

Facebook blocks page of the Palestine Committee of Norway

Our reporters

21 November 2023

Meta has shut down the Facebook page of the Palestine Committee of Norway in Trøndelag. A statement on their newly launched backup page reads: “Our site was blocked a fortnight ago and we were informed that it was not due to a violation of our guidelines. There is a suspicion of reporting or censorship.”

The *World Socialist Web Site* condemns this act of censorship as a violation of democratic freedom of expression and calls for the page to be reinstated immediately.

The shutdown of the Palestine Committee’s page joins a whole flood of acts of censorship and bans around the world. These target social media, events, public appearances and even opinions and slogans condemning the genocide in Gaza.

Recently, YouTube, the video and social media platform of Google’s parent company Alphabet, cut off the channel of the MintPress News (MPN) anti-war website from all revenue. In Germany, even the slogan “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free” is now considered a criminal offence, although it expresses nothing other than the prospect of a free, secular and democratic Palestine in which Arabs and Jews will live on an equal footing. Governments around the world are moving to suppress pro-Palestinian voices, and Norway is no exception.

Members and supporters of the Palestine Committee are now taking to the streets, organising information stands in shopping arcades and informing the population about this act of censorship. The next protest will take place in downtown Trondheim on Saturday.

At one of the previous protests in Trondheim, a WSWs reporter spoke to Magnus Barka Hjelle, the leader of the local Students for Palestine (Studenter for

Palestina Trondheim).

The conversation initially centred on the situation in the Gaza Strip, where the number of people killed by Israel since October 7 at the time had far exceeded 11,000. Hjelle reported that one of his friends, who has family in the Gaza Strip, was currently unable to contact his family.

When asked about the shutdown of the Facebook account, Hjelle said that it was not the Norwegian government itself that had blocked the group’s Facebook page: “It’s not the government, it’s Meta, it’s Facebook. Facebook has blocked our account.” He said that the Norwegian government should actually ensure that such a block is lifted, but did not expect it to actually do so.

When asked by the WSWs reporter how he assessed the situation and who were the “enemies” and who were the “friends of the Palestinians,” he replied: “I think most of the governments in the NATO countries are the enemies. I think the population has changed, at least in the last few years, and you see some of the biggest anti-war protests in Europe since the Iraq war. So I think the population supports the Palestinian people and the government has a problem with going against the Israeli government.”

When asked about the wider context of the conflict, Magnus explained that Israel originated as a colony of settlers who took possession of the land and expelled its population, “much like South Africa, the US and New Zealand and Australia.” The first Zionists such as Theodor Herzl made this very clear by talking about the Zionist project in the style of colonial rulers: “They founded the ‘Jewish Colonial Fund for Palestine’ and named all organisations after colonial structures. Theodor Herzl himself turned to Cecil Rhodes, who was colonising South Africa, and asked for his advice

on the colonisation of Palestine's population.”

The conversation then turned to the future of the Middle East. Our reporter explained that the WSWS was fighting for a democratic, secular and socialist state on the entire territory of Palestine, and Magnus replied that he too saw no future in the two-state solution:

“I don't want to speak for the Palestinians themselves, but you see more and more support for a one-state solution (...) or more and more rejection for the two-state solution in Palestine. You have to see that we already have a one-state solution, which is a one-Israel solution. Israel controls the whole area between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. So, we already have a one-state solution. But what should this state look like? Should it be an apartheid state or a democratic state? That is the question here.”

Shortly after this conversation, around 300 people also gathered in Trondheim on Saturday afternoon, November 11, for a rally against the genocide in Gaza. Further rallies have already taken place several times in Oslo and also in Bergen, Jessheim and other cities in this small country. Millions are taking to the streets around the world, and their protest against the brutal genocide is becoming more and more international.

Despite all the efforts of governments and media corporations, they are unable to contain the resistance to war and oppression. It coincides with an intensification of the international class struggle. In this situation, it is crucial to equip the growing international movement with a revolutionary leadership and a socialist programme. The fight against censorship and the defence of democratic rights are central to this.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact