

SHAMIR TESTIFIES BEFORE COMMISSION

JERUSALEM (WNS) -- Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, testifying before the commission of inquiry acknowledged he had received a phone call from Communication Minister Mordechai Zipori reporting "hishtolelut" -- the Hebrew word for "rampage" by Phalangist forces in west Beirut, but insisted that Zipori had not conveyed the impression that a massacre was underway and had not referred to the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

"I did not think in terms of a mas-

sacre.....I thought solely in terms of fighting against terrorists," Shamir said, Zipori, who appeared before the commission on November 18, said

he had learned from a journalist friend in Beirut that the Phalangists were engaged in a massacre. He said he telephone Shamir immediately to inform him and suggested that he check out the reports with Defense Minister Ariel Sharon who was then on the way to meet with the Foreign Minister. Zipori said he had used the word "slaugh-

ter."

Shamir confirmed that shortly after Zipori's call, he met with Sharon who was accompanied by Gen. Yehoshua Sagui, chief of military intelligence, the chief of the secret service, Shin Bet, and U.S. special envoy Morris Draper. According to Shamir, neither the Israeli officials nor the Americans mentioned any "irregularities" in west Beirut. He said he had no reason to assume that the Defense Minister and the chief of military intelligence were less well informed of

what was going on than Zipori's source, which

Zipori did not identify. The source was Zeev

Schiff, correspondent for Haaretz.

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