

Apartheid rule israel and south africa



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Apartheid is defined according to the Rome statute as inhumane acts that resemble other crime against humanity, which is committed in a well organised governed institutional regime. It is a well organised discrimination of one dominating race against other racial group or groups and committed purposely in order to maintain that regime."

The United Nations General Assembly on 30 November 1973 opened for this vice a punishment chapter that was to deal with those who violated the law protecting humanity against this Crime of racial segregation. It described the crime of apartheid as a vice committed by the offender with the intention of establishing a more powerful rule above other racial group and systematically oppressing them. (Louw, 2004)

The term apartheid, Afrikaans word which means apartness, was the name officially of the South African system of racial discrimination which existed after 1948. Complaints about this system were brought to the knowledge of United Nations several years ago. The Indian representative to the United Nations presented his concern, in which he was complaining about how Indians were treated within the Union of South Africa. As it became more widely known, the whole world turned against South African apartheid rule. It was termed as unjust and racist and many decided that a formal legal action was needed in order to make the South African government to stop this kind of inhuman governance.

In any obvious expectation, it would be that the South African experience would teach people a total lesson; there still is apartheid rule in some countries in the world today. Israel is a worst case scenario. The country has

for a long time been oppressing and segregating against the minority in many ways. The world has gone around blowing warning horns against this act of inhumanity that Israel is imposing on Palestinians. The conflict between Israel and Palestine has been a persistent one since a long time ago. The Israelites have been fighting Palestinians in a bid to survive the threats and attacks that they are exposed to by the Palestinians. This has led to them subjecting the Palestinians to severe test of oppression. Palestinian rebels on the other side vows never to come to table with the Jewish Israelites.

Apartheid system of racial segregation was used by the ruling government of South Africa from the year 1948 to 1994-. Under this legislation, the right of the majority non White South Africans were curtailed and white supremacy and Afrikaners' minority rule was held up high. The apartheid policy was introduced by Afrikaners dominated National party after Second World War.

Racial segregation started during colonial times but apartheid officially took shape after South Africa got independence in 1994. This new legislation divided the population into four groups namely; native, coloured, white and Asians. Residential areas were also segregated. This was sometimes done by forced removals. Non White representation was abolished and effective that year, the black people were denied citizenship.

The government segregated education, medical care, beaches and many other public services. They provided Africans with inferior services as compared to what the whites were offered. The White minority rulers never cared about blacks. Africans were left like stray dogs with hope at all. The

best amenities were made available to Whites alone while Africans watched in distress. (Sonneborn, 2010) The gap between Africans and the White minority widened with every passing day. The heights of the whites to the Africans seemed so hard to climb.

The apartheid rule ignited significant internal uprisings, within the countries. Trade unions were formed to champion abolishment of apartheid rule in South Africa. Those who were against the apartheid rule were imprisoned. As unrest persisted and spread and became more violent, more organisations increased repression and state sponsored violence. This would come to an end in 1994 when a democratic election was done and Nelson Mandela won under ANC. The freedom from apartheid oppression came after a long struggle by human activists and liberation fighters to put pressure on the White government to accept every race and treat them with equal respect.

The various colonies of South Africa passed a legislation to limit the freedom of the unskilled workers and regulated the relations between the races. The franchise and Ballot act of 1892 brought about limits to finances and education to the black race of South Africa and another act of 1894 denied Indians the right to vote. Africans were denied voting rights too and they were limited to fixed areas, where they were not free to move to other places anyhow. They were made prisoners in their own country. (Downing, 2005) Nothing was interesting to live in a country that you call yours yet freedom could be better somewhere else.

The whites were given full political control over the other races. No black was allowed to sit in the parliament. Another act also prohibited the Africans from

buying land outside reserves. This resulted into residential segregation. The residential segregation act intended to push Africans to specific sites away from the whites. They provided cheap labour for industries preventing any one black from developing skills of trade. The blacks were not to be enlightened because their enlightenment would mean that they start for similar positions with the whites and this was not allowed in that regime.

The Native administration act made whites to have control over all the operations of the native Africans. Laws that highly restricted Africans from working to earn more wages than their comparative performance would yield. This would mean that every African was placed for a bar above which they were not to climb above in the social and economic ladder.

The population registration act introduced identity cards that specified the race of every individual. This was to either give or deny them a chance to enter certain areas and to carry out certain activities, depending on the race of an individual.

The group area act abolished staying together. It dictated where everyone was to living according to their races. Each race was allotted a specific area. The government demolished the shack land slums and made their white employers to rise up ad construct residential houses for them this was to be effective only if one had permission to live in the city.

Prohibition of mixed marriages act abolished mixed marriages among different races. Immorality act of 1950 made sexual relationship with a person of different race a criminal offence. According to preservation of social amenities act, municipal grounds were reserved for a particular race in

the population. Separate social amenities like hospital, schools and universities. Signboards were placed on many areas even on park benches

Suppression of communism act enacted in 1950 banned the South African communist party. All organisations that were not government organisations were abolished completely. Any informal gatherings were declared illegal and as a breach of the law. These organisations were deemed threatening to the government and so could not be allowed to continue at all costs.

The Bantu Education act of 1953 was enacted to separate African students from the white's students. The system of education of the two parties was consequently different. The white students were given high quality education that would enable them to have skills in better areas. The African students were given inferior education that aimed at maintaining them at the level of cheap labourers. Na decree of 1974 declared that English and Afrikaans is used on equal terms in high school. (Downing, 2005)

The Bantu authority act established a separate government structure for the blacks and white citizens. This was aimed at stopping to support the Bantustan government. The Africans were being side-lined at all cost.

Industrial development in the homeland was stopped. Aims of making the ten units of the Bantustan governance were gradually underway. The whites wanted to win full independence of South Africa without having the black Africans amongst them.

Let us now turn our attention over to Israel where currently there is element of apartheid rule. The situation in Israel now rivals that which was in South Africa some decades back. Discrimination against non-Jews is the on-going

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vice that is in Israel today. Segregation against non-Jews is the norm that is protected by Israeli basic laws as well as body of other laws still growing.

In Israel land is believed to belong to Jews only. Any blood that is not of a Jewish origin can never be allowed to own land, buy or carry out any land transaction in the land of Israel. Palestinians are not allowed to have any relations with land ownership, land transactions and others. There totally no freedom for Palestinians living in Israel. 93% of land belongs to Jewish people.

In 1948, many Jewish villages were erected but not even a single house belonging to a Palestinian was erected whatsoever. This was merely due to the strong belief that Arabs who are non-Jewish do not have the right of ownership of property inside Israel. Advocating for equality in Israel has actually tanned amounted to sedition if I cannot call it treason.

Arabs living in Israel cannot be elected to the Knesset. Such places and privileges are only reserved for the native Jews. The Arabs are given the least of attention in matters to do with national decision. (Sonneborn, 2010) They are subjected to rules and politicise that they don't have a say or contributing hand on. They do not have the freedom to share in building Israeli nation.

Apartheid policy also found its way in the health sector. In cancer research in Israel, report that was released about cancer during the years 1984-1999 did not feature even a single Arab community. When asked why they did not factor in the Arab community, the Israeli health ministry gave an excuse that it was due to budgetary reasons that the other communities were not

counted. The research was carried out so as to prevent installation of new cancer causing hazards. By not carrying out the research, the government has indirectly given a go ahead to polluters to continue subjecting Arab to more pollution than before while the Jewish side is protected from those dangerous [pollutants that cause diseases.

For the past three decades the malignant disease has increased by 97-8% among Arab men and 123% among Arab women. (Lapping, 1987) In Jewish community, the disease stands at only 39% among men and 24% among women. This shows clearly how much the Israeli government has neglected the Palestinians to their own self.

Israeli politicians, academics, intellectuals and mass were debating on how to fight demographic war with Palestinians. The minority Palestinians are considered as a demographic threat to the native Israelis. They try everything negative against them so as to ensure they don't rise up above them.

Racist walls were erected in several localities where the Israelites live adjacent to the Arabs. These areas included Lydda, Ramleh and caesaria. These barriers were intentionally built to demographically separate the two communities from mixing freely with one another or sharing certain amenities. The Palestinians are considered a lesser people and so are not worthy to share in the same facilities.

Shlomo Gazit from the Jaffer centre for strategic study preaches that democracy has to be subordinated to demography. Members of the Israeli community have been supporting ethnic cleansing. Jews cannot live together

with the Palestinians. There has to be always some obvious difference that keeps the two communities from each other. There is never a bargaining point between the Jews and the Israelis.

The Israeli national agenda views Palestine as a demographic threat. There are places in and positions in Israel that Palestinians are not allowed to go to. Anything that could make Palestinians to arise to heights above the Israel population is quickly shattered. There is strategy to ensure that they are never by the Palestinians in any way. Property ownership is reserved to the Israelites and not let free for the Palestinians to share in it. This is strategically meant to further silence the Palestinians so that they do not have any centre of power. They are to remain below the Israelis at all costs.

Palestinians are often denied basic equality in health, education, housing and possession solely because they are not of Jewish origin. They are excluded from the very definition of Jewish state. They are never let to feel the sense of belonging in the Jewish state. They are made aware of their social and cultural difference hence keeping them at bay as far as national participation is concerned. They are never consulted in any way but rather left in lone. (Lapping, 1987)

The Palestinians do not have any influence in the law or political, social and economic policies, similar to the blacks in South Africa when apartheid lasted there. Israeli civil society opposes Arabs. Employment for the Palestinians is a problem. Jobs are made available on the basis of ethnicity.

Mixed marriages are not allowed in Israel. Jews marry Jews and Palestinians marry Palestinians. Difference in cultural and social background of the two

communities has also taken a toll on the possibility of intermarrying amongst them. This has consequently further increased the gap between them. There is no association of the two communities that can tie the bonds between them.

Many comments about apartheid in Israel have been thrown into the air. People like Desmond Tutu have expressed their concern about this issue. Activists worldwide have complained and demanded that the UN look into this matter because many acts that violate human rights have been witnessed in several instances. A call for Hamas and the government to talk ways out has been a tough mountain to climb. The fight for peace still goes on.

Comparing apartheid in South Africa and Israel

One will definitely notice the differences when the two situations are closely examined. While in South Africa the bid to abolish apartheid rule never attempted to destroy the white oppressor, and denying them rights in South Africa, the activists and movement leaders put up a genuine struggle for human rights to be attained in the entire nation. In Israel, the Arabs surrounding them never wanted them to settle in peace just from the day of her inauguration. The Arabs never wanted to recognise Israelis' right to exist.

The blacks in their fight never targeted innocent citizens with suicide bombing or terror attacks while in Israel such attacks are frequent occurrences. There are many instances when the dominant Israeli citizens are attacked in a bid by the Palestinians to liberate themselves from the hands of the Jews.

Of course in South Africa there were some extremists but the main liberation movement in South Africa maintained a low profile. Perhaps there could have never been apartheid rule in Israel if the war attempts by the Palestinians were never there. There was no Arab who was willing to sign any treaty to ensure that they lived in peace with their Israeli neighbours. Palestinians are the cause of the tragic war that the Jews fought for their survival.

Israeli did not want to conquer another group of people; this was contrary to what the whites did in South African situation. They oppressed Africans, denied them their basic human rights and subjected them to rules by force. (William, 2004)

The intifada 2000 resulted on several suicidal violence attacks on Israel by the Palestinians, where several innocent Israelis died. This resulted in retaliation by the Israeli army. Consequently, this reaction led to the death and suffering of many innocent souls from both sides. The difference is that their South African counterparts recognized the fact that their fate depended on one another. Both sides were able to sit down and negotiate. They were both willing to rebuild the democracy that was in South Africa before. This willingness to negotiate was lacking between Israel and Palestinians.

Palestinians have embarked on road of terror and bombing. This is different from the method that the activists in South Africa used. Here there is no room to come to terms with Israeli rule, Israeli are always a thorn on Palestinians' flesh. Hamas and Jihad have made it clear to the world that their bargain is to completely face off Israel from existence and replace her with a whole new democratic government. This manifesto promotes nothing

but genocide of Jewish people at its full description. This as compared to South Africa's case, liberation fighters in South Africa was campaigning for all South African citizens to gain fair treatment irrespective of colour or race.

In Palestine genocide is the target of the day; they torture and kill their opponents without any care. Perhaps from this view, you could say that they share some similarity with the white apartheid rulers of South Africa in the way they gravely mistreated the blacks and denied them their rights without stopping to think that Africans too were human beings.

Another significant difference between apartheid in Israel and South Africa is the fact that there is no segregation in terms of facilities used by Israeli citizens. Both Jews and Arabs have equal rights. They have the right to vote, there is no law that is condemning social mixing, there are no separate schools, no separate universities. (Lapping, 1987) In South Africa the gap between the white man and the black man was so much widened that no one could fail to notice. Everything was done separately. The White rulers got the best share of the chunk while the Africans were either denied or given left over's.

Conclusion

In conclusion, apartheid system of governance brought trauma in the countries where it was practiced during the colonial era and in those regions where it is still being practiced by domineering regimes. It is quite painful and humiliating to a normal human being to find them being segregated against merely because of some minor cultural or ethnic differences. Apartheid system of legislation has led to violation of human rights. The fight against

this system in Israel has been long yet the warring factions are still not ready to come and eat around one common table. As a result many innocent lives are being lost every other day. Little children are dying for the course they have the least of knowledge about. Women are being subjected to grave cruelty, loss of property, oppression are but a few to mention. Tear, painful tear flow against many faces every day, broken heart and hopelessness fill the gloom of sadness whenever tragedy occurs in the name of fighting for power. Where shall these souls escape to?