

WAKE UP!! IT'S YER SET THE VOLUME TO ELEVEN...



SchNEWS

www.schnews.org.uk

Friday 15th June 2007

Free/Donation

Issue 592

GHETTO BLASTED

WHY THE ISRAEL-US AXIS WANTS CIVIL WARS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Forty years on from Israel's seizure of the West Bank and Gaza during the '67 Six Day War and it still never seems to be good news in Palestine. Across the bombed, besieged and colonized land there is a new and bloody wave of internal fighting, the worst ever seen in the Occupied Territories. Not the worst violence of course, that would be the year-long campaign of terror launched last summer by Israel - allegedly to find one captured Israeli soldier - which has left over 650 Palestinians dead.

So far, 80 people have been killed in the fighting and hundreds have been wounded. Three people were killed on Tuesday (12th) when a gunfight broke out in Beit Hanoon hospital. Kidnapping and arson are commonplace, and across Gaza checkpoints (Palestinian this time, not Israeli) have sprung up, run by masked guys with guns.

All of which is music to Israeli ears: the government and military must be thrilled that Fatah boss and Palestinian President, Mahmood Abbas, is finally doing what they always wanted Yassir Arafat to do - start a Palestinian civil war. As an article in the allegedly liberal *Haaretz* newspaper explained, "When Fatah and Hamas are so good at killing each other, why should Israel intervene and spur them to close ranks against the common enemy?"

According to the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (www.pchrgaza.ps), "Gaza City has witnessed unjustifiable violent internal fighting, and an atmosphere of tension has spread over Gaza... Since Monday evening, violence has extended to most areas in the Gaza Strip from the north to the south, and militants have deployed in the streets, at the entrances of towns and near governmental headquarters and security compounds. Militants have been more violent than ever before as they have stormed hospitals and forced medical crews out. They even fired inside the hospital and killed a number of persons."

Israel and its sponsor, the United States, have done all that they can to provoke violence between Palestinians. Ever since Hamas won the elections in early 2006, the US-led campaign to undermine them has been enthusiastic to say the least. The sanctions imposed by the US, and backed by a compliant EU and UN, have made it difficult for Hamas to govern, as well as further impoverishing the Palestinian people themselves - and it has been made clear that they will stay in place until either Hamas sells out or quits. And not happy with that, the US has also funded Fatah to the tune of a cool £45 million, and Israel has authorised

massive arms transfers to Abbas's Fatah forces. According to Hebron-based journalist Khaled Amayreh, since October eight truckloads of AK47s and machine guns, along with millions of rounds of ammo, have entered Gaza from Israel. This is common knowledge amongst Palestinians, but you'd be hard pressed to find any mention of this in the BBC's headline coverage.

The US / UK / Israeli's current favourite fighting man in Gaza is Fatah strongman, Mohamad Dahlan, head of the Palestinian National Security Council since March. He sees Gaza as his personal fiefdom - having been 'given' the strip by Ariel Sharon in return for ensuring 'quiet' during the 2005 disengagement. Dahlan has received plenty of help from the CIA and MI6 in training and arming his forces - effectively his own private army. He is accused of numerous extra-judicial executions, and his forces have arbitrarily arrested thousands during his 13-year stint as boss of Gaza Security. Coupled with his penchant for corruption, this makes him the perfect foil for the US / Israel against Hamas.

POWER PLAY

The situation in Palestine dovetails nicely with the latest US plans for the whole Middle East, named 'The Redirection' by senior intelligence officials. Following the 2006 Lebanon 'war', US policy makers realised that they would not be able to fight, let alone win, any invasion of Iran. So their Middle Eastern policy is to destabilise and divide governments and organisations allied to Iran, or indeed any government that does not wholeheartedly back the Yanks.

In Lebanon, where the game is to neutralise Iran's ally Hizballah, they have overseen pro-US president Foud Sinora's setting up of violent, sectarian Sunni groups in Palestinian refugee camps. One of these groups, Fatah al Islam, has been holed up in Nahr al Bared camp ever since they robbed a bank, after the Lebanese President had stopped their cheques when his involvement with the group became public (funding sectarian warfare is something of a, how should we say, tricky issue in a country still recovering from a 15-year civil war).

A recent spate of civilian bombings and killings of Iranian Revolutionary Guards has also been linked to the US, which has been funding the armed separatist groups of Azeris, Baluchis and Iran's Arab minority.

In Iraq, the effect has been to ensure that Iraqis remain divided (see SchNEWS

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK



For feeding the hungry...
Eric Montanez was nicked on 4th April for the heinous crime of giving homeless people free vegan food. He became the first person to be arrested in the US under new laws that criminalise compassionate citizens. The 'Food not Bombs' collective have been busy been distributing food to the homeless of major US cities for almost 20 years.

Of course, this brazenly anarchist project highlights inequalities in the fattest country in history and openly breaks the rule of competitive consumption. (How can the poor know they're well off unless there's even poorer people around to make them feel lucky?). Last year, a number of US cities attempted to criminalise food distribution and laws were actually passed in Orlando, Florida and Las Vegas, Nevada. But Food Not Bombs have shown their determination to dish out the free dishes - San Francisco was forced to abandon its attempts to stop them after over 1,000 arrests and a whopping \$25m bill did nothing to push the project off the menu.

Presumably, the mickey-mouse politicians who run Orlando are just too worried that scruffy homeless types gathering for dinner will expose the downside of the American Dream to unsuspecting tourists. Alabama Food Not Bombs were roasted by police and actually told that they would be "terminated"! - but refusing to eat humble pie, they just say, "We'll be back..."

Charged with "serving 30 unidentified persons food from a large pot utilizing a ladle", according to the arrest affidavit (the significance of the ladle can only be guessed), whether or not Eric gets his just desserts at trial remains to be seen...

591). The US military has now begun giving weapons to Iraqi insurgents fighting al Qaeda (on the condition that they never, ever, even think about using those guns against US troops). All of which conveniently fosters the 'oh well, the Arabs aren't capable of governing themselves' attitude favoured by news pundits and, in Israel-Palestine, conveniently overshadows the root cause - the occupation and oppression of the Palestinians, which has now been going on for nearly sixty years.

Judging by the numbers at the June 9th 'Enough' demo in London last week, called to mark the anniversary of the start of the occupation, this attempt the spinning the official line is not convincing everybody. Organisers claimed 20,000 people at the demo, and independent sources say up to 10,000 attended (3 people and a dog went along according to the cops). As well as calling for an end to an occupation, demonstrators want a campaign of boycott, disinvestment and sanctions against the Israeli regime.

- For more see...
* www.electronicintifada.net
* www.bigcampaign.org.uk

FORECOURT IN THE ACT

Roundup Of G8/Climate Actions

Yes OK our big report from Germany is still on it's way, but meanwhile on June 8th there were a range of actions in the UK against the G8, many focussing on the the climate change hot air being spouted during the summit...

* An E\$\$O Service Station on Fulham Rd, London, the heart of Chelsea Tractor country, was blockaded by **London Rising Tide** last Friday (8th). The gas guzzlers were stopped from putting tigers in their tanks for two hours by a group of... people-sized tigers. The police arrived with empty threats and nobody was arrested. The protesters were highlighting Exxon/Mobil's push to bring liquid natural gas from the Middle East for new Gas Fired power stations, and the protest camp against the gas pipeline project across Wales (See SchNEWS 576). www.risingtide.org.uk

* A member of the group **Plane Stupid, Penny Eastwood**, super-glued herself to the front door of the London head office of lastminute.com, purveyors of cheap short flights, blocking entry to the office in Victoria. As a protest against popularity of short flight trips and their role in eco-meltdown, she'd glued her hands to the door, and was arrested afterwards. www.planestupid.com

* In **Norwich** a **Jet Petrol Station** was closed

down by **Norwich Rising Tide**. Vehicles were prevented from filling up by such banners as 'Closed For A Total Re-Think' and 'Danger, Global Warming' hazard tape. A Jet garage was chosen to show that there isn't such a thing as a good oil company, and they are owned by ConocoPhillips, the fifth largest oil company, and the first Western firm to enter Iraq after regime change. www.risingtide.org.uk

* In **Nottingham**, activists picketed the Highways Agency exhibition at the Clifton Leisure Centre about the planned widening of the A453. This road is linked to the proposed widening of the M1, and East Midlands airport expansion plans. Email the HA with your opinion about it here A453Widening@highways.gsi.gov.uk For more email climateactionnow@hotmail.co.uk

* In **Bristol** a Critical Mass was held as a rolling protest against the G8 and climate change through the city centre to the M32 motorway and back, handing out flyers. <http://bristol.indymedia.org>

* In **Rostock, Germany**, where the G8 was going on, a Shell garage was shut down in **Evershagen**. The service station was closed for an hour, helped by riot cops who surrounded it. Also in Germany, where petrol stations are pipe-fed (rather than tanker trucks), an emergency cut-off switch was triggered cutting off Shell stations across Rostock.

HAVANA THE LAST LAUGH

Film maker Michael Moore is hoping that his latest production, 'Sicko' (released on 29th June), will be the one that 'gets things done'. Nurses from the Californian Nurses Association have donned 'Sicko' t-shirts and rallied behind him as he continues to do battle with the greedy health insurance industry. The Nurses, famous for standing up to 'Governator' Arnie Schwarzenegger, advocate a single-payer health care system for the US which all profit-minded people seem to oppose. They want a system where one entity is responsible for ensuring healthcare for all (like the NHS) - as opposed to the current system that leaves the most needy and vulnerable stranded. Such a system was due to be introduced in California in 2006 but was vetoed by Big Man Arnie - well, equal access to healthcare, funded through taxation, might prove too much of a drain on the wallets of the rich.

FBI agents were apparently keen to confiscate Moore's film because he'd done an illegal hop over the Florida Straights to Cuba. Whilst on the island he found that a battle-fatigued dictator and his cronies had actually produced a health care system far better than that in the richest country on Earth.

The Cuban success story comes despite a total absence of the free market in the Cuban healthcare system. The US's infant mortality rate is 7 per 1,000 live births - just the same as in Cuba (but double that in the US if you're Black). Cuban

health practitioners are some of the most highly skilled in the world (Cuba has also exported around 25,000 doctors to needy third world countries) and outstrip the West in certain cancer treatments. This is all despite Cuban healthcare expenditure being amongst the lowest in the world, less than 1/25 of that spent in America.

And still the White House continues to blockade the Cuban economy, preventing medicines from being exported to the island - often citing the prevention of terrorism as justification (who knows what mischief they could do with a pack of paracetamol, you see). Despite the fact that 1,000s of Cubans are willing to risk shark attacks floating 90 miles on a dinghy to escape the one party rule of Castro, a new book - *Cuba Confidential* (see SchNEWS 556), shows that many more have decided to stay put, perhaps partly reckoning that access to high level treatments is a healthier bet than a system where the dollar decides.

*Also worth checking out is "*With or Without Fidel*" the latest documentary from **Rice n Peas Films**. Shot during the most precarious period in Cuba's history, the documentary reveals the aspirations and vulnerabilities of a country that stands on the brink of change and questions whether the Revolution can survive without Fidel. The documentary premieres at the Tricycle Cinema, 269 Kilburn High Road, NW6 on 29th June @ 6.50pm.

PARTY & PROTEST

* For full listings updated weekly see www.schnews.org.uk/pap

JUNE 19 - Animal Rights Coalition (ARC) national meeting - to promote cooperation and share information between groups and individuals stopping animal abuse. At Evesham Town Hall, Evesham, Worcs, WR11. From 10am for vegan breakfast, info stalls, films etc, then 12noon til 5pm www.veggies.org.uk/event.php?ref=1034
** **20 - Pre-emptive Peace Strike #6**. "Don't Attack Iran." Say NO to any further military action - 'authorised' under SOCPA laws. At Parliament Square, 10am. www.peacestrike.org
** **21 June - 2nd July - On A Move UK Tour 2007**. Talk by Ramona Africa, sole survivor of 1985 FBI bombing of MOVE's house, where 11 adults and children were murdered. Come and listen to her story and watch the "MOVE" documentary. 21St - at the 1in12 Club, Bradford, 22nd - Norwich - for venue, and all the rest of the dates on the tour, see www.onamove2007.org.uk

** **23 - Pre-emptive Peace Strike #7** - Parliament Square Peace Camp, again 'authorised' under SOCPA laws. Guest speakers, live music plus open mic. At Parliament Square, from 2pm. www.peacestrike.org
** **23 - Titmore Woods Work Day**. Titmore is having a clean up. Bring gloves and boots. Meet at Brighton station, at 10:45am. www.protectourwoodland.co.uk
** **23-28 - "War is Still the Issue"** Peace camp in Parliament Square to celebrate Blair's departure, calling for troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan, the scrapping of Trident, and in support of Brian Hawe. This five day camp will be an 'unauthorised' protest within 1km of Parliament, breaking SOCPA laws (max fine £1000). Legal briefing and direct action workshop will take place 7-9.30pm on June 22nd at D3, Diorama Arts, 3-7 Euston Centre, London NW1 3JG. www.WarIsStillTheIssue.org

TREBANOS ALERT

Bailiffs from the National Eviction Team have come to the camp to set out guidelines for the imminent eviction of the five-month-old camp at Brecon, south Wales, fighting the construction of a gas pipeline across Wales (SchNEWS 576). Ring the site phone 07903 152822 for information or for advice on what needs doing, i.e. legal support, observers etc. www.fightthepipe.co.uk

RANK BEHAVIOUR

Concerned about which of the big pharmaceutical companies to give your custom to? (well OK, we know - none of them - but just pretend for the sake of this article...) Fear not! Perhaps a look at the green'n'friendly new EthicalQuote report will put all our minds at ease. Released by Geneva-based 'ethical-monitoring' firm, Covalence, the report claims to rank top multinationals by how cuddly and nice they are really.

Trebles all round as top 'most-ethical' spot goes to UK-based do-gooders GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), a prize leading one online trade journal to dub them 'big pharma's Mother Teresa' (a contender for 'hyperbole of the year surely'). Just pipped to the post were Bristol-Myers Squibb and Johnson & Johnson.

Hang on a minute, the well informed SchNEWS reader may say, what about the huge global boycott campaigns against GSK for its animal testing on a range of mammals and primates? In fact don't all three companies regularly infect, spray, cripple, torture and kill animals in the name of product development and profits? Er, well yes, but Covalence have decided to ignore all this, leaving all consideration of animal treatment completely out of their criteria. As ever, it all comes out in the greenwash...

...and finally...

It seems that Frank is no longer as Frank as he used to be. The government's alter-ago for informing the kids about drugs is the cleverly named Frank (A bit of 'Frank talking'...geddit?! Who knows how much they paid some coked-up advertising exec for that one). A couple of weeks ago, a new document packed with slightly more objective information about cannabis than the usual doom-mongering propaganda went up on the site (at www.drugs.gov.uk/Cannabisexplained).

Along with the usual 'balanced' arguments like one toke of skunk is enough to turn you into a paranoid freak who dribbles in public, there was also a big-up of legal hemp and Rastafarianism, a handy in-depth cut-out n' roach guide to all the different types of weed and comments such as, "There is little conclusive evidence about the exact longer-term effects of cannabis consumption" and, on the decision to reclassify it to a class C drug, "The arguments for this decision are compelling and clear. Contrary to expectation, reclassification has not led to an increase in consumption."

But, obviously, it was swiftly decided by someone that all this was just a bit too Frank and the page quickly disappeared in a puff of smoke.

Advice like, "It is unlikely that an individual will be arrested if the police are satisfied that the drug is for personal use" has been dropped for, "If you're caught with cannabis the police will always take action..." and the overall tone is back to that of an over-bearing parent attempt to frighten everyone into abstinence..

It's obviously time to roll up the sympathetic ear and tell the kids quite Frankly what to do... but Frankly my dears, we don't give an (Amster)damn.

PS what went missing is at www.drugs.gov.uk/324026/461229/Cannabisexplained?view=Standard

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers - don't give in to 'divide and rule' - unite and retool. Honest!

Subscribe!

Get SchNEWS free every week by email in pdf or text file - visit our site, or send us stamps and we'll post it to you. Copy and distribute! Keep SchNEWS free with donations (via website or cheques payable to Justice?). Posted free to all prisoners. SchNEWS, c/o Community Base, 113 Queens Rd, Brighton, BN1 3XG. Tel +44 (0)1273 685913 Email schnews@brighton.co.uk Web www.schnews.org.uk