

Call for Solidarity

Exposing Israel's war crimes isn't anti-Semitism!

We are shocked and outraged at the campaign against the United States journalist and author Max Blumenthal and Canadian-Israeli journalist and peace activist David Sheen. The campaign is also directed against Members of the DIE LINKE (Left) party who invited the two journalists to take part in an expert discussion in rooms of the German parliament.

We express our solidarity with the the two Jewish journalists and with the MPs Annette Groth, Inge Holger, Heike Hänsel and party executive member Claudia Haydt.

The main focus of Blumenthal and Sheen during their visit to Berlin was to explain in some detail what happened during the Gaza war this summer which human rights organisations such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch consider to be war crimes.

During the war, Blumenthal was in Gaza gathering information; he was invited as a witness to the Russell Tribunal in Brussels in September 2014.

The two journalists also spoke about the open institutional racism directed against Palestinians and non-Jewish immigrants, and the dangerous drift to the right in the state of Israel.

Both spoke reasonably and factually citing clear evidence. There was no “obsessive whipping up of hatred” or “demonisation of Israel” and no “promoting anti-Semitic argumentation and relativising the holocaust and the German responsibility for the destruction of millions of European Jews.” These accusations were made against the four party members in a stage-managed, populist declaration *You don't speak for us*.

To check what really was said, anyone can watch one of the several video-recordings of the Berlin event or the address Blumenthal gave in the Catholic Church House in Stuttgart on Friday, 7th November:

publicsolidarity.de/2014/11/08/max-blumenthal-am-07-november-2014-in-stuttgart/
publicsolidarity.de/2014/11/09/never-again-to-anyone-today-tomorrow-and-until-palestine-is-free/
publicsolidarity.de/2014/11/09/david-sheen-und-max-blumenthal-am-9-november-2014-in-berlin/
youtube.com/watch?v=dZCiXv1kdDQ&list=PL6bUilsoo3nOZedLBVZ8ATh4mViRIKml

The attempted censorship and denial of a platform for the Blumenthal-Sheen-event in Berlin by Petra Pau (DIE LINKE), Volker Beck (Green party) and Reinholt Robbe (Social Democratic Party) was sharply rejected by Jewish critics of Israel here in Germany and internationally. The Jewish Voice for a Just Peace wrote to Pau, Beck and Robbe:

As German, European and Israeli Jews living in Germany we protest strongly against the attacks on the freedom of speech of two Jewish lecturers – David Sheen is furthermore an Israeli citizen – who had taken part in the Russell Tribunal and who wanted to describe their experiences in Gaza and Israel. We see your intervention as a concrete attempt to forbid any attempt at criticism of criminal Israeli policies. Although you admit that criticism of the policies of the Israeli government could be justified, you seek to determine what criticism is permissible.

The German text of the Declaration is available here: www.juedische-stimme.de/?p=1677

This way of dealing with Jewish and Jewish-Israeli opposition figures is shameful. In the light of German history, this treatment has a disturbing resonance. It is only following this letter and the attempt at censorship from Pau, Beck and Robbe and the refusal by Gysi to explain the measures taken against Blumenthal and Sheen (in denying them use of the Volkstribune for their original event) that the argument with Gysi in the parliament's Paul-Löbe House came about.

Max Blumenthal and David Sheen came to Europe to draw attention to the continual violations of Palestinian human rights by the state of Israel and to promote international solidarity with the oppressed. Israeli scoffing at international law has reached a new peak with its war crimes in Gaza this summer and the coming law aggravating the institutionalized discrimination against Palestinians in Israel.

To divert attention from these obvious facts was the aim of the anti-Semitism campaign launched by Israel lobbyists within and outside DIE LINKEN against Blumenthal and Sheen.

We call on all members of DIE LINKE to take their declared solidarity with the Jewish and the Jewish Israeli Left seriously and to deal with their criticism of the Israeli state.

In particular, they should pay attention to the research and analyses of Blumenthal and Sheen.

We demand that DIE LINKE party members immediately cease the campaign against Annette Groth, Inge Holger, Heike Hänsel and Claudia Haydt.

Solidarity with Annette Groth, Inge Holger, Heike Hänsel and Claudia Haydt.

Solidarity with the resistance of Palestinians against land seizure, ethnic cleansing and apartheid; for self-determination and the realisation of full rights for Palestinians.

30. November, 2014



Palestine Solidarity Committee, Stuttgart

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