

Israel's Proposed Annexation of Ma'ale Adummim: Rejecting a Partnership for Pandemonium

The Plea to Legitimize Annexation

April 11, 2005 witnesses another meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and President George W. Bush. Like their previous meeting in April of 2004, topics on the agenda will include inevitable requests for financial assistance along with a large debit on America's global reputation. The Israeli Prime Minister will seek US assurances for Israeli construction of 3,500 housing units on a strip connecting Jerusalem to Ma'aleh Adumim, the most populous Jewish settlement in the West Bank.

The construction is highly controversial because the "road map" calls for a freeze in all colonization activity. The project is not only the largest in a decade, but cuts into land that Palestinians see as territory needed for a viable, contiguous Palestinian state and access to an East Jerusalem capital. The Israeli Prime Minister is seeking US support for annexations that would inflame the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and create regional pandemonium (see Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1: Proposed Israeli Annexation of Ma'ale Adummim (Dotted Red Line)
(Source: Israeli Model for Control over the West Bank, IFFP – March 2005)



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Divide and Conquer – Splitting the West Bank

Analysis of the Israeli proposal to seal control over Jerusalem by seizing a 160 square kilometer "clover leaf" of surrounding territory reveals how this proposal dooms any prospect for peace between Israelis and Palestinians living in sovereign states:

1. Annexed territory would divide the West Bank into two enclaves, the southern Bethlehem territory and the northern Ramallah territory. Palestinians in transit between regions would have to make lengthy detours around Jerusalem toward the Dead Sea.
2. The expansion represents a strategic deviation from the road map, in which Israel only negotiates with the US for final status issues, rather than the Palestinians in a negotiated political process.
3. As the Israeli separation wall follows the E-1 corridor to encompass the Ma'ale Adummim settlements, the natural flow of people, goods and services between neighboring goods is cut off, changing the prospect for contiguous community growth.

Most troubling for the United States is the prospect for continued complicity in thwarting international law. In an April 14, 2004 the US opined in an official letter to Sharon that Israel could expect to annex Palestinian territories. This perceived US "permission" does not comply with UN resolutions and international law in spite of citation:

"As part of a final peace settlement, Israel must have secure and recognized borders, which should emerge from negotiations between the parties in accordance with UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338. In light of new realities on the ground, including already existing major Israeli populations centers, it is unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations will be a full and complete return to the armistice lines of 1949, and all previous efforts to negotiate a two-state solution have reached the same conclusion. It is realistic to expect that any final status agreement will only be achieved on the basis of mutually agreed changes that reflect these realities."

If the US accepts Ariel Sharon's invitation to unilaterally sanction major new "realities on the ground"; many facilitated by aid and billions in tax exempt contributions from groups operating in the United States, the consequences to US interests in the region would be irreparably harmed. **Arab allies and opinion leaders would see compelling evidence that the US is committed only to "rule of law" within Arab societies, and that international power politics and lobbies matter more when difficult choices are presented to the executive branch.**

Recommendations:

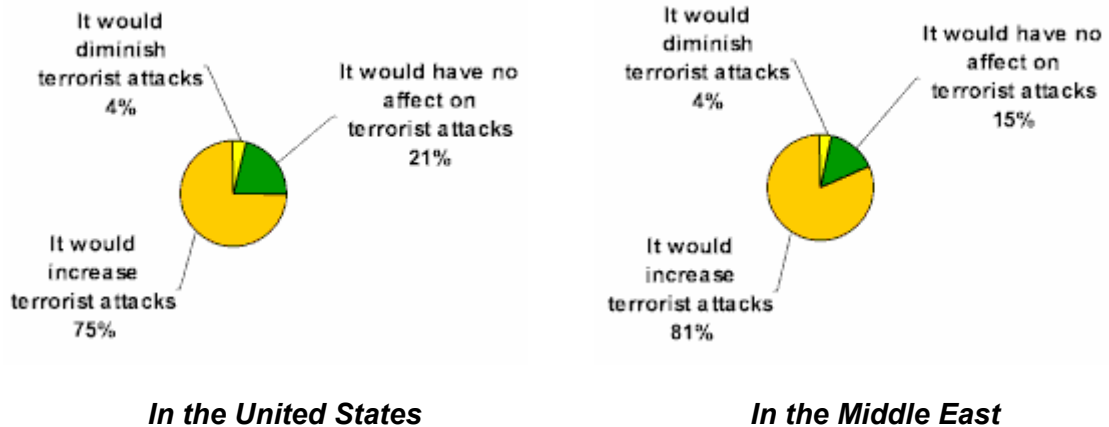
The natural US role in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is that of a neutral party striving for a just solution. As such, the US:

1. **Must reject unilateral Israeli annexations of territory that occur outside of a negotiated settlement between Israelis and Palestinians.** In a [2004 IRmep survey of US Middle East academics](#), most believed that violating international law by approving annexations would not only diminish the US's already damaged international credibility, but also inflame terrorism (see Exhibit 2).

Exhibit 2: US Recognition of Israeli Annexations Fuels Terrorism

((Source: IRmep MEASURE Survey of US Middle East Academics 2004))

How would the formal US recognition of annexation of territory outside the 1967 borders likely affect terrorist attacks?



2. **Attorney General and FBI should also continue to investigate and build cases for prosecution against unregistered foreign agents operating illegal colonization funding networks in the United States.** This includes groups such as the World Zionist Organization found by former Israeli prosecutor Talia Sasson to be major conduits for financing law breaking inside and outside Israel.
3. **Should analyze and consider the implications of the Arab League peace plan.** This plan, which provides Arab diplomatic relations and recognition of Israel in exchange for withdrawal to pre-1967 borders would provide an enduring border and opportunity for peace that unilateral Israeli "facts on the ground" cannot.