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Activists disrupt Israel's PR operation

 Published: Tuesday 13 January 2009 15:36 by **Londonpalsol**

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Activists disrupted the offices of the British Israel Communications and Research Centre (BICOM) in central London this morning. The lobby group's media centre, which is playing a key role in Israel's [public relations operation during the assault on Gaza](#), was shut down as protesters occupied the building.

Photographs of civilian casualties from Gaza were pasted on to the computer screens of public relations executives, phone lines cut off to halt the organisation's media rebuttal unit and leaflets thrown out of window on to the main road and handed out to staff pressing them to confront the truth about the human cost of Israeli aggression.

Neighbourhoods:



protest in Zionist propaganda office

Activists challenged the BICOM chief executive, Lorna Fitzsimmons, in her office, demanding she explain

her support for military action against civilians. Fitzsimmons was formerly Labour MP for Rochdale and a leading member of Labour Friends of Israel. Other Bicom staff attacked activists and attempted to lock them inside the office.

BICOM arranged briefings, conference calls and interviews for months in preparation for the attack, laying the groundwork for Israel's public justifications for the onslaught (see: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/04/israel-gaza-hamas-hidden-agenda>, para. 16).

Since the bombing began, BICOM has sought to downplay the number of Palestinian dead, deny the reality of Israel's military occupation and manipulate the news agenda in Israel's favour.

Bicom, which claims to be an independent organisation devoted to seeking a more supportive environment for Israel, is at the forefront of the campaign to win over the British media. Foreign reporters are bombarded with press releases and invitations to interview senior Israeli ministers and advisors at top London restaurants. Set up in 2001, it has regularly flown journalists to Tel Aviv.

As the attack on Gaza enters its third week, with 900 Palestinian lives lost, including over 250 children, BICOM's continued operation in London must be urgently challenged.

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Notes for editors


1. BICOM's media and research centre (www.bicom.org.uk) is based on Great Portland Street, London. Its staff have close links with Israel's political and military establishment. Danny Shek, a former BICOM chief executive, is currently the Israeli Ambassador in Paris. His successor, Lorna Fitzsimmons, was formerly Labour MP for Rochdale and a leading member of Labour Friends of Israel.

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Well done!

 Published: Thursday 15 January 2009 02:17 by Biff in USA

I wish I was there to help in that action.

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Gaza genocide.