

"Democratic" Nations:



Apartheid South Africa Jim Crow United States Present-day Israel

Every one of the above nations holds or held elections, fielded multiple parties and candidates, and enjoyed the overt symbols of democracy. As we know, however, under these regimes, millions of people who did not enjoy the blessings of such "democracy" suffered miserably, living under oppression and without the rights the privileged members of these societies took for granted. Even their own struggles for freedom were outlawed; organizers for equality were jailed and beaten, and both activists for civil rights and innocents--whose lives were not valued in such conditions of institutionalized racism--were severely injured and killed. The lessons of the past provide a clear call for justice:

Elections are no excuse for oppression!

The government may deny any party the right to run candidates for the Knesset (parliament) that refuses to acknowledge that Israel is "the state of the Jewish people." When parties led by Palestinian citizens of Israel attempted to amend this to read "the state of the Jewish people and its Arab citizens," they were defeated. Even Palestinians who are citizens of Israel are enshrined in this "Basic Law" as second-class citizens. A vote, in Israel, is a vote for apartheid.

In 1948, the founding of Israel was marked by the expulsion of nearly a million Palestinians. Under international law, and as a condition of Israel's admission to the United Nations, these refugees are guaranteed their right to return to their homes. This right has been denied for over fifty years for one reason--the "demographic problem" it would create. Israel has denied human rights for decades - in order to preserve an artificial ethnic majority.

Besides denying equal citizenship to Palestinian citizens of Israel and refusing refugees' human right to return home on racist principles, Israel holds millions of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip under a brutal, repressive military occupation. Palestinians are forbidden any meaningful control over their borders, water and society, while Israeli Jewish "settlers" are provided with government perks to steal Palestinian land.

**Democracy means civil rights and equal justice for all,
not institutionalized racism and military oppression.**

Stand up for justice and democracy. Divest from apartheid Israel.