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**Media Spins 'No Other Land' Oscar Win Into Yet Another Fake 'Israeli Settlers' Story**

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The award went to the Israeli and Palestinian filmmakers behind *No Other Land*, a film chronicling Palestinian activist Basel Adra as he supposedly "risks arrest to document the destruction of his hometown" in Masafer Yatta, at the southern edge of the West Bank.

Hardly a shock. Not only was it the frontrunner, but it ticked all the right boxes for an Academy that never misses a chance to celebrate a politically fashionable pick. And with Israel dominating the headlines since the October 7 Hamas attacks and the ensuing war against the terrorist group, it didn't take a fortune teller to predict this win.

Cue the victory speeches: Adra took the stage alongside Israeli filmmaker Yuval Abraham, who used his moment to chastise the United States for blocking "a political solution, without ethnic supremacy, with national rights for both of our people." The line earned a rousing cheer—because what better way to celebrate cinematic achievement than by tossing out oversimplified, self-righteous slogans?

Also predictable? The media's muddled reporting on *No Other Land*'s subject matter. Many outlets seemed convinced that Masafer Yatta is some ancient Palestinian village network, systematically uprooted in recent decades to make way for Israeli settlers.

Which, of course, is exactly the narrative the filmmakers wanted to push.

**The Truth About Masafer Yatta**

The reality, as usual, is far less dramatic than the Oscar-winning version.

Historically, [Masafer Yatta was a grazing ground](#) for [Bedouins](#) and locals from the nearby town of Yatta—land they used but never permanently settled. Those who stayed for extended periods lived in caves, not in established villages.

In the early 1980s, the IDF designated the area as Training Zone 918, a military training ground. The arrangement was simple: locals could continue grazing their flocks, and the IDF would provide advance

notice when live-fire exercises were scheduled. This system worked with little controversy for nearly two decades.

Then, in 1997, things shifted. Palestinians petitioned the Israeli High Court to revoke the training zone designation. At the same time, illegal construction ramped up. Permanent structures began appearing, first in small clusters and then expanding into what is now generously described as the “12 villages” of Masafer Yatta.

Under the [Oslo Accords](#), Israel maintains full control over this area—known as Area C—until a final status agreement is reached. But that didn’t stop the creeping expansion, which military sources say wasn’t about housing a growing population but about creating political “facts on the ground.” Many structures, they report, stand empty, existing solely to inflate the appearance of a permanent Palestinian presence.

By 2000, the Israeli High Court halted evacuations but explicitly banned further construction—rules that were promptly ignored. The IDF offered compromises, allowing access on weekends, Jewish holidays, and for two months each year, all of which were rejected. It even approved permanent settlement in parts of the zone’s northwest section, but the legal battle dragged on.

After years of legal wrangling, the court ruled in favor of the IDF: the training zone designation stood, and illegal structures could be dismantled.

Yet despite breathless media reports of “displacement,” the reality remains: evacuations have been minimal, the illegal buildings are still there, and the so-called “villages” remain.

**Recommended Reading:** [Masafer Yatta & Khan al-Ahmar: Behind the Headlines](#)

The Media’s Convenient Omissions

So naturally, by Monday morning, Israel woke up to a wave of skewed coverage about No Other Land’s win, all of it framing the Masafer Yatta dispute as somehow tied to Israeli settlers.

ABC News, for example, [suggested](#) the issue was part of Israel’s broader “settlement expansion,” stating:

***Israel’s demolition efforts in the West Bank, on what Israel considers to be illegal structures, have largely been in an effort to clear the way for Israeli settlers to move into the region for reasons including religious beliefs and improved quality of life.”***

Meanwhile, CNN [failed even to mention](#) that the so-called “collection of villages” in the Hebron hills consists of indisputably illegal structures while also tying the dispute to “the encroachment of Jewish settlers for decades.”

And the BBC? It didn’t even bother [including the fact](#) that Masafer Yatta is a military training ground, leaving readers with the entirely false impression that Israel cleared the area for settlers:

***Israel has occupied the West Bank since 1967. Israeli settlements in the territory are considered illegal under international law, though Israel disputes this. They have expanded over the past 55 years, becoming a focal point of violence and conflicting claims over land.”***

And that was the story across the board—from [NPR](#) to [The Hollywood Reporter](#). The facts were lost, and Masafer Yatta became yet another simplistic media tale in which Israel is, conveniently, the villain.

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