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Special Report

Arab Territories Under Israeli Occupation

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ARAB TERRITORIES UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION

Four months after the Arab-Israeli war, Israel remains in control of some 26,000 square miles of Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian territory. Although sizable economic and security problems are presented by the more than one million Arabs living in these areas, Arab resistance has thus far been chiefly non-violent in nature. In any case, Israel has sufficient resources, especially in the form of contributions from abroad, to support the additional financial demands as well as adequate security forces to maintain control over the occupied territories for the foreseeable future.

Background

Approximately 1,150,000 Arab civilians were estimated to be in Israeli-occupied areas of Jordan, Syria, and Egypt on 1 September 1967. Prior to the war, the population of these areas was about 1.6 million.

As a result of the mass exodus of Arabs to Jordan's East Bank fewer than 750,000 remain of the approximately 930,000 persons who resided on the West Bank prior to 5 June. An Israeli census in the occupied areas in September listed only 667,000 persons, including 120,000 refugees from the 1948 war in the West Bank area. The Israelis, however, have a vested interest in proving the number of 1948 refugees is less than that carried by the UN because compensation for refugees might be a part of any peace settlement. Over 14,000 refugees were repatriated to the West Bank in August, but they were more than offset by the Arabs who crossed and who continue to cross--at an estimated 300 per day--to the East Bank.

Of the more than 400,000 in the Gaza Strip and the 50,000 in Sinai when the war started, only 35,000 were able to cross the Suez Canal ahead of the Israelis. Gaza residents continue to go to east Jordan through Israel and the West Bank, however, with more than 4,000 crossing before 1 September. In the area of Syria now controlled by Israel, only about 6,000 Druzes and 250 others remain of the estimated 115,000 there prior to 5 June.

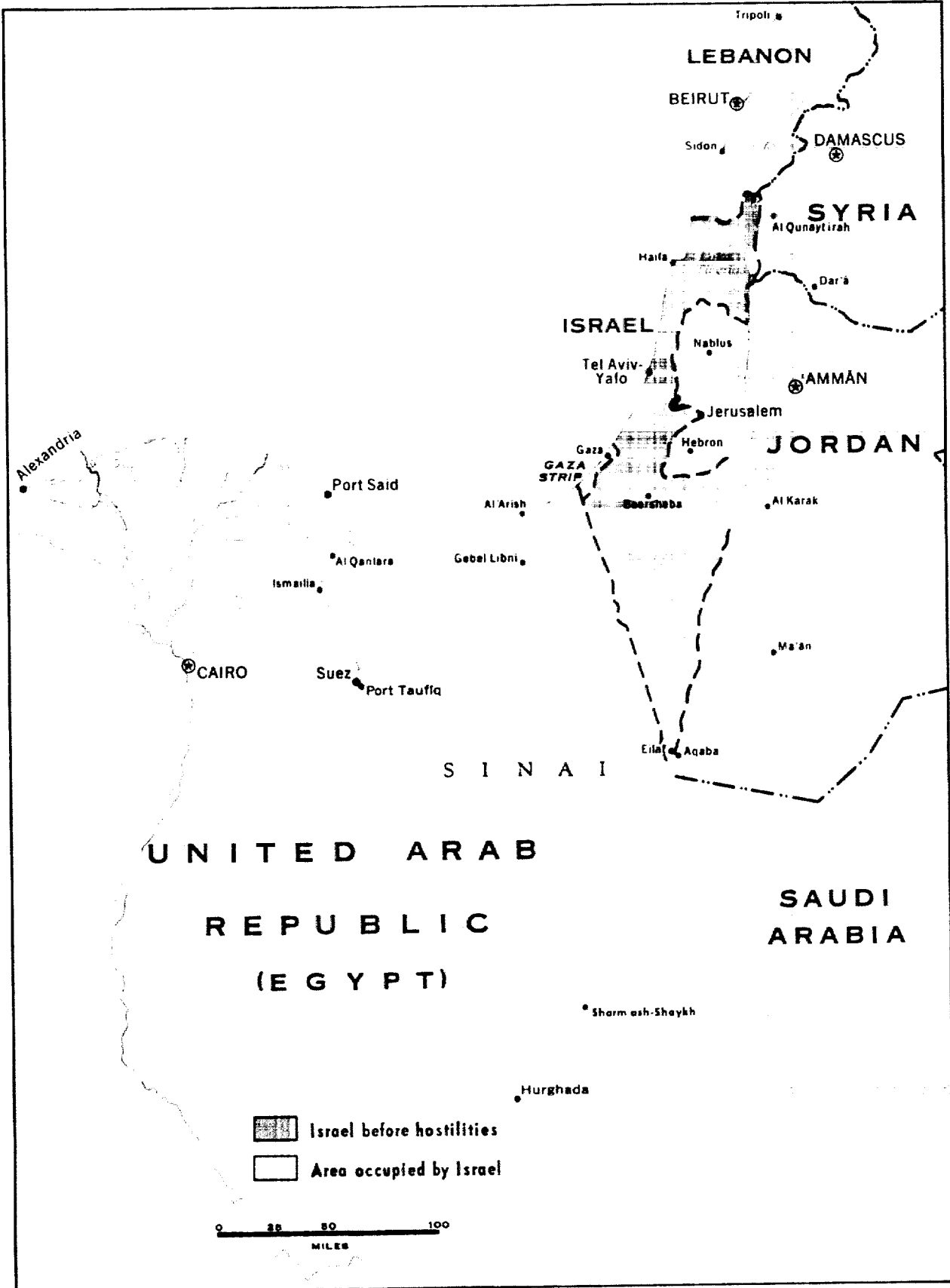
The most authoritative report probably is the one made by a special representative of UN Secretary General Thant following an on-the-spot investigation into conditions of the civilian population and prisoners of war.

After investigating Syrian charges that the Israelis had made "systematic efforts to expel the

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entire original population" from the occupied portion of Syria, the UN special representative concluded that whatever the policy of the Israeli Government may have been as regards the population, it seemed clear that "certain actions authorized or allowed by local military commanders were an important cause of flight."

In regard to similar charges concerning the civilian population on the West Bank, the special representative stated that although there was no indication that persons had been physically forced to cross to the East Bank, there had been reports of acts of intimidation by the Israeli armed forces and of Israeli attempts--using loudspeakers--to suggest to the population that "they might be better off on the East Bank." The representative concluded, however, that the main factor in the exodus from the West Bank had clearly been the inevitable impact of hostilities and military occupation as such, particularly when no measures of reassurance were taken.

Administration of Occupied Areas

Israeli policy in regard to the administration of occupied areas is formulated at the cabinet level. Implementation of this policy is supervised by a joint coordination committee composed of representatives of the Ministry of Defense and the office of the premier's adviser on Arab affairs, and headed by Colonel Shlomo Gazit, Defense Minister Dayan's aide for the occupied areas. The military government

of the occupied areas is the responsibility of the chief of the Israel Defense Forces General Staff, Itzhak Rabin. Rabin's three area commanders, in turn are responsible for the actual administration of the Golan heights in Syria, the Jordanian West Bank, and the former Egyptian territories. The primary mission of these officers, according to the Israelis, is the "normalization of life" in the areas under their command.

Contrary to a UN General Assembly resolution, the Old City of Jerusalem has, for all intents and purposes, been incorporated into the state of Israel. The members of the former municipal council of the Old City, which has been dissolved by the Israelis, have refused even to discuss meeting in a combined council under Israeli rule inasmuch as this might be construed as recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Old City.

In the remainder of the West Bank, however, the Israelis have to a large extent used the administrative structure established by the Jordanians. Local municipal councils have continued to administer essential services, such as health, utilities, and public welfare. In cases where the local council has been unable to cope with a problem, the Israeli military governor has provided whatever assistance is necessary. In this connection, some hospital patients have been evacuated from the West Bank to Israel, fuel has been sent from Israel to the West Bank, and

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local road construction and works projects for the unemployed that had been started before the war are now continuing with Israeli assistance.

Israeli officials are more closely involved in the administration of occupied Egyptian and Syrian territories, including the Gaza Strip, because many of the Egyptian administrators were repatriated to Egypt by the Israelis in early September and because, with the exception of the Druze villagers near Mount Hermon, the area of Syria occupied by the Israelis is almost uninhabited.

Israeli financial experts feel that the burden of supporting the occupied territories over the next year is manageable. Taking into account the reduced level of remittances formerly provided to West Bank Arabs by relatives abroad and the merchandise Israel supplies to the West Bank, it is estimated that the foreign exchange cost to Israel of the West Bank alone will be \$20 million annually, although income from tourism could reduce this figure substantially. The problem of marketing the excess of West Bank agricultural products, especially abundant during July and August, was eased by allowing the export of as many as 400 truckloads per day to East Jordan. Large Israeli expenditures on the West Bank may serve as an anti-recession device for Israel. In any case, the additional demands imposed by the occupied areas will not seriously tax Israel's more than adequate financial resources, which have been considerably

strengthened by donations from the Jewish community abroad.

Arab Resistance and
Israeli Reaction

The Israeli occupation is viewed by Arab residents of the occupied areas with varying degrees of dislike. In all the occupied areas, however, Arab resistance has in general been non-violent in nature and has mostly taken the form of civil disobedience.

West Bank Arabs engaging in civil disobedience are by and large members of an urban minority who before the war comprised only 25 to 30 percent of the West Bankers, and are even less numerous now as more townsmen than villagers have fled. In the weeks immediately after the Israeli occupation, the first signs of opposition were the appearance of leaflets threatening reprisals against those Arabs who were cooperating with the Israeli authorities, and the refusal of some Arab officials to resume their positions under the Israelis. The first real indication of large-scale resistance to Israeli rule was an almost 100-percent effective strike in Jerusalem on 7 August by Arabs protesting the "unification" of the old and new cities. Subsequent attempts to bring about general strikes on 21 August and 19 September, however, met with only partial success.

The most serious resistance has been the failure of most West Bank teachers to report for the

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opening of the fall school term. As a result, schools on the West Bank, especially in the north, were still closed three weeks after the school year was scheduled to start. The teachers charge that Israeli educational authorities have deleted religious passages and phrases from textbooks; the Israelis counter that they have banned or altered only textbooks containing anti-Jewish material. The teachers' action, however, probably stems primarily from a desire to demonstrate a more general dissatisfaction with the Israeli presence in the area.

Israeli authorities from the first have demonstrated their readiness to act against uncooperative elements, including those who periodically refuse to cooperate with the occupying authorities. In recent weeks, they have adopted an increasingly harder line toward those advocating resistance. On 31 July, four prominent West Bank political figures--including Anwar al-Khatib, former governor of the Jerusalem district--were identified as signers of a petition calling for non-cooperation with Israeli authorities. Arrested for "obstructing law and order," they have been exiled to towns in Israel for three months.

In early September, the Israeli commander of West Bank forces issued an order prohibiting oral or written attempts to influence public opinion that might harm or disturb safety and order. Violators are subject to a large fine and ten years im-

prisonment. Persons communicating with the enemy in any way are liable to five years imprisonment. On 23 September, the president and acting chief justice of the High Muslim Court in Jerusalem was deported to the East Bank on charges of inciting noncooperation with Israeli authorities. By moving against the spiritual leader of the West Bank Arabs, the Israelis have indicated that they are willing to adopt extreme measures in dealing with dissidence.

Residents of the occupied territories have become increasingly tense as time passes without any movement toward ending the Israeli occupation or settling the political future of the West Bank.

[REDACTED] a higher volume of violent incidents as local Arabs become increasingly annoyed by the petty irritations of life under occupation by members of an essentially alien culture.

Israeli authorities state that a rash of incidents in early September was the work of Palestinian terrorists based in Syria rather than an indication of indigenous sentiment. Nonetheless, some measure of aid and assistance must have been given to the terrorists by the indigenous population. Israeli reaction to these acts of violence has been swift and harsh, including the demolition of houses belonging to people suspected of aiding the saboteurs. Israeli officials have stated that the captured terrorists will be tried by military courts which

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will have authority to mete out the death penalty.

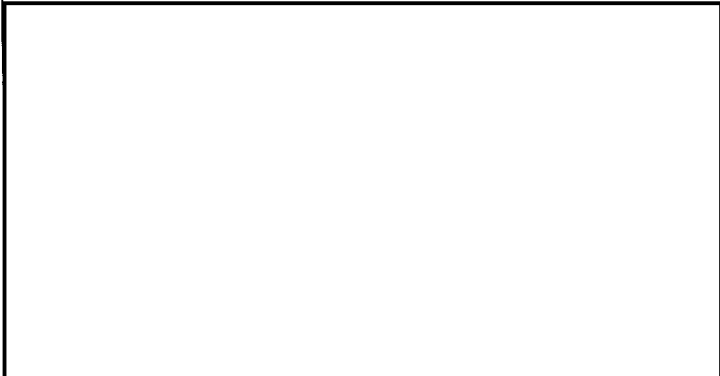
Israeli Views on the Future
Of the Occupied Territories

Israeli authorities have not made an official policy statement with respect to the eventual status of the occupied territories, presumably because they do not want to jeopardize any eventual negotiations with the Arabs. Individual Israeli views, including those of cabinet members, vary widely--except with regard to the status of the Old City of Jerusalem, which almost all Israelis insist must remain under Israeli control.

Some Israelis have argued that Tel Aviv should propose to King Husayn the return of most of the West Bank in exchange for a peace treaty. Others have suggested that the West Bank become an independent state federated with Israel. Hard liners, such as Labor Minister Allon, have stated that the West Bank and the Syrian heights should be incorporated into Israel.

The establishment in late September of Israeli settlements

on the West Bank and on the Syrian heights is probably intended primarily as a warning to the Arabs that in the absence of any progress toward negotiations, Israel may move toward permanent possession of the areas.



Outlook

Meanwhile, as the frustration of the Arabs in the occupied territories increases, acts of violence seem likely to increase against both the Israelis and the Arabs cooperating with them. Israeli security forces, however, are capable of suppressing any dissident elements and of maintaining order. (SECRET NO FOREIGN DISSEM)

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