



WAKE UP!! WAKE UP!! IT'S YER OFF THE WALL...

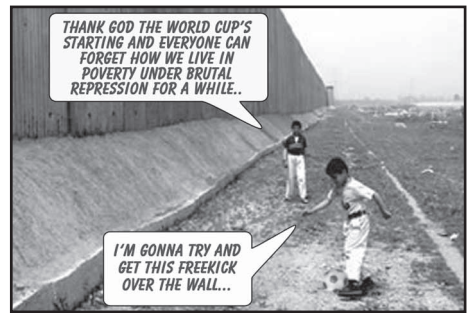
# SchNEWS

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## WALL OF SHAME

### WEST PUSHES PALESTINIANS FURTHER INTO CRISIS

The remnants of Palestinian civil society, brutalized by the occupation and ongoing encirclement by the apartheid wall, is now reeling under the shock of the sudden removal of all US and EU aid. Their crime? To have voted in free and fair elections for a movement, Hamas, which Bush and Blair argue is 'terrorist'.

Bank transfers to the Palestinian Authority (PA) have been blocked by the US. Slowly but surely the PA is being starved of the funds needed to maintain basic services and infrastructure. The civil workforce have not been paid for two months and hospitals are desperately short of vital medicines. Jack Straw argued that aid to the PA had to be cut because Hamas refuses to recognise Israel or renounce the right to resist the occupation. Yet the UK is an enthusiastic backer of the Israel whose new Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has said "I believe with all my heart in the people of Israel's eternal historic right to the entire land of Israel." - meaning a racially-exclusive state from the Mediterranean to the Jordan. Hamas's claim to the same territory, with roots in living memory rather than biblical mythology is treated as terrorist rhetoric and attracts crippling sanctions from the West. Are we about to do to Palestine what was done in Iraq during the nineties?

Annual UK arms sales to Israel have doubled over the last year to £25m, and since 2000 the UK has sold £70m worth of arms to Israel, including tanks, helicopters, mines, rockets, machine guns, tear-gas, leg irons, components for fighter jets and surface-to-surface missiles. Over the last 30 years Israel has been by far the largest recipient of US foreign aid.

This sanctions regime is being conducted against an occupied people on behalf of an occupying power. While the West demands that Hamas renounce violence, the low intensity war against the civilian popu-

lation in Palestine continues. In the months of April and May, over 40 Palestinians have been killed by the army - most of them civilians, at least eight of them children - with the most perfunctory coverage in the western press. Aggressive expansion of settlements together with the building of settler-only roads continues. Israel maintains a stranglehold over the Palestinian economy, meaning that the PA is totally dependent on external sources of funding.

The icon of this oppressive regime is the building of the apartheid wall - some 730km of concrete and steel which will annex huge swathes of Palestinian land and turn towns and villages into gated mini-prisons. If completed it will allow Israel to control all significant movement within the West Bank, allowing further degradation of daily life in the Occupied Territories. A bitter fight to resist this symbol of repression has been growing over the past few months, as SchNEWS's correspondent in the village of Bil'in, near Ramallah, reports...

### BIL'IN UP

"Bil'in is a small village close to Ramallah six kilometres inside the Green Line (the 1967 ceasefire line). For over eighteen months the villagers of Bil'in have been resisting attempts by the Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) to build a section of the apartheid wall on village lands.

At a demonstration on Friday 12th May, 300 Palestinians, international and Israelis converged at the gate of the wall, the villagers non-violent protest was met by a hail of plastic-coated steel bullets fired at close range. Two international activists were hospitalised with head injuries (one needing treatment for a brain hemorrhage) and dozens of Palestinians were also shot and injured.

As in other villages, the Israeli government argues that the route of the wall in Bil'in was determined purely for security reasons. However, a visit to Bil'in shows that the work is aimed at the annexation of the villages' ancient olive groves in order to allow expansion of the illegal 'Israeli-Jewish' settlements of Mattiyahu East and Mod'in Illit. The annexation will directly benefit the Israeli real estate developers 'Green Park' and 'Heftsiba'.

The villagers of Bil'in have gained large-scale support from Palestinian, Israeli and activists from the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) in their struggle against the construction. Since February 2005 vil-

### CRAP DE-ARREST OF THE WEEK

For having a group hug...

On May 12th Sussex Police boot boys intent on a bit of Friday night aggro decided to evict a squat on Brighton's Upper Lewes Road. More than 30 friends of the squatters came and intervened as the police evicted the house. Initially the cops claimed to be acting "under the trespassing laws" and later to be "investigating a burglary". Brighton is such an anarchist utopia that burglars are allowed to leave the premises with as much stuff as they can carry y'see. Onlookers who did know the law were threatened with arrest for 'being clever'.

When people began to take photos of the bully-boy tactics, the police threatened to nick their camera, under section 19 of the Do-What-You're-Told-Act 2005.

After one happy-snap too many they chased one witness down the street for his camera. As they caught up with him, his friend gave him a big sappy hug and refused to let go - so was nicked for Obstructing a Police Officer. When she got to the copshop it was red faces all round for the boys in blue, as the Desk Sgt had to explain to his colleagues that as taking photos wasn't a crime, she wasn't obstructing them in the course of their duty. Apologies all round and then they paid her taxi home!

Meanwhile the squatters were kicked out and the house boarded up. So, more homeless in Brighton and another empty house to split into 76 small but exclusive luxury flats.

lagers have staged hundreds of demonstrations at the route of the wall. The village has become a symbol of Palestinian non-violent resistance and the demos have become a regular feature in the Israeli press.

Israel has built an incomplete barrier separating the villagers of Bil'in from their olive groves. In 2005 the villagers built an 'outpost' on their own land, imitating the Israeli settler tactic of claiming Palestinian land through building illegal outposts, close to the settlement of Mod'in Illit. The outpost is constantly manned by Palestinian and international activists and has become a point where villagers can meet and discuss resistance to the construction.

The villagers hold a demonstration at the gate to their lands every Friday. On one such demo in April, villagers' protests centred around the boycott of apartheid Israel. Protesters burned Israeli products in front of border police in riot gear, before breaking down the gate in the wall and trying to access their land. The demonstrators were met with batons, tear gas and rubber bullets.

Mohammed Khatib, a member of the Bil'in Popular Committee Against the Wall, said... 'in the face of our non-violent resistance, Israeli soldiers have attacked our peaceful protests with teargas, clubs, rubber-coated steel bullets and other

continued overleaf...

### SOLIDARITY EVENTS

May 20th - Demonstrate for Palestine, March and Rally, assemble 12 noon, Embankment, London

May 24th - Introduction to ISM - Wednesday 24th May 7.30pm @ The Bread And Roses Pub, Clapham

May 27-28th - ISM Training Weekend - @ The Square, 21 Russell Sq, London, WC1.

May 30th - International Work in Palestine, discussion, 6.30pm, Cowley Club, 12 London Rd, Brighton

## WALL OF SHAME *continued...*

ammunition. They have injured over 400 villagers, they invade the village at night, entering homes, pulling families out and arresting people.'

The IOF have repeatedly arrested youths from the village in attempts to intimidate those taking part in resistance, often demanding large sums of money in bail. In April two children were arrested while herding goats. The two boys picked up one of the pieces of scrap metal that litter the fields next to the construction site. One of the settlers noticed and called the police, accusing them of theft. The police arrested the pair and later made additional charges of entering Israel illegally and throwing stones at a recent demonstration. The boys' release was secured by the ISM for 5000 NIS (Israeli shekels) each.

Despite IOF repression, the resistance raises the spirits of the people of Bil'in in the face of the brutal Israeli occupation. Tom Hayes, a volunteer in Bil'in with the ISM, an organisation aimed at supporting Palestinian non-violent resistance, said that, 'the atmosphere in Bil'in is one of hope - the villagers respond to Israel's apartheid policies with increased resistance and are confident that they will win their fight.'

Similar widespread resistance in the nearby

villages of Budrus and Biddu, where other sections of the wall have been built, has led to Israeli Supreme Court decisions limiting the amount of land which the IOF can annex behind the wall. The villagers of Bil'in are hoping to draw international pressure and media attention to influence the court's decision.

The villagers of Bil'in have issued three petitions against the wall to the Supreme Court. The most recent, filed on May 14th, states that the route of the wall is specifically designed to benefit real estate companies and should be removed. Supreme Court Judge Salim Jubran ordered the state to respond to the villagers' request for a temporary injunction within seven days.

The ISM has worked in Bil'in for over a year and is committed to supporting the villagers' struggle. Contact [www.palsolidarity.org](http://www.palsolidarity.org) to join us in Palestine."

\* [www.brightonpalestine.org](http://www.brightonpalestine.org) - blog of ISM activist working in Palestine

\* [www.palestinecampaign.org](http://www.palestinecampaign.org) - Palestine Solidarity Campaign

\* [www.palsolidarity.org](http://www.palsolidarity.org) - ISM Palestine

\* [www.ism-london.org.uk](http://www.ism-london.org.uk) - ISM London

\* [www.stophthewall.org](http://www.stophthewall.org) - Palestinian anti Apartheid Wall Campaign

## PUBLISH AND BE DAMNED

Glaxo-SmithKline (GSK) got an emergency injunction rushed through the High Court Tuesday May 9th to stop activists publishing names and addresses of shareholders. A letter from an unknown animal rights group had already been sent to at least 160 investors to warn them they had two weeks to sell their shares or be named on a website. Activists want to sever the drug giant's links with doomed animal torturers Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS).

GSK actually cut ties with HLS eight years ago, after a documentary exposed some of the shocking cruelty in their animal labs - but linked up again as soon as the dust had settled a year later. Glaxo boss, Jean Pierre Garnier has been telling reporters that they're a benevolent company really... Testing drugs on a few fluffy rabbits is OK because the goal is to save people from disease. But pharma companies spend just 0.2% of their money developing drugs for pov-

erty related diseases like tuberculosis, which affect almost one fifth of the world's population. Instead Glaxo prefers to pump their cash into Western vanities like slimming products, in an attempt to follow a trail of cash rather than the most common diseases.

The injunction makes it illegal to publicly identify investors and has been specifically designed to capture anonymous groups, even making reference to "persons unknown". GSK's lawyer plans to cut and paste names into the injunction as they turn up. They will publicise the injunction, so people cannot claim they were not named in it and didn't know about it. Whether that will stand up in court is anyone's guess, but the lawyers will know already that every huntin', shootin' judge in town will be looking to nail some animal rights activists. Anyone found breaching the injunction can be held in contempt of court and faces a fine or prison

## RED HOT CHILE

Spot the terrorist in Chile! Would that be the less than fluffy former dictator General Pinochet or some indigenous activists? The latter of course! Three indigenous Mapuche people and an activist sympathiser have been jailed for 10 years for burning down forest 'owned' by forestry companies. Ever since the conquistadores first looted South America more than 500 years ago, the Mapuches have had their land gradually stolen from them and been forced into poverty as a result. Living in slums in Temuco they are surrounded by a forest that is part of their ancestral heritage, but is now owned by Mininco, one of the largest forestry companies in Chile.

The jailed Mapuche are on the 68th day of a hunger strike to in an attempt to draw attention to their cause. The Chilean judiciary couldn't even be bothered to provide translators for the Mapudungun speaking accused, who were all nicked under anti-terrorist legislation. Activists are calling for their release and more clarity about the political role and use of anti-terrorism laws in Chile. Here at SchNEWS towers we'd been thinking that Chile was way down on Osama Bin Laden's target list, but no doubt politician's have found anti-terrorism laws very useful for controlling dissent. Such laws are in fact becoming more and more popular the world over as tools to suppress social movements and political agitation. As one 80 year old Mapuche healer put it "This is a result of reclaiming the land of our ancestors, but it's money that rules nowadays."

## SEEING (RED)

So Mandela-wannabe Bono-head of popular beat-combo U2 has teamed up with a yankee uber-capitalist to launch 'Product (RED)'.

Taking a leaf from the Book of Tony, they've rebranded the old socialist colour red into... new capitalist red. It is desi(RED), admi(RED) and you should be inspi(RED), they schmchel on their swanky web intro ([www.joinred.com](http://www.joinred.com)). Er, no, actually we are inc(RED)ulous, ange(RED) and think the scheme should be ignor(RED).

It's a slick save-the-world-through-buying-more marketing campaign, designed to convince us that a spending spree will take care all the world's ills. Promoted in conjunction with such philanthropists as GAP, Amercian Express and Converse, a tiny slice of the extra profits raised by the consumer frenzy will go to help alleviate AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Don't worry about the role those companies play in causing and continuing these situations - just buy some (RED) stuff!

To take just one example, we are not so sure that "The new red MOTOSLVRtm" is in fact "the essence of desire", or that Motorola are that "dedicated to doing the right thing" as they've helped destabilise Africa by plundering coltan for mobile phone production, sustained sweatshop style labour forces and helped funnel the world's wealth ever upwards into the same few greedy wallets of the global elite. Maybe we're just bo(RED) of all the self-cent(RED) pop-star bullshit and think it's time Bono reti(RED)...

## BARMY ARMY

"I didn't join the army to carry out American foreign policy," declared Ben Griffin, UK refusenik, having resigned from the SAS and refused to go back to Iraq.

Attention Squaddies... join the army, see the world, (well, Iraq and Afghanistan). Meet interesting people, refuse to kill them, spend LIFE in a prison! Bomber Blair is eager to see the new Armed Forces Bill through Parliament, which recommends sentences up to life imprisonment for those refusing to serve in a war, whether it's legal or not. Not to worry that the legislation breaches the Nuremberg principles which enshrine in international law the responsibility of everyone to "refuse to obey illegal and immoral orders from any government". The Bill also proposes that those who get a free education while in the Forces must remain a soldier until they're 40! This bill will have its third, final reading on the 22nd May. It's sailed through the first two readings without a whisper of opposition, and it's time to campaign and force MP's to reconsider this draconian proposition.

\* See more at [www.refusingtokill.net](http://www.refusingtokill.net) and check out Military Families Against the War's website at: [www.mfaw.org.uk](http://www.mfaw.org.uk)

## PARTY & PROTEST

Campaign Against Climate Change will be having a Mad Emitters Tea Party to send up and satirise the fossil fools of the Whitehouse on May 20th. Have a picnic and make some noise. 2pm-6pm at U.S. Embassy, Grosvenor Square, London, phone 02078339311, see [www.campaigncc.org](http://www.campaigncc.org) \*\* There will be a Trident Ploughshares Devonport Disarmament Camp from 18-21 May. Peace pirates theme so bring eye patches and any spare galleons. Call 0845 458 8363 or see [www.tridentploughshares.org/article984](http://www.tridentploughshares.org/article984) \*\* There will be a Baby Milk Action protest against Nestle, at their tower block HQ at St. George's House, Park Lane, Croydon, at 12 noon on May 20th. This action is also against Body Shop - recently bought out by L'Oreal who are 26% owned by Nestles. For more see [www.babymilkaction.org](http://www.babymilkaction.org). On the same day there will be a Demo at Body Shop, Nottingham, about their new animal testing owners, L'Oreal. Meet at usual Nottingham Animal Rights stall opposite M&S, contact 0845 458 9595. \*\* BP's Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline will be launched May 27, and there will be a demo against it on May 26th, 5pm, BP Building, St James Square, London SW1Y, Phone 07766175641 [www.baku.org.uk](http://www.baku.org.uk)

## ...and finally...

Since 9-11, flying has become a bit of a chore. Endless security rigmarole and x-rays can dampen the spirits of even the most frisky jet-setting businessman. So it's cheering to see that the famously fun-loving Serbian police want to keep things lively... by planting explosives into random baggage at Belgrade airport and standing back to watch the fireworks! Well, it keeps them off the streets.

The foolproof fun inevitably came to an end after an exercise on April 15th went badly wrong. Cops had planted explosives into luggage destined for Heathrow, Paris, Milan, and Athens, and let sniffer dogs loose to find them. They did find three, but when the dogs turned up a blank on bomb number 4, the cops realized they hadn't marked the bags... so they didn't know where the explosives were or where they were going. Doh! Rather than own up, they kept schtum, let the plane carrying the bomb take off, and hoped nobody would notice. And they only got found out after a local paper dug the dirt. One furious cop said, "It makes us look like a bunch of idiots!" Enough said...

## Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers... you can't buy (RED)emption with a c(RED)it card... Honest.

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