

Zionism – A Danger to Jewish Existence

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A while ago I was again asked why I define myself as an anti-Zionist. I offered the story of Umm-el Hiran as an explanation.

In 1949 the tribe of Abu el Kiyam was dispossessed of its lands in the northern Negev, and after having been transferred twice from place to place was settled by the state, in 1956, in its current location Umm-el Hiran and Atir in the northeastern Negev. Now the state is evacuating the Bedouin residents of Umm-el Hiran to the town of Hura, and intends to settle Jews in their place. The name of the new settlement will be changed to Hiran.

During my visits to the village I saw the empty spaces surrounding it. Clearly it was possible to establish a Jewish settlement alongside Umm-el Hiran and not in its stead .

It wasn't a band of criminals that expelled the Bedouin of Umm-el Hiran in order to settle in their place. It was the government of the State of Israel – and it wasn't done by mistake. A years-long struggle has been waged against this horrible act. And the Israeli government, with the backing of the High Court, has continually insisted on removing the Bedouin and settling Jews in their place. This policy symbolizes the essence of the Zionist enterprise – not to settle alongside the locals, but in their place, while driving them out of the country or limiting the living space of those remaining as much as possible.

If others had done this to us Jews, we would have fought relentlessly against the criminals who came to drive us off our land. And judging by Israel's restrictive attitude toward the refugees who arrived here from Africa, I conclude that even if these others had come to settle alongside us – and not in our place – we would not have agreed or allowed it.

The case of Umm-el Hiran, along with many other similar cases, places a difficult moral question mark over the Zionist enterprise – a solution to the Jewish problem on the ruins of the nation that lived here before the Zionist immigration to the country. Here the Jews, who were persecuted for hundreds and perhaps thousands of years not because they caused harm to someone but because they were Jews, have come to the country and driven away its inhabitants because they were not Jews, in order to settle Jews in their stead.

There is another serious aspect to this: Most of the damage to the Arab minority in

Israel is perpetrated by the government of Israel and not by racist nationalists. When the government acts against its citizens because they are Arab, for the purpose of driving them out of their villages to make

room for Jews, we are witnessing a racist-nationalist policy – and this while the government of Israel condemns and struggles against every expression of anti-Semitic racism in the world. It should be remembered that, for the most part, acts of anti-Semitism around the world are not governmental, but are perpetrated by racist right-wing individuals and organizations.

There is yet another aspect to all this. Today, the place in the world where the most significant attempts are made to hurt us Jews – is Israel. The Zionist enterprise has created enemies who desire its and our eradication, in response to the disaster that it has and continues to cause the Palestinians. They are not fighting us because of anti-Semitism, they are fighting us because of our past and present actions against them.

And here is a surprise: Since 2002 the Arab League, with the support of some Muslim countries, has offered Israel a peace agreement and its acceptance in the Middle East, in exchange for the return of the occupied territories and an agreed solution to the Palestinian refugee problem. To my sorrow, we see that Israeli governments prefer the policy of expanding territory over peace and the end of the existential threat against us by the Arab world. In the last election, the majority of Israeli citizens once again decided in favor of endless war and the perpetuation of the existential threat.