

Date: Sat, 2 Sep 2006 16:43:14 +0100 (BST)
Subject: Report from Tucson Meeting
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To: NCGPactions@yahoogroups.com
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Dear Friends,

I wanted to write a report of my participation in late July Tucson meeting of Green party but was unable to do so due to being swamped by work and taking care of our son Javed, ever since my return. Following is a brief report of my trip to Tucson:

- I attended the Tucson convention on Saturday (July 29th) and was a co-presenter in a workshop titled "Resisting Islamophobia and Demonization of Arabs". The other presenters included Aimee Smith from Michigan, Aram Falsafi from Washington state, and Laura Hampton from Ohio. The workshop lasted more than three hours and was well attended by about two dozen people. We talked about stereotyping of Arabs and Muslims in U.S. popular culture and its political ramifications. Aimee Smith presented an excellent video titled "Planet of the Arabs" that you could view online at:

<http://www.jsalloum.org/videos.html>

We wanted to tie in the issue of opposition divestment from Israel, which sometimes attains the form of anti-Islamic commentary. Following are some examples of opposition to Green Party divestment resolution:

<http://www.frontpagemagazine.com/Articles/ReadArticle.asp?ID=20814>

<<http://www.jewishreview.org/Archives/Article.php?Article=2006-01-15-1960>>

<<http://www.jewishreview.org/Archives/Article.php?Article=2006-07-01-2465>>

Due to shortage of time, I was unable to present a video by a Pakistani feminist, Rubina Saigol, who exposed the false claim of liberation of women used to justify colonization and occupation of countries in the Middle East and South Asia. Women rights in Muslim countries are often quoted to de-legitimize any resistance to Western occupation. I plan to present that video in the upcoming "Women Fightback" conference tentatively planned in October in Exploris, Raleigh.

- I was able to cast two votes (as North Carolina delegate and a proxy voter) during the Steering Committee elections, in which Liz Arnone, Sara "Echo" Steiner, and Jody Grage (Washington state) were elected.

- I attended GPAX (Green Peace Action Committee) workshop which is a network of state representative that attend various peace activities in the country. GPAX is in the process of being established as Green Party standing committee. GPAX has issued statements, and endorsed activities like camp Cassey in Texas, Camp Democracy,

"US Out of Venezuela" rally, immigrant rally on May 1st, Stop the Divine Strake protest (Nevada), and divestment from Israel. Some of the members of GPAX workshop included Aimee Smith and her cute baby daughter Jenin, Anne Wilcox (DC), Bill Holloway (TX), Jackie Devaneau (Maine), Deanna Taylor (Desert Green of Utah).

- One important insight I received from a Green Party member from California, Fred Hosea, was to translate Green Party literature in foreign languages. Fred has translated the ten key values of Green Party in Arabic which he distributed during Middle Eastern Film festival in California. I am interested to do similar translations in Urdu and disseminate it in local Pakistani community.

Best regards,
Manzoor Cheema