

Pick of the day

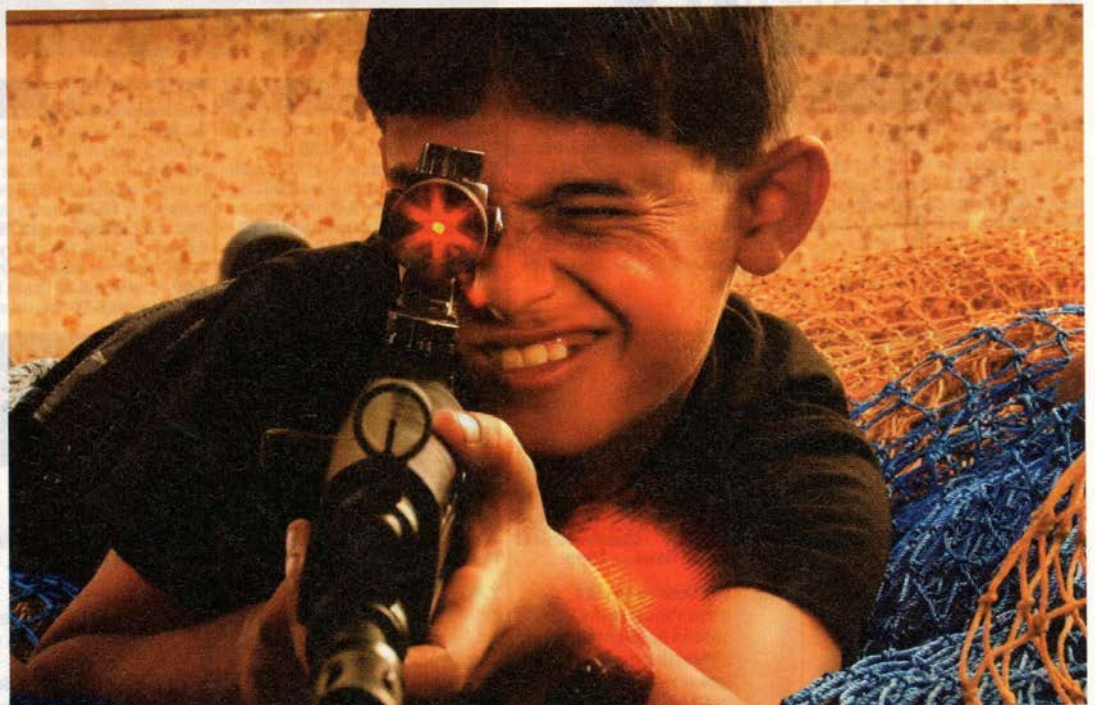
True Stories: War Child

10.00-11.40 More4



Picking up where he left off with his excellent 'Dispatches: Children of Gaza', Jezza Neumann returns to the West Bank – and to some of the same kids, who clearly trust him completely – and finds nothing has changed. If anything, the situation has worsened. And, as admirable as the faltering efforts are to rehabilitate the kids physically, the psychological impact is far more troubling. Ten-year-old Loay was blinded by an Israeli bomb and is now a ball of frustration and anguish; Ibraheem, 11, is distraught when his family's fishing boat – and livelihood – is scuppered by Israeli gunboats; 11-year-old Mahmoud saw his father killed and sister seriously injured, he now cradles Kalashnikovs, plays at torture and talks of martyrdom.

Mahmoud's uncle wonders, 'How can any child comprehend all this?' And it would be very easy to blithely condemn the growth of Jihadism in Palestine but, as Neumann demonstrates, all Israel



can offer the next generation of Muslim youth are indiscriminate bombing campaigns and endless blockades (even Braille paper is

embargoed), so the urge to retaliate in kind is put into awful perspective. The cycle of hatred is perpetuated by this mutual

incomprehension; more films like 'War Child' might not be able to reverse the cycle, but they're an important start. Gabriel Tate