

'Guns blaze in Damascus as envoys arrive' says a news item warning the whole world about the massacre continuing in Syria. Syria has occupied the centre stage in world politics now for one whole year, and no one gets tired of it. The UN and all the powerful leaders of the West are agitated and active, with hardly anything achieved so far. Ban Ki Moon has lectured to Syria over and over again, and with no result. Almost every day we hear about the numbers killed by the Syrian forces. Reporters are particular about the exact number of victims.

While this numbers game is going on, Palestinians are being killed by Israel air raids, and the numbers so killed are hardly ever taken seriously by anyone. One report said that 24 people were killed by air strikes.



What was the provocation for the air raids? Palestinians had been sending crude missiles across to Israel, that being the only method of showing their anger and frustration. How many Israelis were killed by those missiles? NOT ONE. Why? Because they are mere devices to send across to those who are ignoring that there are human beings across their border who need some breathing space; Human beings who have been ignored by those very powers crying out for a fair deal for the citizens of Syria. What is the difference? In the case of Syria, the fighting going on is between Syrians themselves, government and people opposed to it. While the government says the rebels are trying to overthrow it, the latter claims to be fighting for justice as they are now being oppressed by those in power. However one looks at it, it is a struggle between two groups within the sovereign



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country. The plight of Palestinians is far different. They are being punished for not having their own land to live on, not being a nation as such and being utterly poor, undeveloped section of the world population. They have no weapons to speak of, that is why those crude devices are being deployed by them just like children using catapults to scare birds. That again is perhaps why no one bothers about the number of Palestinians

killed by Israelis in their air raids. What these freedom-lovers who descend on Syria to protect its people from its own government ignore is that the Palestinians are being attacked by outsiders who command immense military power and well-trained armed forces that can deal a death blow to the most powerful country. Why don't the

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world powers and the UN who are so concerned about the suffering masses of Syria think of the helpless masses of Palestinians without their own country or without a proper army to defend themselves against powerful Israel forces?

One has to look at the question of Palestine against its history which shows how the creation of Israel in order to give the Jews their promised land rendered an innocent population that occupied and cultivated their traditional land for a number of centuries. Not only were their land taken from them, they were made refugees in their own land and in neighboring countries. They were left with no land to live on or to cultivate.

Has anyone taken the trouble to count the number of Palestinians who have become refugees or the number that has lost their traditional land? That would be an embarrassing exercise for the defenders of freedom. They have to protect the new power that has come up in the Middle East, namely Israel. Why? The US has invested heavily on the creation and development of Israel. Americans would have contributed millions and millions of dollars in this operation. It is too valuable to disrupt or dismantle.

One thing must be made very clear, and that is that no one with a sense of justice would call for the dismantling of the state of Israel. What one would want in the name of justice is that the displaced and ignored people of Palestine be treated as human beings, who

deserve a decent life, suitable land to live on and carry on their cultivation and do their occupations without disruption. They would also want to live on their own land in their own country. Why hasn't the UN being able to make their dream of an independent Palestine a reality? How many times has the proposal come up before the UN? Why doesn't it get through? Who opposes it? Are there nations that do not want to see an independent Palestine among the nations of the world? That type of objection could not be coming from small nations that have their own problems to take care of.

Who actually calls the tune in Middle Eastern affairs? Who has the ultimate authority? Who has allowed Israel to go against UN decisions regarding Palestine? Israel by itself would not dare to act with impunity if someone was not there to back them. That someone is none other than the US, which is the defender of democracy and human rights that goes round catering to the needs of oppressed people. How come when it comes to the landless and helpless people of Palestine they do not apply the same rules?

Israel has not only occupied the land that was once Palestine, it has been building houses in areas which would have been given back to Palestinians as agreed at the UN. How could Israel go against such decisions with no consequences? Whenever Israel does that type of rash action the US is there to see that no one touches their friend. Israel has become the strongest opponent to Iran which is reported to be engaged in developing nuclear energy. It has in fact threatened to attack Iran. It was very recently that President Barack Obama warned Israel against such action. It is alright the friend of Israel defending it against outside interference, but when it comes to nuclear capability one has to remind the US about that innocent citizen of Israel by the name of Mordercai Vanunu, who spent some eighteen years in an Israel jail. They cannot be ignorant of that. Why was Vanunu put in jail? It was because he divulged secret that Israel did not want the rest of the world to know, that of its well-guarded nuclear arsenal. What was the contribution made by the US towards the development of Israel's nuclear arsenal? No one will ever know, but one thing is pretty obvious, the landless people of Palestine who have no one to turn to, will never get that type of aid from the US.

Why don't the peace-makers for the world look at the issue of Palestine with no ulterior motives? Why don't they think of helping out these people so that they can stand on their own feet? There are a number of world organizations looking after various aspects of human problems, such as children's welfare. Why doesn't some such organization come forward and take up the cause of children of Palestine who are not quite sure of their day to day existence? Those powers that are interested in the welfare of the Syrians killed by their own government ought to learn to look at issues which are far more important and demanding, problems that are going to have far more devastating effects on the rest of the world unless tackled in time?

Palestinians had an election which by any standard was considered democratic. But the champions of democracy were not prepared to recognize the newly elected government for the simple reason that they did not like the faces of the elected representatives. That negated the whole theory of democracy these very people were advocating. Hasn't the world body still discovered a way to sort out differences between the worst of enemies through a process of