

Who Are the ‘Real’ Refugees?

Anyone who travels through Israel sees the many brand-new SUV vehicles of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Its main activity in Israel is to provide assistance to the Arab residents of Judea and Samaria—the so-called West Bank. These residents are commonly known as “the Palestinian refugees.”

In my last column, we debunked the ridiculous notion that there ever was an indigenous sovereign Arab nation called Palestine, so the term “Palestinian” itself is problematic. But since that’s the term used by the world, we’ll use it here to identify the Arabs of Judea and Samaria and the millions of refugees we are told were driven out of Israel during its 1948 War of Independence.

The United Nations, at its inception, was a beacon of light—a force for peace and hope in a world that had just experienced the horrors of Nazi aggression that left 12 million innocent civilians murdered in cold blood, including 6 million Jews. Since then, the U.N. has turned into a bastion of hatred, in which the goal of hurting Israel has become paramount.

In its efforts to harm Israel, the U.N. specifically declared that hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees were driven from Israel between 1946 and 1948. Whether they were driven out as the U.N. said or whether they left at the urging of the neighboring Arab armies is a matter of some dispute, but one thing is clear: There are only 30,000 of these refugees alive today, a fact that was reaffirmed in a report by the United States Senate Appropriations Committee in May 2012.

Determined not to lose this issue as a weapon against Israel, the U.N. redefined its term “Palestinian refugee” to mean any Arab who left Israel between the years 1946 and 1948, as well as all of their descendants, thus asserting there are some 5

million Palestinian refugees, most of whom have never lived in Israel!

Aside from this gross distortion of history, the United Nations, led by repressive Arab regimes, has ignored the hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees who were expelled from the Arab nations immediately after the reestablishment of the Jewish State. Unlike the Palestinians, who were treated as outcasts by their Arab brethren, the 260,000 Jewish refugees who made it to Israel were welcomed by the new Jewish state, which was not yet in a condition to easily absorb them.

None of the Jewish refugees have ever been recognized by the United Nations, nor has the Arab world's responsibility for their displacement been acknowledged. Needless to say, the United Nations has never redefined nor even defined the descendants of the Jewish refugees as refugees deserving of repatriation or even compensation.

Any discussion of the refugee issue in any serious peace negotiations must begin with the problem of the Jewish refugees. The Palestinian Authority and the Arab nations have hoodwinked the world into believing their myth of the "millions of Palestinian refugees," giving it a place of honor alongside the myth of the "ancient State of Palestine" that never existed. The next time they reiterate their lies, let's call their bluff and respond with some truth.

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