



'STOP THE WALL' TOUR COMING TO EUGENE

The wall that the conservative Israeli government is building in the West Bank, despite loud outcries from the Israeli people, looms 26 feet high in places and already snakes close to 100 miles through Palestinian villages and farmlands.

The project is in its third year of construction and includes a complex series of electronic fences and concrete walls. Beginning in the northern part of the West Bank, the first phase of the project is complete. Already 200,000 people living in the area have been directly affected by the Wall, with 3,670 acres of land razed for the Wall's construction.

Within this first phase, 16 villages and 30,000 acres west of the Wall have been de facto annexed to Israel and some 50 villages are separated from their lands. The Israeli government has confiscated 36 groundwater wells in this area well known for its agricultural value and has uprooted some 102,000 trees.

The first phase also saw massive demolitions. More than 200 shops in the northwest village of Nazlet Issa were destroyed in a single afternoon.

The world has attempted to voice its collective outrage over the Wall several times over the past two years. On Sept. 16, 2003, the United Nations Security Council voted on a resolution condemning the wall but it was vetoed by the U.S.

Angered by the U.S. veto, the world spoke again. On Oct. 21, 2003, the U.N. General Assembly voted 144-4 condemning the wall, with only the U.S., Israel, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands voting against it.

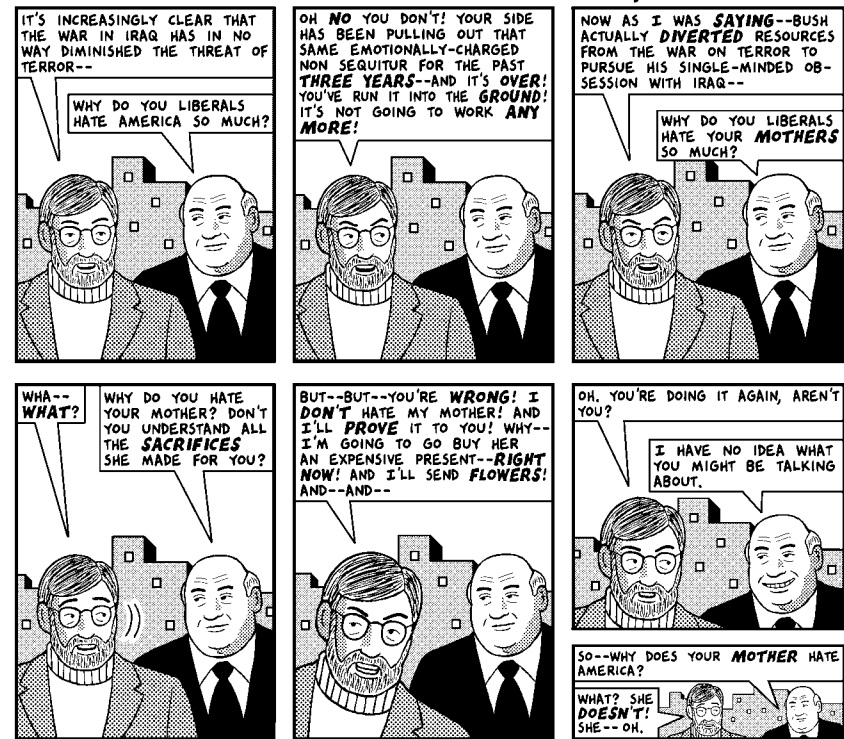
With a ruling on the legality of the Wall by the World Court at the Hague only days away, a "Stop the Wall Tour" kicks off in Portland on July 2 and will cross the U.S. to educate American taxpayers both about the Wall itself and about how U.S. tax dollars are being used to build it.

This Saturday, July 3, the tour stops in Eugene. A display will be set up at the Free Speech Plaza, 8th and Oak, from 10 am to 4 pm, and will show several scale models of this concrete structure to provide people a chance to see for themselves what it looks like.

At 6 pm Saturday at Cosmic Pizza, hydrogeologist and human rights and peace activist John Reese will present images and describe

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



the range of impacts of the Wall on the environment, on Israelis and Palestinians and on the peace process. Reese spent seven months in 2002 in the West Bank and Gaza and saw the first stages of the Wall's construction. While there, he worked with several Palestinian environmental NGOs to map the path of the wall and document the path of destruction to the environment and affected communities.

"The first time I gazed up at that three-story high concrete mass in Qalqilya, I knew I had to tell others in the United States how our tax dollars were being used to destroy lives, livelihoods and hope," he says.

"I saw my tax dollars destroying the chance for peace. I struggled to understand how this could make Israelis more secure and learned from Israelis I spoke to that many agree it does exactly the opposite."

—Aria Seligmann

KELLY OBJECTS TO EW RIVERFRONT STORY

Eugene Councilor David Kelly, in response to a news story last week that said he was willing to sacrifice the riverfront for the hospital says, "I never said anything remotely like that." Kelly says what he said was that "due to the limited number of possible hospital sites acceptable to McKenzie/Triad, we may need to ultimately decide whether we are willing to accept a road north of the tracks for up to half a mile or be willing to give up the idea of maintaining a hospital in Eugene."

Kelly also says he hopes that "an alternative routing with less road length north of the railroad tracks can be designed." One option, he says, would be to build a road just south of the tracks and cross the tracks closer to the proposed hospital site.

But Kelly told EW that he would support a new road through the undeveloped riverfront area if he thought it was the only way to get a new hospital to locate at the EWEB site.

What would the impact of a road north of the tracks be? "It all depends on how it's built and where it's built," Kelly says, noting that the new road could "hug the tracks" or bifurcate the riverfront property as it does in earlier Riverfront Research Park drawings. "It will certainly create more noise, and that's a

negative impact. But it's a huge leap to say that a road with comparatively light traffic will 'sacrifice' the riverfront."

Opponents to the road are also concerned that the road will damage the riverfront by enabling the construction of the massive hospital and parking lots and the six large office buildings, two parking garages and five parking lots the UO has planned to build in the natural area.

Kelly also objected to the EW story saying the "city appears to be rushing forward with the massive project" and that the plans did not go to a public hearing before a council vote. Kelly says the public will have an opportunity for input later. —TJT

OREGON ANALYST CALLS FOR TAX CUT REPEAL

What will be the long-term impact of the White House's tax cuts and deficit spending? It's not a pretty picture, according to Michael Leachman, analyst for the Oregon Center for Public Policy in the non-profit's June report.

"The Bush tax cuts will result in a massive redistribution of income," says Leachman. "Money slips out of your wallet and slides through the window of a passing limousine."

He says some economists call the tax cuts "Dooh Nibor Economics" because they will ultimately produce a "backwards Robin Hood effect."

"The ultimate effect of the cuts, especially once many of them are made permanent, is so beneficial to the richest Americans that it will be difficult and unlikely for Congress to produce a method of paying for the cuts that requires the wealthiest households to pay their fair share."

Leachman says there's only one way to avoid the coming shake-down: repeal a significant portion of the tax cuts — the sooner the better.

He says a new study by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Tax Policy Center "provides strong evidence that most Americans will end up being net losers once the bill for the tax cuts comes due. Ultimately, the study finds, the cost of the tax cuts will overwhelm the immediate benefits for nearly all middle- and low-income Americans."

More information can be found at www.ocpp.org

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

Emily Graham-Berks & Paige Semich

Since last September, Emily Graham-Berks and Paige Semich have worked full-time at HIV Alliance as Americorps volunteers. Graham-Berks, who grew up in Bandon, took a year off from her UO Family and Human Services studies to run the Alliance's needle-exchange program, currently threatened by budget cuts. "We exchange about 52,000 needles per month," she says. "Prevention is so much cheaper than even one case of AIDS." Semich, who grew up in Bend and earned UO degrees in fine arts and international studies, does HIV testing and counseling at the Alliance. "When I'm testing people, I give them education about STD risk factors," she says. "I'm passionate about prevention." When their current Americorps assignments end on July 31, Graham-Berks will return to school, but continue to work part-time as a paid case worker. Semich hopes to renew her Americorps position for a second year. "They're both very dedicated and compassionate people — they're here 40 hours a week," says Kelly Moore, counseling and testing director at HIV Alliance. "Our clients appreciate them as well as we do." — Paul Neevel

