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## ABC Sets Part of the Record Straight

BY ROBERT E. SEGAL

In the heat of media hysteria over the military eruption in Beirut last summer, an outfit calling itself the Ad Hoc Committee in Defense Of The Palestinian And Lebanese People ran a propaganda ad that was scareheaded: "40,000 people killed and 700,000 homeless."

Quick scanners of the ad naturally would conclude that such a giant volume of pillage, murder, and mayhem was the work of the Israel armed forces. Actually, in view of the fact that no strong, central Lebanese bureau kept the casualty records, Lebanese officials themselves say the exact toll may never be known. Again, John de Salis, head of the International Red Cross team in Lebanon, has said: "Anyone who gives you figures has to be making them up."

More to the point, the Foreign Policy Association, which has won endorsement for its scholarly work from every American President from Eisenhower through Reagan, is the source of an estimate of 60,000 people killed in Lebanon in civil strife there among Christians, Moslems, Druzs, and PLO forces between 1975 and 1981.

On the evening of January 7, millions of Americans had the opportunity of obtaining a rather well - balanced picture story of the massacre in Lebanon when ABC news correspondent Bill Redeker narrated an hour-long documentary. This report estimated murder victims in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps

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at 800. It attributed blame to "the wanton brutality of the Christian militiamen, negligence by senior Israeli military officers; the weakness of the Lebanese army and government; indifference of Arab nations, and finally, to the failure of an anxious American government, which broke its word."

A footnote to the reference to U.S. involvement held that senior U.S. diplomats were said to have told the ABC newsgatherers that U.S. troops were withdrawn prematurely because Washington didn't want the American public to be reminded of Vietnam.

What happened in Beirut was far different from what happened in Vietnam, especially insofar as news coverage played an important role. The Vietnam fighting was protracted over a wide territory; the Beirut compress was tight and shortlived. Eric Silver of the Manchester Guardian has put it succinctly: "TV found in this war the drama, the excitement, and tragedy without the subtleties that were necessary to understand the war. The end result was The TV War, more so than even Vietnam." Moreover, with a huge corps of 300 newsgatherers covering the war from Israel and another 300 covering from Beirut (right next door to Yasir Arafat, one of the shrewdest manipulators of the media since the days of Josef Goebbels), the reporting was surely destined to get out of kilter.

These essential facts and many more of great significance have been reported recently in a splendid resume by the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Council detailing interviews garnered by a fact-finding mission to the Middle East sponsored by the NJCRAC. Therein one reads that satellite facilities transmitted tales of the horror instantly, that networks came up with enormous sums for coverage, that "editors wanted 'bang-bang' stories."

And "bang-bang stories" were what they got. One destined to be long remembered was the widely disseminated photo of an alleged armless baby circulated by both the United Press International and Associated Press, a photo that ended up on President Reagan's desk. In that horrible miscarriage of news reporting, the Israelis, who were blamed for the mutilation, tracked down the 4 - month - old child and the nurse and learned that the total injury was a broken arm.

Those who missed the ABC documentary are true losers. Those absorbing the drama objectively must conclude that the Lebanese Phalangists, seeking revenge for carnage inflicted on the Lebanese by Arafat, his "state within a state," and other terrorists, must take nearly all of the blame for the massacre.

An unbiased TV viewer would also be obliged to conclude that it is abundantly true that the world expects a higher measure of moral responsibility from Israelis than from any other people despite the never - ending terror, denigration, and villainy that have constituted the anti - Israel record of the PLO and a major portion of the Arab world.

## ANTI-SEMITIC VANDALISM DECLINED

(Continued from page 1)

the increase in educational programs in schools that focus on the evils of bigotry, and also an increase in law enforcement of new statutes in several states against religiously motivated vandalism.

Perlmutter warned however in assessing the results of the report, that "the downturn in anti - Semitic vandalism, welcome though it is, should be kept in perspective. Hundreds of anti - Semitic episodes sadly suggest that any relaxation of vigilance or of prosecution of offenders would be premature." He went on to point out that while anti - Semitic vandalism was declining in the U.S., there was a "disturbing increase" in anti - Jewish violence in Western Europe, which resulted in the deaths of six persons and the wounding of 216 others in 1982.

## Behind The Scenes

At The United Nations

By David Horowitz

A World-Union Press Feature

## Arabs Continue to Press U.S. on Israel

UNITED NATIONS (WUP) -- In a feverish effort to win over the United States to accept an amended form of President Reagan's peace initiative -- amended to include portions of the Arab League formula adopted at Fez -- the ever-conniving Arabs here at the UN and around the world are continuing in a number of sinister procedures to 'threaten' the Administration to put pressure on Israel to accede not only to some of the impossible terms within the Reagan plan but also to the Fez formula holding firm to the PLO's role in any negotiations.

Accustomed to the use of blackmail as a weapon, even the so - called moderate Arabs, King Hussein of Jordan and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, have time and again turned to the Soviets as if to warn the U.S. that "unless you give us what we want, unless you meet our demands, we will deal with Moscow your adversary."

This is exactly what happened last week when Yasser Arafat, after a secret meeting with King Hussein, flew off to the Soviet capital to meet with the Kremlin leaders. Arafat, who in his shrewd way appears to run the 'show' in the Arab world, certainly must have had the blessings of the Arab League leaders as he flew off from Amman. And in Moscow the terrorist chieftain, whose PLO gangsters serve the global cause of the Soviets around the world, was dined and feted as a head of state.

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