**Settlement argument**

**The Case for Settlements**

Jews should be able to live anywhere. Their building is the fulfilment of a basic human right. To call for their destruction and removal is a form of ethnic cleansing.

The irony is that only Palestinians really suffer from a settlement freeze. Settlement building provides an important source of income for Palestinians who work in the construction industry. Moreover, many Palestinians enjoy the facilities provided by the settlements (shops, healthcare etc.). They are also provided with employment in the Industrial Areas of settlements.

The government of Israel does not recognize the West Bank as "occupied" but rather disputed.

To be occupied the area would have to have defined borders. No borders have been established or ever recognized.

The green line is a cease fire or armistice line not an official border.

There was not a legal sovereign entity (i.e. Palestine) in the West Bank before Israel took control in 1967.

The Fourth Geneva Convention, that prohibits the movement of an occupying power's population into an occupied area is not applicable to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israel took control of the West Bank as a result of a defensive war. The language of "occupation" has allowed Palestinian spokesmen to rewrite history. The area is disputed not occupied. There are many places in the world that are disputed including: Tibet, Scotland, Falkland Islands and Gibraltar.

The connection of Jews to the area can be dated back thousands of years. A people cannot occupy a land that historically belongs to them. You cannot be an occupier in your own home. Judea and Israel were real kingdoms, Palestine had never been a nation state.

Jews should be able to live wherever they want.

Israel destroyed the homes of nearly 10,000 Jews in Gush Katif in the Gaza strip –hoping for peace. After Israel’s withdrawal from the Gaza Strip Hamas took over and we have had only wars and missiles. If Israel left the West Bank Hamas would take over and use it as a base to attack Israel.

The Palestinians are not interested in peace. They want a one state solution – all of Israel. Israeli settlements strengthen Israel’s military security. The problem is not the settlements - the problem is a lack of a partner for peace.

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**The Case Against Settlements**

The settlements are illegal under international law. They are a block to peace as they are built on land destined to be Palestinian.

The actual built-up area of West Bank settlements takes up only a little more than one percent of the West Bank but almost 40 percent of the West Bank is included in the "municipal areas and regional councils," or the jurisdictional borders of the settlements.

In addition, Israel has taken hundreds of kilometers of the West Bank to build roads that serve the settlements, connecting them to each other and to Israel.

The building of settlements prevents the creation of a future Palestinian state.

Without the creation of a Palestinian state, the state of Israel is at risk of becoming either a bi-national state and losing its Jewish character, or becoming an international pariah in which a Jewish minority rules over a disenfranchised Palestinian majority. Either scenario jeopardizes Israel's future.

Settlements are therefore not only a major obstacle to peace but also a threat to Israel's future.

Israel should invest in Israel and not in the Occupied Territories. Israeli settlers are approximately 4% of the population, whereas the Israeli Housing Ministry’s construction budget for the last five years in the settlements is 17% of the budget.

"Israel’s control of the occupied territories and the continued construction in the settlements prevent the chances of establishing a viable sovereign Palestinian State, undermine the ability to negotiate for peace, isolate Israel on an international level and cost the Israeli tax payer hundreds of millions of shekels per year."1

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