

The US has decided to punish UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) for admitting Palestine to its membership. The US has brought the organisation to its knees and it must now beg Big Brother for reinstatement of its funding.

In cutting its contribution to UNESCO, the US has repudiated its commitment to the following objectives and principles on which UNESCO is founded:

"UNESCO works to create the conditions for dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, based upon respect for commonly shared values. It is through this dialogue that the world can achieve global visions of sustainable development encompassing observance of human rights, mutual respect and the alleviation of poverty, all of which are at the heart of UNESCO'S mission and activities.

The broad goals and concrete objectives of the international community – as set out in the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – underpin all UNESCO's strategies and activities. Thus UNESCO's unique competencies in education, the sciences, culture and communication and information contribute towards the realization of those goals.

UNESCO's mission is to contribute to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information." (UNESCO website)

Why is Palestine such a mighty threat to such a mighty nation? Because of the PLO? A tiny revolutionary movement in an occupied country where people are not free? To protect its economic interests, the US cannot allow Palestine to become an independent state. The government of the 'land of the free and the home of the brave' – the champion of democracy, is unwilling to allow a small oppressed people to fight for its freedom.

It will punish UNESCO for following its mandate of creating 'the conditions for dialogue,' for agreeing to give a voice to a voiceless people. The demand for 'a negotiated peace agreement with Israel' is a demand for Palestinian submission. Do States negotiate with the people of territories that are under their occupation? Surely negotiations happen between states, not between a state and its subject people. The failure to recognise the right of the Palestinian people to an independent state is a failure to acknowledge their human rights.

Slavoj Zizek is most concerned by the European slide into fascism: the attack on Muslims in Norway and now the EDL (English Defence League) in Britain.

Is the US moving towards fascism: the assassination of Bin Laden and Awlaki and now slashing the funding of UNESCO? It is particularly sad to note that these happenings are occurring under the administration of the first black President of the United States.