

## The Despicable Bigoted Comments of A Few Syrian-Trinidadians Does Not Represent The Entire Diaspora

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As a second-generation Syrian Trinidadian (my father and both grandfathers are from Syria), I am appalled at the statements of certain third-generation Syrians who have been emboldened to speak with a voice of bigotry and privileged empowerment. Anyone who reads this individual's comments will not find the hidden undertone of racism enigmatic; however, most Syrian Trinidadians will unequivocally disassociate from this and any form of prejudice and racism. Even though most of the native Syrian Trinidadian population share a common cultural heritage, there couldn't be a more rigid dichotomy between the values of the majority of us, and those in the minority from the Syrian community who have clearly been bred and cultivated upon a segregationist ideology.

The Syrian community had its humble beginnings in Trinidad and Tobago in the post-World War II era when many of our grandfathers came to Trinidad selling cloth and clothes as respectful working-class door to door salesmen. And although most of us share this commonality, the divide grew in the next generation when the children of this hardworking generation developed the entitlement personality. The progression into the 1% aristocracy was exclusive to a tiny segment of the small community. While most of the Syrian community came from a Catholic background, a handful of us came from varying Islamic ancestry and upheld much different values. We were educated in Islam with the distinct notion that there are no special privileges afforded to anyone based on race or birth right.

The Syrian community has had many lessons bequeathed to them from the centuries of struggles they underwent in the turmoil that afflicts the Middle East, yet it is ironic that a handful of spoilt individuals with an acute ego-central superiority complex will have the audaciousness to say that when a black man "*steals a sneakers*" then it makes it worse for the entire Afro-Trinidadian race! With what intellect can you accuse an entire race due to the action of any one individual? Can we define all European white descendant people by the actions of the KKK or the Nazis? It's unfortunate, or

fortunate, that the horrific event in Minneapolis has brought out the ugliness of many bigots and racists around the world.

In this racially electrified atmosphere, emboldened by an outright discriminatory president of the so-called “free world,” we find so many exposing their dark and wicked hearts for all to see. Trinidadians should thus be aware of these poor wretched souls who are so poor that their only enrichment is money and wealth, and as principal businessmen in charge of the many foremost businesses in our country, they need to act more responsibly with their statements that could have adverse repercussions to both them and the wider Syrian Trinidadian community.

The public should furthermore be aware of the fact that they do not represent all of the Syrian community and they are alienated within the diaspora just as much as they are in the wider Trinidadian populous. No one should have any misgivings over the idiocy and immorality of this person’s misrepresented views, that a person should be entitled to dislike an entire race due to their personal experiences with one or a few of its people. This untruth is refuted from many perspectives, but the simplest of them is to beg the question: Should the entire Syrian Trinidadian community be penalized for his intolerant beliefs? Also, what is the reason for The Almighty sending all the divinely revealed religions and Prophets with the universal message of humanity and justice for all? Worse yet, does he ascribe to a supremacist mentality that makes him, and those like him, an enemy to all the upright and wholistic values that overwhelmingly shine in the human race? If so, then let it be known, and let those of us who have waged war against racism and bigotry all our lives differentiate from you and your despicable ideology.

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