



THE BLOGS

Antony Gordon

It's not a Duck, it's a Dove – time to drop the pretense of journalist integrity

The *Opinion Column* published by Neil Macdonald of the *Canadian Broadcast Corporation News* earlier today, October, 24th, 2017 titled “***Forget the ‘slippery slope’ – Israel already is an apartheid state***” lacks basic empirical research and is embarrassingly inaccurate. The only redeeming quality of Macdonald’s spurious attempts to draw a comparison between Apartheid and the current state of affairs in Israel is that Macdonald’s anti-Israel bias is unashamedly transparent.

As someone who was born and spent all my formative years in South Africa, fought against the repugnant thesis of the Apartheid regime, and chose to focus on the inequities Apartheid regime as the theme of my dissertation at [Harvard Law School](#), I believe I have earned the right to speak with some authority on the subject.

Macdonald's claim that Israel is an Apartheid state can be easily dispelled by the facts on the ground exposing Macdonald's fallacious attempts to portray Israel as a pariah State

Apartheid refers exclusively to the system of racial segregation that existed in South Africa up until its official abolition in 1991. Apartheid, the brainchild of Hendrik Verwoerd, was an attempt to disenfranchise the majority of people in South Africa in order to justify a small White minority from ruling the country. By definition, Apartheid segregated people based on ethnicity or race, denying the segregated group basic civil rights, and was a form of institutionalized racism.

Not only does Israel have no comparable system, it would be safe to say that the opposite is true. Arabs are granted full rights under Israeli law. They are granted the same protections as all Israeli citizens, including freedom of speech, assembly, and press. Arabs have equal voting rights and have representatives in all branches of the Israeli government. They eat at the same restaurants, go to the same beaches, and drive on the same roads as Jewish citizens.

In stark contrast to the explicit racist laws during the period of Apartheid in South Africa, Israel's Declaration of Independence calls for "*complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race, or sex.*"

Israel has two official languages, Hebrew and Arabic. Israel has Arabic schools, Hebrew schools, and bilingual schools, all of which are open to any Israeli citizen. Moreover, to ensure Arab access to higher education, [Israel](#) has an affirmative action program.

With regards to the so-called West Bank, nearly all Palestinian-Arabs who reside in this area are governed by the Palestinian Authority (PA) and are therefore not under Israeli jurisdiction. The PA denies Arabs in these areas basic

freedoms and human rights and runs an oppressive and corrupt dictatorship over its own people.

The age old complaint that Arab communities have substandard infrastructure is not due to discrimination. Rather, it is directly the result of a neglectful Palestinian-Arab government. The Palestinian Authority has received billions of dollars in foreign aid – one of the largest recipients of international aid per capita – but sadly almost all these funds are derailed into corruption and terrorist activities against Israel.

Within Israel, the government actually spends a disproportionately high amount of funds on social services in Arab municipalities. In short, Arabs are granted more rights and services in Israel than in any other Arab country.

Unlike non-white South Africans under Apartheid, Israeli Arabs have the vote and enjoy full citizen rights. The Supreme Court has an Arab judge; the head of surgery in a leading hospital in Israel is Arab; Arabs head university departments and hold senior positions in all aspects of Israeli society- all of which would clearly be unthinkable under Apartheid.

South African Apartheid rigidly enforced racial laws. Israel is not remotely comparable. Neil Macdonald's attempt to make a claim that Israel is an Apartheid state in the guise of human rights is both cynical and manipulative. It reveals Mr. MacDonald's true attitude toward the Jewish state. The stakes are simply too high to allow this absurd apartheid comparison to be given any credibility.

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