

THE INVASION OF LEBANON: Why Did it Happen? \*

In the summer months of 1982, the world witnessed, in South Lebanon and the City of Beirut, a cascade of brutality, destruction and total disregard for all human values.

As an excuse for this travesty, Menachem Begin quoted the assassination attempt, at Ambassador Shlomo Argov in London on June 4, as an excuse. Yet on June 5, Sir Anthony Parsons, British ambassador to the U.N. announced that the British Police had evidence that not only the P.L.O. was not behind this attack, but it was in fact organized by the enemies of the P.L.O.

In response to Begins other excuse made in the Knesset that: "No Jewish child in Galilee will have to sleep in a shelter from now on", the Israeli writer B. Michael (Haaretz June 18, 1982) wrote:

"The children of the Galilee were surprised to hear that they were supposed to be sleeping in shelters for some months. According to their memory, no shell had landed near them for a good year, at least not until the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) itself started shelling. But then they are children, and he is the Prime Minister. They must be wrong. So that a Jewish child may sleep in its bed, hundreds of Jews and thousands of Arabs have been killed".

Yaakov Guterman, writing in Haaretz (July 5, 1982) addressing Begin said:

"Cynically and shamelessly you make a declaration about

"Peace for Galilee", after not one shot had been fired from the northern border for a whole year".

At a press conference on June 20, 1982, Professor Dan Miron said:

"Truth is the first casualty of war. The government has surrounded us with a web of lies, especially the name "Peace for Galilee" which reminds me of the slogan in George Orwell's 1984 "The war is peace".

The truth is that the P.L.O. has adhered strictly to the cease-fire agreement with Israel negotiated by U.S. Ambassador Habib in July 1981, as testified by U.N. observers. Israel, on the other hand, which cynically also claims that its invasion of Lebanon was designed to restore Lebanon's national sovereignty, is recorded by U.N. observers as having violated, during that period, Lebanon airspace 2125 times-between August 1981 and May 1982- and its territorial waters 652 times, excluding innumerable land violations. On April 21, 1982, Israel without provocation conducted heavy air strikes against Lebanon, including Beirut and there was no P.L.O. response. On May 9, 1982, to quote U.N. Secretary General's report to the Security Council, "Israeli aircraft again attacked targets in Lebanon". In response, P.L.O. fired around 100 shells, deliberately away from inhabited areas resulting in no damage or casualties, by Israeli admission.

Furthermore, it was evident to all observers that the war was planned for many months, as testified by Israeli commanding officers. Israeli Chief of Staff, General Eitan said weeks before: "I have a war machine, a good and well-oiled one. Why should I not use it?".

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Robert R. Bowie, a Harvard Professor and former U.S. Government official, writes in the Christian Science Monitor July 2, 1982 described the events thus:

"The Israeli invasion of Lebanon inevitably evokes feelings of horror, shame and disgust. Horror at its ruthless brutality, shame for the supine complicity of our U.S. government. And disgust at the uncritical disregard of Israel's real aims."

#### So What Were Israel's Real Aims?

To understand Israel's real aims, I submit, one has to understand the ideology of Political Zionism and its two major fundamental qualities namely expansionism and a racist policy dehumanizing the Palestinian people and denying them their national rights. Only by understanding these two qualities can one make sense of this tale of horror and carnage in Lebanon, and the subsequent so-called negotiations that are taking place now. By understanding the true nature of Zionism, one is sadly made aware of the fact that these happenings are not an aberration, in an otherwise peace-loving Israel. Alexandra Cockburn and James Ridgeway writing in their regular column "Annals of the Age of Reagan" in "The Village Voice", June 29, 1982 accurately put their finger on the spot when they said:

"Sharon and Begin are not-even given their murderous megalomaniacal transitory perturbations on the surface of some imagined Israeli "moderation"."

It is, unfortunately, an inherent and inevitable outcome of the whole ideology of Zionism.

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In their expansionist drive, the Zionists spoke of a "historical right" to Eretz Israel (the land of Israel) based on a claimed divine promise, affirming an eternal entitlement. The centrality of the Biblical content of legends, narratives and myths is recognised by all Zionists, whether they are religious, secular or agnostic and is not a monopoly for the extremists only. Ben Gurion says the Bible is the "sacrosanct title-deed to Palestine". Menachem Begin, Meir Kahane and their followers never cease to throw at us this so-called God-given entitlement. It is on this biblical basis and little else, that the Zionists rest their claim to the land of Palestine. Rabbi Nissim, Chief Rabbi of Israel, stated in 1968:

The Land of Israel was, with its borders, defined for us by Divine Providence. Thou shalt be, says the Almighty, and there it is; no power on earth can alter that which was created by Him. In this connection it is not a question of law or logic; neither is it a matter of human treatment or that sort of thing.

As to the geographical extent of the "Promised Land", as outlined in Deuteronomy, is specified by direct orders from Yahweh:

Every place where you set the soles of your feet shall be yours. Your borders shall run from the wilderness to the Lebanon and from the River, the River Euphrates, to the Western Sea [Deut. 11:24].

This is roughly the map that is prescribed for Greater Israel and referred to as the "Kingdom of David and Solomon".

Let us now look at how the Zionists have, interpreted this biblical "deed of title" and proceeded to effect it. Herzl wrote in his diaries:

The northern frontier is to be the mountains facing Cappadocia (Asia Minor), the southern, the Suez Canal. Our slogan shall be: "The Palestine of David and Solomon".

Though this may seem a liberal interpretation, even of the biblical text, it is significant in that it illustrates how expansionist Zionism may ultimately, through military strength, explain away the occupation of the entire area of Syria and Lebanon if not beyond.

The World Zionist Organization submitted to the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 its official plan and map for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine:

The boundaries of Palestine shall follow the general lines set out below: Starting on the north at a point on the Mediterranean Sea in the vicinity south of Sidon and following the watersheds of the foothills of the Lebanon as far as Jisr El Karaon, thence to El Bire, following the dividing line between the two basins of the Wadi El Korn and the Wadi Et Teim thence in a southerly direction following the dividing line between the eastern and western slopes of the Hermon, to the vicinity west of Beit Jenn, thence eastward following the northern watersheds of the Nahr Mughaniye close to and west of the Hedjaz railway.

In the east a line close to and west of the Hedjaz railway terminating in the Gulf of Akaba.

In the south a frontier to be agreed upon with the Egyptian Government.

In the west the Mediterranean Sea.

These boundaries are of particular interest both in relation to rationalization that accompanied them and to the created facts since then. Those who understand the real nature of Zionism will have seen easily through the Zionist cynicism in ascribing the occupation of the Golan Heights, in 1967, to Syrian shelling of Israeli settlements around Lake Tiberias and the occupation of Southern Lebanon in 1978 and 1982 to Palestinian "terrorism". Needless to say, that neither of these pretexts existed in 1919 when the Zionists were already planning this takeover.

In 1948, Ben Gurion wrote in his diary (May 21, 1948):

The Achilles heel of the Arab coalition is the Lebanon. Muslim supremacy in this country is artificial and can easily be overthrown. A Christian State ought to be set up there, with its southern frontier on the river Litani. We would sign a treaty of alliance with this state. Thus when we have broken the strength of the Arab Legion and bombed Amman, we could wipe out Transjordan; after that Syria would fall. And if Egypt still dared to make war on us, we would bomb Port Said, Alexandria and Cairo. We should thus end the war and would have put paid to Egypt, Assyria and Chaldea on behalf of our ancestors.

This too gives us a clear picture of the inherent expansionist nature of Zionism, besides the arrogance and the cynical alleged brotherly love that the Zionists portray today towards the Phalanx and their allies in Lebanon.

This cynicism has been accurately confirmed and documented in the recently published diaries of Moshe Sharett, the former Prime Minister of Israel. Plans of how to create the pretexts to dismember Lebanon and annex its southern portion were made in the early fifties. In a letter to Sharett, the Prime Minister of the day, Ben Gurion wrote:

Perhaps...now is the time to bring about the creation of a Christian State in our neighbourhood. Without our initiative and our vigorous aid this will not be done. It seems to me that this is the central duty, or at least one of the central duties, of our foreign policy...We must act in all possible ways to bring about a radical change in Lebanon... The goal will not be reached, of course, without a restriction of Lebanon's borders.

Ben Gurion to Moshe Sharett (then Israel's Prime Minister) in a letter dated February 27, 1954.

An entry in the Sharett Diaries for May 16, 1955 is incredib

enough almost the exact blueprint for the June 1982 invasion:

According to Dayan the only thing that's necessary is to find an officer, be he just a Major. [Major Saad Haddad was created to fill this role.] We should either conquer his heart or by him with money, to make him agree to declare himself the saviour of the Maronite population. Then the Israeli army will enter Lebanon, will occupy the necessary territory and will create a Christian regime which will ally itself with Israel. The territory from the Litani southward will be totally annexed to Israel.

Sharett's Diaries, May 16, 1955

Repeated references to these plans occurs again and again:

The Chief of Staff [Moshe Dayan] continues to insist that we should hire a Lebanese officer who will accept to serve as a puppet so that the (Israeli) army may "respond" to his appeal to "liberate Lebanon from its Moslem oppressors".

Sharett's Diaries, May 28, 1955

Following the 1967 war, Moshe Dayan expressed partial satisfaction at the territorial rewards of the war and complained that the war had given Israel "provisionally satisfying frontiers with the exception of those in Lebanon."

The 1982 invasion may have achieved satisfaction provisional for the Zionist ideologues. If so, rest assured that this is in one direction only and temporarily. Israel's leaders have every intention of holding on to what they have achieved in Lebanon, or at least most of it. Professor Neeman, an Israeli Cabinet Minister described occupied Lebanon to the port of Sidon as part of Eretz Israel and that Israel should remain in control to the Zaharani river "because that area touched on us from every point of view."

He advocates joint use of the Litani river.

And if this is not enough, the sinister statement by Dr. Da Rubinstein, legal advisor to the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Aff made to an International Committee in Paris on July 22, 1982 tha in the view of his Government there was no occupation of Lebanon He supported his argument by stating that there is no military g but only "special Units for Civilian Assistance". That is Zioni logic for you. The West Bank and Gaza are not occupied territor in Zionist jargon but merely "administered" territories, that is when they are not described as "liberated".

Israel's expansionist objectives are not limited to Lebanon In the fifties Ben Gurion stated "We have set up a dynamic state bent upon expansion." Moshe Dayan, the then Israeli army Chief of Staff, said on the radio, February 12, 1952,

It lies upon the Israeli army to carry out the fight with the ultimate object of erecting the Israeli empire.

He was more explicit, when he spoke to the Times of London in 196

Our fathers had reached the frontiers which were recognized in the Partition Plan. Our gneration reached the frontiers of 1949. Now the Six-Day generation have managed to reach Suez, Jordan and the Golan Heights. This is not the end. After the present ceasefire lines, there will be new ones. They will extend beyond Jordan--perhaps to Lebanon and perhaps to Central Syria as well.

The statements and policies of the Herut Party, the current Government party, and its leader Menachem Begin are even more precise and unequivocal. The First of the Principles of the Her Movement declared and accepted since June 1948, states clearly "The Hebrew homeland, on both banks of the Jordan River, is an



historical and geographical whole". In his address to the Herut Convention in 1956 Begin said:-

"The day is fast approaching when the pupils of Jabotinsky (Begin and his friends) would present themselves to the President of the State of Israel to form a new government.....If the disciples of Jabotinsky come to power, they would assert Israel's right its entire territory, not on the basis of land now occupied but on the basis of its historic boundaries (on both sides of the Jordan)"

This prophecy has been partly realized and we see the pupils of Jabotinsky asserting unshakable claims to liberated "Judea and Samaria" and occupying parts of Southern Lebanon. The crossing of the River Jordan, to 'liberate' the 'entire territory', can only be a matter of time.

We have seen clearly how the biblical promises were formulated as a basic unalterable principle in Zionist policy adhered to by all Zionist leaders, regardless of their supposed political differences, whether they are 'hawks' or 'doves', which is another mythical notion. This biblical territoriality becomes so absolute that it makes it obvious how misguided Arab and world leaders if they expect to negotiate an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights, the West Bank or Lebanon. The territoriality has also precedence over political, economic and strategic considerations. This does not mean that these considerations need necessarily be divorced from each other.

The economic factor has to be taken into consideration when one considers that, to the Zionists, the creation of the State of Israel was meant as a solution for "The Jewish Question" and to provide a home for all the "Jewish People", as their terminology specifies. This is, of course, part and parcel of the use of the biblical term Aliya, for a process of immigration and colonization.

arriving in Israel. These considerations, if for no other reason an economic one, make an expansionist policy an inherent component in the Zionist doctrine. Dr. Hisrael Eldad, a Zionist historian, writes:-

"Israel belongs to 4 million Russian Jews, despite the fact that they were not born here. It is the land of 9 million other Jews throughout the world, even if they have no present plans to live in it".

Dayan provides the economic answer and the territorial requirement for these millions to whom an open invitation to the Middle East remains outstanding:-

"During the last 100 years our people have been in a process of building up the country and the nation, of expansion, of getting additional Jews and additional settlements in order to expand the borders here. Let no Jew say that the process has ended. Let no Jew say that we are near the end of the road."

The message is quite clear and it was equally succinctly put by Herzl when questioned "how much land would you ask for" and answer was clear "We will demand the land we need: the more immigrants, the more land we take".

As to the Lebanese dimension of this expansionist object we have seen the biblical context, as well as the World Zionist Organization's Plan in 1919, and the statements of Herzl, Ben Guri and Dayan and finally the occupying forces of Begin and Sharon all clearly directed at the Litani River. In 1953 the Israeli Government appointed an American consultant, Walter Lowdermilk, to draw plans for the utilization of the Litani waters. The plans which were drawn included a diversion tunnel to be blasted and dug to the nearby Israel border, through the Marj River flowing past the Israeli town of Metullah and bringing the Litani waters into the L Hula water system. We, of course, remember the 1919 Zionist plan

the future Jewish State and its accompanying memorandum which specified that all "water sources on the flank of Mount Hermon should be secured for the Jewish State".

The water resources of this part of the Arab World have always been greedily eyed by the Zionist leaders. Abba Eban on May 7, 1951, while denying Israeli designs on the Euphrates and the Nile Rivers asserted "On the other hand Israel should be concerned with the Jordan and its sources". We saw how this 'concern' ultimately led to the 1967 war to finalize all Arab plans to counter Israeli diversion of the Jordan River headwaters to the Negev and to its 1978 and 1982 invasion of Southern Lebanon, in its 'concern' for the Litani and Zahrani Rivers. Frequent writings in Israeli newspapers and technical journals, speaking of increasing salinity of the Sea of Galilea and the dropping of the water table in northern Israel, must be viewed in a proper light. The control of the West Bank water resources and the 1982 war of invasion of Southern Lebanon are obviously to amend these discrepancies.

We have looked clearly at the theory and practice of un- takable Zionist territorial expansionism and that is a socio-economic one. Zionist planners demand, besides the territory, a "reasonable and normal peace" and not merely an end of the state of belligerence. Golda Meir's definition of the peace she wanted was when she could get into her car in Tel Aviv and drive to Cairo to do her shopping. Her colleagues are now doing just that. Begin and Sharon now insist on doing it in Beirut too. However, the more articulate Abba Eban spoke of "a regional partnership". This will be based on a dynamic Israeli expanding industrial economy producing for and investing

thousands of Israel's skilled professionals and top managers, of European origin, collecting them from Europe and America to 'manage' the Middle East, as it will provide cheap unskilled Arab labour, for Israel's factories and the cleaning of her streets, as alluded to by Herzl when he prescribed the Arabs' role as:

"The hewers of wood and drawers of water".

Abba Eban suggests the following perspective:

"If you imagine railway communications running from Haifa to Beirut, Damascus and Istanbul in the north, to Amman and beyond the east and traffic resumed on the Haifa-Cairo line, you can see at once that trade and commerce of the area, as well as its cultural interchange, would be strengthened beyond measure. Similarly, resumption and expansion of road communications between Cairo, Jerusalem and Beirut and between Haifa and Baghdad would stimulate the life and commerce of the Middle East above any level so far attained.

In the context of a peace settlement there would be no justification for portraying the southern part of Israel as though it were some kind of a "wedge" between various parts of the Arab world...Indeed, within the context of the settlement which I am here presenting, Israel would regard itself as a bridge, not as a wedge.

This is in a nutshell, the realization of the Israeli empire. The Americans see this in a similar light. Eugene Rostow served in 1968:- The Arabs "could have no better partners than the Israelis, their ancient cousins". This state of affairs is referred to by U.S. policy makers as "Regional Stability", which fundamentally means the preservation of dominant American interests in the exploitation of Arab oil and resources and the preservation of those regions that acquiesce to this mode of operation. Kissinger was the major architect in laying the foundation to this structure and Presidents Carter and Reagan in their erratic way, are adding on the bricks.

Besides the territorial and economic expansionist objectives, Israel appears to have wider strategic objectives. General Sharon, in a candid analysis presented to the University of Tel Aviv

strategic objectives for the 1980's. In order to understand the reason for the 'pacification' of Lebanon, there must be an understanding of the area covered by Israel's need for security. For Mr. Sharon this must be broadened, beyond the Arab countries in the Middle East, the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, to include Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, the Persian Gulf and Africa, particularly North and Central Africa". South Africa is already within this area of security because of its close military, political and economic links with Israel.

Equally extensive strategic plans for Israel are revealed by Oded Yinon, in "Kivunim" the journal in an article of the Department of Information of the World Zionist Organization, published in Hebrew in the February 1982 issue. The plan operates on two essential premises. To survive Israel must 1.) Become an imperial regional power and 2.) must effect the division of the whole area, by the dissolution of all existing Arab states into small ethnic or sectarian states which would become Israel's satellites and ironically its moral legitimization. In place of the Arab world, there will be a world of Arab fragments that would succumb to Israeli hegemony. In Iraq: "the dissolution of Iraq into a Shiite state, a Sunni state and the separation of the Kurdish part". In Syria, the "creation of an Alawite state, a Sunni state in Aleppo and another in Damascus and a druze state, maybe even in Golan and certainly in the Hauran and in Northern Jordan".

The plan states "Lebanon's total dissolution into five provinces serves as a precedent for the entire Arab world including Egypt, Syria, Iraq and the Arabian peninsula and is already following that track". Egypt is not only not spared but the plan states that

is therefore a political priority". It anticipates that "Egypt will provide Israel with the excuse to take the Sinai back into hands for the fourth time in our short history. Egypt in its present domestic political picture is already a corpse. Breaking Egypt down territorially into distinct geographical regions is the political aim of Israel in the nineteen eighties."

"Jordan constitutes an immediate strategic target in the short run," it is stated "there is no chance that Jordan will continue to exist in its present structure for a long time. Emigration from the territories and economic demographic freeze in them are the guarantees for the coming change on both banks of the river (Jordan). The Moslem Arab World is built like a temporary house of cards" which must be destroyed by "ethnic social destruction from within" and on and on goes Zionist thinking and planning.....

What appears extraordinarily peculiar, to the observer of the Middle East scene, is that Arab leaders appear unaware of this carefully manipulated expansionist scheme and cannot comprehend Zionist ideology. Instead, they react with incredulity and shock whenever a new stage of it unfolds.

The other major dimension of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon was directed at the Palestinian people, in an attempt to exterminate Palestinian nationalism, embodied as it is in the Palestine Liberation Organization as a symbol as well as a social, cultural, medical, intellectual and military infrastructure. The Palestinians were the main target of this Zionist onslaught, since their viable and independent presence as a people negates the essence and the leg

of the Zionist state. The backbone and spirit of the Palestinian had to be broken in Lebanon so as to put into practice the Israeli version of autonomy in the Occupied Territories and once and for all erase the Palestine question. In effect, though the guns and the fragmentation and phosphorous bombs were directed at the refugees in Ain Hilweh and Sabra and Shatilla, another and equally sinister campaign was directed at the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza.

"The International Commission to Enquire Into Reported Violations of International Law by Israel During its Invasion of the Lebanon" commented on the relationship between the invasion and the intensification of repression in the Occupied Territories. Twenty three new Jewish settlements were announced in June 1982. Land confiscation was intensified; 11,000 dunums were expropriated between June and August 1982. Wasting no time, Israel dissolved the elected councils of Dura and Nablus, replacing the city Council of Dura by "five Arab moderates" ("moderate" is the technical term for "Arab collaborator" in the North American press). The Israeli-sponsored "Village Leagues" of quislings were given a free hand in the civil administrations. The Universities were increasingly harassed and closed. Various economic measures were introduced to increase the economic burden on the inhabitants, in an attempt to force them to move to Jordan.

The entire purposeful pressure on the West Bank, through the "extermination" of the P.L.O. in Lebanon, was admitted by Professor Yuval Neeman, the newly appointed Minister for Science and Technology, in a statement to The Times July 29, 1982:

Israel has embarked on a battle against time to ensure that rapidly increased Jewish settlement in the Occupied West Bank and Gaza would ensure that there was no possibility of establishing an independent Palestinian state there. [A situation must be created] in which there would practically be nowhere, no place left to create a Palestinian State other than in Jordan--where there is one already.

To achieve this objective a brutal process of destroying the P.L.O. and the infrastructure of the Palestinians in Lebanon was undertaken. Their hospitals, schools, social institutes and refugee camps were totally demolished. Doctors and nurses were imprisoned, tortured and humiliated and prevented, in violation of the Geneva Conventions, from performing their human duties. Every article of the Geneva Convention was violated. The Palestine Research Centre in Beirut, after occupation of West Beirut, was pillaged and every item of literary and cultural nature was transported to Israel in violation of the Geneva Conventions; acts that the International Commission considered tantamount to cultural and intellectual genocide against the Palestinian people.

Zionist rationalization of this policy of eviction, massacre and genocide of the Palestinian people emanates from a racist policy carefully orchestrated to dehumanize the Palestinian people and deny them their national rights.

From the very beginning of their settlement in Palestine, at the beginning of this century, the Zionists pursued a policy based on denial of the Palestinian people and their existence, they came to Palestine not to live with the Palestinians but instead of them.

Israel Zangwill in 1906 spoke of "the land without a people".

Chaim Weizmann in a letter to his son, in 1918 wrote: "The Pales-



tinian Arabs are obstacles in the way of the Zionist project, they are like the rocks of Judea and must be removed from our path."

In 1969 Golda Meir said: "There was no such thing as Palestinians. They did not exist."

Sharon in 1982 denied the Palestinians the right to a homeland "there is already a Palestinian state in Jordan."

This is the classical Zionist logic. You drive people from their homes and then you argue they belong to where they are i.e. where you have driven them to.

A more sinister Zionist campaign, aided and abetted by Western Media, is that of affixing terrorism to the P.L.O. and everything Palestinian.

This dehumanizing concept of the Palestinian by the Zionist ideology, accordingly makes it possible for the Zionists to expel, possess, oppress and exterminate the Palestinian without much ado. Menachem Begin described the Palestinians as two-legged animals that deserve extermination; an almost identical description of the Jews by the Nazis.

Mr. Yitzhak Shamir, Israel's Foreign Minister speaking on II radio, June 8, 1982 called for "annihilation of the P.L.O. terrorism."

"Destroy the terrorist infrastructure" General Eitan, IDF Chief of Staff said on June 14, 1982. Similarly Ariel Sharon called on the same day on Israeli television for "destruction of the terrorist infrastructure."

Menachem Begin expressed the view, in the Knesset on August 1982 that the Palestinians, including civilians in Lebanon were

deserving of the punishment inflicted upon them.

The effects of these sentiments in the upper echelons of Israel's leadership was inevitably passed on to their masses. In an interview by Robert Fisk with an Israeli soldier, quoted in The Times June 17, 1982:

Listen, the Israeli said, I know you are tape-recording this but personally I would like to see them all dead. I would like to see all the Palestinians dead because they are a sickness wherever they go and like a sickness they must be eradicated.

And if you think these are the words of a crazy soldier, General Raphael Eitan, the Chief of Staff, and one of the quartet orchestrating this war, spelled it out in his famous or infamous declaration shortly before the outbreak of the war, before an audience of students in Tiberias:

The conflict in this country is between two parties and it will not end until one of them has wiped out the other... Israel, of course, is not going to be the one that's wiped out.

Professor Israel Shahak spoke of a Nazification process going through Jewish society in Israel and abroad. In a testimony before the International Commission to Enquire into Reported Violations of International Law by Israel During its Invasion of the Lebanon, M Gideon Spiro, a reserve sergeant in the paratroops, gave detailed evidence as to the "dehumanization of the Palestinians" in Israeli society and the Hebrew language itself. Menachem Begin during the first week of his Lebanese onslaught described the Palestinians as "lice and two-legged animals".

It is this process of dehumanizing the Palestinians by the Zionist ideologues that made the butchery, the indiscriminate

shelling and carpet bombing and total destruction of refugee camps and cities not only possible but justifiable in the eyes of its perpetrators. It made the massacres of Sabra and Shatilla not a horrifying barbarity they were but "events" that could be shrugged off as they were by Shamir, Sharon, Begin, Eitan and their officials.

Speaking of the massacres, Israeli apologists in North American media have attempted to shrug these acts of savagery off as acts committed by Lebanese, as if it would have been unheard of for Israeli soldiers to commit such acts. It is sad to state that Sabra and Shatilla were only a new chapter in a long saga of massacres of Palestinians by Zionists and incredibly enough none but Israel's current leaders, Begin, Shamir and Sharon.

The blueprint for Sabra and Shatilla was perpetrated, by the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern terrorist gangs led by Menachem Begin and Shamir, in Deir Yassin on April 9, 1948. In the early hours of the morning Zionist troops entered the peaceful Arab village of Deir Yassin, near Jerusalem and butchered virtually its entire population killing in cold blood 254 men, women and children. Jacques de Reynier, head of the International Red Cross delegation in Palestine gave an eyewitness account of the massacre:

I reached the village with my convoy. The gang were wearing uniforms with helmets. All of them were young, some even adolescents, armed to the teeth; machine guns, grenades and large scimitars in their hands, most of them still blood-stained. A beautiful young girl, with criminal eyes, showed me her knife still dripping with blood; she displayed it like a trophy... This was obviously the "cleaning up" team, that was obviously performing its task very conscientiously... virtually the entire population of the village had been deliberately massacred in cold blood, for as I observed for myself, this gang was admirably disciplined and only acted under their leaders' orders.

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The Qibya massacre, October 14, 1953, where sixty-six men, and children were butchered by the Israeli Army Unit 101, led by General Sharon, was described in these words by the American Roman Catholic priest, Father Ralph Gorman:

Terror was a political weapon of the Nazis and is still used by the Communists. But neither Nazis nor Communists ever used terror in a more cold-blooded and wanton manner than the Israelis in the massacre of Qibya. The official report of the Palestine Truce Supervision removed any possible doubt that the Israelis, themselves, in large part refugees from Hitler's terror, were perpetrators of this horrible slaughter of innocent men, women and children. It also reveals that it was an official act of the state, carried out by an official organ, the army. An orgy of murder that would be incredible if it had not been verified by reliable neutral testimony. Women and children, as well as men, were murdered deliberately, systematically and in cold blood. The only response the Israelis have made to outraged protests of the civilized world has been one of defiance and self-justification. The Prime Minister excused the murderers. Israeli newspapers openly gloated over the deed and even American Zionists showed little concern other than a fear that American dollars might not continue to flow as freely as before into the coffers of the new state.

The Kafr Qassem massacre committed by the Israeli army in October 1956 is horrifying, in its cold-blooded inhumanity. It was on October 29, 1956 that Israel's Frontier Guards perpetrated one of the most horrific massacres, in its cold blooded savagery, in modern times. A total of forty-nine Arab villagers in Kafr Qassem in Israel, mostly women and children, were in waves stood against the wall and shot, on returning to their village from their fields under the pretext of not complying with a curfew they were unaware of. When Major Melinki, the unit commander, asked the battalion commander Brigadier Shadmi if he should continue the shooting of the villagers, he was told: "I don't want any sentimentality" and

When news of the massacre leaked out, the Prime Minister David Ben Gurion, told the Knesset, in a vague statement, not dissimilar in its callousness from Menachem Begin's response after Sabra and Shatilla, that people have been "injured" by the Frontier Guards in an "incident".

After much reluctance, a number of officers and soldiers were brought to trial before a military court. Major Melinki and Lt. Dahan were found guilty of killing forty three citizens and sentenced to seventeen and fifteen years imprisonment respectively. The leniency of these sentences did not stop them from having their sentences reduced in turn by the Supreme Military Court, the Chief of Staff, the President of Israel to eight years and finally by the Committee for the Release of Prisoners to about three years. Brigadier Shalom who issued the orders to kill and spurned sentimentality was tried by another court, was convicted of a technical error and fined the equivalent of one cent. And to crown this act of Israeli justice Lt. Dahan who was convicted of murdering forty-three Arab citizens was appointed after release to be in charge of Arab affairs in the city of Ramleh! The story of Sabra and Shatilla sounds familiar! Zionist history of massacre, cover-up and callousness repeats itself.

The story of the agony of the Palestinian people did not, as some tend to forget, start in Lebanon. The Palestinians are in Lebanon because they have been evicted from their homes and deprived the right to return to their homeland. Israel's continuing war against the Palestinian people is an attempt to terrorize them so that they may forsake their birthright and acquiesce to legitimize

their own dispossession. This, I believe, is a forlorn hope and certain to fail because it is against the ethics of civilized people of this age and defies the natural course of history. The Palestinian people are determined to continue their struggle for their right to self-determination and their inalienable right to return to their homeland.

This act of massive injustice, committed against the Palestinian people, will bring nothing but continuing strife. For without a modicum of justice for the Palestinians, there will be no peace for Arab or Jew in the Middle East.