

VOICES FOR ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFEDERATION

From a decentralist position, the best way to look at the Israel-Palestine conflict is from the perspective of the a) rights of individuals to their freedom and their justly acquired property and b) the right to self-determination of the communities they have created.

Zionism from its inception recognized that because native Arabs already inhabited most of the arable land, Israel could only be created by driving Arabs off their land. As the graphic below shows, through its 57 years Israel has managed to do just that. (Even more land has been confiscated since 2000.)

The Arabs who have chosen to call themselves Palestinians have been trying to "secede" from the imposed state of Israel and regain their confiscated property since 1948. As [maps below](#) show in more detail, Arabs owned most of the land in 1945. At that time Jews owned only 7 percent, much of it acquired from Ottoman Turks with dubious claims to it.



Yet according to decentralist theories of self-determination Israelis also have a right to live in the "Promised Land" on their *justly acquired* (or if necessary, justly compensated) lands, which today might be 10-15 percent, including land that truly was previously unowned. Of course, given that so much of that land was stolen and Arabs ethnically cleansed from the area, many Palestinians and their supporters would disagree. However, those Palestinians willing to make some compromises do frequently point out that most Israelis live in cities near the sea anyway and do not occupy most of the Palestinian villages they emptied and destroyed in 1948. West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem land confiscated since Israel's 1967 war of aggression, of course, would have to be returned.

Trying to resolve these issues in terms of collective rights of ethnic and religious groups is driving us now to the verge of a regional war as Israel ramps up war against Iran before it obtains the technical ability to produce nuclear weapons. Such a war could rapidly lead to regional or even world nuclear war. See [StopTheWarNow.Net](http://www.stopthewar.net)

Workable solutions probably would have to be more radical decentralist, more based on case-by-case analysis, like those advanced at Secession.Net. Such radical decentralist prescriptions below highlighted in underlined italics. Decentralist solutions certainly would *not* look like the defacto "bantustans" that the Israeli government has been trying to force upon Palestinians since the Oslo accords, and including George Bush's "road map."

The official [Palestine Liberation Organization position](#) is that Palestinians are willing to accept Israel if it retreats to its June 4, 1967 borders--a demand long made even by the United Nations (Resolution 242)-- and recognizes the right of return. Israel refuses to give up the territory and recognize the right of return -- which would soon turn Israel into a majority Arab state -- and continues to threaten nuclear retaliation in "self-defense" of these confiscated lands. (See [Israeli nuclear threats](#) page.)

Perhaps only a transcendent political solution like confederation, arrived at through nonviolent negotiation, can resolve this conflict. (See a nonviolent plan for resolution from Nonviolence International's Mubarak Awad [Eight Steps to Israeli Palestinian Peace](#).)

[Israel-Palestine-Jordan Confederation](#) | [Trilateral Confederation](#) | [Binational Confederation](#)

[Israeli Voice for Israel-Palestine Confederation](#) | [Palestinian Voice for Israel-Palestine Confederation](#)

[Libertarian Voice for Israel-Palestine Confederation](#)

[Maps of Land Ownership and/or Control in 1945, 1948-49 and 2002 and the New "Apartheid Wall" 2003](#)

March 2005 version of this article



ISRAEL-PALESTINE-JORDAN CONFEDERATION

Seek Peace and Pursue It (Psalms 34:15) <http://www.harhoma.com/confederation/>

"The way to bring peace to the Middle East is to establish a Confederation which will include a Palestinian State in the West-Bank and the Gaza Strip, the State of Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan.

"Today, each of the Israeli party leaders proclaims a 'peace and security' motto, however, nobody explicitly suggests how to implement this. It is the obligation of these leaders to deliberate how to reach the desired 'peace and security'. For the sake of all the peace and security, justice and prosperity supporters we suggest a draft of Confederation Agreement between Israel, Palestine and Jordan, which is the first step in a larger scale project of the Middle East Common Market.

"We address all politicians, all academic and public bodies who support the 'peace and confederation' agreement in the Middle East region and worldwide, to suggest concrete improvements to this document. We will do our best to examine your suggestions, and if found appropriate by publishers of this draft, they will be included in future revisions."

Article 4 of their charter states: "All persons shall have the right, to be implemented in accordance with confederation legislation and Cantonal legislation consistent therewith, to have restored to them any property of which they were deprived and to be compensated for any property which cannot be restored to them. All statements or commitments made under duress, particularly those relating to the relinquishment of rights to land or property, shall be treated as null and void."

Links include: [confederation agreement](#) | [common market](#) | [map of the middle east](#) | [historical agreements](#) | [survey](#) | [questions and answers](#)

Trilateral Confederation: A New Political Vision for Peace by Arieh Hess, January 1999

The [Israel/Palestine Center for Research and Information](#) states: "IPCRI, founded in Jerusalem in 1988, is the only joint Israeli-Palestinian public policy think-tank in the world. It is devoted to developing practical solutions for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict." It features Arieh Hess's a 115 page PDF paper on confederation at <http://www.ipcri.org/files/downloads.html> Mr. Hess claims many Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian leaders he has spoken with found the idea of interest.

A Binational Confederation, A Response to "[The Case for Binationalism](#)", by Jerome M. Segal, March 2005

5Binationalism, as a general category, need not be equated—as Lama Abu-Odeh equates it—with the specific proposal for a binational state as

opposed to a two-state solution. Presented below is a three-state framework that is also a species of binationalism. It is offered as an idea to consider, as a possible solution, not just to the problem of self-determination of both peoples, but also to the issues of refugees, Jerusalem, and security. It does this while preserving the Jewish character of the State of Israel. See rest of proposal at: <http://www.bostonreview.net/BR26.6/segal.html>

ISRAELI VOICE FOR ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFEDERATION

THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS: AN INTERVIEW WITH JOSEPH ABILEAH

by Dr. Jeffrey Elliot (circa mid-1980s, publisher unknown)

Joseph Abileah, the world-renowned Israeli pacifist*, is presently the Secretary of the Society for Middle East Confederation, an international organization which has advanced a series of bold proposals for peace in that troubled region. The Society, which was founded in 1972, believes that the present impasse can best be resolved by a tripartite confederation involving Jordan, Arab Palestine (West-Bank), and Israel, with Jerusalem as the Federal capitol. Here, in this exclusive interview with Dr. Jeffrey Elliot, he outlines his controversial plan for the reconciliation of Arabs and Jews in the Middle East.

ELLIOT: What is the Society for Middle East Confederation?

ABI LEAH: The Society was conceived as a forum for the discussion of constructive ideas which aim at solving the Middle East conflict by cooperation of Arabs and Jews on the economic and political level. These range from a BENELUX pattern (economic cooperation) to a full confederation of states, providing equal status and representation to each of the member-components.

ELLIOT: Who comprises the membership of the Society?

ABILEAH: The Society consists of both registered members as well as sympathizers. The total of registered members exceeds 150, including Israelis, Jews, Arabs, and nationals of other countries. The sympathizers, mostly abroad, number between 400-500. All professions and walks of life are represented. The international sponsors include: Dr. Landrum Bolling (United States), Yehudi Menuhin (England), Dr. Martin Niemoller (West Germany), Dr. Hugh Schonfield (England), and Adv. Hein van Wijk (Netherlands.)

ELLIOT: What is the thrust of the Society's peace initiative?

ABI LEAH: Having lived in the region for almost 50 years, I have become very concerned about its future. As a convinced pacifist, I have always advocated peaceful solutions based upon a common homeland for Jews, Arabs, and other people who would like to share our fate. The Society has not adopted a definite plan. My own program includes six points: (1) A confederation composed of three states, viz. Jordan, Arab Palestine (West-Bank), and Israel, with a federal capitol in Jerusalem. (2) The federal government should deal, at least in the beginning, with foreign policy and economic integration. (3) Economic integration would enable the confederation to solve the refugee problem without massive foreign aid. (4) The help of the United Nations is required for an enlargement of the irrigation scheme in the Syrian desert with the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates. This would provide the Iraqis and the Syrians with irrigated land. (5) A religious council, which would form a second house in the federal parliament, should be composed of representatives of all faiths and religious communities in the area. This council would be entrusted with the creation of a federal constitution based on ethical principles. (6) The confederation would be open to any country in the Middle East to join. It should be formed with the idea of creating a United States of the Middle East in the future.

ELLIOT: Why should Israel, under your proposal, give up its status as a sovereign nation?

ABILEAH: Like the other member-states, Israel must be willing to limit its absolute sovereignty if we are to become a tripartite confederation or even a binational constellation. We cannot expect our neighbor to do something which we are not prepared to do ourselves. Besides, this fact only reflects the realities of the situation, as Israel has become entirely dependent on the United States. In this regard, it lost its independence and sovereignty some time ago. It is important to challenge the notion of national sovereignty as such. In our century, with the advancement of technology, improved living standards, and mass communications, this political term has lost its meaning in a practical sense. It has become an anachronism, one which has encouraged the outbreak of war owing to the semantic weight of the word as myth. Similarly, as Israel has lost her sovereignty, so will a sovereign Palestinian state lose her independence to one of the super-powers or an Arab state in the area. It cannot hope to survive with limited natural resources and lack of access to the major seaports.

The establishment of an Arab-Palestinian state without close ties to Israel or Jordan or both is precarious at best. Add to this the law of return for refugees, and you further increase the risk of war. It is clear that Israel will do her utmost to remain in a position of readiness and will escalate an endless arms race with the result of economic decline for herself and the whole region.

ELLIOT: At the heart of your proposal is the concept of confederation. What kind of confederation do you envision?

ABI LEAH: The answer is to create a confederation, very loose in the beginning, of perhaps two or three states which would depend on each other in a geo-political way. This would encompass the areas on both banks of the Jordan, the present state of Israel, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the creation of a new member-state on the West-Bank and the Gaza area reserved for the Palestinians. Each state would establish a local government as well as send representatives to the confederative government on a parity basis. The central government would deal with common concerns, chief of which should be the rehabilitation of refugees. This task must be viewed as a shared burden and responsibility.

ELLIOT: What do you see as the geographic boundaries of a Middle East Confederation?

ASI LEAH: The smallest Middle East Confederation which could meet the present needs would comprise the territory on both banks of the River Jordan. This would provide the Hashemite Kingdom and the new Palestinian state with access to the seaports of the eastern Mediterranean, vital to their respective economies. The state boundaries would be roughly those of June, 1967, it being understood that these would constitute ethnic- cultural divisions and not strategic frontiers to be defended. There exists the possibility of a division into smaller states according to the majority of inhabitants of one ethnic group or another. This approach resembles a plan proposed by Yitzhak Hayutman in 1975, which would establish three types of sub-states based on ethnicity: Arab, Jewish, and mixed. There could be as many as twelve or more of these states, each of which would be represented in the confederative government. A similar approach was advanced by Professor Johan Galtung, Oslo, and would address the problem of the large minorities in preponderantly Jewish or Arab states.

ELLIOT: In what ways will a confederation turn enmity into friendship in the Middle East?

AS! LEAH: Enmity and hate are created by fear. At present, the Arabs are as much afraid of being pushed into the desert as the Jews are afraid of being thrown into the sea. The Jewish immigration is opposed by the Arabs for fear of being outnumbered. The return of the refugees is opposed by the Israel is for fear of the Arab majority. If we could agree on the principle of parity-representation in the constitution, this mutual fear would be eliminated and a new bond of trust created in its place. This is the difference between a confederation which is merely a military alliance and one which has a common constructive purpose. ~

ELLIOT: How will the confederation be governed?

ASI LEAH: The responsibility for administration and decision-making in the various member-states must be left to the local governments. The confederative government should deal, at least in the beginning, with common regional concerns. These might include a coordinated foreign policy and the rehabilitation of refugees. Once we have made progress in these areas, we will find ourselves cooperating in such areas as health service:" road building, meteorological services, port authorities, and many others. A president should be elected on a rotating basis, similar to the system in Switzerland, where seven members of the cabinet hold office as chairman for a period of one- year in rotation. The concept of parity-representation in the confederative government is essential, especially since every sector is afraid of being outnumbered.

ELLIOT: What do you see as the basic foreign policy of a Middle East Confederation?

ABI LEAH. The cornerstone of a confederative foreign policy should reflect the common welfare of the region. This is idealistically expressed. However, in practical terms, it should include trade agreements with Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon.

ELLIOT: What role would the super-powers play in a Middle East Confederation?

AB I LEAH: The super-powers are not interested at the present time in the outbreak of peace in the Middle East because they are afraid of losing their foothold in their respective spheres of influence in the region. Oil interests and weapons markets are also involved. As far back as 1969, I argued that we should ask for help from the nations of the world in irrigating the Syrian desert, but at the same time guarantee the oil interests for these nations. This induced Mr. Maynard Shelly, the former editor of The Mennonite, to write an article entitled, "Take Your Oil, Give Us Water". The super-powers are not interested in a big fire which would mean a direct confrontation, but they do not mind if a few thousand Arabs and Jews are killed from time to time. The situation demands that we no longer kill or be killed to protect foreign interests. Our

conscientious objectors have made an important start in this direction. This is a first step, but a passive one. We must become more active in peace-making by awakening our citizens to the true facts of the situation. Even for the super-powers, the present policies are short-sighted. The arms supplied to the Middle East are paid for in cash only by rich countries. Those supplied to Israel are mostly in the form of loans, few of which will ever be paid back. This fact does not worry the United States as long as we remain their serfs. Arms do not produce anything; they can only be used for destructive purposes. On the other hand, if credit was granted in the form of tractors and other agricultural machinery, new skills could be developed, and in time, all loans repaid with interest. In a confederation comprising all countries of the Middle East or even a common market constellation, regular commercial relations on equal standing could be established with western as well as eastern nations, including the super-powers.

ELLIOT: Are you optimistic over the prospects of Arab-Israeli co-existence?

ABILEAH: *I am optimistic in terms of peaceful co-existence provided that we can work out a suitable political framework. This cannot be the same pattern which was invented in the nineteenth century and which precipitated two world wars. We cannot turn the wheels back. We must look ahead to a new world order. We must be prepared to adapt our policies to the realities of the twenty-first century. If, however, we continue to accept the idea of the nation-state, then I see a bleak future ahead.*

Society for Mid-East Confederation ---P.O. Box 9478, 31094 --- Haifa. Israel (Note: since nothing was found about this Society on the Internet, it is not known if it still exists or is at this mid-1980s address.)

* **Joseph Abileah** is (or was) a Conscientious Objector who refused to serve in the Israeli army. **Abileah**, who had lived most of his life in what had been called Palestine, said at his trial in 1949: "I have been educated with Arab children on the same school bench. Do you expect me to kill my schoolmates?" For more information on Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Israel go to <http://www.uscj.org/ctvalley/beki/conscientious.html> Anthony G. Bing wrote a biography of Abilah called "Israeli Pacifist: the Life of **Joseph Abileah**"

PALESTINIAN VOICE FOR ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFEDERATION

POINT OF VIEW OF A NATIVE PALESTINIAN CHRISTIAN

By Sami Aldeeb al-Imwasi* from <http://www.palestineremembered.com/al-Ramla/Imwas/Story260.html>

The absence of the Palestinian voice: Newspapers, radio and television in Western Countries have access to Israeli journalists and correspondents who report daily on the situation in the Middle East from an Israeli perspective. The Palestinian perspective, on the contrary, is rarely heard from Palestinian sources. Such a situation is contrary to democracy. In an attempt to fill the gap, I have written this short piece.

Peace is the fruit of Justice: There are two opposing concepts of peace found in the world today: First is the concept based on the pagan Roman adage: "If you wish peace, prepare for war" (Si vis pacem, para bellum). Then there is the saying of the prophet Isaiah, who lived in Palestine 2700 years ago: "Peace will be the fruit of justice; justice assures calm and tranquility forever" (Isaiah, 32: 17). As a Palestinian Christian, I am convinced that only the concept of Isaiah can bring peace to the Middle East.

From a moral point of view, the war between Jews and Arabs, two brother peoples, is contrary to the commandment: "Thou shall not kill". From a practical point of view, war has failed to establish peace and has done nothing but perpetuate the cycle of violence. It is pointless to persist in swelling the military arsenals which serve no one except arms manufacturers. To achieve the peace which Isaiah writes of, it is necessary to put an end to the injustice which is the basis of the war in the Middle East.

A basic injustice: By virtue of Israeli law, all Jews, even recent converts, have the right to immigrate to Palestine, regardless of where they were born, in Moscow or in New York. The majority of native Palestinians, on the contrary, do not have the right to return to their land and their homes, simply because they are not Jews. Today, Palestinians, as non-Jews, find themselves within miles of their land, inside the territories occupied by Israel in 1967 and the Arab countries, forbidden to return home. Meanwhile, Israel recruits Jews from Moscow, New York and elsewhere. Palestinian villages were, for the most part, demolished. Professor Israel Shahak from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem gives the names of several hundred destroyed villages. This equals approximately 80% of the Palestinian villages within the borders of Israel prior to

1967 (see p. 14).**

Israeli oppression continues today. Palestinian intellectuals are arrested and tortured. As a condition for their release from prisons, Israel demands their departure from Palestine. Thus begins a nomadic life of exile for these intellectuals, in countries which mayor may not welcome them, according to the whims of the moment. It is estimated that 70% of Palestinian academics have been in prison at least once. According to the Newspaper "Le Monde" of June 11, 1987, 2000 people have been deported since 1967, and 4,500 prisoners are incarcerated in Israeli prisons.

It is impossible to review all the harassment aimed at the civilian Palestinian population by Israeli authorities. There have been the poisoning of school children; armed robberies, in the middle of the day, carried out by unidentified persons under the watch of Israeli military patrols; the confiscation of farmers' lands, depriving them of their way of life without financial compensation; the control over the access to water resources by Israeli authorities.

Solution of the ignorant against the terrorism of the hopeless: Chased from all sides, declared undesirable both in their homeland and in other countries, the Palestinians have been hopelessly drawn to acts of terrorism reflecting their hopelessness. Attempting to stop this terrorism, heads of state convene meeting after meeting, talking only of police measures or military intervention against those countries that harbor terrorists.

In so doing, these leaders behave like an idiot who fights a headache with insults rather than trying to heal it. They believe that waging war against terrorism can bring peace. Not only do they forget their complicity in creating the desperation which leads some to acts of terrorism, but they have forgotten their Bible as well, preferring pagan ideals to those of Isaiah. The latter however, would cost considerably less, and would bring a much more effective response. It is not through the signing of treaties, through police measures or military interventions that a people who have lost hope can be prevented from resorting to terrorism. You can prod a donkey with a stick to change directions; but a people without hope need justice to calm them.

Justice: allowing Palestinian refugees to return to their homes; permitting the reconstruction of the villages razed by Israel; giving repayment to war victims.

Israel also forgets her Bible: When Sadat visited Jerusalem in 1977, I was among those few Palestinians supporting this trip, on condition that reparations for the injustices committed against the Palestinians be made. I felt convinced that "Without a solution to the Palestinian problem, all attempts at peace are nothing but a time bomb." (Newspaper "La Suisse", Dec. 31, 1977).

The Camp David agreement which followed Sadat's visit turned out to be a means of neutralizing the Egyptian border in preparation for an Israeli war against the Palestinians in Lebanon. Instead of making reparations for the injustices committed against the Palestinian people, Israel preferred to launch a murderous war called "Peace for Galilee". Israel forgets the Bible by applying the pagan principle "If you want peace prepare for war" instead of looking to that of Isaiah, "If you want peace establish justice." With losses and suffering on both sides, this war is far from having established the deathly peace desired by Israel.

Pretexts for denying justice: On April 22, 1983, President Reagan, repeating the words of Israel, denied that the PLO was the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. These two "democratic" countries refused however to give proof of their allegations against the PLO by allowing elections amongst the Palestinians -at least those of the West Bank. The refusal to negotiate with the PLO or to organize elections proves that these two states are refusing to grant justice to the Palestinians.

Israel and the United States refuse to dialogue with the PLO, asserting that it is a terrorist organization. They forget that most of the present Israeli leaders were involved in terrorist movements and are implicated in some civilian assassinations. Suffice it to cite the case of Yitzhak Shamir, Israeli Prime Minister, who was responsible for the assassination of Count Bernadotte, special Envoy of the United Nations in charge of finding a solution to the Palestinian problem (Sune O. Persson, Mediation and Assassination, Ithaca Press, London 1979, p. 208). The United States and Israel further contend that the PLO refuses to recognize the State of Israel.

Israel does not, however, say which borders it would like to have recognized, or what destiny is in store for Palestinian refugees and destroyed Palestinian villages. Personally, I do not oppose recognition of Israel, if it accepts: the borders prior to 1967; the return of those refugees who wish to, who fled in 1948 and 1967, with rights; equal to those of Jews immigrating from Moscow or New York; reconstruction of a significant portion of those villages destroyed, and reparations; made to war victims; dismantling of the Israeli settlements on the Occupied territories.

With the exception of the Golan Heights, which would have to be returned to Syria, I would favor putting control of the

territories emptied by Israel under the United Nations for five years, without the presence of an army. After five years, a free election would be held. Whatever the results, these territories would have to be maintained without an army so that the energies of the population of the area could be directed toward the good of the people, and not toward the purchase of weaponry.

Over the long term I envision the establishment of a confederation between Israel and the new Palestinian State, with local autonomy for the two entities, as is the case in Switzerland. This confederation would be open to other states with rights equal to those of the base states.

Such an idea for a confederation is not purely an invention of my spirit. Sane Israelis support it, and find that it is the only solution possible in a land claimed by two peoples. Amongst these Israelis are Nahum Goldmann (former President of the World Jewish Congress), Uri Avnery (Israeli politician and Chief-Redactor of Haolam Hazeh), Andre Chouraqui (former vice-mayor of Jerusalem), as well as Israeli pacifist [Joseph Abileah](#). [Abileah](#) is the Secretary of the Israeli Association for a Confederation in the Middle East, of which the famous musician Yehudi Menuhin is a supporting member. It is composed of Jews, Moslems and Christians and its President is an Arab Pastor.

Justice or extermination: The Confederation idea is undoubtedly utopic in its vision, so long it has not been realized. Whatever alternative is chosen must however respect the principle of justice and assure that the Palestinian refugees are permitted to return to their lands and their homes. Such an assurance by Israel was a condition for its recognition by the United Nations. Failure to establish a just solution to the Palestinian problem will result in the continuation of the battle between the Arabs and Jews, until both parties are exterminated. Either justice or extermination.

LIBERTARIAN VOICE FOR ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFEDERATION

(Note: for a libertarian view on the history of the conflict, see [Murray Rothbard's historical overview.](#))

WHO SHALL OWN JERUSALEM By Fred Foldvary

<http://hometown.aol.com/foldvary2000>

Press Release #13 - Foldvary for Congress - October 15, 2000

Jerusalem, ancient capital of the Israelites, and would-be capital city of both the Israelis and the Palestinian Arabs, is at the center of the conflict, once again become violent, between the two peoples in Israel and Palestine. Both sides have maximal demands to exclusively own East Jerusalem and the Old City. As Isaiah 59:8 tells us, "The way of peace, they know not."

The Palestinians want jurisdiction over eastern Jerusalem and also want control over the Muslim religious sites. The Israelis want to keep Jerusalem unified within Israel. The Palestinians have been offered a few sections at the edge of eastern Jerusalem, but they remain adamant in wanting all of eastern Jerusalem, which had been under Jordanian control prior to 1967.

There is no way to reconcile these maximal demands within the confines of only two governments, Israel and Palestine. We need to expand the whole paradigm to include a third entity which would have jurisdiction. Israel and Palestine must be equal nations in a Confederation of the Levant. The "Levant" is the French term for the eastern Mediterranean area, derived from the Latin word for rising, as in the rising of the sun in the East.

There can arise a new peace and a new era for the Middle East once the two peoples accept the other as equal human beings with equal rights to self-determination and equal rights to the land. The Confederation would have direct jurisdiction over all Jerusalem and over all the holy religious sites, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim. The confederation would also have courts to resolve disputes between Israelis and Palestinians, as well as authority over common resources such as water.

The concept of confederation for Israel is an old idea. Martin Buber proposed a binational state, and Noam Chomsky in his book *Peace in the Middle East?* (1974) advocated principles for a settlement which include: no domination of one group by another, self-government for each nation, the ability of each individual to live where he chooses, and a state which is neither Jewish nor Arab but multinational. Chomsky suggested, as an alternative to the usual proposals, "parallel national institutions throughout the whole territory with a free option for each individual; and also the option of dissociation from national institutions with retention of full rights of citizenship for those who prefer."

A Confederation of the Levant, however it is named, would satisfy all these criteria. Israel and Palestine would have full and equal self-governance for their internal affairs, including their own schools, currencies, languages, criminal law, and economic policy. The confederation would have jurisdiction on common and disputed interests, such as Jerusalem. Both

sides would thereby own the disputed areas, but neither would do so exclusively.

The philosopher Martin Buber proposed a just alliance with the Arab peoples with unhampered independent development for each in a binational state. He also favored (in a 1939 letter to Gandhi) "the independence of each individual." With "joint sovereignty," neither people need fear "domination by the other through numerical superiority," hence, he said, immigration need not be restricted. In a 1947 radio lecture in the Netherlands, Buber said, "The demands for an Arab state or a Jewish state in the entire Land of Israel fall into the category of political 'surplus,' of the desire to achieve more than what is truly needed." The two essential prerequisites for an agreement, said Buber, were "the precedence of economics over politics" and the "intra-national principle." (Martin Buber, *A Land of Two Peoples*, 1983).

The vision of Martin Buber and Noam Chomsky of bi-nationalism in a common land would be realized in a Confederation that ties the two peoples in one union with two states, just as the United States is a country with parallel sovereignty by the States and the federal union. With the violence in Israel and Palestine now threatening the progress made by the peace process, it's time for the idea of a binational confederation to be widely discussed and made a key ingredient in the negotiations.

The Middle East will continue to be a key policy issue that Congress will be dealing with during the next decade, affecting many residents of the East Bay who have ties to the Middle East and who are active in movements for peace and social justice. Candidates for Congress should state their positions on this issue, and the press should let their readers know of their positions. Foldvary for Congress is thereby informing the public and the press of his position to empower voters to make an informed choice.

Fred Foldvary <http://www.foldvary.net>

Other articles by Foldvary on this topic are at <http://www.foldvary.net/works/globcon.html> and at <http://www.progress.org/2003/fold307.htm>

MAPS: 1945 Palestine land ownership by category; Lands confiscated by Israel 1948-49; Lands confiscated in 1967 war.

From the Applied Research Institute in Jerusalem and An Atlas of Palestine

Jews owned only 7% of the land in 1945 and gained the rest through United Nations intervention and through confiscation. See depopulated Arab villages 19548 and 1967 at http://www.palestinecenter.org/cpap/maps/hist_depop.html

More maps at: <http://www.palestinecenter.org/cpap/map.htm>

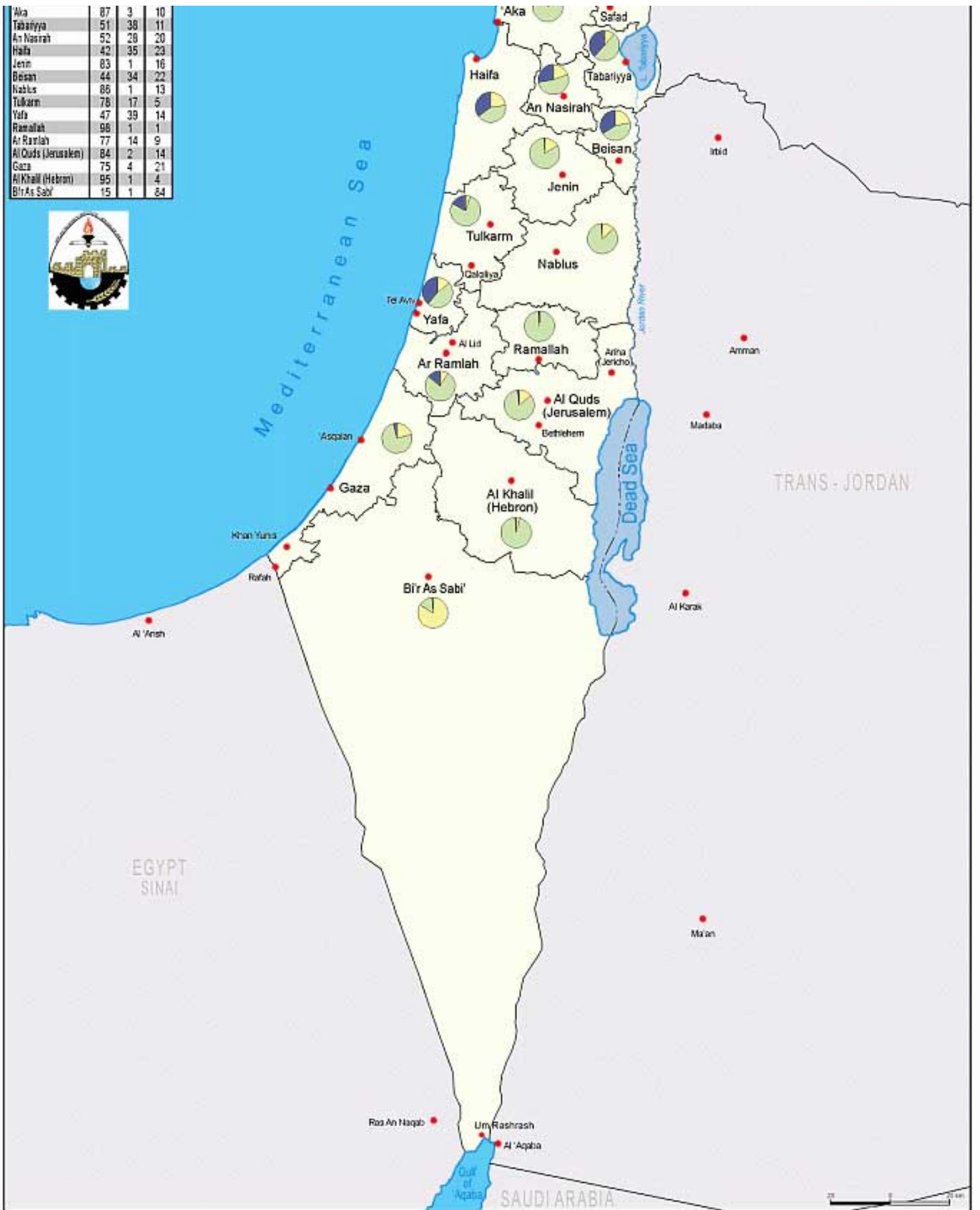
The Jewish National Fund Study itself admitted how little lands Jews legally owned at the birth of Israel: Of the entire area of the state of Israel only about 300,000-400,00 dunams--apart from the desolate rocky area of the southern Negev, at present quite unfit for cultivation -- are State Domain which the Israeli government took over from the mandatory regime. The J.N.F. and private Jewish owners possess under two million dunams. Almost all the rest belong at law to Arab owners, many of whom left the country. (Jewish Villages in Israel, Jewish National Fund (Keren Kayemeth Leisrael) Head Office, Jerusalem, 1949, pp. xxi-xxii.)

Land Ownership in Palestine, 1945

http://www.palestinecenter.org/cpap/maps/hist_owners.html



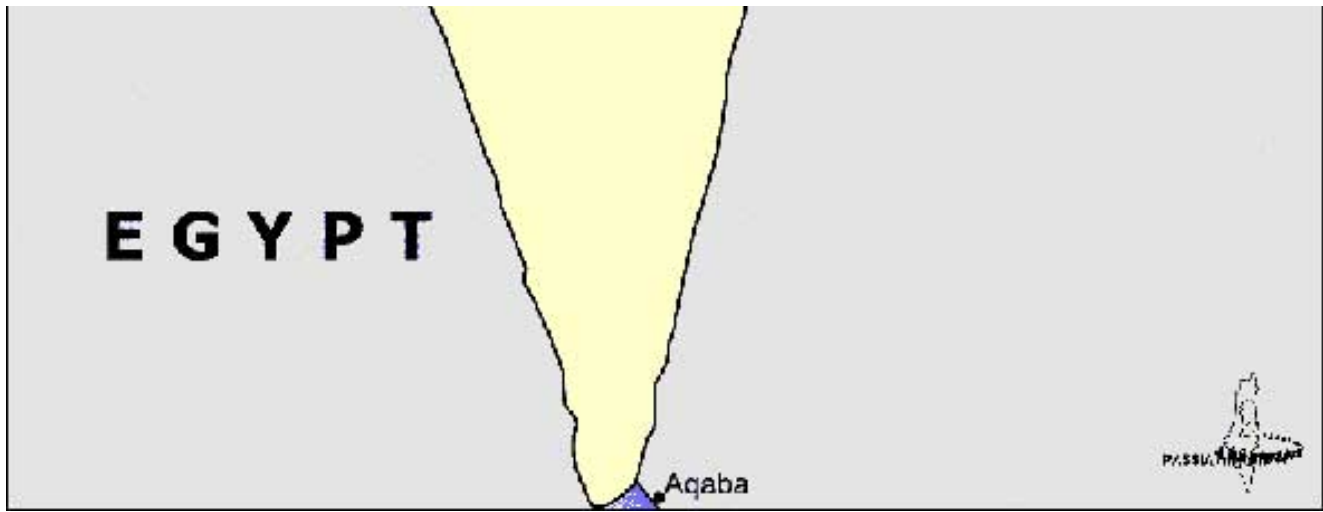
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Tabariyya	51	38	11
An Nasirah	52	29	20
Halifa	42	35	23
Jenin	83	1	16
Beisan	44	34	22
Nablus	86	1	13
Tulkarm	78	17	5
Yafa	47	39	14
Ramallah	98	1	1
Ar Ramlah	77	14	9
Al Quds (Jerusalem)	84	2	14
Gaza	75	4	21
Al Khalil (Hebron)	95	1	4
Bir As Sabi'	15	1	84



Arab Territories Seized By Israel in 1948 and 1949

From http://www.palestinecenter.org/cpap/maps/hist_arab.html

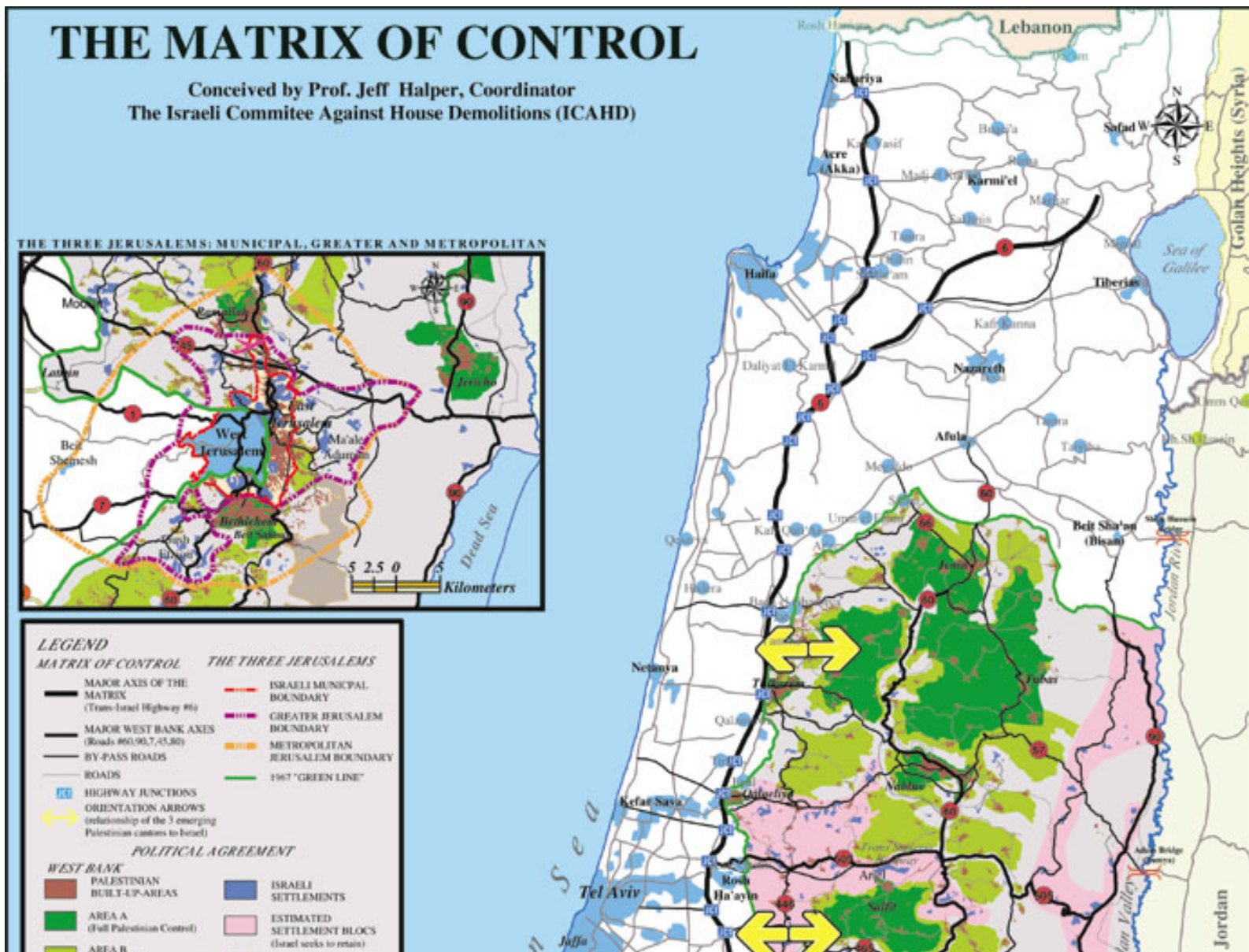


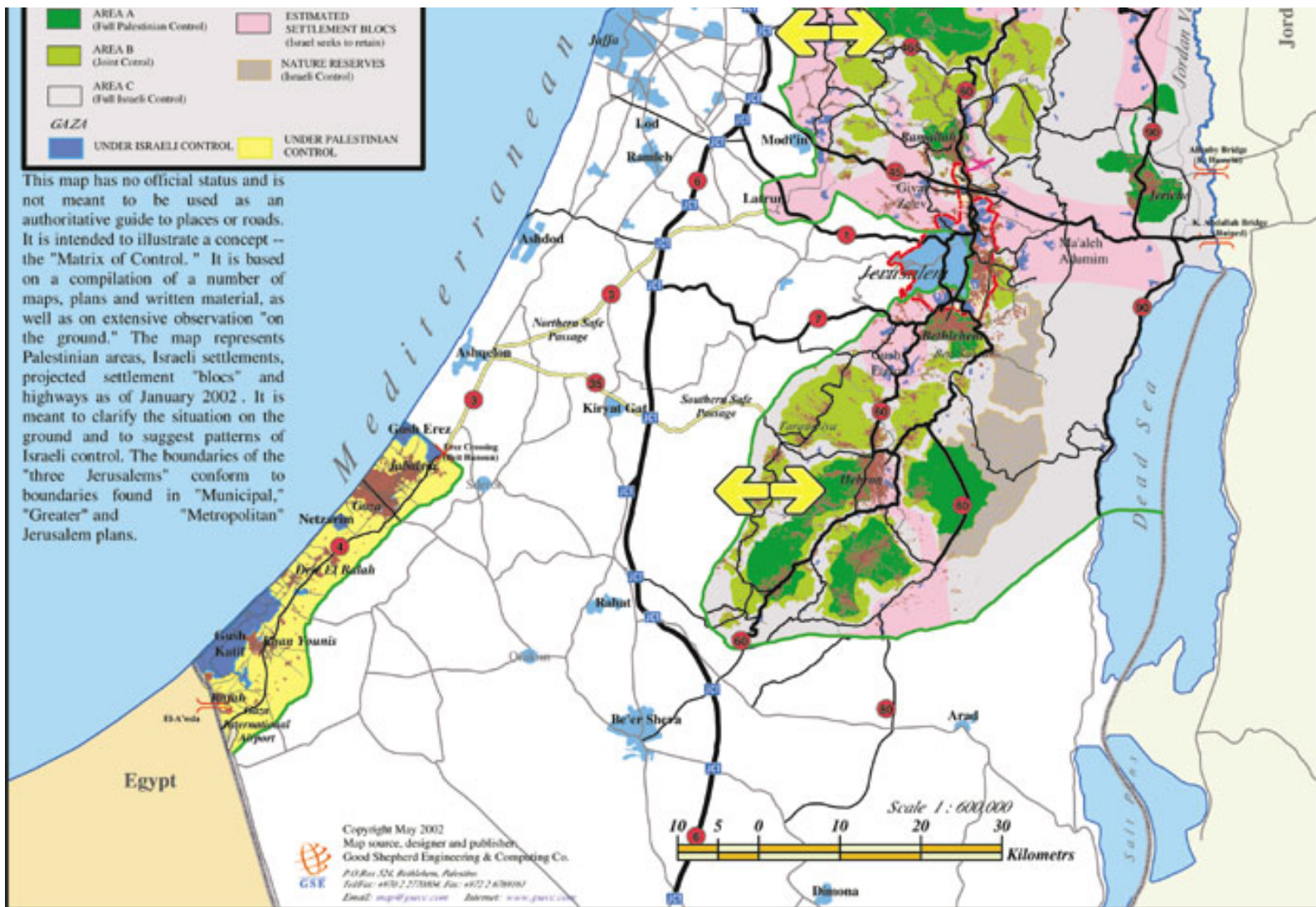


The Matrix of Control May 2002

Professor Jeff Halper, Coordinator, The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (since Israel seized Gaza and West Bank in 1967 war.)

http://www.palestinecenter.org/cpap/maps/settle_matrix.html





Map from article "THE APARTHEID WALL" <http://www.antiwar.com/hacohen/h052103.html>
Green line has changed somewhat since 2003

