

NOTE

## OF GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHY

**MQ writes :**

Israel's desire to acquire maximum geography with minimum Palestinian demography is the root of the Middle East crisis. Today there are 6 million Palestinian refugees and displaced people. Amnesty International has observed that the "peace processes" failed because Israel has ignored human rights, including the right of native Palestinians to return to their homes and lands. There is now a broad international consensus (with the exceptions of the US and Israeli governments) on the danger to international peace and security posed by Israel's continued violations of human rights and international law. Clearly if one wants peace in the Middle East and beyond, the path starts by giving justice to Palestinians. Israel is the largest recipient of US foreign aid and the US administrations still go out of their way to cater to Israeli lobby influences.

The logic of military and political power dictates that Israel is now building more Jewish settlements and demolishing more Palestinian homes and farms in spite of its obligations under signed agreements and under International law. The current Israeli government is even moving further right to fend off the extreme right of Netanyahu before the elections. The ensuing Obama administration has appointed Israeli apologists to key positions of power (Hillary Clinton, Rahm Emanuel) indicating people should expect no "change". Bush or no Bush, it is business as usual when it is the question of Israel vis-a-vis Middle East.

Israel as the occupying power is responsible for the welfare of those under its belligerent military rule, as per the applicable Geneva conventions. Yet, Israel has intentionally de-developed the Palestinian economy. With the collusion of the EU and the US the economy of the West Bank and Gaza became even more dependent on Western "humanitarian aid". Some 30% of this aid is siphoned off into Israel and some 30% goes to support Palestinian "security forces" whose job seems to focus not on protecting Palestinians from settler attacks but to fight any Palestinian who dares to resist the occupation or challenge the usurpation of his land.

There is a system of corruption involving governments and "authorities" trickling down to people. This is coupled with a media strategy that makes it look as if the only choices available to Palestinians are blowing themselves up or capitulation and endless negotiations. This sad state of affairs did not just happen but was engineered and is actively managed to perpetuate occupation and dependency.

But history is not static as is amply illustrated by many historical examples including the rise and fall of the Bush dynasty. □□□