



VERBATIM RECORD (PARTIAL) OF THE 37th MEETING*

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* The full record of the meeting has been issued as document A/SPC/38/SR.37.

84-61427 2801V (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/SPC/38/PV.37
25 January 1984

ENGLISH

38p

AGENDA ITEM 69 (continued)

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/38/262, 409, 481-484)

Mrs. TADROS KHALAF (Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)): On behalf of the delegation of the Palestine Liberation Organization I would like first to express our thanks to the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories for its thorough efforts in covering Israeli practices in the occupied territories for the period from 27 August 1982 to 19 August 1983. The final outcome of its work is quite substantive, both qualitatively and quantitatively, and gives an adequate perception of the reality in the occupied territories. Despite the objective approach adopted by the Special Committee, since it has relied primarily on reproducing material appearing in the Israeli press, without any intervening analyses or interpretations of the facts, the image conveys the brutality and terror exercised by the Israeli occupying authorities towards the Palestinian civilian population.

The bare facts, moreover, reveal that the Zionist "practices" in the occupied territories do not simply "affect" the human rights of the Palestinian population, but are based on the denial of the existence of any such human rights.

The systematic refusal by the Israeli authorities to collaborate with the Special Committee and to allow it to visit the occupied territories is only further proof that the conditions under which Palestinians live in occupied Palestine are so inhuman that the Zionist authorities do not need any more witnesses to their crimes. Moreover, it is another instance of contempt for the United Nations.

What is politely referred to by the international community as "practices" could easily be substituted by the words "acts of terror" committed against the Palestinian population in the occupied territories. Such acts of terror become much less tolerable, of course, when they become regular "practices", since the word "practice" evokes some sense of continuity, of professionalism. For example, one practises law or medicine, but one seldom practises terror.

Unfortunately, there are historical exceptions; the practice of terror is a State policy adopted by the Zionist authorities against the Palestinian population for the past 36 years.

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Menachem Begin, leader of the Irgun, has expressed his thoughts clearly for decades. He once said:

"... I deeply believe in launching a preventive war against the Arab States without further hesitation. By doing so we will achieve two targets: Firstly, the annihilation of Arab power, and, secondly, the extension of our territory ..." (The New York Times, 26 April 1956)

Earlier, in 1948, after the massacre of Deir Yassin, he described its purpose: "Panic overwhelmed the Arabs of Eretz Israel. In the rest of the country, Arabs began to flee in terror. ... All the Jewish forces proceeded to advance, like a knife through butter. The Arabs began to flee in panic, shouting 'Deir Yassin'."

Another image from 1948 reveals how Israel has used force and terror since its inception. In an article entitled "Israel Talks of a New Exodus", the two authors wrote:

"It was July 1948; the first Arab-Israeli war was at its height. Israeli General Yigal Allon repeated his question, 'What is to be done with the population?' In reply, according to former Premier Itzak Rabin, Ben Gurion waved his hand in a gesture that said, 'Drive them out.' They were discussing the 50,000 Palestinian civilians living in the twin towns of Lydda and Ramle, which his forces had first occupied. 'There was no way of avoiding the use of force and warning shots', recalled the officer responsible for carrying out the order, who had sent in his troops to drive the people of Lydda and Ramle from their homes."

According to Israel Shahak, President of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, the only significant use Israel seems to make of religion and history is its tendency to use

"biblical examples of mass extermination in order to 'justify' at some future time a very cruel war which will cause the loss of millions of lives to the peoples of the enemy and from which they could not recover for many years". This tendency is reflected by proposals emanating from respectable Israeli figures to put into practice various methods of war.

A strategic expert, B. Amidrov, proposed since the early seventies that Israel should bomb the Aswan Dam and drown the Egyptians, and a respected professor of political science at the University of Jerusalem, Shlomo Aharanson, proposed

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dropping an Israeli hydrogen bomb near the shores of Lebanon in order to wipe out all the Palestinians there.

The Israeli attack on Lebanon and Beirut in June 1982, and the various types of weapons that were put to use and tested on the civilian population, such as vacuum bombs, cluster bombs, fragmentation bombs, massive air raids, and, finally, the supervision of direct massacres of unarmed civilians, such as those at Sabra and Shatila, reveal that Israel is capable of using all and any of the means at its disposal to kill Palestinian civilians.

The Israeli occupying authorities have transformed the occupied Palestinian territories into a huge prison camp.

The policy of detaining the greatest number of Palestinians possible without charges or trial has been clearly expressed on page 14 of the Special Committee's report, where it is stated that,

"Other instructions issued by General Eitan, in a memorandum published in April 1982, included harassing suspected inciters and stone-throwers with repeated and arbitrary arrests, punishing parents and using collective punishments such as curfews and economic sanctions against troublesome villages. General Eitan reportedly suggested that a 'detention/exile camp' be built, 'even if it does not have the conditions of a normal prison', where detainees were to be kept until their investigation. (A camp for teenage detainees had since been built ... near Nablus.) General Eitan's memorandum contained, inter alia, the following recommendations: 'to arrest sparingly according to the number of places available in the prisons'. 'Inciters are to be dealt with forcefully and detained at every opportunity.' 'One must construct a camp urgently and use the legal facilities permitting detention for questioning (without trial) for the period stipulated ... [18 days] ... release for a day or two and then renewed arrest (harassment)'. 'The residents of the Jewish settlements have to carry arms and open fire when they are attacked. This should be made clear and publicized among the Arab residents.'" (A/38/409, para. 28)

The most audacious phrase is "to arrest sparingly according to the number of places available in the prisons" and not according to the number of acts committed which are considered "illegal" by the occupying authorities.

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In an article by Felicia Langer, an Israeli lawyer, the theme of which is "Palestinian prisoners are held hostage by their prison guards", she refers to a conversation with a group of guards, in which one of them was quoted as saying:

"It is a waste of time to sentence them. They should be killed one by one, adults as well as youngsters. I am willing myself to do the shooting'. 'He is right', responds one of his colleagues. 'They throw rocks and fight against us. God should eliminate their names, these terrorists that you defend'. Then a third guard concludes firmly 'There is a need to finish them and that is it.'"

Their response to Mrs. Langer's note that "Since they carry on this approach they should have volunteered to participate in the massacre of Palestinians in Sabra and Shatila" was "Don't worry. Opportunities such as these will be coming with the help of God."

In the same article Mrs. Langer tells the story of two guards who brought in explosives to the prisoners' cells and used it to torture them. A complaint was made against them, and after an investigation the two guards admitted that they did commit the crime, but they were not punished, because, according to their colleague, "That is the policy."

Prisoners are often subjected to the most cruel forms of torture, often leading to death. On 30 November 1982 Tawfiq Toubi, Knesset Member, presented an emergency request to the Israeli Knesset to conduct an immediate inquiry regarding information which had reached him about crimes committed against Palestinian prisoners in the Megiddo prison camp which had resulted in the death of 14 prisoners in the span of one month. It was reported that during his request he said:

"We have confirmed information that thousand of prisoners have disappeared, with their whereabouts unknown. These people suffer the worst kinds of torture, thirst, and cold-blooded murder."

He gave an example of the torture, saying:

"One prisoner dared to take a sip of water after water was kept away from him for a week. When the soldiers caught him drinking water, two of them held him while a third brought a water pipe which was inserted through his mouth to his stomach. The water faucet was turned on and he lost consciousness and died."

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The concept of collective punishment by imposing curfews on various refugee camps and villages is an extended version of the concept of filling up the prisons and building new ones. It is perhaps a cheaper way of imprisoning the largest number of people at the same time. By sealing off the refugee camps from all the roads and exits and by imposing curfews on inhabitants who are not allowed to move out of their homes without being arrested, shot or made to pay extravagant fines, the Israeli authorities seem to be saying "Why bother to take them to prison. Why not bring the prisons to them?"

There are today new terrorists that have replaced the old terrorist gangs of Irgun and Stern, but who seem to perpetuate the same old mentality. Rabbi Meir Kahane, who lives in the Zionist settlement of Kiryat Arba in the West Bank, calls for the voluntary evacuation of Arabs from all of historical Israel, the occupied territories as well as the pre-1967 lands.

Gush Emunim, also known as "Block of the Faithful", is another extremist ultra-right-wing movement. Rabbi Mosheh Levinger, one of its foremost figures, has declared:

"The more Jews settle in the territories, the greater their security. The Arabs shall not raise their heads, and if they do, we'll know how to deal with them."

The radical measures of expulsion, elimination and bloody solutions, have been deeply rooted in Israeli thinking for a long time and have been propagated on several occasions during the last four years, particularly in the education institutions, according to Natan Donvitz.

Gush Emunim leader and Knesset Member Hanan Porat has suggested that the Arabs of Eretz Israel could choose one of three options. First, they could become full Israeli citizens in rights and obligations. When asked what would happen if these Palestinians opted for full Israeli citizenship, he avoided giving a specific answer. The second option was that they could become residents, entitled to live, and work there, but not to take part in the political process. Thirdly, if they did not accept either of those two alternatives, they could emigrate. He added:

"... if they openly called for an independent Palestinian State and supported the PLO, they should be loaded onto buses and thrown across the border".

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This young Gush Etzion fanatic is a faithful student of his masters, Rabbi Knock, Rabbi Ariel and Rabbi Kahane, among others.

Professor Amnon Rubenstein, of the Israeli daily Ha'aretz, wrote:

"... the racist groups of Rabbi Kahane and of Rabbi Ariel are thought to be small, but their ideas, nevertheless, are shared by many [others]".

According to him, two central themes dominate the ideology of the groups of Kahane and Ariel. The first is that

"the Arabs are a lower race, have no rights, pose as a threat to Israel and to the sexual purity of Israeli women and are therefore doomed to be expelled out of the country".

The second theme is that

"It is permitted and necessary to use armed force in order to execute this cleaning task",

which should transform Palestine into a new Jewish ghetto "pure and clean of all foreigners", a "Judenreich".

While in various official statements such groups are considered unimportant, there are various indications that the Israeli authorities defend these groups and that they even share and encourage their acts. Aharon Yariv, former Chief of Israeli military intelligence, said in a lecture at the Hebrew University on 8 December 1980:

"Some people talk of expelling 700,000 to 800,000 Arabs in the event of a new war, and instruments have been prepared [for the contingency]."

It is no coincidence, of course, that these settlers, according to Eitan's previous instructions, are allowed to carry arms, and that various terrorist acts which occur in universities and refugee camps against the civilian population are carried out by these armed settlers. Moreover, the Israeli authorities sometimes attempt to protect the perpetrators of some of these crimes by claiming that these armed civilian settlers were really Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) secretly dressed as civilians. This is what was claimed after the recent attack by five armed Israeli "civilians" who killed three youths in the Dheishah refugee camp two weeks ago, while the camp was under curfew.

Another crime where the Israeli authorities attempted to cover up for settlers was that committed against Ilham Abu Zaarour, a young girl who was killed, and her

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cousin Miriam, who was wounded, when "Israeli soldiers" were said to have opened fire on demonstrators in the city center. According to Al-Fajr, Ilham was killed by Jewish settlers and not by the army, as was reported in Ha'aretz.

The constant curfews imposed on Arabs are, according to some analysts, a variation on the evacuation themes of 1948. Amnon Kapeliouk, one of the foremost Israeli journalists, has written:

"The policy of collective punishment is not new. We saw it in all its glory in the days when ... Dayan served as 'the emperor of the territories'. But the difference between those days and now is that the policy ... as carried out under the Likhud government is with the clear intention of making the inhabitants leave."

Whereas in 1948 official Israeli propaganda has pretended that the Arab exodus was "self-inspired" and that the Jews had done their best to persuade the Arabs to remain, more recently the Arab view has been confirmed by Israeli sources, to the embarrassment of the Israeli authorities. Michael Bar Zohar, Ben Gurion's biographer, quotes from Ben Gurion's diary an entry dated 18 July 1948:

"[Head of the Northern Command] Moshe Carmel gave orders to uproot all the inhabitants of Nazareth".

Curfews imposed upon Arabs more recently have the clear intention to drive the Palestinians out of their lands. Such curfews are so massive that, according to General Mattayahu Peled, an Israeli general, more than 100,000 Arabs in Hebron and neighbouring areas were starving as a result of such curfews.

Israeli logic seems to proceed as follows: Life should be made so intolerable for the Palestinians that they should be compelled to leave. If they do not, they should be arrested or murdered. But if they cannot all be murdered and arrested, they should be suppressed until they accept their fate as cheap labourers and a faceless people denied its national identity.

As stated previously, the Palestinians are a highly conscious people with an extensive and intensive national history. Israel, by its attempts to deny a national identity for the Palestinian people, is waging a total war against Palestinian history. This war expresses itself in Israeli policies which aim at the destruction of the political infrastructure of the Palestinian people, both inside and outside the occupied territories.

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The political leadership in the occupied territories, the labour unions, the religious leaders, activists, student representatives and other public figures, have been, particularly since 1967, targets for arrest, deportation, interrogation and other suppressive measures, including, on several occasions, shooting and bombings.

The criminal car bombings of 2 June 1980, which left the Palestinian mayors Bassam Shaka'a, of Nablus, and Karim Khalaf, of Ramallah, mutilated, are but better-known attacks by the Israeli authorities on elected representatives of the occupied territories. Following these criminal acts against the elected Palestinian leaders, and on discussing the so-called investigation by the Israeli authorities, Knesset Member Shulamit Aloni commented:

"The government's reluctance to charge anyone with the bombings is an extension of its policy of breaking Palestinian nationalism in the West Bank." She added:

"The mentality of the Prime Minister's office is that it doesn't matter when Arabs are killed. Arab blood is not human blood to Begin."

For both the Government and its protected fascist settlers the legally-elected Palestinian mayors, together with labour, religious and academic leaders, pose the biggest obstacle to transforming the occupied territories into a biblically rationalized bantustan. From the start these leaders were targets for criminally illegal acts by Israel. In 1982 alone, five Palestinian mayors, including Shaka'a and Khalaf, were dismissed by the Israelis. This was followed in 1983 by the dismissal of the mayors of the major cities and towns of the occupied territories, including the mayor of Al-Khalil, for the second time in two years.

The latest report of Amnesty International, which has just been published, indicates that in 1982 77 restriction orders affecting 57 people were issued. According to the report, those restricted included political activists, mayors, journalists, lawyers, trade unionists, academics and students.

Amnesty International was also concerned in its report about the use of short-term detention to hold hundreds of Palestinian demonstrators, mainly schoolchildren and students, protesting Israeli policies in the occupied territories and in Lebanon, and many others arbitrarily arrested, apparently to deter them from demonstrating. The arbitrary nature of these arrests was attested to during the trial in Jaffa of seven Israeli soldiers charged with assaulting West Bank residents. One defendant stated:

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"We were told to collect them, 150 or 200 at a time, whoever happened to be around. It didn't matter if they had demonstrated or not." (Jerusalem Post, 5 January 1983)

Hypocritically, the higher commanders of these soldiers were not charged.

The Amnesty report indicates also that in 14 separate incidents during 1982 15 demonstrators were shot dead and hundreds of others were injured by the Israeli Defence Forces. Amnesty International said it could not accept the Israeli argument of self-defence or panicky reaction by troops to justify the shooting and killing of demonstrators who did not have firearms.

A more recent measure taken by the Israeli central command is the dismissal of the acting mayor of Al-Khalil, Mustafa Nabi Natshe, along with other municipal council members on 8 July 1983. An interesting aspect of this dismissal was revealed by Ha'aretz columnist Mr. Elyahu Selpetter in an article entitled "A crime which could not be translated". Commenting on the dismissal of Mr. Natshe, Mr. Selpetter wrote:

"In democratic countries, when the government suspects somebody of a criminal act it brings him to the court of justice. In the West Bank, however, when residents appeal to the court of justice it is considered to be a criminal act by the Government of Israel."

In the background information on the dismissal of Mr. Natshe, the Military Governor of the West Bank accused Mr. Natshe of the crime of appealing to the Supreme Court of Justice. Selpetter writes:

"It seems that the assistants of the Governor noticed that this explanation would not be accepted by the democratic people of the world. Thus they deleted this item from the English text of the 'background information.'"

In order to destroy the Palestinian political infrastructure, the Israeli authorities have found it necessary to wage a global war against any form of Palestinian cultural expression, which implies the crippling of Palestinian educational institutions, especially those of higher learning.

Section IV of the Committee's report contains information on measures affecting the right to freedom of education. The report states:

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"The Special Committee felt that the importance of this information warranted separate treatment in the hope that attention thus focused on this aspect may lead to a realization of the need for urgent action by the occupying authorities to curtail the cycle of violence that the denial of this right was provoking." (A/38/409, para. 359)

Israeli pressure against Arab universities and schools has continued to escalate for the past three years. In the academic year 1981-82, Bir Zeit University was closed three times for a total period of seven months, which is unprecedented.

On 2 November this year the Israeli army shut down Bethlehem University for two months, after the students had simply held an exhibition entitled "Palestinian Heritage". A week later two schools were closed by military order for one month. The schools, Tarik Ben Zayad in Al-Khalil and the Boys School in Ramallah, were closed following demonstrations supporting the independence of Palestinian decision-making and the elected Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, under the leadership of Chairman Yasser Arafat.

The most tangible and serious manifestation of increased military repression is Military Order 854, issued in July 1980. This order was described by a group of American professors as imposing "crippling restrictions" on Palestinian higher education. Military Order 854 placed the autonomous institutions of higher education under the total control of the education officer in the Israeli military government. It requires the universities to seek annual permits to operate, and it gives him authority over the recruitment of professors and other staff, over the curriculum, and over the admission of students.

The boards of trustees of Bir Zeit University, Najah National University, Bethlehem University and the Polytechnic Institution of Al-Khalil in the West Bank in a joint letter of protest to the Israeli Chief of Staff, which appeared in Al-Fajr on 5 December 1981, wrote:

"To subject the Universities in the occupied territories to the supervision of a military officer, and confer upon him arbitrary power in regard to the organizational, academic and professional activities would render precarious the very existence of these institutions."

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The report indicates that, as part of continuing attempts to apply Military Order 854, the Israeli authorities in late 1982 requested non-local academics to sign a commitment concerning allegiance to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Following the expulsion of the professors from the universities, Alan Romberg, United States State Department spokesman, expressed some concern, and said:

"We are concerned that large-scale bannings and expulsions of vital non-resident educators could eventually force some or all West Bank Universities to close."

Two days later Secretary of State George Shultz criticized Israeli behaviour. He denounced Israel's crackdown on Arab universities in the occupied West Bank as a threat to academic freedom reminiscent of the McCarthy era in the United States.

Can we infer on that basis that the Government of the United States of America has finally started to see the true nature of its long-time strategic ally?

In an article published in the Jerusalem Post on 19 November 1982, David Richardson indicated that the aim of this policy is indeed to close down Arab universities. He said that a senior official of the Israeli Defence Ministry reportedly informed the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Najah National University:

"The Universities were formed during the time of Peres and Rabin; now is the time of Begin and Sharon."

The closing of universities and schools, the expulsion of professors and the disruptive interference by the Israeli authorities in the educational and academic fields are accompanied by yet a further destructive measure - the control and censorship of books and all other forms of publication. This control gives the occupation authorities complete power over what the Palestinians under occupation can read. All books entering the area must first receive permits. Formally, any book in the occupied territories without such a permit is illegal. By mid-1981, the Jerusalem Post reported, 3,000 books had been banned by the Israeli censors. During the year 1982 several hundreds of other books were banned. Often the banned books do not deal with politics, or deal with it in a very peripheral manner. Interestingly, the list of those banned include such titles as "The History of Jerusalem", the Islamic Dictionary, the "Myth of Death and Resurrection in Modern Arabic Poetry", "The White Nile", and biographies of Abraham Lincoln and Alexander the Great. The list also includes, funnily enough, Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice".

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The killing, expulsion and suppression of the Palestinians, as expressed through the aforementioned practices, have as a final aim the total destruction of a society with a view to a complete Zionist take-over of the remaining Palestinian lands.

The take-over of Arab land and the establishment of Zionist settlements have been, since the beginning of this century, the corner-stone of Zionist strategy and practice. The Zionist myth of "A land without a people for a people without a land" has reflected itself brutally in the settlement policy of the Zionist Establishment, before as well as since the creation of the State of Israel. However, the policy of taking over Arab land and establishing Jewish settlements was aggressively intensified after the occupation of the remaining part of Palestine and other territories in 1967.

Paragraph 366 of the Special Committee report concludes:

"The net result [of settlements] is the continuation of the consolidation of the Israeli presence in the occupied territories to the detriment of the civilian population. Over 150 settlements have so far been established, and over 60 per cent of the land in the West Bank has passed into the hands of the authorities." (A/38/409, para. 366)

Since the beginning of this year, dozens of new settlements have been established and dozens of others are being planned. According to Meron Benvenisti, former Deputy Mayor of West Jerusalem,

"the settlement phase initiated by ideologically motivated groups mobilized by Gush Baunim is now over. The typical settler of the 1980s is a figure well known throughout the Western world, the suburbanite".

Accordingly, the settlement bodies are concentrating most of their efforts on regions termed - officially - "areas of high demand", that is, a ring of settlements encircling Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. According to Benvenisti, there are 100,000 Jewish families potentially willing to move out to the suburbs on the West Bank during the coming decade. At the present pace of construction, he added, 10,000 to 15,000 additional people can be housed in the territories each year.

In an article interestingly entitled "Promised lands", the Jerusalem Post's Yosef Goell explores the great rush to the new suburban settlements springing up in the occupied West Bank. The following are some highlights of his article which appeared in the Jerusalem Post on 14 January 1983:

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"On the front page of Agudat Yisrael's daily Hamodia of 23 December 1982, an electrifying advertisement in Yiddish overshadowed all the news of the day. Under a photo of a \$100 bill the ad read, 'They're giving you land? So grab!' The ad inserted by the Cohav Hashomron town development company of Bnei Brak was referring to nearly free land and munificent housing subsidies available to Jewish settlers in the new town already rising on the Western slopes of the West Bank."

The \$100 bill referred, according to Mr. Goell, to the estimated monthly mortgage payments for the smaller flats being offered in new towns. The advertisement is aimed at the many young ultra-Orthodox families who, according to him, "live in desperately overcrowded conditions".

In short, Defence Minister Moshe Arens made it clear when he stated:

"Within 30 years there will be on the West Bank hundreds of thousands of Jewish settlements, including large cities and universities, which will include hundreds of thousands of Jewish people".

"It is clear that this tremendous increase and intensification in the building of settlements is a conscious process leading to the ultimate annexation of the occupied territories.

In fact, the overall conclusion of the Committee is that the Government of Israel continues to follow a policy aimed at the annexation of the occupied territories. This conclusion has been confirmed through several Israeli and non-Israeli sources. Mr. Meron Benvenisti, for example, concluded last October:

"the political, military, socio-economic and psychological processes now working toward the total annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip outweigh those that work against it".

He also emphasized:

"Begin's extremist ideology, his vision of greater Israel, have turned into a solid structure in which second-generation Israelis from both political camps (meaning Labour as well as Likud) have found shelter". (The New York Times, 13 October 1983)

The intention to annex and all its concurrent practices are explicitly discussed and declared by Israeli policy-makers. In rejecting the Reagan plan for the occupied territories, former Defence Minister Sharon declared:

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"You can annex foreign land. You cannot annex your own country. Judea and Samaria [the Biblical names for the West Bank] are part of the land of Israel, where the nation was born."

The Zionist authorities, while attempting to reach their final goals of annexation and the total liquidation of Palestinian national identity, are behaving in exactly the same way as an apartheid State. This is the main theme of an article written by Mr. Amos Elon, a well-known Israeli writer and journalist, who concluded in his column in Ha'aretz on 10 December 1982:

"The take-over of the Palestinian lands in the occupied territories and the denial of Palestinians of their human and political rights will inevitably bring the formation of an apartheid State."

The question, according to Elon, is whether Israel will become like Rhodesia, which collapsed under the pressure, or like South Africa, which still survives because of its rich resources.

Meanwhile, Elon says, Israel is a "democracy of masters" which dominates large populations of other nations (Palestinians) and denies their rights, including the most fundamental ones. This population lives under a "police State" which operates through arbitrary orders without the control of a parliamentary body.

According to Elon, two legal systems have been created in the occupied territories - one which is territorial and applies to the Jews who live on both sides of the green line (the 1967 lines), and the other which is personal and which applies only to the Palestinians in the occupied territories. According to these legal systems, Jews are free to speak, their minds, to write, to publish, to move freely in the country and to organize politically. The Palestinians, on the other hand, are denied those rights and are restricted to residential areas, such as was the case with the Russian Jews during the time of the Tsar or is the case of black Africans today in South Africa. As in South Africa - I am still quoting Elon - the Palestinians in the occupied territories cannot leave their residential areas and cannot work in other areas without the permission of the Jewish authorities. They are denied the right to purchase property in Israel, while Jews are encouraged to do so in the territories. Only Palestinian land is confiscated to be used by Jewish settlers.

Mr. Elon continues with a long list of suppressive measures and the denial of the rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories. He concludes:

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"the Israelis can no longer escape from the acknowledgement of their apartheid policy."

I would like to point out that Zionist policies are in the final analysis directed not only against the Palestinian people but against the Jews themselves. Such thoughts have been clearly expressed since the beginning of this century by various Jewish scholars and political figures, who were conscious at a very early phase of the immoral aspects of political Zionism. One such scholar is Professor Martin Buber, who, in an address delivered in New York in 1958, said:

"What I felt sixty years ago when I joined the Zionist movement is essentially what I feel today. I have joined this national movement because it was not called 'Jewish' nationalism but Zionism ... I believed that this nationalism would not go the way of all others - beginning with a great hope and then deteriorating, decaying, becoming a collective egoism, even daring, like Mussolini, to call itself a sacro-egoism as if collective egoism could be more sacred than the egoism of any individual ... When we returned to Palestine, the decisive question was, do we want to come there as an ally, as a friend, as a brother, as a member of the coming community of the peoples of the Near East, or as representatives of colonialism and imperialism? The majority of the Jewish people preferred to learn from Hitler rather than from us ... Hitler showed that history does not go the way of the spirit but the way of power, and if a people is powerful enough, it can kill with impunity ... This is the situation that we had to fight ..." (Jewish Newsletter, 2 June 1958)

Another Jewish scholar, Ahad Ha'am, who attended the first Zionist Congress but left it after the signing of the Balfour Declaration, said after this first Zionist Congress:

"In Basel, yesterday, I sat lonely among my brothers, like a mourner at a wedding ... This new enthusiasm is an artificial one, and the results of treacherous hopes will be despair ... The salvation of Israel (the Jewish people) will come through prophets and not through diplomats ... One thing is clear to me, we have destroyed much more than we have built up. Who knows whether this was not the last sign of a dying people? I cannot get this out of my head ... There is only one objective which we can actually approach, and that is the moral objective, our self-liberation from inner slavery ..."

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In 1961, the following words appeared in "Ihud's" Ner, a Hebrew magazine published by the Ihud association of the Union of Jews and Arabs for a bi-national Palestine, an association formed by Martin Buber, Judah Magnes, and others who favour a form of cultural or spiritual zionism and who abhor the methods of the Zionist State:

"Only an internal revolution can have the power to heal our people of their murderous sickness of causeless hatred [for the Arabs]. It is bound to bring complete ruin upon us. Only then will the old and young in our land realize how great was our responsibility to those miserable Arab refugees in whose towns we have settled Jews who were brought from afar; whose homes we have inherited, whose fields we now sow and harvest; the fruits of whose gardens, orchards and vineyards we gather, and in whose cities that we robbed, we put up houses of education, charity, and prayer while we babble and rave about being the 'people of the book' and the 'light of the nations'." (Ner, January/February 1961)

Today there exist in Israel several factions and individuals that are conscious that the policies of the Zionist State can only bring destruction to both Arabs and Jews. The peace movement in Israel, despite its various currents and its spontaneous reactions, finds root in this Jewish tradition, which calls for an end to Zionist fascist policies.

I produce these statements in order to make it clear to the supporters of the Zionist State at this international forum that they are doing a big disservice to the Jewish people themselves by supporting zionism, and to bring to the attention of all the members of this Committee that a real option for peace cannot come about in the Middle East unless the Zionist State reverses all its policies and withdraws from all Palestinian and Arab lands occupied in 1967, thus opening the way for the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable right to self-determination and to the establishment of its independent State on its national soil, Palestine.

The Palestine Liberation Organization has always expressed itself clearly on the concept of peaceful co-existence with the Jewish people. The only question that had been debated in Palestinian circles was what form this coexistence should take - a non-sectarian State where Christians, Moslems and Jews could live as co-citizens of a democratic State or a partitioned Palestine where an Israeli State lived alongside an independent Palestinian State.

(Mrs. Tadros Khalaf, PLO)

The Zionist State up till this day has refused both alternatives. Instead it is vacillating between its two fascist alternatives - a pure Zionist State free of all Arabs, or an apartheid State where Arabs are reduced to non-persons, mere inhabitants.

The international community, which represents a higher world conscience, has a great role to play in the achievement of a peaceful and just solution to the Palestinian problem. Several resolutions have been passed in this direction, several documents have been disseminated, but nothing has been done. Only today we hear of more and more repressive measures in the West Bank against the Palestinian people.

Writing and talking about Israeli practices and policies should not be simply an intellectual exercise, for the sufferings of millions of people cannot be reduced to mere rhetoric.

What is needed is international and legal action to put an end to all those policies and practices which have been identified as inhuman, brutal and in contradiction to the inalienable rights of all human beings.

The Security Council has demanded, in resolution 465 (1980), among others, that Israel should cease forthwith its practices, but, despite the provisions of the Charter that Member States agree to respect and carry out the decisions of the Security Council, the Zionist occupying authorities persist in their policies and practices, in defiance of the Charter and all United Nations resolutions.

For all the nations that have voted for each of these resolutions to maintain faith in the United Nations and its organs, it remains incumbent upon the Organization to impose comprehensive sanctions on its non-peace-loving and arrogant member, Israel.

Unfortunately for the record of the United Nations, as well as for the Palestinian people themselves, the Middle East problem, the core of which is the question of Palestine, remains one of the main issues which have over the year revealed a persistent imbalance between what the United Nations can say and what it can do.

However, we, the Palestinians, a people determined to regain their homeland, Palestine, and to exercise our inalienable rights, have not lost faith, despite our multiple tragedies, that justice and truth shall prevail.

* * *

Mr. SHEHATA (Egypt): My delegation expresses its deep appreciation to Ambassador Fonseca, Chairman of the Special Committee to investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, and to the members of the Committee. The report submitted by the Chairman in document A/38/409 contains comprehensive, updated, fully substantiated, well documented information on Israeli policies and practices in the occupied Arab territories - in particular in section IV.

This report, together with the statement of Ambassador Fonseca, unmask the multifaceted strategies of the occupation authorities in restructuring the economic and demographic texture of the occupied territories. It also divulges the stark facts of the dehumanization process by the occupying Power against the Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and southern Lebanon.

The Palestinian people have been in a state of dislocation and dispersion for the last 35 years. Their statelessness has denuded them of human rights, and their subjection and dependence have deprived them of the commonly accepted standards of civilized living and being. They live in perpetual dehumanizing conditions and their lives are in constant danger. The fruits of human, civilizational, social and political progress, as expressed by the world community in the form of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, have failed to reach them.

The annexation of the West Bank and Gaza is, was and will be the objective of the Lebanon war in two directions. The first was the attack on the West Bank. Ten years after the beginning of the Israeli occupation the heretofore implied struggle between Israel and the Palestinians over the West Bank came out into the open. It was a struggle between a national-religious coalition in Israel and a diaspora centre with its territorial periphery. The assault on the Palestinian communal structure was directed at both the charismatic centre and its extension in the territorial periphery. It was a concentrated effort, taking place within the span of a year and beginning after the victory of the Likud in the 1981 elections. Since the first target of the new approach was the West Bank, I shall first analyse the attack on this periphery. It will become evident further on that the later action in Lebanon was part of the same campaign.

The establishment of the Civil Administration and the removal of the mayors involved a certain added cost for Israel. The new structure effectively negated what was perceived by Israel as an accomplishment. The new policy involved more

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direct intervention by the Civil Administration. Instead of communicating with the local inhabitants through their elected officials, the new structure required a process of managing the towns through Israeli officials. The move by Sharon and Milson against the municipalities was described by Amnon Cohen as "Israel's re-conquest of Judea and Samaria".

The strategic goal of the second Likud Administration was the destruction of the relationship between the West Bank and its diaspora centre. In order to accomplish this goal, Israel also struck at other power centres of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in the West Bank.

Following two days of rioting, Bir Zeit University was closed on 4 November 1981 for two months. This came in the wake of several other measures, which included the temporary closure of Al-Fajr, restrictions on the movement of several leaders suspected of instigating disruptions, and the ban of monetary transfers from the PLO to institutions and individuals in the West Bank. Israel's persistence in pressuring these institutions in the ensuing period indicated that the second Likud Administration, and especially its new Defence Minister, had decided to eradicate the PLO's power centres in the West Bank.

The clash between the Civil Administration and Bir Zeit University illustrates the struggle that took place in the West Bank. The first closure came in response to demonstrations at the university against the new Civil Administration. One of the innovations of the Administration was the inclusion of institutions of higher learning under the authority of its own education department.

Relations with the Arab press also deteriorated during the second Likud Administration. In the previous years, the Weizman rule guided censorship. According to this rule, whatever had been published in the Hebrew press was publishable in the Arab press. Consequently, Arab editors would tip off Israeli journalists about West Bank news items and then rewrite the stories they had inspired. This policy was changed in the summer of 1981 by the new Defence Minister, and in the subsequent period censorship became increasingly rigorous. Before Sharon's new measures the censor would have looked the other way or given the publications in question some warnings if they had published material which they had not submitted for censorship. During the winter of 1982 the Israeli authorities started to take action. On several occasions publication of Al-Fajr and Al-Sha'ab was suspended or circulation in the West Bank was banned. Following the expiration of their annual distribution licences in March 1981, editors

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Hanna Siniora of Al-Fajr and Mahmoud Yaish of Al-Sha'ab refused to sign applications for new licences. Their objection was that the forms included new restrictions. While denying these charges, the spokesman for the Civil Administration did admit that the licences were being issued for a shorter period of time. In June 1982 the editors of the two more radical newspapers were called in to Yigal Karmon, Milson's adviser for Arab affairs, and were warned that if they continued to publish items that had not been submitted for censorship they would be banned.

The censor seemed to ban accounts of disorders which might have contributed to the rebellious mood of the territory. According to the editor of Al-Fajr's English edition, Saman Khoury, the censor's new policy was to remove almost all news stories about the territories. Abu Zuluf, the editor of Al-Quds, also complained in March 1982 about an unprecedented crackdown by the censor. The censor also rejected publication notices from people announcing withdrawals from the village leagues.

The second direction was the attack on the diaspora centre. The Peace for Galilee operation that started on 6 June 1982 must be understood in the context of the Likud's policies towards the West Bank. The pretext for the war was the threat in the north originating from a PLO military build-up in Lebanon.

It became clear immediately that Israel's strategic goals went beyond the 40-kilometre cordon sanitaire that was initially declared to be the goal of the campaign. The real aim of the war was the PLO centre in Beirut, which radiated authority far beyond Lebanon, and especially into the West Bank, where the Government's concerns lay.

The real goals of the operation in Lebanon were unique in the history of Israel wars. In a lecture to the nation's Defence College in early August, Prime Minister Begin compared the war with the Sinai Campaign and the Six-Day War by distinguishing between a war of no alternative and a war of choice. In 1982 the PLO did not present an immediate threat to Israel's existence, neither did it present a potential threat to the balance of power.

The war in Lebanon could not be classified as an extended retaliation operation along the lines of previous Israeli actions across the border. The order of battle employed in this operation and the duration of the war went far beyond any criteria for a retaliatory operation.

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The real aim of the war was to destroy the military and political infrastructure of the PLO in Lebanon in anticipation that this accomplishment would have an impact on the other components of the Palestinian communal structure. In order to accomplish this goal, Israel for the first time in its history besieged an Arab capital for over two months. The siege generated a great deal of negative public opinion as a result of heavy civilian losses.

The attack on the PLO in Lebanon must be placed in the context of the conceptual framework that had started to unfold several years earlier. It was another stage in the Likud's campaign not to relinquish any part of the West Bank and Gaza. It was directly linked to the new settlements policy adopted during the first Likud Administration and to the attempt to destroy PLO influence in the West Bank, an attempt which was launched during the second Likud Administration. Sharon's repeated warnings during his first year as Defence Minister about the threat in the north, and the evidence that the operation was planned during the summer of 1981, further indicate that the operation was an integral part of a broad political framework adopted by the new ruling elite.

In summary, the 1982 war in Lebanon represented the new realities that emerged in the region in the 15 years that had elapsed since June 1967. The emergence of a new Palestinian communal structure and a parallel transformation of the Israeli polity, which now laid claims in no uncertain terms over the West Bank and Gaza, created a direct struggle between the Jewish polity and the Palestinian community. This struggle took place in both domains of the Palestinian communal structure: the West Bank and Lebanon - that is, their territorial periphery and the locus of their diaspora centre.

The Israeli campaign on the West Bank was fought largely through administrative means. In Lebanon, military means came to the fore and were used to uproot the concentrated Palestinian diaspora centre. Thus, the war in Lebanon, although it required the crossing of inter-State borders, was not an inter-State war but rather an inter-communal war, and as such an extension of the Jewish-Palestinian struggle over Eretz Yisrael-Palestine. This direct confrontation, which had lain dormant since 1948, when the Yishuv overwhelmed the Palestinians, was almost unavoidable because of the nature of the new situation in both the Jewish and the Palestinian communities.

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I come to the common characteristics of the policies and practices of occupation. The Military Government and the civilian authority use the contemptible term, "the policy of the stick and the carrot", as though the Palestinians in the occupied territories are cattle that need to be fed carrots or hit by sticks, but, beyond this colonial term, the concept of reward and punishment by the standard of the conqueror belies any understanding of historical processes.

Commenting on what he termed as dialectics of occupation, Amnon Kapeliuk, correspondent of the Israeli daily Al Hamismar, wrote on the collective punishment in the West Bank in New Outlook of April 1982:

"When the occupied territories were conquered in 1967 we were told that this time we would witness an enlightened occupation. Within a short period it became clear that the dialectics of occupation remain, and that the difference lies only in the details of secondary matters and in the degree of resistance and suppression.

"There has never been an occupation régime that did not ban books. There has never been an occupation régime that did not view universities as hot houses and focal points of resistance and so shut them down. There has never been an occupation régime that did not fight against flags.

"All occupation régimes repeat the same mistakes. All occupation régimes degenerate to the point of harassing the occupied people, unless they accept the fact of occupation unquestioningly.

"Stooping to such tactics and their like proves only one thing - the bankruptcy of military government."

I turn to the specific characteristics of the policies and practices of occupation, dealing with culture, education and the press, and beginning with banned books.

The following list of books is just a small portion from a list of over 1,250 books and publications that cannot be imported to, or distributed in, the West Bank. The ban holds for all West Bank residents. The list contains books, weeklies and dailies.

All books ordered by West Bank universities, or sent to them, must be inspected by the Military Administration censor. In practice, the censor bans all books that contain the name "Palestine". Some of the banned books are readily available at the National Library in Jerusalem. I shall quote the number of the

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relevant Military Administration order and the title of the banned book - just a few:

- 183 "Islam and the Rights of Man"
- 306 "The Ties Between Europe and the Ottoman Empire"
- 368 "I am a Zionist and I Demand a State for the Palestinians"
- 463 "One Thousand Personalities"
- 490 "The Talmud, Its History and Guidelines"
- 795 "The Status of the Woman in the Jewish Tradition"
- 810 "The Histadrut"
- 825 "The Establishment and Evolution of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF)", by Yigal Alon
- 841 "Herzl: The First Objective Research About the Founder of the Zionist Movement"

The list of banned books is too long to recite.

In carrying out such orders, the Military Administration confiscates books and newspapers from bookstores, publishers, universities and even private homes. The Administration has expanded the scope of these activities in recent months. I shall quote only a few of the confiscatory activities carried out by the Military Administration in past months. On 6 January 1983 books and paintings were confiscated from the Gaza Women's Club. On 13 January 1983 books, newspapers and postcards were confiscated from the University of Bethlehem. These are excerpts from a special report prepared by Dedi Tzucker on behalf of the Citizens' Rights Movement, under the title "The Occupied Territories, the Reality", August/September 1983.

Next I come to the question of education.

Dr. Hugh Harcourt, who before coming to Bir Zeit University was teaching at the American University of Beirut, has said:

"Students and faculty here face terrible difficulties. The Israelis have never wanted Palestinians to get educated or to have a Palestinian university. They wanted to eliminate Bir Zeit."

"Palestinians have little or no academic freedom. Any kind of organized political activity is completely illegal. Demonstrations are completely illegal. Any kind of assembly of more than five persons is illegal. Any kind of printing, any kind of handbill or poster on any political issue is

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illegal. If I write an article for publication - and this is true for every teacher, every student - it is censored.

"We are censored on every item of purchase at Bir Zeit. All our books are censored. We select book titles from a Hebrew University catalogue - books, in other words, available to Jewish students - and most of these are denied us. The Israeli censors have declared the more than one thousand Arab publications available in Jerusalem bookstores forbidden to us. Most newspapers printed in East Jerusalem and circulated there are banned here."

I turn to the question of censorship of the press.

The Military Administration censors the West Bank press in accordance with the Emergency Regulations of 1945. Most of this press is printed in East Jerusalem, which is within the province of Israeli law.

A random check of the censorship applied against one East Jerusalem newspaper - Al Fajr - was carried out during the five-day period 6 April 1983-10 April 1983. During those five days the censor struck out 52 items or parts of items. Five of the disqualified items were broadcast on Israeli national radio or television.

Next I deal with civil and administrative policies and practices, beginning with limitations on freedom of movement.

House arrest, the obligation to appear at police headquarters and bans on travel outside the limits of a village or city are based upon the Emergency Regulations of 1945, and they are signed by the IDF commander in the region.

Presently over 60 residents of the West Bank and Gaza are under house arrest or suffer from restrictions on their freedom of movement.

Usually such restrictions are issued for six months, without any supervision by the judicial system. The military commander has the authority to extend them for as long as he likes. Moreover, he is not required to submit reports or provide justifications regarding these restrictions.

The detainee is restricted to the region of his home town during the day, and from evening through morning he is restricted to his home. During the daylight hours he is required to appear at least once a day at police headquarters.

Secondly, there is the question of mayors appointed by the Civilian Administration. The mayors listed below presently serve in place of elected mayors who were removed from their positions by the Civil Administration: Jenin - Oved Zayad, an Israeli citizen; Nablus - Jabar Heinu, an Israeli citizen;

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Ramallah - Moshe Biton, an Israeli citizen; Dura - Abad El Fatah Aissa Dudin, a Village League member.

Thirdly, there are the following Government and public initiatives. The Civilian Administration is carrying out negotiations for the construction of 500 units in Tapuah, at the junction of the Hotzeh Shomron and the Jerusalem-Nablus highways. Registration for a new neighbourhood in Karnei Shomron has begun. Construction will be completed in the summer of 1984. On 6 January 1983 the settlement of Neve Dekalim in the Gaza Strip was populated. On the same day, the cornerstone for the local yeshiva was laid. The sale of apartments in Pisgat Adumim, a new neighborhood in Adumim, has begun. In the middle of March Israel decided to transfer eight West Bank Nahal outposts from military to civilian status. One of the eight, Bracha, is to serve as the basis for the establishment of Schem Elite, in Upper Nablus. During the first stage, 800 housing units will be built. Construction of seven additional Nahal outposts, out of a planned 14, has begun.

Next, I turn to recent actions by settlers in the West Bank. On 1 December 1982 a settler, apparently a resident of Elon Moreh, fired at a number of stores in Nablus. In the same month a house was illegally occupied by Hebron settlers near Beit Hadassah. Also in the same month a number of residents of Kiryat Arba threatened the muhtar of the El Arub refugee camp after stones were thrown at an Israeli bus.

My next subject is the conditions of labour and Arab labourers in the West Bank and Gaza. Tel Aviv is an all-Jewish city, and they have rules about wanting to keep it "clean of Arabs". Arabs are permitted to go into Tel Aviv only to work. Entering, they must show their work permit. But the work permit is not good to stay overnight. That is against the law.

They actually have a law on the books: a Palestinian from Gaza or the West Bank is forbidden to be inside Israel from 10 o'clock to 3 o'clock in the morning. If he is sleeping in a Tel Aviv bed at that time, he will have committed a crime. At that hour, they want Tel Aviv to be "pure" Jewish.

In an interview with Grace Halsel, an American writer, reproduced in her book "A Journey to Jerusalem", an Arab labourer narrates:

"I grew accustomed to being locked up when we worked late at the Tel Aviv mattress factory. The plant manager herded us like so many sheep

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into a warehouse. He shut and secured the steel doors, locking them from the outside. He claimed this was 'protection' for us. One night, however, a fire broke out. All of us tried to climb the walls, but we were trapped, like animals. Many Israeli employers say they prefer Arab Palestinians to Jewish workers. The wetbacks, they say, arrive on time, work hard, and never complain.' In Israel [the author says] I heard many of the same comments about Palestinians. 'The Arab arrives on time, he works hard, you can pay him about twenty dollars a week, and he never complains. He will take some bread, buy some olives, grab a tomato, and that's his food.'

"Like the wetback, Zayid, an Arab labourer, has no union to back him up. It's not that there aren't plenty of unions around, but for one reason or another he is barred from their benefits. First, the West Bank Palestinians have organized a couple dozen labour unions, but the Israelis have forbidden these unions to represent the eight-five thousand labourers who commute each day from Gaza and the West Bank to work for Israeli firms.

"The Israeli military authorities say they must delay their permits until they investigate the membership and leadership. The Israelis will recognize only union leaders who are acceptable to the military authorities because of 'security' considerations. But West Bankers see these security arguments as a pretext for suppressing and controlling political opposition to the military government.

"Arabs who organize West Bank unions risk their lives', Zayid asserts. 'The Israelis do not want any leaders to develop.' As an example, the Israeli police, with no warning or explanation, went to the home of George Hasboun, deputy general secretary of the West Bank trade unions. They arrested him, handcuffed him, and put him in prison. They kept him there for one year and never filed any charges against him.

"The Israelis also arrested Hassan Baghouti, chairman of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union. They held him in prison in 1978 and never filed charges against him."

On the dehumanization of Palestinian prisoners, allow me to quote some excerpts from the memorandum submitted to the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights by Joseph Alqazy on 9 December 1982, as follows:

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"Having invaded Lebanon the 'Israeli Defense Forces' (IDF) detained at the time of the hostilities and in their wake (and are still detaining) thousands of people. The Israeli authorities refuse any request to make public the exact number of people which were taken prisoners. A report of 'Amnesty International' (AI) of August 9 1982 estimated the number of people detained (or having been detained in the enlarged prisoners' camp of 'Al Ansaar' near Nabatiya, South Lebanon) as 10,000.

"In our estimate the total number of prisoners ... - those who are still being detained - amounts to approximately 15,000, including children and aged people - Tally Selinger, 'Davar' of November 29, 1982 - coming from various nationalities - International Herald Tribune of 12 July 1982, quoting 'official Israeli sources'."

According to the above report of Amnesty International

"there were among the detained also Palestinian and Lebanese civilians, as well as members of other nationalities. It has been reported that many of them were caught in the streets with the assistance of masked informers and thereupon taken to arrest".

This way of arresting people was reported by foreign correspondents during the hostilities. A member of the IDF told French correspondent Francois Sergeant - Liberation of 22 June 1982:

"Terrorists are identified by their physiognomy. We have acquired some experience in this respect, but in addition we have lists and informers, too."

Thus, young men were detained - anybody who could have been a member of the PLO or was denounced as such, or was supposedly connected in some way or other with the PLO and its institutions, or received some kind of support (like a welfare allowance) from the PLO, or was employed in a Palestinian hospital, or supposedly declared his sympathy with the PLO. All were detained. In our estimate, out of the thousands of Palestinian prisoners, only a few hundred actually fought in the ranks of the PLO. The authority to detain people was bestowed upon every Israeli commanding officer in the field, as he deemed fit. People were hunted in the streets, were driven together and handcuffed. Their eyes were covered and finally they were taken to the places of detention.

There are as many places of detention as there are units of command and districts of Military Government in the occupied territories of Lebanon, and this

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is in addition to the central detention camps, some of which have become known. So far it has been ascertained that prisoners have been detained in the following places: the concentration camp of Al Ansaar; the military prison near Athlith (south of Haifa); a school building of Sidon (Report of AI, testimony given by Dr. Francois Capet of Belgium, Humanite, 1 July 1982); the premises of the Safa Citrus Company south of Sidon; the military prison in the vicinity of Meggido junction - east of Haifa; the old and neglected "Shmuel Harofe" hospital of Be'er Ya'akov - south of Tel Aviv - for wounded prisoners.

The collapse of the Military Government's building in Tyre revealed that it had contained rooms of detention, and interrogation, where prisoners were held. Some of them were killed when the building collapsed, others were wounded.

Detainees from the West Bank who had been held in the Hebron prison told afterwards that they had met there prisoners from Lebanon.

The Israeli authorities were concealing not only the numbers of the prisoners-of-war but also the places of their detention. There is no international agency concerned with prisoners-of-war and their conditions according to the Geneva Convention, neither is there any humanitarian, Israeli or otherwise, who knows exactly where all the prisoners-of-war are being held.

In order to increase the confusion and thwart any possibility of ascertaining the existence and identity of the prisoners-of-war and follow up the conditions of imprisonment and their fate, they are transferred from time to time from one place of detention to another.

I come to the question of torture and death.

Dr. Steiner Fraga and Marian and Oiveen Muller of Norway said in a television interview - Le Monde, 24 June 1982 - and testified before an international committee of investigation in Cyprus that they had seen prisoners being beaten up with cudgels and plastic rods and whipped in the courtyard of a Sidon school. They witnessed a 70-year-old man, who had tried to kick an Israeli soldier, being beaten up savagely for 10 minutes and kicked on all the parts of his body, until he fainted and collapsed.

They told the audience that they had seen the Palestinian physician Dr. Nabeel being dragged by Israeli soldiers, with a rope strung round his neck, while others were beating him with sticks. When they saw him again the next day, they found him staring at his surroundings; on his neck there was a big wound, and his back was covered with blisters.

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Speaking at a press conference - Humanite, 1 July 1982 - Dr. Francois Capet had apparently in mind the same Dr. Nabeel:

"A surgeon was brought in fettered, with his eyes covered. It was evident that he had been beaten and tortured. In the courtyard I saw three unconscious men lying in the sun, on the earth. They kicked them in order to awaken them, but in vain. They didn't move."

As for legal status, the Israeli Government acknowledges as prisoners-of-war only captured members of the armed forces of Syria. A special ordinance issued by the Minister of Defence on 9 June 1982 empowers the Israeli armed forces to arrest in Lebanon any person who is not a citizen or inhabitant of Israel. This ordinance made it possible to detain thousands of people without granting them the status of prisoners. In this way the Israeli authorities circumvent the application of the Geneva Convention which deals with the treatment of prisoners-of-war. Since these prisoners do not enjoy any recognized status they are called "the fetched ones", "the brought-in ones". I refer to Tally Selinger, Davar, 29 November 1982.

Any judicial control and any applying to court concerning "the fetched ones" are out of the question, because of the legal vacuum that has been created. An Israeli court is precluded from dealing with their case, since they are held on Lebanese sovereign territory, and upon applying to a Lebanese court they would be told that it has no authority over the IDF. This constitutes an unprecedented devilish subterfuge.

An Israeli eyewitness has written with regard to the conditions of Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli concentration camp of Al Ansar:

"One of the MP officers appeared, aimed his rifle and began shooting into them, and we [the soldiers], standing outside the fences, watched how the bullets cut into the flesh of those who were hit, and the wounded begin to hold on to the ground and the blood streams through their fingers, staining the blue uniform, and the wounded fall to the ground crying, and someone seems to be dead, another is twisting in pain, and their friends bend down next to them, shouting, and there is more shooting in the air and the loudspeakers call on all the men to get into the tents, and they obey, leaving the crying wounded on the ground, and it is quiet except for the wounded, and the military vehicles come to remove them and the smell of gunpowder mixes for a minute with the permanent stink and then dissolves into the air."

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These are excerpts from a letter in Hebrew, translated by Israel Shahak, Chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights in Jerusalem, and originally published on 5 November 1982 in the major Israeli daily paper Ha'aretz. Attorney Langer has given the following testimony on torture:

"I met one official, who, after insisting I must not use his name, said 'Let me remind you that Israel is a Jewish State, determined to remain so. Yet we rule 1.7 million Arabs, and for more than a decade 1.2 million of these have been under military occupation. Under our military rules, we can arrest and hold prisoners without permitting them to see a lawyer. Nor are we required to hold any court proceedings. Under these conditions, in which we report only to ourselves, are you surprised to hear that there is torture? How else do you suppose we keep more than a million people subdued, if not by torture?'"

Attorney Langer documents several cases of Palestinian prisoners dying in Israeli jails.

"Each Palestinian prisoner's death raises a storm in the Israeli parliament", she reports,

"but they do not insist that the jails be opened for general inspection."

She cites the example of a young Palestinian named Qasim Abu Aqr, who lived in Beit-Hanina. She says:

"I talked with his cellmates, who said Israeli guards returned him to his cell unconscious and blue from beatings. Once after such beatings he did not regain consciousness and died. The interrogators said he had died 'from a fall'. His cellmates said: 'We know his interrogators and we know how he died.'"

Attorney Langer says:

"Arresting Palestinians and torturing them is a big operation. All of Israel's security services are involved: the Shin Beth, the security service that reports to the Minister of Defence and the border police and Latam, Israel's 'Department for Special Missions', both of which report to the police minister."

Several Palestinian women have testified that they were stripped naked and tormented by varying degrees of assault. Aisha Audi, arrested at 17, spent 10 years in an Israeli prison. The case of Aisha's cousin, Rasmiyyah Audi, was

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cited in an Amnesty International report in 1979. She reported that Israeli soldiers ripped off her clothes, tied her hands behind her back, and stood around her, poking her vagina with a stick. After so,ousing her, and while she was still naked, they brought in her father, ordering him to take off his clothes and have sexual intercourse with her. On hearing the words and seeing his daughter so humiliated, her father passed out. "He just collapsed", she testified.

The degree of torture differs from one case to another. But almost all prisoners go through these stages, beginning with the beatings. One is lucky to get out alive, and no one gets out without some kind of permanent disability. It is the loss of an eye; another will have a permanent loss of a hand or an arm or a leg. You will suffer permanent damage to your stomach or back. You cannot come out free.

I come to the settlements policies and their effects, and their recent scope and dimensions, beginning with Government activities to establish and expand Jewish settlements and the land issue.

At the beginning of January 1983 the Military Administration announced that it intended to declare the following areas Government land (those interested in challenging such moves are usually given 21 days to do so before a committee appointed by the military governor):

1. 200 dunams in Kefar Alar
2. 20,000 dunams in Kefar El Suahara El Sharkiyah - near Jerusalem
3. 4,000 dunams in the villages of Zababida, Kaba, and Salfit - near Jenin

In addition, land was declared State land, for the purpose of expanding existing settlement, in the following areas:

1. 20,000 dunams in the area of Od Dahari
2. 500 dunams in Kefar Batir - near Bethlehem
3. 5,000 dunams in Kefar Mahmas - near Jerusalem

At the beginning of February 2,200 dunams near Kefar Yatra were declared State land. In the middle of February 5,000 dunams near Tarkumiya were also declared State land.

Authoritative sources estimate that the private land that has been bought so far from West Bank residents equals 100,000 dunams - about 2 per cent of the West Bank land.

The sum total of land defined as "State land" equals nearly half the area of the West Bank - the entire area reservoir for Jewish settlement in the region.

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I turn to housing and private investment.

During the budgetary year 1983-1984 Israel will begin construction of 2,500 housing units. A total of 7,000 additional units are currently being built by private enterprise, with 3,000 of them almost completed.

The Avraham Gindi Housing Corporation is the first company to raise money for the funding of projects in the West Bank on the stock exchange. Its request was presented to the exchange at the beginning of March 1983.

A total of 229 Israeli industrial enterprises are active in the West Bank today. An additional 82 enterprises have been authorized to transfer to the West Bank.

Now I wish to speak of the non-viability of the settlement policy.

The Israeli strategy for dealing with the West Bank land problem, essentially force majeure cloaked in semantic subterfuge, comprises three distinct dimensions. To begin with, for public consumption, it is asserted that all new developments will use only "State land" - rocky hilltop. This stipulation is in fact to a large extent inoperable. The November 1979 settlement plan is so massive that formal public domain cannot possibly suffice, while State land on the West Bank highlands is so scattered and poorly defined that it is hopelessly inadequate even for whatever settlement Israel can actually implement. Beneath the public relations cover, therefore, somewhat different tactics are being employed. The most prominent is exploitation of the fact that 26 per cent of the West Bank is technically under "unclear ownership", though regarded by the Arab residents as private village land. Here considerable scope exists for closure of hilltops and cultivated terrain without any need for military justification, and the whole exercise can simply be passed off as the identification of "State land". Depending on the local conditions, any additional difficulties in rounding-out areas can then be circumvented either by arranging a military initiative for a security needs seizure or by Jewish private purchase from Arab owners.

Of course, despite the seemingly inexorable advance of colonization activities, each new step in this direction in the occupied territories in fact brings Israel closer to a crisis in its relations with the Western democracies - links on which it depends for its ultimate political and economic survival.

Although Israel lacks the economic and demographic resources fully to implement the new West Bank plan, it probably has sufficient capability so to

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change physical realities on the highlands that within a few years no Palestinian self-determination will be practicable. This, clearly, is the real objective of the exercise. It may be assumed that Israel can increase the West Bank Jewish population to over 30,000 - 100,000 including East Jerusalem - in the 1980s, given the requisite will and favourable political opportunities - quite enough to absorb extensive parts of the West Bank. In addition, there can be little doubt that colonization of the suggested dimensions, whether concentrated or dispersed, will affect numerous individual Arab communities directly and detrimentally. This would be true regardless of proposed water transfers from Lake Tiberias to the Jordan Rift and regardless of protestations about "uncultivated State land" - to which, as with military reserve, Israel has no permanent proprietary right anyway. Here it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that some Israeli strategists hope that the inevitable pressures on land and water resources will encourage Arab emigration.

Paradoxically, in the longer term occupied territory colonization will probably do most harm to Israel itself. The imposition of unjust policies on a large and unwilling Arab population promises both to subvert Israel and thoroughly to discredit Israel's legitimate cultural and national security interests.

Mr. Begin calls settlements a "wall of defence" - on the contrary, they are a wall of provocation. It is utter nonsense to speak of good neighbourliness being produced by activities which, stripped of their semantic decoration, simply amount to land-grabbing. Whatever path Israel chooses, the path of settlements points towards a particularly dismal future.

Moreover, solutions which propose such variations on occupation cannot offer a genuine answer to Israel's difficulties. This is because at the end of the day Israel must come to an agreement with the Arab people of Palestine. Here the only possible basis for a stable bargain is Israeli acceptance of Palestinian national self-determination in the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. Without such a bargain, which necessarily implies disbanding the settlements, the long and tragic struggle of two great and sophisticated peoples for the same land will continue into the indefinite future.

I come to the effect of settlement policies on the safety of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank have served as a psychological hothouse for the growth of Jewish terror, according to the former head of Israel's

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general security service - Shin Beth - Avraham Ahituv. In an interview with the Israeli daily, Davar, of Friday, 19 August 1983, Ahituv accused the Israeli Government of encouraging Jewish settler lawlessness and making it difficult for Shin Beth to conduct successful investigations that involve Jews.

Ahituv, who served as chief of Shin Beth from 1974-1980, also called for a halt to Jewish settlements near Arab population centres. He warned that lawlessness among Jewish settlers, if not curbed, would pose a painful threat to any Government, requiring extensive and severe measures.

In Ahituv's opinion, there is a serious suspicion that Jews were responsible for the murder of three Palestinians at Hebron University earlier in August as well as for the car bomb attacks that crippled two mayors in 1980. Ahituv resigned shortly after the latter incident.

The Government's inaction, Ahituv contends, is related directly to its vigorous settlement policy. The military settlers have come to believe that the Government eventually sanctions all their actions, including the illegal ones.

Some settlements, such as Kiryat Araba and the enclave of Jewish militants in Hebron, were brought into existence by people taking the law into their own hands, sometimes through trickery and deception and sometimes through explicit subordination and confrontation with the army.

With regard to settlement policy and its effects on Israel's body politic, according to Abba Eban:

"Not a single country in the world community, including those most in favor of Israel, was prepared to support the idea that Israel's security required the imposition of permanent Israeli jurisdiction over a foreign nation. At least half the Israeli nation opposed the idea of the incorporation of the population of the West Bank and Gaza into Israel. There does not exist on the surface of the inhabited globe a single State that resembles what Israel would look like if it were to incorporate the West Bank and Gaza coercively into Israel. A democratic country ruling a foreign nation against its will and against the will of the world would be a unique reality. If the 1.3 million Palestinians were to be integrated into the central political system of Israel, they would take the balance of power in all Israeli decisions, and Israeli politics would become a constant, restless pursuit of their votes. If, on the other hand, the 1.3 million Palestinians

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are denied the equal possibility of electing and being elected to the Israeli parliament, Israel will face the implications of becoming a State whose inhabitants have two different levels and categories of rights and obligations: Jews and Israeli Arabs who can elect and be elected and, a few meters away, Palestinian Arabs who would be held down by military force in an allegiance to which they give no real devotion. The choice between maintaining the present territorial breadth at the expense of Israel's democratic vocation and accepting a more compact structure for the sake of national and social harmony will be Israel's most fateful decision in the 1980s."

The annexation of these territories means conditioning Israel to a state of permanent conflict in the Middle East, reinforcing its character as a militarized nation. The case of the West Bank is more than grave. It demands a social and economic effort that is not only bleeding the country but chaining future Israeli generations to its defence.

There is no need to analyse Israel's policy in the occupied territories in detail; the daily reports in the mass media provide sufficient illustration.

When Israel made it manifest that its objective was the addition of the occupied territories, which means reducing their population to second-class status, it undertook an action unacceptable to democracy, law or justice.

These settlement policies also have their effect on peace prospects and historical reconciliation between Arabs and Israelis.

As Arie Ya'ari of the Kibbutz Ein Dor, a member of the New Outlook Editorial Board, wrote in August/September 1982:

"A realistic attitude, as well as respect for universally recognized principles, demands that both parties [the Palestinians and the Israelis] find a political solution based on recognition and peaceful coexistence. Spilled blood, desolation and hate will deepen the gap between our two nations, which are doomed to live or die together. How many more victories will we have to submit to before we realize that the only victory is peace in reconciliation reached through negotiation and mutual recognition? But we have not the right to despair. We in Israel must fight off illusions of victory and strive, as best we can, to terminate our occupation of the West Bank and Lebanon. War opposes one nation against another; the battle for peace must be fought from within each of these nations."

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Let me recite the warnings of the prophet Isaiah, who said:

"You may multiply your prayers. I shall not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. Take your wrong-doing out of my sight."

What is to be done, and how? There is proceeding now a mighty mass movement inside Israel representing a majority of its own Arab and Jewish population for the termination of its brutal occupation policy, and an end to its settlement scheme. Its main source is detestation of the aggressive war-making policy. It is indeed a heroic effort by those advocates of peace in Israel to save the body as well as the soul of Israel.

Three of the outstanding figures of world Jewry - the late Naham Goldman, Pierre Mendes-France, and Philip Klutznik - insisted in July 1982 that the time was urgent for mutual recognition between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples and concluded:

"Mutual recognition must be vigorously pursued and there should be negotiations with the aim of achieving coexistence between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples based on self-determination".

As Chairman Arafat has prophesied,

"A day will come when the Israelis will feel ashamed and will wish to forget what their present leaders have done to the Palestinian peoples during the summer of 1982 in Lebanon."

The day is here; the shame has become anger, and both are felt not only by Israelis but by those who possess human feelings. With more than anger properly organized and directed, all peoples may live together in peace. Then there will be rejoicing in Israel, in Palestine, beneath the cedars of Lebanon and throughout the four quarters of a celebrating globe.

Rafik Halaby, an Israeli Arab citizen, wrote in his illuminating book, "West Bank Story", on the land-grabbing:

"Perhaps the land is mocking us for accepting the fallacy that we can possess it. This land is mocking our vanity and visions of Lordship. We may shed one another's blood, and delude ourselves that if we bash, smash, shatter and ultimately stamp out a competing dream, we can by sheer dint of force overcome this land as well. We can have soil exclusively to ourselves, but the land will be mocking us while we go spreading death and destruction in its name.

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"Having seen our mistakes and failures, our children may value peace over the illusion of possession and may learn the secret of sharing without losing."

"Those who don't remember the past are condemned to relive their past", the American philosopher George Santayana wrote. I hope that his prophetic intuition will not be lost on the minds and hearts of those who have lived a tragic past and are themselves drifting to an even more tragic future.

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