

■ SECURITY AND DIPLOMACY

Study: More Than Half of Israel's Land Used by or for IDF

A study of the IDF's assets by two Israeli professors says that the army owns 5% of the land in urban areas within the Green Line, amounting to about a million *dunams* of land.

These assets include urban army bases, office buildings and training installations. The land, according to the study, would yield between NIS 700 million and NIS 1 billion annually if it were rented out.

The study, part of research being conducted by economist Zalman Shiffer and geographer Amiram Oren on behalf of the Shmuel Ne'eman Institute is the first to attempt to analyze the impact of the IDF on Israel's land economy. That impact, according to the study, is far greater than most people realize.

Over 90% of the land in Israel is owned by the state, rep-

resented by the Israel Lands Administration (ILA), and the Jewish National Fund (JNF). The land on which homes and businesses owned by individual Israelis are built is generally rented at nominal cost from the ILA and JNF for periods of up to 49 years — but actual titles to the land itself remain with the agencies.

Of this land, the study says, quoting IDF figures, 30% is used for military training and weapons testing. IDF bases occupy 4% of all land in the country, and building on an additional 11% of land adjacent to army installations is limited as well.

Overall, only 54% of state land is available for civilian use.

But according to the study's authors, the IDF's figures significantly understate the amount of land used by the army. Quoting figures by the Israel Geographical Research Institute, 60% of land in the Negev, as well as 20% of land in the Golan and in Judea and Samaria, are dedicated to IDF training areas.

Six percent of land in the center of the country is used to house army installations in the area, and altogether, there are some 2,600 IDF installations of all types throughout the country.