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Netanyahu Sees a Historic Moment in Annexation. But He Might Not Be Seeing the Risks.

by [Dennis Ross](#)

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Articles & Testimony

The prime minister has not acknowledged the important differences between this move and other recent controversies, instead making the unnecessarily dangerous bet that all the warnings will once again prove unfounded.

One late night, while I sat with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the middle of negotiating what would become the Hebron protocol, he told me “I will do what Ben-Gurion did.” I knew he was a disciple of the “revisionist” movement, bitter enemies of David Ben-Gurion, so I said “you mean Menachem Begin.” And he shot back: “No, not Begin, Ben-Gurion—he did the big stuff.” Recently, as I wrestled to understand why Netanyahu seems so determined to press ahead with annexation of West Bank territories this July, I began to think again about that conversation. Netanyahu is a no-holds-barred politician, yet throughout his tenure as prime minister he has been risk-averse when it comes national security. Even as other world leaders decry the plan, however, Netanyahu seems determined to carry it out...

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