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# 'Two-state theory is fiction,' says author Antony Loewenstein

PREMIUM

Journalist and writer Antony Loewenstein on why the world should pursue one democratic state where both Israelis and Palestinians can live together

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Journalist and author Antony Loewenstein | Photo Credit: Special arrangement



she chronicled the orchestrated raids on the public sphere in the wake of a catastrophic event, which economists like Milton Friedman were seeing as “exciting market opportunities.”



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The German-Australian journalist and writer, Antony Loewenstein, followed in Klein’s footsteps for his 2017 book, *Disaster Capitalism: Making a Killing out of Catastrophe*, travelling across Afghanistan, Pakistan, Haiti, Papua New Guinea, the U.S., the U.K., Greece, and Australia and witnessing the reality of disaster capitalism. He found out how companies “cash in on organised misery in a hidden world of privatised detention centres, militarised private security, aid profiteering, and destructive mining.”

Last year, Loewenstein, who is Jewish, wrote the prize-winning *The Palestine Laboratory: How Israel Exports the Technology of Occupation Around the World*. In it, he argues that Israel’s military industrial complex uses the occupied, Palestinian territories as a testing ground for weaponry and surveillance technology that they then export around the world to despots and democracies. For decades, occupation of the West Bank and Gaza has given the Israeli state invaluable experience in controlling an “enemy” population, the Palestinians. It’s here, he says, that they have perfected the architecture of control.

As Israel’s relentless pounding of Gaza continues, we spoke to Loewenstein on the sidelines of the Samsung Galaxy Tab S9 Series Jaipur Literature Festival.

### **How do you see the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel and the brutal response by Israel on Palestinians? What is the way out?**

The repression of West Bank and Gaza – and Palestinians – have been going on for decades. Israel has never wanted true peace for Palestinians. It’s an apartheid state, as South Africa has called it out in the International Court of Justice. The two-state theory



**In your book, *After Zionism*, edited with Ahmed Moor, you argue for one state for Palestine and Israel. But given the current situation, is that a rational solution?**

It's time the two-state fiction presented in the U.S. and in other Western powers is put to rest, because it's an idea which is just kept dangling without any concrete plan on how to go about it. The separation of two people in a small place is a non-starter. Can there be a Palestinian state when Palestinians are under Israel occupation, and Israeli laws extend to Israeli Jews wherever they may live? Israel will continue to transfer a large number of civilians in occupied territories, as the world looks on. The ideology of separatism favoured by the Israeli state, which includes keeping Palestinians behind barbed wires and under mass surveillance, has failed. Call advocates of a one-state solution like me a dreamer and idealist, but it is only through cooperation and addressing past grievances that peace can be achieved.

**Two peoples are engaged in a conflict over the same land. How can there be reconciliation?**

I agree that it will be difficult to get back on the rails because Israeli society itself has become radicalised over the years and there's no true democracy in Israel. Society has normalised extreme words, as we have alarmingly seen in the past few months. There is increasing intolerance of dissent in Israel, despite pressure from civil society. Lessons can be learnt from South Africa and its Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the post-apartheid era. Every Palestinian must be given the right to return, and this is under UN laws too.

**Does America control the cards in looking for a solution?**

The U.S. is not the only player, but it offers diplomatic protection to Israel in all its deeds. South Africa and nations like Spain, Ireland and Norway pose a direct challenge to western nations with their stand against Israel in this war. I want to point out that we must look at what people do, and not what people say. It is hypocritical of countries buying Israeli spyware and those supplying arms to Israel to say the war must end. Israel has become an unaccountable state and that means all Palestinians are in danger; after exporting the concept of occupation to other countries around the world, Israel is getting away with apartheid.



in the age group 17-35 do not support Israel or its occupation of Palestinian areas. This is happening viscerally, and U.S.-based groups like Jewish Voice for Peace are backing equal rights for all citizens in Israel and Palestine, and eschew Zionism as a militant, nationalist movement that cannot provide safety and justice for Jews and Palestinians.



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