

Israel's Netanyahu Says the Quiet Part Out Loud: Palestinians to be "Subjects," Not Citizens in Apartheid Annexation

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In an interview with corrupt casino mogul Sheldon Adelson's free newspaper, Israel ha-Yom, [Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu](#) said the quiet parts out loud.

Although he did not use the word, he described an Apartheid regime in the Israeli-controlled Palestinian West Bank.

He openly referred to the stateless Palestinians as "subjects."

Netanyahu will annex the Jordan Valley formally to Israel, where 60,000 Palestinians live and which is one of the areas Israel had pledged to relinquish to the Palestine Authority in the 1993 Oslo Accords. He will also annex the land on which Israeli squatters established settlements in Palestinian territory.

Israel ha-Yom asked, "Q: Nevertheless, several thousand Palestinians live in the Jordan Valley. Does that mean they will receive Israeli citizenship?"

Netanyahu replied:

"No. They will remain a Palestinian enclave. You're not annexing Jericho. There's a cluster or two. You don't need to apply sovereignty over them, they will remain Palestinian subjects if you will. But security control also applies to these places."

How about if we won't?

I have long argued that the crux of the Israeli conflict with the Palestinians is the denial to Palestinians of [citizenship in a state](#). In calling the Palestinians "subjects," Netanyahu is acknowledging that they are not citizens. In Hannah Arendt's phrase, citizenship is the right to have rights. Palestinians have no citizenship in a state. They do not have a right to have rights.

They are subjects, they way medieval people living under an absolute monarchy were subjects. Only democratic states really have citizens.

The Israeli right wing is afraid that Netanyahu, in leaving un-annexed the rest of the Palestinian West Bank, is acceding to the demand for a Palestinian state. These fears are exacerbated by Netanyahu's championing of the Kushner plan for the Mideast, which does

contain language about a Palestinian state, although as described it isn't actually a state.

It is what was called in Apartheid South Africa a Bantustan.

Netanyahu admitted as much, saying of the Palestinian leadership:

"They need to acknowledge that we control security in all areas. If they consent to all this, then they will have an entity of their own that President Trump defines as a state. There are those who claim and - an American statesman told me: 'But Bibi, it won't be a state.' I told him, call it what you want."

I said at my Hisham B. Sharabi Memorial Lecture:

"Statelessness means the complete lack of citizenship in a recognized state. It means you don't have a passport; you have a laissez-passé. That means a lot of countries won't accept the laissez-passé. It means you can't travel freely, you don't have constitutional protections, you often can't get a work permit, your property is not secure because people can take it away from you and you don't have access to national courts that could adjudicate those disputes . . . what does a state do? It controls land, water, air. If a North Korean MiG flew over San Diego, all hell would break loose . . . If an Israeli plane flies over the West Bank, eh? Not a state. If substantial water resources, a river or something, were expropriated by Canada, there would be trouble because that's America's water, it's owned by the federal government. But if 85 percent of the water on the West Bank is diverted to Israeli settlers, that's all right because there is no Palestinian state. The water doesn't belong to anybody. It's a no-man's land. States control immigration. But the Palestinians would deport somebody, how? There are lots of [Israeli] undocumented people on the West Bank, but their state is behind them."

As for the notion of a "Bantustan," here is what the [Wikipedia](#) article says:

"Under the Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act of 1970, the Government stripped black South Africans of their citizenship, which deprived them of their few remaining political and civil rights in South Africa, and declared them to be citizens of these homelands . . . the process of creating the legal framework for this plan was completed by the Black Homelands Citizenship Act of 1970, which formally designated all black South Africans as citizens of the homelands, even if they lived in "white South Africa", and cancelled their South African citizenship... Bantustans within the borders of South Africa were classified as "self-governing" or "independent". In theory, self-governing Bantustans had control over many aspects of their internal functioning but were not yet sovereign nations. Independent Bantustans (Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei; also known as the TBVC states) were intended to be fully sovereign. In reality, they had little economic infrastructure worth mentioning and, with few exceptions, encompassed swaths of disconnected territory. This meant that the Bantustans were little more than puppet states controlled by South Africa. Throughout the existence of the "independent" Bantustans, South Africa remained the only country to recognise their independence."

Palestinians in the Jordan Valley are about to be made like the Black South Africans who lived in South Africa but were declared aliens in their own country and assigned to a toothless, puppet-like “Bantustan” for their citizenship. That is what Netanyahu means when he calls them “Palestinian subjects.” Bantustan subjects.

In those areas that the Israelis are not (so far) annexing, Palestinians are still under the security control of the Occupying Israeli military. But, again, they have no citizenship in a state. Israel makes policies for them, but they cannot vote on those policies. They are stateless. As for the Palestine “Authority,” “call it what you will.” It is not a state. It will not be allowed to undertake the functions of a state.

I said in 2013 that you can’t keep 5 million people stateless forever, that this is monstrous. but apparently you can do so for many decades, maybe a century or more.

Shame.

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