14. PALESTINE FREE

**Pauline:** I want to acknowledge that this show about stolen land has been created on the unceded land of the Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation. I pay respect from me and my ancestors to Kulin Nation ancestors and elders and all Indigenous people, who might be tuning in tonight. I also want to acknowledge that 3CR broadcasts from the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation.

**Pauline:** You're listening to Palestine Free: Peace Through Justice, Health Through Decolonization.

**Pauline:** You just heard a track by the late Palestinian artist Rim Banna, called This Is My Voice, off her final album, Voice of Resistance. If you've just tuned in, hi, I'm Pauline Vetuna. The Disability Day Worker for 3CR. I'm calling this show Palestine Free, Peace Through Justice, Health Through Decolonization. And I'm going to be emphasizing the latter part, health through decolonization, because that's what the theme of today's whole broadcast has been, Health Sovereignty.

**Pauline:** We're going to be looking at the racist colonial project of Israel through the lens of health. And tracking just some of the devastating health destroying impacts that this genocidal colony has had on the Palestinians it has oppressed for 75 years and counting. Aside from driving people from their land, health and life destruction for indigenous people is the foundational weapon wielded by settler colonizers.

**Pauline:** The attacks on ambulances, on health workers, on hospitals. Sanctuaries for the ill, the disabled, the elderly, new mothers, babies. These are actions entirely consistent with the character of a settler colony. And specifically, they are actions entirely consistent with the moral character of Israel. A nation state that has deliberately, systematically disabled a huge percentage of the Palestinian population.

**Pauline:** Now we understand that this is what colonizers do. Short of eradicating a population completely, a colonizer wants to make sure any survivors are as disabled as possible. Before we go into the topic of this show further, I think it's important to acknowledge first that settler colonialism is at its core about one thing. Land. Counter to that though, the land is also the central focus of Palestinian liberation.

**Pauline:** It reaffirms that Palestinian sovereignty over Palestine was never ceded. Now I'm going to read you an excerpt of a paper titled Reclaiming Palestinian Indigenous Sovereignty by Jamal Nabulsi, published in the Journal of Palestinian Studies this year.

**Pauline:** Not only is the settler state of Israel founded on this original violence, but precisely because it is grounded in the baseless denial of Palestinian indigenous sovereignty. Israeli state sovereignty must be performed through continuous violence on Palestinians who embody enduring sovereignty. Israeli sovereignty is fragile and anxious.

**Pauline:** It is precariously constructed on the unjust repudiation of Palestinian sovereignty. While Palestinian indigenous sovereignty is grounded in the land itself, Israel's sovereignty rests on the surface of the earth. It is anxious because Palestinians have utterly refused to disappear. Their ongoing sovereign presence poses an inherent threat to the legitimacy of Israeli sovereignty.

**Pauline:** The only way for Israeli state sovereignty to sustain itself is by continuously attempting to erase Palestinian indigenous sovereignty. However, this sovereignty persists as lived through Palestinian bodies. And Israeli sovereignty must be constantly performed through violence on the Palestinian body, alongside the erasing of Palestinian space.

**Pauline:** The Palestinian body must be violently eliminated in order to suppress and deny the sovereignty that it carries. As Nadera Shalhoub-Kevorkian And Sarah Ihmoud note, "the nature of Israeli settler colonial power requires the everyday exercise of terror against the native Palestinian other whose very presence haunts the colonial imagination. Indeed, it is haunted by our breathing."

**Pauline:** And we're back. You just heard another track from Rim Banna called Rim off her final album, Voice of Resistance. Rim Banna was a Palestinian singer and composer who is most known for her modern interpretations of traditional Palestinian songs and poetry. So before I played that track, I read from Jamal Nabilsi's paper, Reclaiming Palestinian Indigenous Sovereignty, and specifically a passage that talks about the relationship between Palestinian land and Palestinian bodies.

**Pauline:** Sovereign Palestinian bodies defy the settler colonial state of Israel. So the violence that the settler colonial state of Israel performs on Palestinian bodies is not just racist, but something it must do in order to erase the sovereign living reminder of its own illegitimacy. In other words, colonization is inherently violent.

**Pauline:** The colonizer has a monopoly on violence through scale and unequal power, and it uses this violence in order to eliminate the threat of the unwavering, sovereign Palestinian. A genocidal state does not care about the age of its victims. All are considered threats. And we can view the extreme, extreme violence of the Israeli state against the Palestinian people through this lens of understanding that the violence that it perpetrates against Palestinians is a statement of its own illegitimacy.

**Pauline:** And we know the violence has taken many different forms in the past, and we're currently seeing the most devastating manifestation of that violence. There's so much that could be said on this topic, but I want to call attention to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, or CRPD, which held its first periodic review of the State of Israel this year.

**Pauline:** Now, this committee received a report on Israel's violations of the Convention On the rights of persons with disabilities with respect to Palestinians in Gaza from Adalah, the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, together with Al Mezan Center for Human Rights based in occupied Gaza and the UK based Medical Aid for Palestinians.

**Pauline:** I'm talking about this report specifically, one, because it pertains to disabled people. Two, it was presented to the United Nations this year. And three, the report covers four key issues that really demonstrate the health destroying, disabling nature of a settler colonial regime. This 18 page report looks specifically at Israel's unlawful conduct in the context of the Great March of Return, which were demonstrations in the Gaza Strip from March 2018 to March 2020.

**Pauline:** Thousands of Palestinians participated in these demonstrations at the separation fence between Gaza and Israel, and they really posed no threat to the military forces or to civilians. In response, the Israeli military killed 217 Palestinians at these protests, including nine individuals with disabilities, and wounded thousands more, disabling at least 178 protestors.

**Pauline:** The report covers four key issues. 1. Israel's shoot to kill policy. 2. Israel's shoot to maim policy against Palestinian protestors. 3. Israel's policy of prohibiting injured persons from accessing medical treatment. 4. Lack of civil remedies for victims. I want to zoom in on Israel's policy of prohibiting injured persons from accessing medical treatment for a second.

**Pauline:** The report, which was prepared earlier this year, details the negative effects of the deficiency of medical services in Gaza as a result of the ongoing occupation and closure. Remember, this was before what is occurring now. And of Israel's denial of medical exit permits to injured Palestinian protesters during the Great March of Return, which led to deaths and permanent disabilities as a punitive measure.

**Pauline:** This listed issue really speaks to the fact that it has been Israel's strategic policy to prevent injured Palestinians from accessing the healthcare that they deserve. Israel's shoot to kill policy and Israel's shoot to maim policy against Palestinians mirrors the violence that we are witnessing today.

**Pauline:** I'm going to play part of a really fantastic interview that was featured on the Palestine Remembered show last year on 3CR. The interview is with Dr. Layth Hanbali, who is a freelance consultant focusing on health policy. He's also worked as a researcher, public health practitioner, and doctor.

**Pauline:** Recently he's written a number of really important articles, including Locked in Despair, Palestinian Hostages in Israeli Prisons, which was published on the 6th of November. In this interview, through looking at mental health of Palestinians, Dr. Hanbali really breaks down how health can be achieved through decolonization.

**Dr. Hanbali:** As you might see, as you may have heard from my bio, my interest is really focused on health. I really value the way in which health can be used as a lens to expose injustice. And so this is really where that came from. And you hear over and over again, things like a thousand percent of Palestinians have post traumatic stress disorder and this many are depressed and this many have anxiety.

**Dr. Hanbali:** And there are several problems with this. And I try to engage in the main ones in the article, which inevitably means that it's just a bit of a light touch exercise. But there are two big things to really consider here. The first is that we have to be able to understand the problem. We have to really get at the root cause of it, right?

**Dr. Hanbali:** So when we diagnose in medicine, you want to understand the precise way in which a disease has developed so that you can come up with the best tools to combat that disease and heal the person in front of you. Now, public health is that on a much larger level. It's trying to do that to communities and countries at a time.

**Dr. Hanbali:** So to understand for example, the mental health crisis in Palestine. To understand why people exhibit symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder, which are things like flashbacks and being very anxious and things like that. Depression, symptoms like lack of hope, not seeing a bright future, being down, not being able to motivate oneself to do things.

**Dr. Hanbali:** So these things, when you put them in the context of settler colonialism, are not symptoms of disease. Right? Settler colonialism very clearly aims to subjugate people. It aims to make them hopeless. It aims to take away everything that people value in order to drive them off of their land and to stop them from resisting this violence, right?

**Dr. Hanbali:** That is the core tenet of settler colonialism. So when we talk about these terms like depression and anxiety, all these kind of different symptoms, they're not because of a diseased mind. The Palestinian mind is not diseased. The disease is the colonial violence. And if you take away the colonial violence, a lot of these things would disappear.

That's the first part of the article and that's the one of the solutions to making Palestinians more hopeful, making them happier, making them more able to engage in planning for the future and things like that. And diagnosing the problem, settler colonialism, leads us to a logical solution: dismantling settler colonialism.

**Dr. Hanbali:** That's one part. The other part to consider is these definitions in and of themselves actually come from a Western perspective, which has been imposed on the rest of the world. So when we think about the relationship between a health practitioner and the patient, it's a very individualized relationship.

**Dr. Hanbali:** And invariably, health professionals end up looking at a very narrow set of personal circumstances in order to understand what someone suffers from, and then try to heal them on an individual basis. That's how the Western medical establishment has conceptualized health, but that's not the same as what people all over the world want to do, right?

**Dr. Hanbali:** So you will know Nasser and Robert if you've interacted with a lot of Palestinians, as I'm sure you've done. You know that our community is very important to us. We experience things as a family. As a neighborhood, as a community. And that is both in happiness and in sadness, right? We experienced these things together and we celebrate each other's successes and we console each other and ourselves take, for example, the assassination of a few weeks ago. Every time a Palestinian would speak to another Palestinian for about a week, they would offer the other person that condolences, while offering themselves condolences at the same time because it shook an entire nation all over the world. All 10, 11 million of us. So we feel that on a community level, right? We feel both the sadness and the happiness on a community level. And therefore that really individualized relationship between a doctor and a patient, between a nurse and a patient is not really the way that, if we were to have the freedom to organize our health services by ourselves, that's not the way that we would do it. The same thing goes for a lot of other Indigenous people, and I wouldn't want to speak for any of them, but when you exchange these ideas with others from a lot of other communities, they say the same thing.

**Dr. Hanbali:** And we've arrived at this point where We just impose the same western traditions of medicine all over the world because of colonialism as well. Right? So the west colonizing the entire world, telling people exactly how they should live their lives and then telling them that they're doing it all wrong while continuing to impose the same tools to fix the problems that the west created. So although western countries do not directly colonize a lot of the world anymore, there's persisting what we call 'coloniality'. The imposition of these western ideas on the rest of the world without due consideration for what the people that you're imposing these things on actually want.

**Nasser:** Interestingly, and you spoke about in your article, whether it's Mohammed in the Gaza Strip following an interview with Medicine Sans Frontieres who said his mind is continually preoccupied with thoughts about war. Adel who says we live in a state of constant fear, everything feels stressed for himself and his brothers, his children, his friends.

**Nasser:** World Bank did a survey, 70 percent of Gazans and 57 percent of West Bank residents reported symptoms consistent with post traumatic stress disorder. When we're talking about that western construct of post traumatic stress disorder, you speak to it very clearly. While it's the most commonly diagnosed mental health condition in Palestine, it's inaccurate because this is a western colonial construct, which assumes the event has stopped.

**Nasser:** When in reality, as you said, that using health to expose injustice, what we've got here is a mental health challenge that is because of settler colonialism. There is no opportunity for a post. It's ongoing.

**Dr. Hanbali:** Yeah, absolutely. And there's another layer to it. So you're 100 percent right. And it's not post.

**Dr. Hanbali:** It is this constant trauma. So that immediately goes out the window. But there's another layer to this, which is that, and I couldn't fit this into the article, but post traumatic stress disorder actually came out of a definition of a disease that soldiers returning from war were suffering from.

**Dr. Hanbali:** So they would go and do all sorts of atrocities all over the world to brown and Black bodies. And then they would go home and be preoccupied while in complete safety by the horrors that they witnessed. And you couldn't see my air quotes there, but there were air quotes there because they were the ones inflicting them, right?

**Dr. Hanbali:** So they were inflicting that violence. And then they would go back and while completely safe, have fears and stuff. Post traumatic stress disorder was also a product of imperialism and colonialism because they were sending these young people out to do their bidding, to be violent towards people, to subjugate people.

**Dr. Hanbali:** And then those people that were committing that violence were then suffering all of these horrible ailments when they came back. But there's a really important part of this, which is that they had returned to safety, and then they were suffering these symptoms. In the Gaza Strip, one of the most densely populated places on Earth, where a teenager has suffered through four wars, four assaults, four brutal massacres during their lifetimes, they're obviously going to be preoccupied by thoughts of war because they've seen so much of it and they don't know when the next one will take place.

**Dr. Hanbali:** So we go back to the fact, that's not a sign of a diseased mind. That's just a natural reaction to the reality that person is living.

**Robert:** I think people need to also realize that the colonization, it's calculated. The Israeli soldiers go through the villages at between 2 and 3 AM in the morning because they want the children to feel unsafe.

**Robert:** They could go through any time during the day, but they tend to go at night. They tend to beat the parents in front of the kids. And it's calculated because they want to do this to the entire population, beginning from a child all the way up to the elderly. That's correct, isn't it?

**Dr. Hanbali:** Of course. It's 100 percent correct. And that's very accurate. And it is clear from the testimonies of Palestinians that's what happens. But it's also by the admission of the very people who commit that violence that that's what they try to do. That's part of that attempt to subjugate. The checkpoints, the wall, the incarceration, the house demolitions of anyone who dares to resist. The months and months that people spend in jail for throwing a stone. All of these things, obviously, some of these things have more than one aim, such as the wall. Which also takes over a lot of farmland of Palestinians and cuts people off from their families and from their land. But it definitely has a primary purpose of subjugation as well.

**Nasser:** So the entire apparatus of Zionist occupation inevitably creates these situations. There's not a disease of the mind. It's settler colonialism, the complete lack of safety, feelings of comfort, hope for the future that are creating this mental health crisis. How do you treat a Palestinian?

**Dr. Hanbali:** This is a very good question and there are some easy kind of broad answers, but then there are more difficult kind of intricacies to try to engage with. We cannot solve this problem without undoing, dismantling, breaking down, whatever you want to call it, settler colonialism, and other colonial structures such as coloniality.

**Dr. Hanbali:** You cannot solve this problem without ending the violence and that has to be the center of anything that we try to do to address this. And settler colonialism ends by promoting the resistance of the people who are living underneath it. By promoting cross solidarity between communities that recognize that injustice and promoting the resilience and resistance of people under occupation.

**Dr. Hanbali:** So that has to be the sense right? And then there's obviously more immediate things that we can try to do. And this is why I talk near the end of the article about trying to reframe services focused on mental health, but health in general in Palestine, to frameworks that are context appropriate, that are born out of local solutions, traditions, and which are really owned by people who they intend to serve.

**Dr. Hanbali:** So when, for example even the vast majority of Palestinian providers will just go for the westernized model of very individual care. And that's because that's where the funding is. They need the funding in order to survive [ inaudible] frameworks because that's what the western donors impose. But what we need to do instead is create these spaces where people are offered the opportunity and granted the tools to organize and plan and articulate exactly what it is that they want.

**Dr. Hanbali:** Because let's take for example the tradition of Sumud. Sumud means steadfastness. The way in which that is translated is essentially community solidarity, community support in order to build resilience to the various forms of colonial violence.

**Dr. Hanbali:** That is what empowers communities to stay on the land, to cope with the violence, to come out of prison and reintegrate into at normal everyday life. So that for example, would be a concept that should be supported. And there are Palestinian organizations that try to practice this. But that's not what donors want to fund and that's not what people want to pay attention to.

**Dr. Hanbali:** But this deals with both levels of colonial violence and mental health in Palestine. The settler colonialism, because it deals directly with the effects of that, but also coloniality, because it promotes a local solution that flies in the face of the western imposed paradigms.

**Dr. Hanbali:** So that would be one thing. But what we see instead is actually there's a repression of the organizations that try to come up with local solutions. So let's take, for example, back in I think it was October when the Israeli military issued an order outlawing six Palestinian civil society organizations and condemning them as terrorist organizations.

**Dr. Hanbali:** Now we've seen very soft words being spoken by previous funders, including the European union of these organizations, but essentially Israel's getting away with it, these organizations are suffering. Their members are being prohibited from traveling. Their work is being repressed. And there isn't really proper assistance, even from the donors of these organizations that very explicitly said that there's no credibility to Israel's claims that these are terrorist organizations.

**Dr. Hanbali:** There's another organization actually that was targeted several months before these organizations, the six, which became relatively famous. But the health work committee, for example. That is an organization that was trying to come up with local solutions and was founded back in the seventies in order to come up with local solutions, which basically centered an anti colonial narrative to health services.

**Dr. Hanbali:** They basically said the colonial services will not serve the health needs of our people. We need to take matters into our own hands, set up these services. And over time, they've just been targeted through various means.

**Dr. Hanbali:** So the introduction of the Palestinian Authority in the nineties dealt a massive blow, because essentially all of the funding that was coming into Palestine, into civil society organizations was diverted to the neocolonial, neoliberal tool of colonial oppression, the Palestinian Authority decimating these huge networks of community support.

**Dr. Hanbali:** So what we see by essentially every powerful actor in this space is, they choose the way in which they want to be complicit and they pick their favorite one and they practice it. But if anyone wants to express solidarity, it's by promoting local solutions. It's by putting power in the hands of Palestinians on the ground who are doing that anti colonial work.

**Nasser:** Hear, hear. Brilliantly said, Layth. Layth, I'd be interested in your thoughts on intergenerational trauma. Nakba survivors are passing it down through their families.

**Dr. Hanbali:** The idea of intergenerational trauma is real. I often go back to kind of two ideas when I think about it. One, there's no healing without the trauma healing. And the way in which colonial violence works is that it rips people from their homes and that rips them of out of their communities, out of their land, which means that it has material impact, right?

**Dr. Hanbali:** So it actually affects your ability to integrate into society because you're always actually being marginalized. Because, for example, you might have refugee status or you might have this hope of return and that constant uncertainty has material impact. The fact that people had resources stolen from them has material impact. Affects people's development, their ability to fulfill their needs and desires. So there's that impact. That effect, even before you think about the psychological impact, which are obviously just as real and just as visceral.

**Dr. Hanbali:** And then the main problem here is that that trauma is not being resolved, that trauma is not being healed, no reparations have been paid, we haven't been allowed to return to our homes. A lot of Palestinians aren't even able to visit. If they do visit, particularly if they are from the Nakba generation, then they might stand in front of a house that was stolen from their father or grandfather and parents and grandparents. And they just feel helpless because there's a settler sitting inside of it who could legitimately shoot you and get away with that.

**Dr. Hanbali:** So that trauma needs to be resolved in order to actually start healing, right? That's really important. And there's another thing that's a bit more hopeful, that I just want to introduce here as well. Which is that, although that intergenerational trauma is very painful, and horrible, and a sign that the injustice is continuing, the Nakba is ongoing, it is also why Palestinian liberation is inevitable. Because we may have been powerless to stop it 75 years ago, but we're not going to stay powerless forever.

**Dr. Hanbali:** The persistence of that trauma demands a solution. When we do develop the tools, when we do gain the power to dismantle that violence, then we will. Because we have skin in the game. It means something personally to us to resolve it. And it's horrible that trauma needs to be passed down in order for justice to be served. But at least it will be.

**Pauline:** That was Dr. Layth Hanbali. in an interview with 3CR's Palestine Remembered show last year. Thank you for joining me tonight for this program, Palestine Free, Peace Through Justice, Health Through Decolonization. Before we go, I recently caught up with a local Palestinian organizer to ask about what concrete actions that people can take in solidarity with the Palestinian people and Palestinian land.

**Pauline:** I'll let them introduce themselves.

**Mohib:** My name is Mohib Nabilsi. I'm a Palestinian living in exile here on Wurundjeri country of the Eastern Kulin Nation. I grew up mostly on Turrbal and Jagera country in Meanjin. I'm a activist, organizer, writer, editor, and I've been involved with obviously Palestine activism for some time. Also with disability justice activism.

**Pauline:** So I was wondering if you could give some comments on what listeners in this colony who want to be in solidarity with Palestinians, both now and in the times to come, must do here from whatever position they occupy.

**Mohib:** I mean that is a really important question. And the question of what things are most impactful is one that I'm constantly asking myself and others are as well.

**Mohib:** And how to spread awareness about these things. But I think maybe before that I think it's important to think about what we Palestinians want and need from solidarity movements. And by that I mean people are calling for a ceasefire which obviously needs to happen to stop the mass death of this genocide from continuing to occur on a daily basis and a child being killed every 10 minutes etc. I'm sure many people have seen the statistics. But the genocide didn't start on when so called Israel started its most recent bombing campaign.

**Mohib:** A ceasefire is definitely needed, but what comes after that? We need to be asking ourselves that question now. Because the fear I have, and I think this is shared by many Palestinians, is that after there's a ceasefire, it'll just go back to the slow genocide that's been occurring, with these flare ups, more acute flare ups every few years. But, this slow genocide that's been occurring since, for, 75 years. And that can't happen now. We can't just get the ceasefire and then the majority of people who are engaging with the movement, perhaps for the first time now, they just go, okay, job done. And go back to their life and business as usual.

**Mohib:** We really can't let that happen. So people need to know that this has to continue. The action has to continue. Solidarity has to be from whenever people are joining the movement until Palestine is liberated. And obviously we need to undertake this action in ways that are sustainable.

Particularly for disabled people, myself included. I think it's important for people to figure out the best way that they can engage. What capacity they have, what they can offer. And also importantly, what they're willing to sacrifice. I think the latter one is important, what people are willing to sacrifice.

**Mohib:** It's important because you see a lot of people's solidarity go up to the point. Well, it ends at the point at which they're asked to sacrifice something more than, say a few hours on a Sunday afternoon for a protest. Whether that's being arrested and potentially facing criminal charges, or it's being disciplined in some way at your job for speaking up for Palestine, or whatever it may be. It's important for people to ask themselves those questions. What can I give to the movement? What am I willing to sacrifice? What's my capacity? And once someone knows that about themself and how they can engage, only then I think, can we start talking about, okay, what's the best way for you as an individual, or you and your family, you and your community, to be in solidarity.

**Mohib:** Once people know their capacity, what they're willing to sacrifice, and how they want to engage, then we can start talking about how people can be in solidarity. And there are a few things, there's a lot of resources that are circulating at the moment. But I think the most important thing to emphasize at the moment is that we need to learn from previous social movements in regards to how we're organizing at the moment. And one of the biggest things about that I think is that learn that, and primarily from the anti war movement against the invasion of Iraq, learn that mass protests approved by police and appeals to elected government officials are not gonna stop this genocide.

**Mohib:** They're not gonna stop the genocide and they're not gonna liberate Palestine. They can be part of a broader strategy definitely. But the only thing that is gonna stop so called Israel's genocidal regime and liberate Palestine is action that causes the Israeli state economic damage. Direct action and that's really where I think the focus needs to be.

**Mohib:** That's what brought about the end of apartheid in South Africa. Not mass protests. Well, not mass protests of the kind that we have now. And definitely not appeals to parliamentarians. It was economic damage inflicted by boycotts, divestments, and sanctions, eventually.

**Mohib:** When people think about direct actions they think about perhaps environmental protesters locking on to coal trains, whatever. Which makes sense because that's the image that mainstream media would give people of that.

**Mohib:** But there are actually many ways to be involved in direct action. And the most important thing for Palestine at the moment is boycott, divestment and sanctions. And I'm not at all discounting, I'm not saying don't call. I'm not saying don't protest outside your MP's office. I'm not saying don't go to the marches.

**Mohib:** They're all important. It's when we can have a kind of multi pronged movement and strategy that we will be able to bring about the change we want to see. So BDS is essential to being in solidarity, in genuine solidarity with Palestine and Palestinians right now. And engaging in that, learning about BDS, educating oneself about it, and then engaging in it in whatever capacity one has.

**Mohib:** And like I was talking about before in terms of what people are willing to sacrifice. It might be following your local Palestine activist group. Here in Naarm it's Free Palestine Melbourne. In Meanjin it's Justice for Palestine Meanjin. Palestine Action Group in Sydney. And looking out for these direct actions when public calls are made and going to the place.

**Mohib:** If it's blocking Zim ships at one of the docks, having alerts on your phone and when that public call is made for people to come down and their numbers to go. If you have capacity to do that. But there are lots of other ways if you don't have capacity to physically go down to the docks. And I don't just mean due to physical mobility, there could be any number of reasons, and all of which are legitimate.

**Mohib:** There's plenty of other ways to engage with BDS. All these kinds of direct actions require a support team behind the scenes that is not there on the day necessarily. In fact, it can be better if they're not there. So support with media, support with writing and publishing things online, social media.

**Mohib:** These are all things people can do from home that are essential to these actions. They're by no means secondary. So we're talking about these material actions against logistics and blocking logistics in such a way that causes economic damage to the state of Israel, but also to so called Australia, because that's also what's going to put pressure on the so called Australian government to remove its support for the state of Israel.

**Mohib:** But BDS, there's so many levels at which one can engage. So this is probably the kind of biggest, these are the biggest targets and the biggest kinds of actions like logistical blockades and so forth. There's also chain stores, there's smaller companies. For example, in Meanjin recently a campaign was just started against an Israeli, oh no sorry, vegan food company that's just opened a factory in Meanjin. It's its first international facility. With something like that, obviously, those products are in supermarkets everywhere, so you can put stickers on the products in your local supermarket. You can leave bad reviews online for these products. So the goal there is getting the Australian company to cancel its agreement with VGARDEN, which is the name of the Israeli company.

**Mohib:** And yeah, there are lots of ways we can apply pressure and people can engage in that from home. Leaving bad reviews, calling the company incessantly. All these kinds of tactics which enact a kind of psychological effect on the organization that's being targeted. And then there's of course large multinational brands which are being boycotted are main targets of the BDS campaign, such as Puma, Hewlett Packard, Caterpillar.

**Mohib:** There's many have recently been added. I'm sure people have seen most prominently companies like Starbucks and McDonald's and public kind of actions around the places where these are sold. Where these products are sold, are also essential. So regarding particularly some of these bigger companies like McDonald's and Starbucks, a campaign has recently been started called Defect for Palestine, which aims to connect McDonald's and Starbucks workers with new jobs. Because the target of actions against these companies obviously is not the workers who are underpaid and overworked.

**Mohib:** Contacting groups like Defector Palestine, seeing how one can support them from home are really crucial because this kind of administrative work I think, is so essential to these movements is often overlooked.

**Mohib:** And these kinds of groups are always looking for people. They're actually on Instagram at Defect4Palestine, all one word. Yeah that's BDS. Another way people can engage in BDS is bringing it up with their unions. And we're seeing a lot of work happening with unions. A lot of union specific Palestine groups popping up. I'm a member of NTU and MEAA. I know they both have these groups. I've also seen them for ASU or the ETU, a number of other unions. It's pretty much every union at this point, every large union. If people are union members, that's a really important thing to engage in.

**Mohib:** Because, like I was talking about before, the success of bringing an end to the apartheid regime in South Africa, unions were really crucial to that. Obviously since then, since those campaigns, we've seen the overall decline of unions. It's in the west, but also globally due to the neoliberal onslaught and intentional union busting degradation of laws, protecting workers, et cetera.

**Mohib:** A lot of unions are not nearly as politically radical as they used to be, and don't even really conceive of themselves as organizations that should be at the forefront of political movements for justice. But this moment is a real one of reckoning, I think, within unions. For society as a whole, of course. But within unions, since I've been a union member I've never seen this kind of push, not just for one cause, but for overhauling how unions conceive of themselves as political actors.

**Mohib:** And these Palestine groups within unions are growing by the day. So I would really encourage people to, most of them have like social media accounts now, most of these Palestine groups within unions.

**Mohib:** So if you're a member of a union, look up, try and find out about the one specific to your union and get involved there. Because there's a lot of administrative labor needed to maintain those, to organize the open letters, to organize among members, contacting other members who aren't yet involved, et cetera.

**Mohib:** One of the reasons I think it's important for people to really ask themselves what their capacity is, how they're willing to engage and what they're willing to sacrifice, is because that's how we can bring people into the movement, how people can join the movement and ensure that they don't just go all in and are highly active for one month and then just fall off because it all becomes too much. Because they've neglected their work or their relationships or so on and so forth. Because like I've said this movement doesn't stop with a ceasefire.

**Mohib:** So we need to be thinking about how to make it sustainable in the long term. And I think related to this is the point that it's not just about Palestine, it's about the struggle against all settler colonies, firstly, but it's also about broad struggles for justice in the world in this moment. And I think the sheer number of things that are happening at the moment, it's seemingly, I think it was on the weekend or one day on the weekend, there were things at, and this is just in my kind of local area, there were things at 11, 12, 1pm, 2pm, separate events. And then I think there were one, there was one or two more in the evening.

**Mohib:** I think what's happening, and I will relate this to sustainability in a sec- I think what's happening is that with so many events, there are almost new social worlds that are emerging out of the movement, or as part of the movement, rather. And by that I mean that, you go to the protest one day, then there's an action the next day, then there's a online meeting the next day, and you're seeing all the same people at these things.

**Mohib:** And there may be people who you didn't even know before. I think it's giving people a way of and obviously you have to support each other through, you have to support your comrades in any of these kinds of engagements. So it's giving people, some of whom have little prior activism experience, it's giving them a sense of what solidarity actually feels like, what solidarity actually is.

**Mohib:** Which in turn alleviates some of the fear that neoliberalism instills in people and the kind of scarcity mindset. And as people recognize this, as people are seeing the people they're doing these things with and building communities around the movement and within the movement, it can contribute to a more sustainable culture because there's more people. When there's more people it's much easier for someone to be like oh i'm having a hard time at the moment i need to take a week away from this and someone else can easily step in. But also it's more sustainable because people can see what it means to be part of a political movement for justice. i think that gives that's giving people something intangible but really important. Yeah.

**Pauline:** And my thanks to Muhib Nabulsi for that. We've unfortunately run out of time today, so stay tuned to the 3CR Disability Day website, where I'll be posting an extended version of this show. So I've played a couple of songs from Rumbanna today. From her final album, voice of Resistance, the album was released after her death from cancer. I'm gonna play one more track for you now.