

Israel boycott will hit Palestinians, warns MP

FABIAN Hamilton MP has condemned the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign's national anti-Israel supermarket boycott scheduled to start tomorrow.

The member for North East Leeds has also slammed the anti-Israel organisation for attempting to set up a Palestine Action Group in Leeds to further a campaign of pressure against Israel through a boycott of exported goods.

He said: "I condemn this biased and ill-thought-out campaign based more on political posturing

rather than any constructive action and policy that will improve the situation in Israel and on the West Bank.

"Actions that threaten the economy in those areas will just drive both sides further into polarised, entrenched positions and play into the hands of hard-liners who do not want any peaceful solution.

"If jobs in Israel and the West Bank are put at risk, the sad reality is that it is the Palestinian community that will suffer most."

Mr Hamilton serves on the Foreign Affairs Committee and has visited Israel, the Gaza Strip and West Bank to see at first hand the current conflict.

The boycott campaign aims to dissuade shoppers from buying products from Israel in supermarkets, particularly Morrisons and Waitrose.

Yorkshire has been targeted as Morrisons' head office is in Bradford.

In Leeds around 40 Palestinian sympathisers attended a meeting last month consisting of Stop The War campaigners, Trade Union Congress members and Leeds University students.

A PSC spokesman called on volunteers to join a convoy being organised by MP George Galloway to take supplies to Gaza in December.

The PSC has planned a phone-in day on Wednesday, which coincides with a week of action called by the Palestinian Grassroots Anti-Apartheid Wall Campaign.

An attempt by the PSC to boycott Israeli goods failed recently in Canada because the Jewish community came out in force to buy as many Israeli products as possible.

■ MIDDLE East expert Neil Lazarus will address the Leeds Zionist Federation about 'Iran: The Greatest Threat To The Jewish People In The 21st Century?' at the Community Centre on Tuesday, November 17 (8.30pm).

■ Contact Sandra 0113 2185685.