

AUSTRALIANS FOR PALESTINE

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Prepared by SK/AFP

From the pulpit to the soap box

Providing a Voice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release No 7 – 8 June 2007

Reverend Helen Cox is a brave woman. Never one to hold back on social justice issues, Helen certainly knew that she had her challenges cut out for her when she decided to speak up for Palestine. But that never deterred her. With poster and leaflets in hand, Helen has often taken the train to the city and stood in the city square or outside Myers determined to highlight the plight of the Palestinians under occupation. Armed with years of experience in ministering to her parishioners and a sound knowledge of the Bible, Helen has no trouble in defending Palestinian human rights and their right to live in their own homeland with dignity and in peace. Not only does Helen have a profound understanding of what it really means to be Christian, she is very much aware that the Palestinian presence in the Holy Land goes back to time immemorial.

“It has been a solo act for years,” explained Sonja Karkar from Women for Palestine. “Very few people have that kind of courage. We well know how reluctant people are to even speak up in the comfort of friends and supporters when it comes to Palestine. Helen is one of a kind.”

Mrs Karkar went on to describe how not only Helen’s gentle, but firm voice and lilting laugh disarm most people wanting to challenge her, but people soon find themselves mesmerised by Helen’s strong convictions and overwhelming empathy with human suffering. “We believe that she is just the person to speak the words of an American human rights activist Rachel Corrie, killed by an Israeli bulldozer as she tried to protect a Palestinian family home from being destroyed in 2003. Rachel was 21; Helen is 70 – but you would never know the difference because Helen touches the humanity in all of us.”

Next week on 16 and 17 June, Helen will be reading Rachel’s words from her diary – words that tell of her deep feelings for the Palestinians under occupation. However, this time Helen will not be alone. She will be supported by Women for Palestine and Australians for Palestine who are organising the ‘67 Occupation Exhibition and Palestine Film Festival at the State Library of Victoria to mark 40 years of Israel’s occupation of the remaining Palestinian lands and 4 million Palestinians who have not known freedom, justice, peace or dignity in all that time. If only there were thousands more like Helen.

Event: ‘67 “Occupation” Exhibition & Melbourne-Palestine Film Festival

When: Saturday 16 June and Sunday 17 June from 9.30 am – 6.00 pm

Where: State Library of Victoria, Entry 3 La Trobe Street, Melbourne City

Admission: Exhibition – free; Film sessions - \$5 per session

Program & times: www.67.com.au

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