return of sovereignty to areas A and B is unthinkable." However, a nation does not live from today until tomorrow. Many of us have been privileged to experience the establishment of the State and afterward the liberation of Judea and Samaria and the establishment of its many communities. The day may come – perhaps sooner, perhaps later – when we will return to the entire area. Meanwhile, there is no point in acting against the reality."

Toward the end of his speech Harel sends a harsh and sharp message through us to the leadership of the settlement enterprise and the educational institutions of religious Zionism: "The Kibbutz Movement was a small percentage of the population and nevertheless for decades directed the state's spirit and ethos. The spirit that originated in the kibbutzim was implemented by politicians in the Knesset. Only approximately three percent of the population resided in kibbutzim but about a third of the seats of Knesset were occupied by kibbutz members – and in certain governments, close to half of its members were kibbutz members. From the spiritual-ideological perspective as well as the political point of view, the Jewish communities of Judea and Samaria should have the same influence as the kibbutzim did at their peak, and they should lead processes such as the application of the law or annexation of all of Judea and Samaria over Area C. The settlement enterprise must radiate such excellence that the politicians will not be able to ignore the spirit that it radiates. In the absence of that radiating spirit, it will atrophy. Unfortunately, I see such signs of atrophy. There is not a strong spiritual quality radiating from Judea and Samaria outward: certainly not from the official institutions."

Harel continues his barbs of criticism. "It is not only that the yeshivas do not fill the void, but that some of the heads of yeshivas actually hold us back. This must be said: in part, our hands are tied from a political point of view. The fact that there are many institutions creates competition for resources. And the politicians buy political quiet by supplying monetary means into the many, too many, educational institutions. The educational institutions, which are so important from a Jewish point of view, have become a millstone from a political point of view."

"I saw this clearly in Gush Katif. Important rabbis came in order to "strengthen" the residents of Gush Katif. But ultimately, instead of leading the struggle, they weakened the hands of those who were holding strong and refused to be uprooted. The overriding interest of the rabbis was to be not totally cut off from the establishment that funded their institutions, and therefore, when the moment of truth arrived, meaning the time for battle, even non-violent battle, they disappeared from the scene. I will never forget how a few of them who did not leave, wore vests prepared ahead of time – a sign of cooperation and pre-arranged submission – with the word "rabbi" written on them. These rabbis symbolized the terrible tragedy of Gush Katif's struggle, or actually, the lack of struggle."

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Israeli Sovereignty in Judea and Samaria Will End an Ongoing Injustice

By Yossi Dagan, Deputy Chairman of the Samaria Regional Council

A Kafkaesque legal system prevails in Judea and Samaria. Israeli law hasn't been applied officially, yet in practice it was applied almost immediately. The legal method used at the time was applying the law through "military rule". But then, something else happened – the Oslo Accords – and as a result, 96% of the Arabs became subjects of the Palestinian Authority. Israel does not determine a single thing in their daily lives, and in fact, the only ones who are still under military rule are the residents of the Jewish communities, Israeli citizens, who live under unimaginable, tyrannical laws.

Welcome to the Israeli Cuckoo's Nest. Here, Arabs who are not citizens, do not fulfill obligations to the State of Israel, some of whom are even hostile and take part in terrorist activities, live side by side with Jews who hold the record in burden carrying. The Jews fulfill their obligations above and beyond what is required. They pay taxes and serve in the best combat units in the IDF, hold the record for reserve service – 34% in comparison to the Israeli average of 4.5%, and their presence in the military cemeteries is accordingly. But when it comes to their basic rights, the situation is reversed. The Civil Administration, which was established to present a friendly face towards the Arabs in the military rule, has become an oppressive body towards their Jewish neighbors.

Only in Judea and Samaria does every government regulation have to be signed off by the Major General in order to take effect – just a technical issue, allegedly – except that this technique has become a tool used by the political and legal echelons in order to rob the Jews of their rights. Only in Judea and Samaria do planning and construction laws have to be validated by the Minister of Defense, thus going through a political filter as well as the municipal filter. All across the country, communities have been and are being built based on primary general outline plans. The bureaucratic process usually ends decades after construction is complete, because if people waited for the bureaucrats, not a single wall would go up in this country.

In the Cuckoo's Nest, Ariel Sharon, the former great community builder, could, at the height of cynicism, call one day upon the woman he formerly detested, Adv. Talia Sasson, and give her the responsibility of writing a report which is meant "to halt the outposts phenomenon and remove them," the very same outposts he used to push for with all his power. How is this possible in a state of law? Because there is no law in Judea and Samaria and the military commander – meaning the political echelon that directs him – is a tyrant who does as he, the political echelon and particularly the legal echelon, pleases.

The monstrous result of the report produced by Talia Sasson was transforming hundreds of communities into "illegal settlements" overnight, just because they didn't have a City Building Plan (Zoning Permit), meaning they didn't fully complete the bureaucratic process yet. And what about those who did? They wait for the Minister of Defense's signature and get stuck.

That's how the Cuckoo's Nest operates: a Jewish community which doesn't have a Zoning Permit is deemed "unauthorized", is under threat of demolition and uprooting and will definitely not receive any government assistance (unlike, in case you were wondering, the illegal Arab construction and

settlements in the Galilee, the Negev and also Judea and Samaria). When it finishes with the requirements for the Zoning Permit, it will turn to the Minister of Defense for his signature and be met with evasive answers.

This fixed, double-standard game against the Jewish citizens in Judea and Samaria is that, on the one hand, a draconian rule is set that a community without a Zoning Permit is deemed “unauthorized” and, on the other hand, such Zoning Permits are withheld, keeping the communities “unauthorized” and therefore, prevented from receiving the resources they deserve as per standard, such as electricity, water, parks and schools.

The community of Bruchin was established as a result of the 1984 decision of the Likud-Labor national union government. The community was established with government support, with infrastructures and houses that were built by the Housing Ministry. In the meantime the Sasson report was turned in, and the community discovered it was now, suddenly, “illegal”. The community grew, and the electric supply remained low, which led to power outages, usually at the peak of winter. The community, which became an “outpost”, didn’t receive a kindergarten, even though there was an allocation waiting from the Ministry of Education. In the dilemma between breaking the Compulsory Education law and breaking the Planning and Construction laws, the parents decided to build the kindergarten at their own expense and without a permit. The Civil Administration hung a demolition order on the kindergarten, when all they were missing was the Minister of Defense’s signature. Despite the fact that Bruchin got the signature in the end, there is no fundamental change in the situation since the bureaucratic processes in the Civil Administration are still ongoing, so that the most contributing public in Israel continues to be deprived and persecuted.

The legal system in Judea and Samaria imposes a form of legal terrorism against Jews with an onslaught of demolition orders, not balking even at the destruction of wading pools of springs, which were created in memory of fallen IDF soldiers, such as Kfir Spring in Elon Moreh, which was destroyed, rebuilt, and granted another demolition order, or Amsa Spring in Har Bracha, which is also decorated with a demolition order. The springs, by the way, are named after 2 combat soldiers who were killed in Lebanon, and do not interfere with anyone.

“Delimitation orders” and “Orders regarding disruptive use”, original legal gimmicks for suppressing the Jewish communities, were invented and are used only against the Jewish communities of Judea and Samaria. In the Levy Report they were called “draconian” by first-class legal experts. There is not enough space to describe the various methods of discrimination, persecution and insult.

This system is led by a few legal professionals, often against the will of the political, diplomatic and even military echelons. The application of Israeli law in Judea and Samaria will, once and for all, disband and disarm these unharnessed circles, which operate on the verge of anarchism, and force them to act, for a change, according to the rules of Israeli law.

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2013 Sovereignty Conference Excerpts

The Sovereignty journal is the direct product of the large information campaign, which began, a few years ago, with a series of conferences organized by the ‘Women in Green’ movement, in which the call to apply Israeli sovereignty over Judea and Samaria was raised. Before you are excerpts of some

of the speeches given at the last conference, which was held in Jerusalem on January 1st 2013, with the attendance of ministers, members of Knesset, public figures and hundreds of supporters from around the country. The entire conference can be viewed at the site: www.womeningreen.org.

Mk Yuli Edelstein

Today Knesset Speaker

"We do not have to fear the international response to the application of sovereignty. Sovereignty is to be applied in a gradual and practical manner. We must return to the discourse of rights to the Land, from the historical aspect as well. We did not occupy a Palestinian state, because there wasn't any such state."

Caroline Glick

Senior Editor at the Jerusalem Post

"The issue of the Arabs of Judea and Samaria deters the public and results in many not discussing the entire demand for sovereignty, because of the fear of this question. In the two precedents of the Golan Heights and Jerusalem, Israel was capable of dealing with the local Arabs without any special problem, when it allowed the Arabs in these places to file requests for citizenship, which they will receive if they will meet certain criteria. These precedents have worked very well, and there is no reason why they won't work now."

Mk Yariv Levin

Today Head of Coalition

"A vision must be presented, and only someone who sees the vision will reach the goal. The gradual application of sovereignty is to be supported and to request, first, that the laws of the State be applied to the Jews residing in Judea and Samaria, both laws applying to individuals and general laws, first and foremost, the building laws."

Dr. Mordechai Kedar

Bar-Ilan University

"I suggest going for the gradual application of sovereignty. In response to the application of sovereignty, we can expect condemnations from the UN and the institutions attached to it, and perhaps the summoning of the ambassadors to Jordan and Egypt, but not the cutting of relations. Everyone wants peace, but in the Middle East, peace is given only to the undefeated. The time has come for us to be exactly that – undefeatable – and then peace will come, inshalla."

Adv. Elyakim Haetzni

Former member of Knesset

"The correct idea for the Arabs of Judea and Samaria is autonomy, to which the State will transfer from its resources, and thereby express its sovereignty. This will be after the application of Israeli sovereignty over the area. They could receive their citizenship in the country beyond the Jordan."

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The Call that Arises from Shdema: Impose Sovereignty

and Declare that the Land is Ours and is not for Sale

The call to apply sovereignty over Judea and Samaria was a recurring theme in the speeches that were given at the dedication ceremony at the Land of Israel Cultural Center in Shdema in Gush Etzion. In his speech at the ceremony, Dep. Minister of Religious Affairs, Rabbi Eli Ben Dahan stated that "there will be no other sovereignty in the Land of Israel than the sovereignty of the State of Israel." In the educational spirit of Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Kook, he emphasized that we must state over and over: "We will repeat this statement again and again without stopping. Only by repeating it again and again will these words settle in our hearts. In the future there will be families and children here again and from here, sovereignty will expand to the entire area of Judea and Samaria and we will continue to hold on to each and every place."

Later in the event, former member of Knesset, Israel Prize laureate, Ms. Geula Cohen, spoke about the sense of excitement that she feels every time she attends such an event aimed at strengthening the settlement enterprise in Israel, an excitement that only increases with every such event. She also spoke of her hope that the next time she comes to an event in the Shdema Cultural Center, it will be when Israeli sovereignty has already been established over Judea and Samaria.

Before Ms. Cohen's words, MK Shuli Mualem-Rafaeli spoke, turning to Ms. Cohen with a personal note: "It is a tremendous privilege to work in the Knesset and continue in the spirit that Geula Cohen imparted there. Geula is a source of power and, thanks to this spirit, we will reach our goal which is the application of Jewish sovereignty over the entire area of Judea and Samaria. It is we politicians who are primarily required to do this because G-d has endowed us with the right and the privilege to act on behalf of all of the People of Israel."

The ceremony opened with words of greeting from the heads of the Women in Green Movement, Yehudit Katsover and Nadia Matar, who were the force behind the project of returning the abandoned military compound in Shdema to Israeli hands. "It is not enough to establish settlements," the two said. "We must demand that Israeli sovereignty be imposed in Judea and Samaria. The sovereignty signifies that the Land is ours and it is not merchandise to be sold. This is what we demand from the government, from the Knesset and from the public as a whole."

The return to the abandoned Shdema Camp was accompanied by continual struggles against anti-Israel anarchistic groups from Israel and abroad and agents of Palestinian incitement, who understood the significance of the location in keeping territorial continuity between Jerusalem and the eastern part of Gush Etzion.

In 2006 the base was abandoned and in 2008 it was revealed by the journalist Hagai Huberman that the government of Israel had intended to hand over the place to the Palestinians. This, despite its being in Area C, meaning under Israeli control. As a result of the publication of this information, activists and supporters of the Women in Green and the Committee for a Jewish Shdema began to act so that there would be civilian Jewish presence in the place. This process won wide political support. The year 2010 marked a significant achievement when the IDF internalized the importance of the place and decided to return to Shdema. In parallel, local Arabs took over the area on the outskirts of the camp and illegally set up a huge compound, funded by anti-Israeli organizations from abroad, among them USAID and PAIDIA. A demolition order was issued against the illegal Arab compound there but it was never carried out and as if that was not enough, lately the Arabs have extended their illegal holding in that locality. And until now, without any appropriate response from Israel.

In light of the apathy demonstrated by the authorities in the area, the hundreds of Shdema supporters throughout the Land see the affixing of the mezuzah in the central building of the camp, a building that is now the Cultural Center for the Land of Israel, as a small turning point in the history of the area.

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