

Chair's Report, Brighton & Hove Palestine Solidarity Campaign

1. The past year has been one in which the full horror of Israeli attitudes to the Palestinians has come out in sharp focus. As Edward Said wrote, they are regarded as a nuisance, as so many flies to be swatted when they get too troublesome. A relentless stream of propaganda pours out of Israel and out of the mouths of its supporters justifying the unjustifiable with a suaveness which beggars belief. In particular we have been told that Arafat was foolish not to have taken the unbelievably generous offer which Barak proposed to him, and it seems that most westerners have simply swallowed this formulation without bothering to ask what really was on the table. That is an apartheid state in which all effective power would remain with the Israelis and where there was no prospect of a meaningful Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital or of the return of refugees. I myself went to Palestine-Israel in March last year and even I, despite my knowledge of the situation, was appalled at the arrogance of Israel's behaviour on the ground.

2. It has been to do our small part in putting the Palestinian case that PSC exists and that we as a branch exist in Brighton & Hove. We do not deceive ourselves that we will achieve miracles. We are part of a steady drip drip of truth which we believe will in the end have its effect. Without this belief we could not carry on.

3. In view of what has been happening to the Palestinians it appears almost unseemly to say that we have had a very successful year. But we need to say this to encourage ourselves. Let us remind ourselves what we have done; a chronological approach seems as good as any other.

24.3.00 B&H EC & Mtg at which I reported back on my trip.

8.4.00 B&H Stall re Deir Yassin

9.4.00 Deir Yassin demo. Zoe's boards.

29.5.00 B&H Stall at Peace 2000

22.6.00 B&H Mtg (general discussion)

15.7.00 B&H Poet's Corner stall

31.7.00 B&H Mtg: Maysa Jalbout: Education in refugee camps

5.8.00 B&H Bric-a-brac sale

13.8.00 B&H sale stall at Hanover 2000 event

15.9.00 B&H Mtg: Refugees

17.9.00 Right of Return rally, Trafalgar Square; our banner seen world-wide

11 & 12.10.00 B&H Freshers' Fayre

19.10.00 B&H Initial meeting of Pal Soc at Sussex

27.10.00 B&H Mtg: Chris Doyle

29.10.00 My interview on Southern Counties Radio

1.11.00 Socialist Labour Party meetings at Sussex & The George Beard on Palestine

12-24th B&H Jewish Film Festival including:

17.11.00 B&H Holocaust Education Event & 21.11.00 B&H The Jahalin

9.12.00 B&H Palestine Support Evening

11.12.00 Samar & Jawad Picket

22.1.01 B&H Mtg at methodist church: Linda Ramsden

27.1.01 B&H Holocaust Memorial Day demo

1.2.01 B&H Voluntary Fayre stall at Sussex

3.2.01 Bethlehem Day at Darvell Bruderhof. Muna Hamza etc.

+ newspaper articles + magazine articles + dissemination of information by email + debate by email.

Final rousing remarks