

# “Israel commits massive ethnic cleansing in Palestine, while building more illegal settlements.”

## Interview with Fra Hughes

By [Fra Hughes](#) and [Steven Sahiounie](#)

Global Research, August 28, 2023

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#)

In-depth Report: [PALESTINE](#)

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*The current government ruling Israel is the most far-right Jewish extremist in history. Senior members in power have been asking for the forced deportation of Palestinians, in a frightening echo of the Nakba of 1948, when three-fourths of the Palestinian population was expelled in a massive ethnic cleansing while the US and western nations stood by in silent complicity.*

The Israeli Defense Forces have repeatedly attacked refugee camps in the West Bank, especially Jenin. Meanwhile, the Jewish citizens of Israel have been in the street protesting their own issues, which have nothing to do with the apartheid state of Israel, and the human rights abuses and war crimes committed almost daily by the Israeli government against the Palestinians held without any form of human rights or justice.

The UN and many members of the international community have voiced their support of the Palestinian cause and the right to resist occupation, and yet there is no end in sight, or even a peace plan to discuss.

In an effort to gain some insight into the present situation in the Occupied Territories of Palestine, Steven Sahiounie of MidEastDiscourse interviewed [Fra Hughes](#).

Hughes’ book, [‘My Walk With Palestine’](#) catalogues the Palestinian solidarity work that he and others have been involved in since 2010, when he took a trip to Gaza. Hughes, is a Belfast native, and felt similarities between Northern Ireland and Palestine. The siege-busting convoy to Gaza in 2010 is only really the beginning of Fra’s story, and his work has seen him visit Egypt, Jordan and Syria.

**Steven Sahiounie (SS):** The Saudi envoy to Jordan, Nayef Al-Sudairi, has been appointed

to serve as the nonresident ambassador to the State of Palestine. In your view, what is the significance of the Crown Prince Mohammed bin-Salman's choosing to make this important appointment at the time?

**Fra Hughes (FH):** It's difficult to know for sure. While obviously a very important step, is it too little too late? What power does he have, what influence can he bring to bear on the continued illegal occupation of the West Bank Jerusalem? The ongoing ethnic cleansing of the indigenous Palestinian population with the continued, indeed accelerated construction of more illegal Jewish settlements, and the ongoing siege of Gaza and the apparent shoot to kill policy carried out on behalf of the Israeli government and by extension Israeli society who elected it. At this stage it is a symbolic appointment, but taken together with the Saudi-Iran rapprochement, the potential ending of the war in Yemen and Syria's inclusion into the Arab league, it certainly has America the EU and Israel concerned.

**SS:** President Sisi of Egypt hosted King Abdullah, II of Jordan and President Abbas of Palestine yesterday in a meeting to discuss the need to end the Israeli occupation of Palestine. In your opinion, is there international consensus on getting back to peace negotiations?

**FH:** There will never be real peace negotiations. The Israeli apartheid government talks peace as a stalling tactic to buy time while it attempts to absorb all of Palestine under its racist control.

If Sisi is real, he should open the Gazan border fully, and allow fuel, building equipment and medicine into Gaza.

Egypt must end the pivotal role it plays in forcing Palestinians to live under a blanket of fear disease and poverty.

Abbas is unelected and in my opinion he is a collaborator with the occupation.

Egypt and Saudi Arabia wish to join BRICS and as they move away from the influence and control of the western hegemonic powers perhaps we are witnessing a renaissance of rapport with Russia, and by extension China, via the belt and road initiative, and a new energy cartel to rival OPEC.

**SS:** The Palestinian resistance groups in Jenin have been repeatedly attacked by Israeli Defense Forces. After the massive destruction in Jenin, can you explain the status of Jenin now, and is there any help being offered?

**FH:** The Israelis achieved their short term goals: not the extermination of the Resistance fighters, but the devastation of homes, centres of employment, and the destruction of the infrastructure leaving those living in Jenin in dire need of support from the international community. Help which I believe will not be forthcoming unless there are political strings attached.

**SS:** There are Israeli citizens who publically complain that Israel is an apartheid state. Are there enough Jews in Israel who recognize the occupation and apartheid to make a difference in the government's policy?

**FH** We have witnessed the internal contradictions within Israeli society when it comes to

the new far right government elected by Israeli voters.

There's an old saying: you get the government you deserve.

They complain about judicial reforms and hundreds of thousands have come onto the streets, yet they attacked some activists who had the temerity to fly Palestinian flags at these protests.

Israeli society cares nothing for dead, injured, maimed, and imprisoned Palestinians.

They are beneath contempt as quasi fascist ideological fundamentalists.

**SS:** There are serious differences among the various political factions in Palestine. In your view, is there any compromise among the groups, and can it help to find a solution for the Palestinian people?

**FH:** Scrap the Palestinian Authority; they are nothing short of corrupt politicians collaborating on the demise of their own people, their culture, and their future for money, power, prestige, and the illusion of government.

All groups must embrace the choice of resistance. End division in the interests of self-preservation and strike out against the occupation before it's too late.

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*This article was originally published on [Mideast Discourse](#).*

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