BBC pulls *Gaza: How to Survive a Warzone* following Zionist witch-hunt

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The state-owned British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has pulled *Gaza: How to Survive a Warzone*, a documentary filmed largely through the eyes of three Gazan children, from its iPlayer service in an appalling act of political cowardice.

The hour-long film was produced by two London-based directors working remotely with two local cameramen in Gaza's so-called "safe zone" over nine months because the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—an indicted war criminal—has banned independent international journalists from the enclave. It was pulled just days after its initial screening on Monday evening following a witch-hunt by the Zionist lobby because one of the children is the son of a Palestinian minister in Hamas-run Gaza.

David Collier, a self-described "100 percent Zionist" activist, revealed that the documentary's 13-year-old narrator Abdullah Alyazouri is the son of Dr. Ayman Alyazouri, Gaza's deputy agriculture minister with scientific qualifications who had previously worked for the United Arab Emirates government and studied for his undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at British universities.

Collier called the documentary a piece of "propaganda" for Hamas. This is despite the fact that the film includes Palestinians criticising Hamas on several occasions.

A group of 45 prominent Jewish journalists and members of the media—including a former BBC governor Baroness Ruth Deech, actress Tracy Ann Oberman, former BBC One controller Danny Cohen and ITV's former Controller of Entertainment Claudia Rosencrantz—wrote to the BBC to question how the film was made, whether it violated the regulator Ofcom's rules, whether any Hamas members were paid or if the film required Hamas' permission to be made and, if so, why this was not disclosed to audiences. Their letter referred to Dr. Alyazouri as a "terrorist leader". Hamas is a listed as a terrorist organisation in Britain. They demanded the film be removed from the iPlayer.

Tzipi Hotovely, Israel's ultra-right-wing ambassador in London, who is opposed to any Palestinian state, followed with a complaint to the BBC. Britain's Labour government culture secretary Lisa Nandy said she would be discussing "the way in which they sourced the people who were featured in the programme" with the BBC.

The BBC apologised "for the omission of that detail from the original film" and edited the text attached to the programme to explain, "The narrator of this film is 13-year-old Abdullah. His father has worked as a deputy agriculture minister for the Hamas-run government in Gaza. The production team had full editorial control of filming with Abdullah."

The BBC said that it had not been informed of this by the independent producers. But that was not enough for the pro-Israel lobby and after further pressure, the BBC removed the film from its iPlayer list.

As the BBC explained, "The film gives audiences a rare glimpse of Gaza during the war, as well as an insight into the children's lives, it hears the voices of other Gazan civilians, several of whom voice anti-Hamas sentiments." The children include:

• Abdullah, who speaks fluent English, having attended the British school in Gaza before the war. At the beginning of the film, Abdullah speaks to camera and asks, "Have you ever wondered what you'd do if your world is destroyed? Most important, could you stay alive? After all this, you could say we're experts."

• 11-year-old Zakaria, who volunteers at one of Gaza's few functioning hospitals—the Al-Aqsa—where he works as a porter, opening ambulance doors, steering gurneys and wending his way through the crowds amid scenes of devastation and bombing. Several of his schoolfriends have been killed in the war. He has to find somewhere to sleep every night.

• 10-year-old Renad, who does a cooking show on TikTok with the help of her older sister that has more than 700,000 followers. They make many dishes, even though the war means they can't get the proper ingredients.

The film also features 24-year-old Rana, who has given birth to a baby girl prematurely. She has been displaced three times and lives near the hospital with her two sons and her parents.

Gaza: How to Survive a Warzone, while giving only a pale indication of the horrors suffered by the Palestinians as seen through the eyes of children, is heartbreaking. It is impossible not to feel enormous anger that children or indeed anyone should have to witness such suffering inflicted on a defenceless population at the hands of an army financed and directed by the world's superpower in Washington. It is precisely because the

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film will add to the enormous global sympathy for the victims of genocide and ethnic cleansing that the pro-Israel lobby has railed against it.

Last month, BBC Verify analysis revealed that the so-called safe zone where the Palestinians were told to shelter was targeted 97 times in an eight-month period last year because the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) claimed that Hamas fighters were operating there. Some of these attacks were captured in the film.

The moment when 19-year-old Sha'ban al-Dalou burned alive on his hospital bed, when tents full of refugees and patients outside al-Aqsa were bombed, was captured on a smartphone and seen around the world. Zakaria said, "I saw the boy burning with my own eyes," adding, "I must have seen at least 5,000 bodies. I saw them with my own eyes." Abdullah adds in a voiceover, "The Israeli army later said that it was a precise strike on terrorists who were operating inside a command-and-control centre."

In another scene, a surgeon conducts exploratory surgery on an unnamed 10-year-old boy to see if his injured limb can be saved. Minutes later the surgeon hands an amputated forearm to a colleague for disposal.

The BBC's pulling of *Gaza: How to Survive a Warzone* is part and parcel of its pro-Israel bias in its reporting. Last November, more than 100 BBC staff wrote an open letter to the BBC's director general, Tim Davie, accusing the state broadcaster of failing to provide "fair and accurate" coverage of the conflict and demanding it "recommit to fairness, accuracy and impartiality".

The BBC, like the corporate media, consistently plays down Israel's perpetration of war crimes and crimes against humanity. In so far as their reporters refer to the "humanitarian crisis" in Gaza, they fail to place responsibility for it at Israel's door.

They constantly refer to the Hamas-led October 7 attack that led to the deaths of 1,100 Israelis, without mentioning that the IDF, under the remit of the infamous Hannibal Directive, killed more than 300 of the victims in a bid to prevent hostages being taken. The October 7 attack is then used to justify the killing of more than 60,000 Palestinians, the majority of whom are women and children killed in their homes and places of shelter, by the IDF.

They never reference the Zionist state's 75 years of brutal suppression of the Palestinians as the context for the attack. When the mainstream media and the BBC mention the words "genocide," "war crimes" or "crimes against humanity," they do so in relation to Hamas rather than Israel. The fact that Netanyahu and his former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant are wanted for war crimes and crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court that the UK signed up to is never mentioned.

The BBC and the media in general have blacked out the unprecedented protests around the globe against Israel's genocidal war on the Palestinians, just as they have covered up the slaughter of journalists who are protected under international law.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), as of February 20, 2025, at least 170 journalists and media workers are among the tens of thousands killed in Gaza, the West Bank, Israel, and Lebanon since the war began, making it the deadliest period for journalists since CPJ began gathering data in 1992. A further 59 journalists were reported injured, 2 were reported missing and 75 arrested. The CPJ says it is investigating these additional cases of potential killings, arrests and injuries, but this is difficult amid the harsh conditions of the war.

The BBC's support for Israel's barbarity is bound up with its role as the propaganda arm of the British state. The British government—under both the Tories and now Labour—is complicit in Israel's genocidal war against the Palestinians, supplying the Zionist state with the weaponry and intelligence to carry out its attacks and stacking the BBC's board with its supporters.

According to a recent investigation by *Guardian* writer Owen Jones, published by the online news outlet *Drop Site News*, at least 13 BBC staff spoke out against Raffi Berg, the BBC's senior editor at the Middle East desk, and his "bias towards Israel", stating that his "entire job is to water down everything that's too critical of Israel" and that he holds "wild" amounts of power in the newsroom. He is said to play a key role in turning its coverage into "systematic Israeli propaganda." *MintPress* revealed, citing his LinkedIn profile, that Berg is a former employee at a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) propaganda unit and a collaborator with the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad.

While Britain's National Union of Journalists proclaims its support for the Palestinians in Gaza, it has said nothing about the broadcaster's role in permitting a culture of "extreme fear" about publishing anything critical of Israel and its pro-Israel bias, even though its members may face victimisation for their commitment to honest reporting.

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