

Israel and Apartheid: Exposing a Cynical Deception

It is a common axiom that, “if you tell a big enough lie and keep repeating it, people will eventually believe it.” The allegation that Israel is an apartheid state, a staple of the BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions) Movement, is a demonstration of this maxim. Israel is a thriving democracy that protects the rights of all its citizens. Claims to the contrary are without merit.

In Israel, all citizens enjoy the freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, due process under the law, a free press, the right to vote and many other indicia of a free society. Proponents of the “Israel is an apartheid state” view, however, try to paint a picture which would lead some to conclude that Arab citizens of Israel do not enjoy all these rights. Consider the following and then ask if this sounds like what happens in an apartheid state:

- An Arab-Israeli sits on the Israeli Supreme Court.
- Twenty percent of the student body at The Technion (Israel’s MIT) are Arab students. This proportion is roughly equal with the Arab population of Israel.
- Fifteen of the 120 Knesset members are Arab-Israelis. Some of them question the legitimacy of the Jewish State and they are free to do so. Imagine this happening in the US.

In fact, Arab–Israelis serve in the government, the Israeli army, as doctors in Israel’s hospitals, in virtually every aspect of Israeli society. This is not to contend that Israel is perfect. There are problems of inequality that impact Arabs, as well as Jews. Then again, one could say the same about the United States and most Western democracies.

Compare this with the reality of apartheid where black South Africans were subject to racial laws that enforced inequality and denied them the most basic human rights. Black South Africans were forced to live in selected areas. They were denied education, restricted in where they could travel and had virtually no recognized role in the larger society. Yet, in South Africa, some have been persuaded that Israel practices apartheid – that is until they visit Israel and discover that what they had been told is a lie. Consider the testimony of young South Africans who had been taught that Israel was a practitioner of apartheid and then got to see the reality for themselves. <http://africansforpeace.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Africans-For-Peace-Perspectives-On-Israel-And-Palestine.pdf>

Sadly, those who promote the “Israel practices apartheid” narrative have a darker motive for perpetuating this lie. They do not believe in peace based on a two-state solution. Instead, they are endeavoring to de-legitimize the Jewish State, to render it inviable, and will go to great lengths to make their case, including fabricating arguments that they repeat over and over again.