

Information about the *Roadmap to Apartheid*

The Roadmap to Apartheid gives the appearance of a documentary. But in reality it is an extremist, anti-Israel propaganda film designed to misinform well-meaning people about the Arab-Israeli conflict. Using slick editing and emotionally manipulative imagery, the film spreads false narratives, demonizing Israel and portraying Palestinians as the ultimate blameless victims. It seeks to equate Zionism and Israel with the evil of South African apartheid, inspire viewers to join the anti-Israel boycott movement, and promote the elimination of Israel as a solution to the conflict.

The narrator and many of those interviewed are notorious anti-Israel propagandists.

- The narrator is Alice Walker, a famous civil rights activist and author who has turned to anti-Israel bigotry in recent years. She has refused to allow her novel, *The Color Purple*, to be published in Hebrew, blatantly discriminating against the people of Israel.¹
- Ali Abunimah, Omar Barghouti, Jeff Halper, Phyllis Bennis, and Diana Bhuttu feature prominently in the film. All of them are leading anti-Israel activists who deny Jewish rights to self-determination in Israel.

Like most anti-Israel propaganda, the film omits crucial historical context.

- The film omits the fact that Jews are indigenous to Israel and have maintained a documented, continuous presence there for over 3,000 years.²
- It won't tell you that Palestinian Arab violence against Jews began in the 1920s, long before refugees and occupation. It neglects to mention the war Palestinian and Arab leaders launched in 1947 in an attempt to kill or ethnically cleanse Israeli Jews. It glosses over the 2nd Intifada of 2000-2005, in which Palestinian terrorists brutally murdered over 1,000 Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Israelis. It completely ignores the thousands of rockets Gaza terrorists have fired at Israeli civilians since 2005.
- It ignores the fact that Zionist and Israeli leaders agreed to give land for peace in 1937, 1947, 1968, 2000, and 2008, and were rejected every time by Arab and Palestinian leaders.³

The film's comparison of Israeli and Afrikaner narratives is inaccurate and offensive.

- The Afrikaners who instituted Apartheid were European colonizers with a fundamentally racist ideology. Zionism, on the other hand, is an indigenous liberation movement. The Jewish people are indigenous to the land of Israel and have inalienable rights to self-determination there under international law.⁴
- Afrikaners created the conflict in South Africa by violently taking over the land of an indigenous people and denying them basic human rights. Similarly, Arab leaders created the Arab-Israeli conflict by attempting to violate Jewish rights to self-determination in Israel by force.
- The analogy between Jewish and Afrikaner suffering is false. Afrikaners were persecuted by the British during parts of the 19th century. Jews were persecuted **across Europe and the Middle East for 1,900 years**, including by Arabs in the land of Israel itself. The fears of Jewish Israelis are further justified by the fact that minorities across the Arab world are still being brutally oppressed today.⁵

The film's comparison of violent resistance in South Africa to Palestinian terrorism is inaccurate and serves to whitewash a genocidal ideology.

- The film mentions Palestinian violence against Israel only in passing, and only to frame it as the equivalent of violent resistance against South African Apartheid. In fact, the aim of genocidal Palestinian terrorist groups like Hamas is not resistance to any specific Israeli actions. Their stated goal is to obliterate Israel and murder Jews.⁶

The film's claim that Israel is an apartheid state is offensive, false, and an insult to all victims of true apartheid regimes.

- Israel is the opposite of an apartheid regime. It is a multicultural liberal democracy whose legal system upholds equal rights, liberties, and protections for all of its citizens. It is the only free country in the Middle East according to the human rights group Freedom House.⁷
- Israel's policies in the West Bank and Gaza do not constitute apartheid. The Palestinians are not citizens or residents of Israel and do not wish to be. They have their own national movement and 98% of them live in areas ruled by their own governments – Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. Israel made peace offers in 2000 and 2008 that would have ended the Israeli presence in these areas, and led to the establishment of a Palestinian state. Palestinian leaders rejected both offers, and refused to even start negotiating for peace again until 2013.⁸ Israel cannot be held responsible for their rejectionism.
- In contrast to Apartheid South Africa, Israeli safety measures like checkpoints and the barrier have nothing to do with race or religion. They exist to separate Palestinian terrorists from their intended victims – Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Israelis of all colors.⁹ Until the two sides reach a peace agreement, safety measures like checkpoints and the barrier are needed to ensure the daily safety and survival of Israeli civilians. **In 2013 there were nearly 1,400 attempted attacks against Israelis in the West Bank and Jerusalem.**¹⁰
- The film attempts to gain credibility by featuring South Africans who accuse Israel of apartheid. But it ignores the voices of prominent South Africans who strongly disagree:

“I am shocked by the claim that the free, diverse, democratic state of Israel practices apartheid. This ridiculous accusation trivializes the word apartheid, minimizing and belittling the racism and suffering endured by South Africans of color.”—*Rev. Dr. Kenneth Meshoe, Member of the South African Parliament*¹¹

“Few of those who suffered from apartheid directly have bought into [the apartheid analogy]... racism and discrimination do not form the rationale for Israel's policies and actions... Israel respects freedom of speech and human rights...” – *Rhoda Kadalie, former Commissioner at the South African Human Rights Commission, appointed by Nelson Mandela*¹²

- Rhoda Khadalie also wrote that South Africans like Desmond Tutu, Ronnie Kassrils, and John Dugard have been “sidelined in the New South Africa” and are using their involvement in the anti-Israel movement to “maintain [their] political relevance on the international scene.”¹³

The film contains an overwhelming number of blatantly false and misleading claims.

- The claim that settlements are illegal is contradicted by many respected legal experts including former Dean of Yale Law School Eugene Rostow and international law scholar Julius Stone.¹⁴

- The claim that Israelis steal water from the Palestinians is false. Israel is **giving** the Palestinians water. It gives them **3 times more** than it is required to under the Oslo Accords. Today Israelis and Palestinians use roughly the same amount of fresh water per capita.¹⁵
- The claim that there are 600 checkpoints in the West Bank is false. 12 checkpoints remain inside the West Bank today and they are kept inactive unless there is a specific security threat. According to human rights group B'Tselem, "Palestinians can now travel relatively freely within the West Bank."¹⁶
- The claim that Palestinian women have given birth at checkpoints because "some silly kid won't let them through" is false. Israel has been forced to search Palestinian ambulances at checkpoints because Palestinian terrorists have repeatedly used ambulances to enter Israel and murder civilians.¹⁷
- The claim that there are Jewish-only roads in the West Bank is false. Prior to the 2nd Intifada in 2000 Israelis and Palestinians were free to travel on the same roads. But after Palestinian terrorists began murdering Israeli drivers in the West Bank, Israel was forced to designate some roads for use by **Christian, Muslim, and Jewish** Israelis, and others for use by Palestinians. When drivers in the West Bank are no longer threatened on a daily basis this restriction will be lifted.¹⁸
- The claim that the security barrier is a "tool for massive land-grabs" is false. The barrier does not annex any land. It deviates from the Green Line only to protect Israeli civilians living in the West Bank. Palestinians retain ownership of land used for the barrier and are offered compensation by the Israeli government. Israel began building the barrier in 2002 to stop a brutal Palestinian suicide bombing and terrorism campaign. Before 2002 terrorists could simply walk into Israel and attack civilians. Since 2002 casualties from terrorism have dropped by over 90%.¹⁹
- The claim that the Oslo Accords and the two-state solution are equivalent to the South African Bantustan system is false. What Israel offered the Palestinians in 2000 and 2008 was not a group of separate enclaves but a viable, contiguous state.²⁰ The only reason Israel still controls parts of the West Bank is that Palestinian leaders rejected those offers.
- The claim that Israel still occupies Gaza is false. According to an ICRC report, there is no such thing as occupation without the physical presence of troops on the ground.²¹ Israel withdrew all troops from Gaza in 2005, so there is no longer an occupation. Israel's blockade of Gaza has been ruled a legal self-defense measure by the United Nations' Palmer Report.²²
- The claim that Israel has caused a humanitarian crisis in Gaza is false. There is no humanitarian crisis there, largely because Israel delivers massive amounts of food and supplies to Gaza every day. Gaza's standard of living is similar to that of many countries in the region, including Turkey and Morocco.²³
- The claim that Palestinians can't leave Gaza and the West Bank without Israeli approval is false. Israel sealed off its borders with Gaza in response to Hamas rocket-fire, but there is another border with Egypt which Israel does not control. Palestinians can leave Gaza and the West Bank using passports issued by the Palestinian Authority, with no approval from Israel required.²⁴
- The claim that 5-6 million Palestinian refugees living in Arab countries have a "right of return" and should be given Israeli citizenship is false. There is nothing in international law which gives Palestinian refugees a "right of return". In fact, millions of Palestinians moving into Israel would end Jewish self-determination and violate international law.²⁵

- The claim that only Jews get welfare benefits in Israel is false. The Israeli Welfare Ministry has implemented specific programs to help end poverty in Arab communities and Israel's universities have implemented highly effective affirmative action programs.²⁶
- The claim that Jews can't marry non-Jews in Israel is grossly misleading. There is no law against mixed couples in Israel and 10% of marriages in Israel are mixed.²⁷
- The claim that Arab and Jewish communities in Israel are segregated and that 90% of Israel's land is reserved for Jews only is entirely false. Israeli law strongly prohibits such discrimination. This claim refers to the fact that over 90% of the land is owned by the state. No one can buy this land, but any Israeli, regardless of religion, sex, ethnicity, etc. can lease it.²⁸ It is true that most Israeli communities are fairly homogenous – Arabs tend to live in Arab communities, secular Jews tend to live in secular Jewish communities, religious Jews tend to live in religious Jewish communities – but this is by choice, not because of legal restrictions.²⁹
- The claim that Israel displaced Israeli Arabs and “confiscated” their land is misleading. After Palestinians and Arab states launched their war against Israel in 1947, Israel moved Arab citizens away from strategic border areas vital to its survival. It has since compensated them for their land.³⁰
- The claim that Israel's 1.7 million Arab citizens are a “demographic time-bomb” is misleading. Israel's demographic concerns are not focused on its own citizens, but on Palestinians living in the West Bank and surrounding Arab countries. If they were to become Israeli citizens, Jews would become a minority and lose their self-determination.
- The claim that Palestinian residents of East Jerusalem are not allowed to have Israeli citizenship is false. Israel offered them citizenship but most have refused for political reasons. In recent years, however, over 10,000 East Jerusalem residents have applied for and received Israeli citizenship.³¹
- The claim that Arabs are not allowed to constitute more than 30% of Jerusalem's population is false. 35% of Jerusalem's residents are Arab and Israel has set aside extra residential land to accommodate their future growth.³²
- The claim that Israel uses home demolitions to force Palestinians out of Jerusalem is false. Like other countries around the world, Israel demolishes some structures that violate its urban planning laws. These laws are the same for Jews and Palestinians. Between 1993 and 2001 Israel demolished far more Jewish than Palestinian structures in Jerusalem.³³
- The claim that Palestinians can't get permits to build homes legally is false. Palestinians and Jews enjoy similar rates of approval for building permits in Jerusalem.³⁴
- The claim that 700,000 Palestinian political prisoners have been jailed by Israel since 1967 is blatantly false. The “700,000” figure is a massive lie which has been repeatedly debunked in recent years. Palestinians are detained by Israel if they are involved in violence and terrorism, not for political reasons. Calling those who murder innocent men, women, and children “political prisoners” is morally corrupt and deeply offensive.³⁵
- The claim that administrative detention is contrary to international law is false. Israel, like the U.S., UK, Canada, and Italy, uses administrative detention to prevent terrorist attacks. It has been officially endorsed as a counterterrorism tool by the Global Counterterrorism Forum.³⁶

The film uses a notorious propaganda tactic: fabricating and distorting quotes.

- **Fabricated:** *“Negev land is reserved for Jewish citizens, whenever and wherever they want... We must expel Arabs and take their places... I support forced transfer and see nothing unethical in it.”—David Ben-Gurion.* Anti-Israel activists claim this quote was taken from a letter Ben-Gurion wrote to his son in 1937. But in fact Ben-Gurion wrote the opposite – “we **must not** expel the Arabs and take their places.” The section about the Negev does not appear in the letter at all.³⁷
- **Fabricated:** *“Israel will create in the course of the next 10 or 20 years conditions which would attract natural and voluntary migration of refugees from the Gaza Strip and West Bank to Jordan.”—Yitzhak Rabin.* Anti-Israel sources claim this appeared in a New York Times article from 1983, but the original article contains no such quote.³⁸
- **Questionable:** *“We’ll make a pastrami sandwich of them. We’ll insert a strip of Jewish settlements in between the Palestinians, and then another strip of Jewish settlements right across the West Bank so that in 25 years, neither the United Nations, nor the USA, nobody, will be able to tear it apart.”—Ariel Sharon.* This was not a direct quote. It is based on an unverified anecdote told by a British journalist.³⁹ When Sharon was prime minister he did the opposite of what is described in this quote. He dismantled settlements in the West Bank and Gaza.
- **Misleading:** *“The Jews took Israel from the Arabs after the Arabs had lived there for a thousand years. Israel, like South Africa, is an apartheid state.”—Hendrik Verwoerd, former Prime Minister of South Africa.* Verwoerd made this false claim in 1961 when there was no Israeli presence in the West Bank. It was a reaction to the fact that Israel had publicly opposed his racist regime at the United Nations.⁴⁰

The film promotes BDS and the elimination of Israel as the democratic state of the Jewish people.

- Once the demonization of Israel is complete, the film calls for viewers to support the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement and a one-state solution. In concrete terms, this means millions of Palestinian refugees moving into Israel and replacing it with a majority-Palestinian state. This would end Jewish self-determination and violate international law.⁴¹ Even worse, it would almost certainly force Israeli Jews to live as a minority under the rule of racist political parties. Fatah and Hamas are the political forces that dominate Palestinian politics today, and both promote violence and hatred against Jews on a regular basis.⁴²
- In an ideal world, there would be no borders anywhere and people would be able to live wherever they wanted. But that is not the reality today. Those who support a one-state solution are demanding that Israeli Jews agree to live as a minority under the rule of people who oppressed them for centuries, and whose most powerful leaders today promote violent anti-Semitism.⁴³ The one-state solution will lead directly to injustice and human rights violations against Jews, and further bloodshed on both sides.

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