

„Um Zions Willen“

In Aufnahme des Appells von inzwischen weit mittlerweile mehr als fünftausend europäischen Juden, die sich Anfang Mai 2010 in Brüssel unter dem Namen „JCall“ für das Ende der israelischen Besatzungspolitik zu Wort meldeten, haben über 5200 US-amerikanisch-jüdische Staatsbürger – unter ihnen Rabbiner, Juristen, Autoren, Professoren, Akademiker und Philanthropen – am 14. Mai 2010 eine Online-Petition „Um Zions Willen“ auf den Weg gebracht. Darin erkennen sie Israels existentielle Bedrohung durch seine Feinde an, weisen aber die Ansicht zurück, dass sie Israels unabänderliches Schicksal sei. Die Unterzeichner – unter ihnen David Biale, Steven M. Cohen, Leonard Fein, M.J. Rosenberg und Michael Walzer – befürchten im Ausland eine Delegitimierung Israels durch die fortgesetzte Besatzungspolitik und distanzieren sich aus moralischen und politischen Gründen nachdrücklich von der Siedlungspolitik in der Westbank und in Ost-Jerusalem.

„For the Sake of Zion“

Encouraged by the recent European [“Call For Reason,”](#) signed by more than 5200 Jewish citizens of European countries, we, American Jews passionately devoted to the safety and welfare of the State of Israel, now add our voices to those of our European kinsfolk. They recognize, as do we, that Israel faces existential threats, both from without and from within. We do not take these lightly, but we reject the view that they are Israel’s inevitable destiny.

Some of us have lived and worked in Israel; all of us have visited there many times. We resonate strongly with Israel’s Declaration of Independence when it asserts that it is “the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign state.” We believe without reservation that “Israel is the national home of the Jewish people,” and we therefore feel both entitled and obligated to make our views known.

Together with all Israeli citizens, both Jews and Arabs, we lament the decades of death and destruction that have plagued the Land of Israel. We categorically condemn terrorism and we mourn the tragic loss of blood and treasure that has afflicted the region over the years. At the same time, we abhor the continuing occupation that has persisted for far too long; it cannot and should not be sustained. As our European counterparts correctly point out, “[T]he occupation and the continuing pursuit of settlements in the West Bank and in the Arab districts of Jerusalem . . . are morally and politically wrong and feed the unacceptable de-legitimation process that Israel currently faces abroad.” They go on to say, “Israel will soon be faced with two equally disastrous choices: either to become a state in which Jews are a minority in their own country, or to establish a regime that would be a disgrace to Israel and lead to civil unrest.” We agree.

Recent and ongoing developments in Jerusalem, Ramallah and Washington give rise to a still extremely fragile hope that finally, both Israelis and Palestinians may be ready to revive the peace process and to engage in negotiations. Ultimately, the long-term security and welfare of the democratic Jewish State of Israel depend upon a genuine resolution of the conflict within the framework of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in comity.

Advancing toward a two-state solution will require significant concessions and commitments by both sides. Among these: Terrorism must stop, and the Palestinians will need to set aside their claimed “right of return” to Israel, which would undermine the very notion of a Jewish state; they must vigorously oppose incitement against Israel. Israel, for its part, will need to dismantle the settlements considered illegal under Israeli law; protect Palestinians from maltreatment and violence by extreme elements of the settler community; set aside its insistence on exclusive sovereignty over all of expanded Jerusalem, including Arab neighborhoods, where, we

anticipate, the designated capital of the new state of Palestine will be located.

As Americans and as Jews who care deeply for the security and welfare of the State of Israel, we endorse the American government's vigorous encouragement of the parties to make the concessions necessary for negotiations to advance. In that context, we call upon Israel immediately to cease construction of housing in the disputed territories.

It is the citizens of Israel and their neighbors who will decide on their future; that is their undoubted right. Ours is to call attention to decisions the government of Israel takes which, in our view, endanger the State we hold so dear.

We invite all those of similar view to sign this statement.

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