

plan called for "beefing up" existing settlements and strengthening regional councils within it.

The Likud coming to power in 1977 paved the way for the final departure from the "territorial" conception of settlement as developed by Allon, which confined colonization to strategic "security" belts and to areas of minor Arab demographic presence (Jerusalem and Gush Etzion areas excepted). The ideological precepts of this expansion were already expressed by the World Zionist Organization Master Plan (1979-1983) in which settlement was declared essential for the State of Israel not only for security but "by right" (Drobbles, 1978:ibid.). But the logistical aspects of the plan's implementation were most sharply expressed in Arik Sharon's (then Minister of Agriculture) so-called Secret Map. The plan's main thrust was the building of longitudinal belts of Jewish settlements in a grid-like fashion which would criss-cross the lengths and widths of the West Bank's populated centres:

In Sharon's view, the growth of the Arab population cannot be restricted by administrative means -- including expropriation -- and therefore, the correct solution is to neutralize the physical development by shifting the border to the very doorstep of the Arabs, through an Israeli foothold in the empty expanses and the formation of a physical link between the Israeli outposts. (Shapira, 1978:1)

In the Jordan Valley the plan called for the establishment of a triangular series of settlements around Jericho intended to seal off the "Allon Corridor" linking Jordan to the West Bank and thus preempting any political solution within the Camp David framework (Shapira, 1978:ibid.). It is paradoxical that the implementation of this plan was carried while the autonomy negotiations were carried with Egypt during the 1978-1981 period. Actual construction of the first six settlements in the Jericho