

An Antisemitic Tweet Leads to George Galloway Being Sacked from Talk Radio

by Hugh Fitzgerald



George Galloway, whose life in the public eye for almost four decades has been punctuated by scandalous behavior of all sorts, has been in the news again. After the recent Champions' League soccer match between Tottenham Hotspurs and Liverpool, which the Liverpool team won, Galloway tweeted his congratulations to the winner, and ended with "No Israel flags on the cup!" This was a well-understood reference to Tottenham being a club owned by Jews – Alan Sugar and then Daniel Levy – and a favorite of Jewish fans, which is unsurprising given that many Jews live in North London, where the club is located. Galloway was taken to task for this comment, which was denounced as antisemitic, and as a consequence, his own show – "Mother of All Talkshows" – was terminated by TalkRadio. Galloway has had a long run, but perhaps losing

this last gig, his radio show, after having been booted out of the Labour Party in 2004, and then seeing his Respect Party dissolve in failure, will be the end of the line.

Galloway's record and views are deeply disturbing. He was a great supporter of the Soviet Union, and in an interview called its end "the biggest catastrophe of my life." He has said that "I am not a pacifist. I am a revolutionary and I support the armed struggle where there is no alternative."

When he was the Secretary General of War On Want from 1983 to 1988, a British charity campaigning against poverty worldwide, he traveled widely, and was charged with spending 20,000 pounds in expenses and "living a life of luxury." While denying the charge, Galloway did repay nearly 2,000 pounds in expenses. He has a rich love life. In September 1987, at a press gathering of the War On Want, a journalist asked him about his personal arrangements during the previous year's War On Want conference on the Greek island of Mykonos. Galloway replied: "I traveled and spent lots of time with people in Greece, many of whom were women, some of whom were known carnally to me. I actually had sexual intercourse with some of the people in Greece." In a 2016 interview, he speculated that an incident of sexual abuse which he suffered when he was 12, had led to a "lifelong fear of being gay and this led me into ostentatious, rapacious heterosexual promiscuity." Don't blame George, he was suggesting; he was as much a victim as anybody.

Galloway became a great fan of Saddam Hussein, whom he visited in 1994, ending a speech to the Iraqi dictator with these words: "Sir, I salute your courage, your strength, your indefatigability." This was a few years after Saddam's soldiers had murdered 182,000 Kurds and tens of thousands of Shi'a Arabs. Those massacres were denied by Galloway, ever Saddam's champion, who claimed that any casualties were part of "a civil war that involved massive violence on both sides." No one other than George Galloway noticed any discernible violence on the part of the Kurds, all of whom were civilians;

the Shi'awho rose up after the Gulf War – also mostly civilians – did manage to mount most modest defenses, but were quickly crushed.

When the Iraq War started in 2003, Galloway urged the Arabs of Iraq to kill British servicemen, while telling British soldiers to refuse to fight. One of the results of the war was the discovery of documents in the ruins of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry. These were purported to be records of meetings between Galloway and Iraqi intelligence agents, stating that he had received 375,000 pounds per year from the proceeds of the Oil-for-Food Program. Galloway completely denied the claims. But later, Oliver Thorne, a forensic expert who had been hired by Galloway's own lawyers, stated that "in my opinion, the evidence found fully supports that the vast majority of the submitted documents are authentic." Galloway continues to claim that charges – and there have been several others – of financial irregularities, are the result of "the Zionist movement and the newspapers and news media which are controlled by Zionism."

Galloway is best known for his support of the Palestinians and his deep hostility to Israel, which predate his second marriage, to a Palestinian. He has claimed that "Hezbollah has never been a terrorist organization. It is the legitimate national resistance movement of Lebanon; Hezbollah consists of 'freedom fighters'; "I glorify the Hezbollah national resistance movement, and I glorify the leader of Hezbollah, Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah." Galloway has been just as enthusiastic about Hamas, and has received a Palestinian passport from Hamas leader Ismail Haniyah. During the 2008-2009 Israel-Gaza conflict, also known as Operation Cast Lead, Galloway gave a speech to a crowd in Trafalgar Square on January 3, 2009: "Today, the Palestinian people in Gaza are the new Warsaw Ghetto, and those who are murdering them are the equivalent of those who murdered the Jews in Warsaw in 1943."

Galloway's latest tweet is, by comparison with his many previous examples of antisemitic (and anti-British, anti-American, anti-Western) malevolence, very far from being the worst. But it has led to the shutting down of what had become his last media outlet, his program Mother of All Talk Shows. He has entertained us long enough. For this relief, George, much thanks.

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