



GAZA INTO THE ABYSS

AS ISRAELI FORCES BEGIN NEW TERROR CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE GAZA STRIP

Israel's incumbent, Bibi Netanyahu, has kicked off his election campaign in traditional Israeli style- by bombing the shit out of Palestinians, because, as every Israeli politician knows- dead Arabs mean more votes. Just like during Israel's last general election 4 years ago, Israeli forces have begun a massive terror campaign against the Gaza Strip. Operation 'Pillar of Defence' is shaping up to be a mini cast lead- 15 dead (so far) to Cast Lead's 1400.

There is no military rationale to this offensive- Israel's first target, Hamas leader Ahmed Jabari, was hardly Israel's no. 1 enemy. Quite the opposite in fact, Jabari was instrumental in enforcing the truce between Israel and Gaza's armed factions, indirectly coordinating the ceasefire with Israel and Egypt. Other early casualties of Israel's onslaught include an 11 month old baby (the son of a Gazan BBC correspondent). The world's largest open air prison is once again has become hostage to

the whims of Israeli electoral cycles.

Despite the Arab Spring and the supposed democratisation of much of the Arab world, Middle-Eastern leaders have so far been content to express their displeasure at the IDF's actions with tough talk and no action. But even as governments are willing to stand by and watch Gaza burn, the same isn't true of conscientious people across the globe.

Demonstrations have erupted around the world at short notice- in the UK the focus has been on the Israeli embassy, where hundreds of protesters faced a heavy police presence to take their message direct to the Jewish State's official representatives.

Over a hundred people showed up in SchNEWS' home town, the fair city of Brighton. People assembled at Victoria gardens before marching towards the EcoStream store (EcoStream have a factory in one of Israel's illegal settlements, Mishor Adumin).

One protester was arrested before the demo could even get under-way. A Palestinian man who had arrived in his car with his young children ended up in a dispute with cops over parking almost immediately after turning up. Eyewitnesses say the cops goaded him into losing his cool, at which point they arrested him for assault police. Ironically, his car had a sticker on it that read "Working in partnership with Sussex Police".

Palestinians and activists based in the

Gaza strip are calling out for people everywhere to get involved in the struggle against the Israeli state's aggression. The ISM have published out this callout on their site:

"Dear All. I am calling on all your support for the besieged people of the Gaza Strip. Here in Gaza, more than 10 people have been killed so far in the Israeli operation named "Pillar of Defence" within the last 7 hours, including countless children such as 7-year-old child Ranan Arafat and an 11 month old baby. We've seen charred bodies of dead and injured children pouring in to Al Shifa hospital of Gaza City and the other depleted hospitals around the Gaza Strip. 50 airstrikes all over the Gaza Strip so far. Deafening explosions shook us all as bombs landed close to us in the streets near the Universities. Huge explosions are landing all around us in Gaza City now as I write, some entire families have been injured. We can also hear the shelling of Israeli Gunships. Announcement of possible Israeli land invasion very soon.

More than 330 children were killed in the last bloody operation like this in operation Cast Lead, killing over 1400 in total: the vast majority civilians. We are reporting from hospitals, streets and bombed areas. How many, terrified in their homes will have their lives shortened by tomorrow, or after the days of airstrikes, tank shellings and Gunship missiles Israel has announced. YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. MOVE. ACT NOW TO STOP ANOTHER GAZA BLOODBATH. INACTION AROUND THE WORLD HAS LEAD US TO THIS POINT. ACT NOW."

PETERS OUT?

AS RACIST HUNTSMAN BUSTED

Frank exchanges of views are par for the course when the hunt meet the sabs, but David Lee Peters, master of the Ross Harriers Hunt, Herefordshire, overstepped the mark when he unleashed a volley of racist abuse at a hunt sab in January this year.

The huntsman (presumably a bear of very little brain) approached the group's land rover and on spying Hiba Hassan announced "They've got a fucking wog in there". Unluckily for Peters there was an impartial eyewitness who was gardening nearby and his outburst led to a conviction for racially aggravated harassment and a whopping three grand fine at Hereford Magistrates on Thursday (15th).

Lee Moon, press spokesman for the Hunt Saboteurs Association said "Decent people know that racism is completely unacceptable. The hunting community however appear to be stuck in some kind of time warp where it is still ok to use this kind of disgusting language. Maybe they would like to join us in the 21st Century and realise that racism, along with the senseless murder of animals in the name of sport, is something that society no longer tolerates. We hope the Ross Harriers do the right thing and sack Mr. Peters immediately to show that they do not condone racism".

For more on direct action against bloodsports contact Hunt Saboteurs Association.

WEATHERLEY GETS EGGED ON

Mike Weatherley MP, due to deliver a talk on the new squatting legislation, at the University of Sussex, was instead chased off campus by students and protesters on November 14th.

After realising the opposition the lecture was to face, The University of Sussex Conservative society changed the format into a debate in order to try and appease the many trolls on the Facebook event. However, attendees decided to take a different approach, seeing no use in debating over a law that had already been passed.

Seconds after turning up at the lecture theatre, Weatherley was surrounded by around 50 people shouting "Whatever they say, squatting will stay". Without even getting a foot in the door, Weatherley was turned around by his team and campus security and began walking in the opposite direction.

Whilst some stayed in the lecture theatre to give an impromptu talk about the squatting ban, other protesters chased Weatherley

through university buildings pelting him with tomatoes and eggs.

As Marvel-less Mike, his aides and right hand man Robert Nemmeth sprinted into a room and locked themselves inside, people surrounded the building and blocked every exit. Whilst 'In for nasty' Weatherley and co. hid inside, awaiting a police escort to save them, a crowd of amused onlookers gathered at the entrance to watch the show.

Around 20 mins later, two cop vans rolled up and Weatherley was brought out of the building by two police. Again he was surrounded with protesters attempting to block the route into the back of the van.

As he was bundled in he was pelted with a few more tomatoes, and people stood in front of the van to prevent it driving away. After a few short tussles with the police, the van sped away, leaving Nemmeth and Weatherley's aides stranded inside to find their own way home. The victory was celebrated with a banner drop from the intended venue, stating "No Housing, No Peace".

GEO-POLITICS

MEET THE PRIVATE COMPANY PUTTING THE HARM INTO HARMONDSWORTH DETENTION CENTRE

Prince Kwabena Fosu, a 31-year-old man from Ghana, is one of a long list of people who've died in Harmondsworth detention centre. He died in solitary confinement after an apparent violent interaction with a GEO Group guard on October 30th. The tragic death and subsequent silence demonstrates once again the lethal indifference shown by private contractors, in this case GEO, and once again the hushed inaction in the aftermath stinks of a cover-up.

"There is an inquest which - means there is something suspicious - this week. There's no legal representation and the family have no support. The officer involved went on leave immediately after the incident. It seems very much like their brushing it under the carpet and hoping it will go away," says a NoBorders activist.

Around 15 activists held a noisy demonstration outside the detention centre last Tuesday (6th) during which a mobile number was displayed on a banner along with an appeal for information. Detainees crowded round windows, answering the chants and shouts of 'freedom' and 'liberty' in various languages to the protesters who'd wangled their way close to the detention centre compound and attracted attention with whistles and a megaphone. Several prisoners called to tell what they knew.

"People inside say he was taken to isolation block. They think he was hit because the guard came back with blood on him, and that he didn't have a blanket was very cold all night. He died the next day, he'd called for distress and the guards didn't respond," SchNEWS was told. "Generally people seemed in distress about being in there, there's a tense atmosphere, people are anxious... People are willing to talk to the media, but guards have been threatening them. The guards have been looking into who's been visiting who."

Eventually the demonstration was rounded on by cops who warned them to move or get nicked for 'breach of the peace'. Inside, the guards moved in to block access to the windows.

GEO-ENGINEERING

Harmondsworth, a 615-room centre, is privately run by GEO Group UK Ltd, a company a bit like G4S's equally evil but less notorious little brother. But it's not so little either: it boasts of being the "World's leading provider of correctional detention and residential treatment services with 108 facilities, approximately 75,000 beds, and 20,000 employees around the globe". Other pies in which they put their sticky fingers include 'mental health facilities' and 'community supervision services' with 'cutting-edge' electronic monitoring technologies. Their biggest operations so far are running private prisons in the US.

It stands alongside G4S and Serco as one of the lead beneficiaries of the plan to put power over the increasingly violent deportation machine into private hands, under cosy deals where any idea of public accountability is washed away like blood off a cell floor. It's proving lucrative for them. The new contract for running Dungavel House in Scotland is expected to make the GEO Group £5m per year, continuing the massive year-on-year increases in profits for its UK operations. In general, 2011 was a bumper year for the death squad. Along with the Dungavel deal, the capacity at Harmondsworth was increased by 360 beds.

As well as giving GEO a few million quid in

contracts to do their dirty work, the government have been showering the company with dubious awards. GEO won the UKBA's supplier awards in three out of seven categories earlier this year, including Tom Gallety winning Director of the Year and several staff members coming in second place as team of the year for "their work in ensuring Harmondsworth IRC remains a safe and secure place for detainees, staff and visitors".

The official response from GEO management to the latest tragedy? "It would be inappropriate to comment at this stage". Actually, GEO, immediately after the unexplained death of a man incarcerated in your facility - after reports that he was beaten, stripped and locked in a cold room alone and ignored - it is about the time you should be saying something. Likewise, the Home Office have kept silent, with both refusing to disclose even the name and nationality of the man. The 'an inquest is underway' excuse is a handy one: the inquest into the death of an American who died after several days in the neighbouring Colnbrook centre in July 2011 is not due for completion until 2013, long after his name has been forgotten. They also refused to state whether any member of their staff had been removed from duty following the death (the perpetrator, known as Jim, was in fact speedily bundled off on 'holiday').

The company is no stranger to controversy. Across the pond, a GEO-run youth prison in Mississippi was investigated after it was found that guards were sexually abusing inmates - in one case taking a prisoner to a motel for sex - bringing drugs into the premises and using disproportionate violence routinely as a first resort. Other facilities saw inmates riot at bad treatment, while family members of prisoners who died in custody have taken GEO to court for medical negligence of health conditions.

In the UK, the company ran Campsfield House detention centre, near Oxford, until recently. The centre was the target of the Campaign to Close Campsfield House and the location of almost rolling hunger strikes at mistreatment and indefinite detention. A statement from Ghanaian detainees at Harmondsworth released after the death pointed not only to the need to explain Prince Kwabena Fosu's death but to the general dire conditions and lack of adequate medical attention at the centre.

As another campaigner told SchNEWS: "UKBA awards and vomit-inducing CSR reports can only camouflage so much. GEO, just like G4S, have blood on their hands. These companies need to be exposed for the role they play in imprisoning and abusing innocent people."

As the UKBA says: "Expanding the number of removal centres is a critical part of our plans to increase the rate of removal of failed asylum seekers and illegal immigrants, and to allow the fast removal of those who come to the United Kingdom and break the rules." GEO look poised to capitalise on detention over the coming years, and neither they, nor their cheerleaders UKBA, want a small fact like the violent death of an innocent person to get in their way. Unfortunately for them, campaigners like those shouting outside Harmondsworth's fences, are equally determined not to let these deaths be forgotten.

PARTY & PROTEST
For events listings updated weekly see
www.schnews.org.uk/pap

NO LULZ IN THE ACTION

The amorphous phenomenon that is Anonymous (see SchNEWS 632 for an early outing) took to the streets on Bonfire Night in a bizarre flash mob/protest effort in Trafalgar Square. One banner carried the slogan "We are Anonymous", others carried home-made signs referring to the paedophile crisis currently gripping the nation.

Sporting the now standard 'V' masks in honour of the main man in Alan Moore's V for Vendetta graphic novel* several hundred responded to the call-out and marched towards parliament - given that unlike their hero they weren't armed with home-made explosives unsurprisingly they didn't make it through the gates but the thought was there.

A similar rally took place in Washington DC and there were several co-ordinated online attacks on high profile targets such as U.S news network NBC and Trapwire a corporation specialising in surveillance.

Anonymous is one to watch perhaps for the more established anarchist/direct action crew. Their various manifestations are a bizarre mix of Occupy style agit-prop, online actions, outright 9/11 truth lunacy and at times outright whimsy. Are they political activists, pranksters or summat else entirely? For an interesting bit of analysis and history check out Corporate Watch

Meanwhile the inspiration behind at least some of this and Northampton's favourite chaos magician and comic book writer, Alan Moore has released a novelty single for the Xmas hit parade on Occupation Records the recording wing of the Occupy movement and jauntily entitled "The Decline of English Murder" it tells the story of the 'English murder' imposed on the people by the greed of the banks and incompetence of the state.

*SchNEWS recommends - read the book and don't bother with the piss-poor Wachowski brothers film adaptation.

EATING LIKE PIGS

Protesters gatecrashed the Lord Mayor's Banquet on Monday (12th) as posh nosh guests were greeted by a 100-strong angry mob who had not so kindly organised an alternative feast.

Dishing it up involved representatives from suffering European countries such as Ireland, Portugal, Italy, Spain and Greece acting as European leaders dressed in dinner jackets, ball gowns and pig masks, serving 'austerity soup' and peanuts outside the Guildhall in London - all to the soundtrack of samba and European music provided by the Rhythms of resistance samba band.

This was while inside the new Lord Mayor, Alderman Roger Gifford wined and dined the world's finest degenerates in the form of bankers, politicians and business leaders.

The Plebs & PIGS Banquet was brought together by an amalgamation of groups such as PIGS United, Occupy London, Coalition of Resistance, Queer Resistance, Black Activists Rising Against the Cuts (BARAC), Disabled People Against the Cuts, and a very long list of other groups (it's a very big tent!).

The alternative feast had a few gatecrashers of its own in the form of some drunk bankers who in antithesis to the protesters shouted their support for their glorious European leaders, especially David Cameron and Boris Johnson.

Police arrested seven protesters (but no bankers) with breaching Section 14 of the Public Order Act and detained them overnight.

*There is a longer version of this story on the website...

Disclaimer

Schnews warns all readers- The meek will inherit the earth, once it's a burned out husk and the rich have fled to live in the off world colonies. 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 - (01273) 685913 - mail@schnews.org.uk - www.schnews.org.uk - find us on Facebook & Twitter (whatever they are)