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Don't let the settlers fool you

By [Nehemia Strasler](#)

A stranger from Mars who read the newspapers, listened to the radio and saw the television could conclude that the pullout from Gaza had been carried out under unconceivable duress by a heartless army of conquest that fell on an innocent group of people and dragged them from their homes - without preparation, without warning, without compensation, without assistance - and sentenced them to cruel exile with only the shirts on their backs.

The settlers have the knack of turning themselves into "the robbed Cossack." They will always present themselves as the ones who have been wronged, the hapless who have been maltreated, the trampled-on minority - even though the truth is the exact opposite. They complain about everything - that "no solution" was prepared for them, that the temporary housing is not suitable, that the double-wide trailer is too small, that the hotels are too full and the babies have no Materna and no pacifiers.

They are so concerned about the children that only a few days ago they put them smack up front in the struggle. Some of them dressed their children with yellow Stars of David and pushed them in front of the cameras. One of them held his baby out a window and we all trembled to think that he could suddenly drop the baby .

With all their arrogance, they did not even attempt to pack their belongings. Let the soldiers (the "doormats," as one settler called them) do it for them. For they are the lords of the land, and the army is there to serve them.

Between complaints, they forgot that until the last minute and even beyond that they believed that divine intervention would prevent disengagement. They forgot that since February 2005, when the Evacuation-Compensation Law was passed in the Knesset, the head of the Disengagement Administration and the director general of the Prime Minister's Office ran after them to come and talk, and that they refused.

In the beginning, the treasury allocated NIS 3.5 billion for the evacuees. But they brought lawyers and demands. In the end, their plots were valued like those in Kiryat Gat. Their houses were valued at \$1,000 per square meter and they received compensation for every year of residence in Gaza, plus a six-month

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vacation from the state, plus a pension for anyone above 55, plus rent for two years.

On average, an evacuated family will receive \$450,000. Those who lived there almost rent-free for two years will receive \$150,000. Is there any better investment anywhere?

The idea was that they would take the money, build a future and not have complaints. But the settlers knew they could squeeze more out of Ariel Sharon, so they invented the idea of a community. They now want to move en bloc so that the state will build the community for them. That is, they will get compensation, get rent and also get the state to do everything for them.

Now the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, Ilan Cohen, is breaking new records. He is proposing to set up an exact copy of Neveh Dekalim with all its public institutions, so that all the functionaries will have jobs.

This is a crying shame, a waste of public funds. In Ashkelon, there are 1,200 plots for houses next to the sea. There are suitable schools, roads and infrastructure. But that is not good enough for the lords of the land.

The residents of Elei Sinai also want more. They have set up a tent city near Yad Mordechai, even though there are beautiful rental houses waiting for them, which they can use until their own homes are built. They also want to move en bloc, with all their institutions, and to have double-wide trailers, because that is what behooves the lords of the land.



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