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# **REVOLUTION**

socialist youth movement

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## ***ISRAEL MASSACRES GAZA FREEDOM ACTIVISTS***



***BREAK THE BLOCKADE!  
FREE PALESTINE!***

# ***Palestine hasn't been forgotten***

**BY REBECCA ANDERSON**

Hundreds of thousands are again taking to the streets to demand freedom for Palestine following the flotilla massacre. The horror we all felt in 2009 when the bombs fell on Gaza was reawakened when the Israeli army turned their weapons on aid workers and political activists from across the world.

In 2009 pro-Palestinian activists revived old organisations and built new ones in their towns, cities and universities. Within 24 hours of the massacre these groups had mobilised thousands onto the streets and blogged and facebooked the truth of the situation to counteract the lies of the Israeli state, echoed by the British government and media. We need to strengthen these organisations, drawing in new activists and taking action in solidarity with Palestinians and those from the flotilla.

If we do this then there won't need to be another war or attack to revive our movement, we can force Palestine onto the agenda of every government, paper, student union and trade union and keep it there.

In a time of economic crisis more people can empathise with oppression and poverty, more people can see the lies of the Israeli state reflected in the lies of our own government. All our struggles are linked by the brutality of capitalism - whether it's for an aggressive ally in the Middle East backed up with billions of dollars at the expense of Palestinian freedom or the deep cuts in Britain at the expense of our jobs, education and future. The system of oppression is international and so is our struggle. Let's stand together and overthrow it.



REVOLUTION in Vienna, Austria marching against the attack on the flotilla

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# Big oil's crimes against the planet

**BY MARK BOOTH**

The reasons for the oil leak disaster unleashed on the Gulf of Mexico and the Southern United States by British Petroleum (BP) are bound up with the capitalist system. The disaster began on 20 April when a build up of pressure in the oil well caused an explosion, forcing gas and oil at massive speed up onto the rig, killing 11 workers and causing a fire which destroyed much of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig. The rig then sank, bending and breaking the mile long oil pipe from the sea bed to the rig and allowing oil to gush out in several places. The safety measures at the base of the pipe which are meant to seal the pipe and cut off the oil flow in the event of an accident failed to work, and since then over 19,000 gallons of oil has been flowing into the Gulf of Mexico every day. This spill is worse even than the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil disaster. That spill contained 42 million litres of oil, the Deepwater Horizon spill is now over 200 million litres, and is still gushing.

## Why did this happen?

Most news coverage has focused on the clean up effort and attempts to stop the leak, but why was this disaster able to happen in the first place? Oil rigs in the North Sea have safety measures and regulations to protect against these accidents - a Norwegian oil rig in the North Sea halted drilling and was evacuated when faced with a similar situation at the end of May. However the government regulations are not the same in the US where the oil industry, including BP, spend millions of pounds lobbying the government to prevent them enacting laws which might force them to invest in costly safety measures, or halt oil drilling when it becomes to dangerous. For the capitalists, the drive for profit leads them to oppose any law or regulation which may impede their accumulation of more profit. Secondly the Mineral Management Service (MMS), the US government agency responsible for

## BLACK DEATH: Oil slicks devastate the environment and wildlife



regulating the industry has been in the pay of the oil companies for years. MMS looked after both safety and tax revenue from the oil industry, so they were pressured not to halt drilling or impose costly safety measures with the threat of less tax revenue. Oil companies were allowed to fill in their own safety forms, and the relationship between the agency and oil companies was full of corruption and sleaze, with the oil industry giving thousands of free tickets and gifts to the MMS between 200 and 2008.

## Double standard

Now the clean up of the disaster has begun. Yet BP still demonstrates its contempt for the people affected by the spill. BP underestimated the amount of oil being spilled saying it was only 25,000 litres a day, when in reality it was 100,000. Then it offered to pay for the clean up but is making only a token effort. Fishing boats leased by BP for use in the clean up have been found sitting idle at docks, and the thousands of metres of floating booms, designed to stop the oil flowing inland, have been laid without any plan or reason, simply to provide impressive figures for the media while doing little to lessen the impact of the spill. Even this token effort is only happening to appease the government

and the American public. In many poorer countries around the world exploited by the oil industry, oil spills are never cleared up. There are currently 2,000 oil spill sites around Nigeria which have not been cleaned up. Rivers and wells in Venezuela, Angola, Chad, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Uganda, Ecuador, Columbia and Sudan have been badly polluted and no effort has been made to clean them. To top it off, despite the disaster BP is still going to pay its shareholders this year's annual dividend; over £10 billion pounds!

## The end of oil?

Oil is fuel for capitalism. It fuels the millions of cars, powers the big industries, and is crucial for the military power of imperialist superpowers like the US. It drives the imperialist nations to wage wars of conquest like in Iraq, and does untold damage to the natural environment. The big oil companies pass on the cost of oil disasters and drilling, exploiting and impoverishing the workers and the people who live in oil rich countries, while the bosses live lives of luxury on the obscene profits. They are one of the most barbaric industries under capitalism, and a clear example of why it must be overthrown.

# *Free, Free Palestine*

## **Flotilla attack: time**

**BY SAMIA AZIZ**



Freedom flotilla: delivering aid but received bullets in return

Israel has once again managed to stun the world. At 2am on 31May, Israeli forces attacked the Gaza Freedom Flotilla, which was carrying nothing but well wishes, messages of solidarity, hundreds of peace activists and humanitarian aid for the people of Gaza. There were as many as 20 killed, and many more injured.

The Israeli justification of events has been little more than predictable. Israeli officials had previously threatened the ships on several occasions, eventually branding the defenseless humanitarian journey as “violent”. Furthermore, the Flotilla was accused of being “pro-Hamas”. The media have bought into this story, deliberately choosing to give the Israeli version of events far more coverage than those who organized

the flotilla.

Even while the flotilla was 100 miles from Gaza, certainly in international waters, it was being harassed by Israeli officials, and as it drew closer the Israeli military actively disrupted communication. Israeli forces then attacked, with soldiers lowering themselves from helicopters onto the ships. At first, Israeli reports revealed there were no activists killed. However, later they reluctantly revealed that at least 10 people were killed, but insisted the peace activists attacked first. Eyewitness reports, on the other hand, explained that “once soldiers were on the boat, they beat the passengers, a cloth sack was put over their heads and they were handcuffed.” They described the course of events as a massacre.

### **“No such thing as a Palestinian”**

Worldwide, people have been questioning why Israel attacked the Flotilla. In short, the peace activists, by delivering aid straight to Gaza, were confronting Israel’s domination and control of the occupied land. The injustices in Palestine can be traced back to as early as 1917. As a result of the Balfour Declaration, Palestine was granted to Britain to build a national home for the Jewish people. As a result of rising anti-Semitism in Europe, Jewish immigration to Palestine, rapidly increased, naturally putting a strain on relations. In 1947, the UN acted, and recommended giving away 55% of Palestine to a Jewish state. This ignored the fact that the group represented only 30% of the total population, and owned less than 7% of the total land. The war that fol-

# *Free, Free Palestine* **to blockade Israel!**

lowed was marked by fighting on Palestinian land, with an army two-thirds the size of Israel's. By the end of the war, Israel had conquered 78% of Palestine; three-quarters of a million Palestinians had been made refugees; over 500 towns and villages had been demolished; and any remainder of the Palestinian culture was erased. For decades, Israel denied the existence of this population, in so far that the former Israeli Prime Minister, Golda Meir claiming: "There is no such thing as a Palestinian."

The Gaza Strip has been under siege since 1991, preventing the Palestinians from living meaningful and civilized lives. As a result of Hamas taking over Palestine in 2007 after winning the election in 2006, the siege was intensified. It became clear what Israel intended to achieve: to collectively punish Palestinians for their choice of government; to deepen the separation between Gaza and the West Bank; to isolate Hamas; and to turn the population of Gaza into a "humanitarian" rather than a "political" problem. To achieve its goals, Israel with its US and EU allies, have imposed poverty, unemployment and grief on the 1.5 million residents of Gaza, most of whom are children. The siege on Gaza has been condemned

by nearly every government in the world, and according to UN agencies and human rights organisations it is a clear breach of international law, and has even been declared a "crime against humanity". But at the same time, the Gaza siege is backed up with billions of dollars in US military and economic aid.

### **World leaders must act**

Israel boldly assumed that despite their treacherous behaviour, the world would once again be silent in their response. They are far from the truth. Criticisms have arisen from every direction, and thousands upon thousands of peace activists have swarmed the streets in protest: London, Athens, Manchester, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Madrid and Sweden to name a few.

The mass protests have put pressure on world leaders to talk tough. Turkish president Abdullah Gul condemned the Israeli attack, hoping that "Israeli politicians and state will put an end to this situation". In parliament, French Prime Minister, Francois Fillon stated: "France demands the immediate liberation of the boats and all the civilians who were aboard." He condemns the disproportionate use of force and addresses his condolences to the fam-

ilies of the victims. Furthermore, the EU Representative for Foreign Affairs "calls for an immediate, sustained and unconditional opening of the crossing for the flow of humanitarian aid, commercial goods and persons to and from Gaza."

But how many more thousands of Palestinians does Israel have to kill in "disproportionate" responses before world leaders back up their words with deeds?

In 2008, a parliamentary committee found that Britain exported £27.5 million worth of arms to Israel, and expressed "regret" that many of the weaponry components were "almost certainly" used when Gaza was invaded last by Israel last year.

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### **WHAT WE SAY...**

- **Stop arming Israel with weapons and money**
- **Shut down the embassy and expel the ambassador**
- **A massive delivery of aid, defying the blockade**
- **For a cultural, academic, military and economic boycott of the racist Israeli state**



## **Fascist EDL attempt pro-Zionist protest**

*By Josh Rooney*

On 2 June 2010, at least 1000 fascist EDL and Zionist Federation members held a pro-Zionist rally outside the Israeli embassy in London. Although heavily outnumbered, the 70 or so pro-Palestine protesters stood their ground against racist chants and inflammatory placards with "we are all squadron 13" and eventually saw off the fascists after about two hours. How ironic for the Zionists to team up with fascists – who persecuted European Jews in the 1930s.

# Fighting the Con-Dem cuts

## Save jobs at Lambeth College

Lambeth College is being hit by crippling cuts, with over 70 teaching staff to take redundancy. Management announced £3.5 million in cuts – under the Labour government – and who knows what will happen when £6 billion extra cuts are pushed through nationally by the ConDem coalition. Staff have already taken strike action, now students need to unite with staff to stop the cuts by any means necessary – including walkouts and demonstrations. We won't pay for their crisis!

## Occupation at Middlesex uni

Students occupied their Dean's office and set up a protest camp against cuts. Read more online @ <http://anticuts.com>



## Support BA cabin crew strike!

Don't believe everything you read in the news or see on TV. Cabin crew certainly don't get paid £35k per year! In fact they get paid very little for long shifts, often overnight and causing them severe jet lag. Willy Walsh, the head of British Airways is victimising cabin crew because he wants to destroy their trade union. A victory for the BA strike would be a victory for all workers fighting low pay, bullying and poor conditions. They need our support!

## EMA is here to stay!

**BY HELEN HATFIELD**

The Con-Dem government have refused to rule out cutting Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) as part of their promised cuts programme.

EMA is a means-tested allowance of between £10 and £30 per week, paid to 16-to-19 year olds who stay in education and come from families where annual household income is below £30,000. Many students rely on EMA to go to college and if it is cut to heavily, up to 65% of students will no longer be able to continue to study.

### Public-school millionaires

David Cameron and Nick Clegg attended the most expensive private schools in the country and had millionaire parents to pay for their education. Their dad's were both super-rich bankers. No wonder they don't care about working class college students.

Any reduction in EMA by will be a clear

attack on working class youth and is taking away the rights of many people wishing to continue in education. We cannot let the rich decide who has the right to education; everybody has that right.

In order to oppose moves to take away our EMA, we must unite and organise ourselves to defeat the rich Tories. We should organise walk-outs at schools and colleges, protests, demonstrations, petitions, posters and every lively method of campaigning at our disposal.

We should unite with the teachers who are losing their jobs and show them support –and approach them to support our fight for EMA. School and college students should join the National Campaign Against Fees and Cuts which wants to unite all the education campaigns and take the fight of thousands of youth against education cuts right up to Downing Street and to David Cameron's face.



David Cameron and Nick Clegg have teamed up to bring through huge cuts

# Bradford sex workers murdered – it's time to change the law!

**BY RACHEL BROOKS**

The recent, alleged, murders of sex workers in the Bradford area has brought forward the question of rights for sex workers. Three women who worked as prostitutes, Suzanne Blamires, Shelley Armitage and Susan Rushworth had all been reported missing over the course of this year, and it is thought that they have been murdered by a post-graduate student, whilst working in the “red light district” of Bradford. This story comes some years after the horrific murders of five prostitutes in Ipswich, where they were all picked up and murdered by the same man. The media response was varied, some offering some sympathetic reportage, whilst others, in particular columnists, taking a particularly moral position, arguing that these women were prostitutes and drug addicts, who worked the streets and put themselves at risk. Indeed, what most of the murdered women share in common is drug addiction (nearly all were reported to having had difficult pasts and histories of abusive relationships) and even more so - all these women worked the streets.

Being a sex worker has hazards that other jobs don't have, and this is heightened by the fact that sex workers have to engage in an industry that is shady, underground and illegal. Union rights aren't recognized, there is no holiday pay, there is no sick pay, maternity leave, your boss, generally a pimp, takes huge excesses of your pay and is frequently violent towards you. Criminalisation has never stopped prostitution, “the oldest



Soliciting is dangerous, and made more so by illegality

trade in the world”, but it has pushed it further underground.

As long as capitalism tears through society, forcing families into low income, or non at all, as long as people are so disenfranchised from society that they turn to heavy drug use, which them deems them “broken” by highly moralistic society (rather than helping them) then prostitution will still exist. An interesting fact recently reported was that most women who enter work as a prostitute do it for purely economic reasons and not because of drug or alcohol problems. It is only after some time working as a prostitute that they turn to drugs and alcohol to numb themselves.

Women- and of course men- do not enter the dangerous world of street work because they are “bad people”, but because they are forced to. The only thing that makes them “bad” are the laws that deem their work criminal.

What do the recent murders tell us

about sex work then? That indeed it is a very dangerous world to enter, that sex workers forced onto the streets to work are exposed to huge dangers. What it tells us more than anything though, is that forcing this industry underground, and into the hands of pimps, where some customers are murderers, is the worst possible scenario for those who work as prostitutes. REVOLUTION calls for the immediate decriminalisation of sex work, soliciting and brothels. Two or more sex workers working together in the safety of their own home, where they can vet their customers, and watch out for each other, must be welcomed, not deemed criminal by a set of laws based on religious morals. REVOLUTION also, importantly, welcomes the efforts of sex workers to unionise and fight for decriminalisation. In the words of the English Collective of Prostitutes “There are no bad women, just bad laws.”

# Mephedrone did not kill Scunthorpe teenagers

**BY JOHN BOWMAN**

Nobody knows what Daily Mail journalists were snorting on 17 March when they wrote an article headlined "TEEN FRIENDS DIE WITHIN HOURS OF TAKING 'LEGAL HIGH'".

But it turned out to be a packet of lies.

A toxicology report has discovered that Louis Wainwright and Nicholas Smith did not take any mephedrone (also known as Plant Food) on that evening, and died of other causes.

Now mephedrone, a drug which many people believed to be fairly harmless, has been banned, proving conclusively that government drug policy is indeed based upon media hysteria, and not on scientific fact.

Professor David Nutt left the government's drugs advisory council several months ago for this very reason. He said, "the government's rush to ban mephedrone never had any serious scientific credibility – it looks much more like a decision based on a short-term electoral calculation."

But there is a rather tragic and serious note to this story.

The supply of mephedrone, a drug that may well have been safe, is now firmly in the hands of drug dealers – unregulated and unlicensed, and can be cut



The right-wing media ran a scare campaign to get mephedrone banned.

with anything the dealers choose.

Mephedrone is now being replaced by some casual users with more dangerous substitutes such as 2-DPMP which can cause severe hallucinations and stay in the body's system for a much longer period of time – making it more unpredictable.

It's high time to legalise drugs and regulate them properly, with information on their effects, dangers and strength. If this was done, then perhaps the lives of Louis and Nicholas would have been saved, rather than used to deepen the problem of drugs deaths at the hands of more dangerous substances.