

There can be no doubt that the settlers and their supporters intend to fight these aims by all means at their disposal. The full arms stores at the West Bank settlements will be an important contributive factor in that struggle. Alignment leaders know already that any solution they will propose will be most difficult to realize, mainly because of the settlers' opposition -- not just words but, so they expect, with factual opposition, which may not restrict itself to demonstrations. In private talks, and in broad hints in their public declarations, the settlers are putting the message across that only over their dead bodies will the settlements in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip be evacuated. (Litani, 1981:14)

As events turned out these preparations were premature. The Likud's second victory entrenched those pro-settlement elements even more firmly into state power. The consequences for geopolitical changes in the map of the West Bank are staggering. In April 1981 Ariel Sharon, by then Minister of Defense and the ultimate authority in the occupied territory, showed a map of settlement regions to the international press covering areas which he termed as "vital to Israel's security" constituting 75 percent of the total land area of the West Bank (Jerusalem Post, April 25, 1981 --- see Map 4:2). By 1980, the total area under direct Israeli control, according to classified U.S. State Department documents, cover 30 - 40 percent of the West Bank area, including 70 percent of the Jordan Valley's arable land (Aronson, 1980:21).

The issue of colonial settlement in the occupied territories has been, so far, the most explosive aspect of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, both from the perspective of territorial Zionism and in its association with the imagery of Palestinian dispossession. However, as a prelude to out discussion of economic dependency in the occupied areas, Jewish settlements have had a marginal impact on structural change for two reasons. First, with the exception of Kiryat Arba' and the Rafah settlements, these