

“Treat Everybody Equally! Treat Everybody with Justice!” In Solidarity with Palestine. Louay Alghoul

Transcribed from recent Global Research News Hour show "Revealing the Myths and Realities of Israel-Palestine Struggles"

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Louay Alghoul is the principal and owner of Alghoul & Associates Law Firm



and has over a decade of legal experience in several areas of law. His preferred area of practice is immigration law. Over the years, he has helped hundreds of individuals to successfully immigrate to Canada. In addition to practicing law, Louay was previously the President of both the Business Law Group and the Canadian Islamic Chamber of Commerce. He is called to the bar and licensed to practice in Manitoba, British Columbia, and Ontario.

Mr. Alghoul is also a Kuwait born individual with family in Gaza. HE immigrated to Canada in 1989. The Global Research News Hour had an extensive discussion of the current conflict in Gaza in terms of his personal loss, the history of Israelis and Palestinians living together, and the solutions moving forward. We also discussed the NAKBA of 1948, and its similarities to the current exodus and genocide of Gaza.

Global Research: Since October 7th, you've lost a number of relatives in the war. Do you care to say how many?

Louay Alghoul: Yeah, so in the last, well, since October 7th, we've lost 74 family members, people I knew, that's not including distant and friends, but before that, we also lost other family members in the other raids on Gaza. We lost 11 family members in the one before this one as well, and it's very heartbreaking to speak with the survivor ones right now in Gaza. I talk to them almost on a daily basis.

Some of them we were able to take to Egypt temporarily for medical treatment, and I'm actually leaving on Friday, the day after tomorrow, to go and see what we can do to support them over there.

GR: Just give us a couple of examples, I mean, people who are particularly close to you?

LA: Yeah, so the closest one is my uncle, my father's brother, who passed away, and he died from starvation, unfortunately, and malnutrition, and that's another thing people don't realize that the stage that they're in right now is we are losing a lot of people, children, elderly people, and people with lower immune system to starvation, malnutrition, bad water, and the climates. So, the last one we lost, it was my uncle, actually, who basically I grew up with and knew him very well.

GR: Yeah, so I mean, I imagine, like, just, you know, from my own experience, when you lose a loved one, that could be very, you know, arresting, and so on, but you're losing dozens in a few months. I mean, I can't really imagine what that must be like for you.

LA: It's been extremely difficult, very, very difficult for me.

I've, since October 7th till about March 1st, I was glued to the news, and also overseas. The stress level was to the roof. I would sleep about three to four hours a day maximum.

I'm up all night because of the time difference, and on the news, and so on, and the stress was so high to the point where I suffered a heart attack on March 3rd. And so, you know, I actually, I'm very blessed for what I have, and I have nothing to complain about compared to the people who are living there. Seriously, nothing.

I'm very blessed to be here.

GR: So, what have you heard from your relatives in Gaza? What have you been hearing about their experience with the attacks? Have they been able to connect with you? And what was their experience like?

LA: It's, I'm using terms that have been used by the international court, and by Amnesty International, and so on, and so on. It is nothing short of a genocide.

So, there is collective punishment where they're, over 70% of the people who've been killed are children and women. And that's the same in my family. Like, one extremely sad case, as you know, the attacks happened all over Gaza.

Now, most people have moved to Rafah, which is in the southern border where, next to Egypt. And now they've been, Israel has announced two days ago that they are going into Rafah as well. So, during that movement from the north to the middle, to like from Shat, from northern Gaza, from Khan Yunis, people were killed even walking and moving from one place to the other.

A sad story about, the saddest story I would say is about a young child, a relative of ours, where her family were all killed in northern Gaza, except for her. And not, the sadness of the death of the family is one thing, but the horrible situation of knowing that there's a child alive, with no family members around her, and trying to facilitate her movement from there to Khan Yunis at that time, to be with some family, that was 10 days of hell for us, for the whole family and for me. So, things like this, people actually don't understand the severity of the situation.

There's, the bombs that are being thrown on Gaza, they're 2000 kilograms bombs. The amount of bombs that were thrown on Gaza is more than Second World War. I mean, you're talking about a 40 kilometers area, 40 by 40.

Can you imagine the devastation that's happening there? There is 80% of the hospitals, 80% of the schools, over 86% of the homes were all destroyed. Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel, used the term that they're going to carpet clean Gaza, and destroy Gaza that way, to allow for settlers to come in and take over. So, this is a second Nakba, after the first one that happened in 1948, with over 750,000 Palestinians taken out of their homes and killed, to make space for the western settlers coming from Europe, to take their homes.

And actually, many of these homes are still standing, where they were just taken by, from Palestinians and just taken by the settlers. So, the issue is not a complicated issue. The solution is not a complicated solution.

The solution, people ask me, well, this has been going on for 200 years. It hasn't, it has been only going on for 75 years. They say that this is a religious conflict.

It is not. Palestinians are Jews, and Christians, and Muslims, and Baha'is, and been like that since until 1948.

GR: Anti-Semitic refers both to Palestinians and to Jews.

LA: Yeah, I have a nice challenge to anybody, actually, who is here in Winnipeg. I'm happy to meet with them. And just to kind of clear this concept, I'm happy to do a DNA test with anybody who claims to be from Israel.

And if they have more Semitic blood in them than I do, DNA blood, Semitic than I do, I will give up my Palestinian inheritance. You can, but we go, our family traces back all the way to Canaans. We are the one who hosted Ibrahim, who came from Iraq, and we welcomed him.

And he had two wives, Sarah and Hagar, who was Egyptian, and two children. And his children, Isaac, married Palestinian Canaans. And his children, two children, two boys, one of them is Jacob, that we know Jacob, also married two wives, also Palestinians, Canaans.

So we, I am here in Canada since 1989. I have children who were born here in Canada. Hopefully, grandchildren also will be born here in Canada.

None of my children and grandchildren can make a claim to say that they are indigenous people of Canada. And the same thing applies to Ibrahim, and to Isaac, and to Jacob, which we love, by the way, we love and we host and we value, but you cannot say that they are indigenous people of Palestine. They are, they intermarried with us.

And I can't intermarry with, oh, no, I can't, my wife will kill me. But my children can intermarry with an Indigenous people of Canada, but they themselves cannot be Indigenous. What I'm saying is, this is a situation where people have to understand that when somebody says, you know, I'm a Palestinian, he doesn't mean a Muslim.

He doesn't mean Christian. He doesn't mean Jew. He means the people of that land.

And a story, I will just say a very quick story. In 1948, my grandfather, we come from a village called Sarafan al-Amar. It's very close to a city called Lid.

And 1948, in May 1948, the militia, the European militia came in and tried to occupy our village. So the people of the village, especially men, went in to fight those militias. The women and children left the village because to run away from the fights.

After the fight finished, my grandmother went back. And my grandmother tells me the story. I was 11 years old.

And she says, your grandfather died in that war. And I went to look for his body. And I had your uncle, my youngest uncle, Muhammad was with me.

And we were looking for the bodies of your grandfather, Shihada. So we're looking, and we're twisting the bodies and moving the bodies to look for him. And she's telling me the story.

Mind you, I was 11 years old. And at that age, the understanding of what is a Palestinian came to me. It was very clear to me at that time.

She says, I'm flipping the bodies and I see you know, Muhammad, I flip the body and I see Dawood, in Arabic means in English, David. I flip the body and I see Mikhail, which means in English, Michael. And I was like, wait, wait a second, grandma, who's, who's David? Who's Michael? I thought you're gonna say Arabic names like Hassan and Osama.

She's like, no, no, these are our neighbors. David is our Jewish neighbor. And Michael was our Christian neighbor.

And they all went in to fight this militia, Western invaders. So Palestine had...

GR: This is since 1948.

LA: This is up to 1948, before the declaration of the State of Israel.

So we had, we had, we had anybody who looks at the history at the, at the, at the currency or the coins of Palestine, at the stamps of Palestine, you know, before 1948, he or she will see that there is Hebrew writings on the coin and an Arabic writing on the coin. He will, he or she will see that on the, on the postage, the same thing. There were libraries of Jewish and Christian and Muslim libraries, because we were, we are one nation.

It doesn't matter what religion you are from. So in 1948, we had settlers who came from Europe because of the worst, one of the worst, I would say one of the worst human catastrophe, which is the Holocaust happened in Europe. And, and, and we had settlers and refugees, refugees came to Palestine from Europe.

Same thing when Abraham came to, from Iraq to Palestine as well. We welcomed them and we, we hosted them. And then they took arms against us and they, they declared the State of Israel in 1948.

Up to that time, we had no idea why would they do that. But, but clearly it was a promise that was made to them by Balfour, the prime minister of Britain promising, promising the Jewish people in Europe, a land in Palestine, our country. What right does he, did he have to do that? Why didn't they give him a land in Germany, for example? But the point is this happened.

Now there is a State of Israel. Now there is Palestinians. Now there's an apartheid state, unfortunately, not according to me, by the way, it's according to international court and Amnesty International and other organization, accredited organization and scholars, where people in that land are treated differently based on their skin color and their religion.

And that's really horrible to have in 21st century. This is the problem. So what's the solution? Someone will come to me and say, well, what is the solution? Well, the solution is to treat everybody equally, to treat everybody with justice, to give the same right to, to everybody, whether regardless of your religion or your background, and to recognize the Indigenous people of the land.

And just to say to them, we're sorry, 1948 happened and we want to live together peacefully. And we've done this in Canada here. We've took the steps in Canada after centuries of arrogance and, and centuries of, and by the way, we're still going through discrimination and racism in Canada.

But we came a long way since, you know, what we did to our beautiful Indigenous population. We have to do the same over there. And we have to say to them, let's live together.

Nobody's going to throw the other one in the sea. Nobody's going to kill the other person. Let's all live together under one umbrella.

Call it Israel, call it Palestine, but recognize what Palestine is and, and treat people equally. This is my view, at least. Some people might disagree with me, but I say this with all my heart.

I don't think any Palestinian and I don't think any Israeli open mind person would mind living next to each other peacefully, where there was justice and equal rights and so on. Very simple, really.

GR: Yeah. You mentioned earlier how what's happening now is like a second Nakba, right?

LA: Yeah.

GR: And I was wondering, could you give me any insights like, or rather did experiencing this now, like firsthand, you know, the deaths of all your relatives, does it give you a unique, or are you looking at Nakba 1948 in a different way or maybe appreciating it more?

LA: Absolutely. Like I am, my dad, I would say is better than me.

My dad survived both the first Nakba and losing his father, getting killed, and the second Nakba losing many relatives, including his brother. And the second Nakba, I say this with confidence that this is the second Nakba because over 1.6 million people were displaced now from their homes. And the first Nakba, it was over 750,000.

So it gives me an appreciation of what people went through. And the good thing for people who are opening their minds and their hearts and their eyes to what's happening is that social media actually has been an amazing tool in showing us the pictures of the people who are going through this, who are moving from one place to the other, raising white flags and still getting killed. Humanitarian workers coming to give aids and food and still getting killed.

Doctors and nurses who are giving aid equally, by the way, to everybody and still getting killed. My cousin's husband, his name is Salim. He is now in Egypt getting treated for heart issues from Gaza because of what happened.

He's a doctor, he's a surgeon in Gaza. And when October 7th happened, I called him and I said to him, what's going on? Are you guys okay? And so on. You know what he said to me? He said to me, I am in a very unique situation and I'm very blessed because I am treating both Israelis and Palestinians.

This was actually October, maybe 12 or 14, something like that. I can't remember exactly the date. People who, when Hamas went into Israel and captured those prisoners, brought them back to Gaza, some of them were injured and he was treating them.

And he was also treating Palestinians and they were all next to each other in hospitals. And he's saying to me, he had nothing to do with it, but he said to me, as a physician, I am in a very unique situation to be providing aid and treatment for everybody. And he's very humbled by that.

When he was saying this to me, in my mind, I was saying, if this situation was reversed, and actually it did get reversed when Israel entered into Gaza, did they provide the same aid and care to Palestinians? Did they actually look after them? Did they actually provide? I've never, since October 7th till now, I've never seen any footage of any Palestinian being treated by Israeli hospitals or Israeli mobile tents and so on. And what really breaks my heart is seeing the IDF, who should be, their name should be changed from IDF to IIF, they're not defense, they're invaders, should be seeing them and seeing the prime minister of Israel and seeing the officials in Israel, recklessly and arrogantly saying that, why can't the Palestinians go to Egypt? We're here for Hamas. Why can't they go to Egypt and clear Gaza for us? What an arrogant thing to say, you know, number one, you took over the land in 1948.

Number two, you're occupying Gaza. Now, number three, you're carpet cleaning Gaza, and

now you want them to leave their land, homeland, those Indigenous people to another country. Why don't you take them? If these are innocent, and you're only after Hamas, which is, by the way, not true, they're after all Palestinians, but if they're only after Hamas, why don't you bring these innocent people into Israel? Strip them naked from everything and make sure they have nothing of a weapon of any sort, but take them into Israel and host them there until you clear the issues that you're saying with Hamas.

How can you make such a statement? Why can't the Arab world open their doors to the Palestinian and take them into their countries? What an arrogant thing and inhuman thing to say.

GR: I wish you well on your trip out to Egypt to see your relatives and hopefully that you and your neighbors among the Israelis, you can have some sort of a...

LA: I hope so too. I hope so too.

And I want to say, it's very important to say that anti-Semitism is unacceptable. There are people right now who are Jewish people who are being targeted and they're being attacked and that's unacceptable in any means or form. But at the same token, don't be afraid to criticize the government of Israel.

That's not anti-Semitic. Don't be afraid to criticize any government in the world if they are against human rights, that's fine. And don't associate a government with religion.

Netanyahu's government is a racist government. It's a horrible government and it's doing injustice to the Jewish people, which we respect and love. And I think as soon as the war is finished, this guy is going to go to jail and he's trying to prolong the war to run away from that.

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