

Behind The Scenes

At The United Nations

By David Horowitz

A World-Union Press Feature

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dio correspondent Moses Schonfeld of the Fairchild Broadcast News that the Report should be followed up by a Nuremberg type trial to be initiated by the Security Council and in Amman a gleeful Yasser Arafat, terming the Inquiry findings "important but incomplete," said that "an international court ought to be set up."

Paradoxically, while the Report exonerates the Israeli leaders from "direct responsibility" of what happened in the Sabra and Shatila camps -- something this writer noted last week the Commission "must" do -- it does place "indirect responsibility" on them and on the army generals recommending penalties.

Strangely, despite the clear evidence presented -- and despite its own assertion that in "having the Phalangists enter the camps, no intention existed on the part of anyone who acted on behalf of Israel to harm the non-combatant population, and that the events that followed did not have the concurrence or assent of anyone from the political or civilian echelon who was active regarding the Phalangists' entry into the camps" -- the three judges completely omitted any mention of the presence in those camps of PLO armed terrorists numbering some 2,000 and that all the other males carried weapons.

The omission of any mention of an armed battle within those camps, of a "shootout" -- a term used by the Lebanese prosecutor Germanos in questioning whether or not it was a massacre -- constitutes a cardinal sin on part of the Inquiry Troika. No one will dispute the fact that the Phalangists had gone into the camps to "look out for and clear out the terrorists."

Moreover, the Report itself stresses the fact that "when the group of doctors and nurses met IDF officers Saturday morning, at a time when it was already clear to them that they were out of danger, they made no complaint that a massacre had been perpetrated in the camps. When we asked the witnesses from this group why they had not informed the IDF offi-

cers about the massacre, they replied that they had not known about it." And if these "doctors and nurses who were in the Gaza hospital" so close to the event "did not know about the massacre," the judges affirm, how then could all those "who were nearby -- including of course, the IDF -- but not actually inside the camps . . ." form the impression from what they saw and heard that a massacre...was taking place..."

Having rescued the Christian Phalangists from the beastly grip of the PLO terrorists, and after having been hailed as their liberators, Israel, certainly its army command, had no reason to mistrust them. In fact, during the early phases of the Israeli operation, the Israelis had hoped in vain that these Phalangists would join forces with them in the campaign against the PLO. When at last, a unit agreed to enter the PLO - infested camps of Sabra and Shatila -- both of which were connected with the Beirut PLO headquarters via a secret underground tunnel -- under instructions to clear the camps of terrorists, the Israelis felt relieved never expecting that the results would turn out as they did. The full truth of what actually took place in those camps still awaits disclosure.

Whenever that happens, the three judges will not only face some embarrassment but also shame for having concluded their Inquiry Report with clauses II, III and IV involving "The Indirect Responsibility," "The Personal Responsibility," and "The Recommendations." They should have confined themselves with clause I captioned "The Direct Responsibility" in which they state, in part:

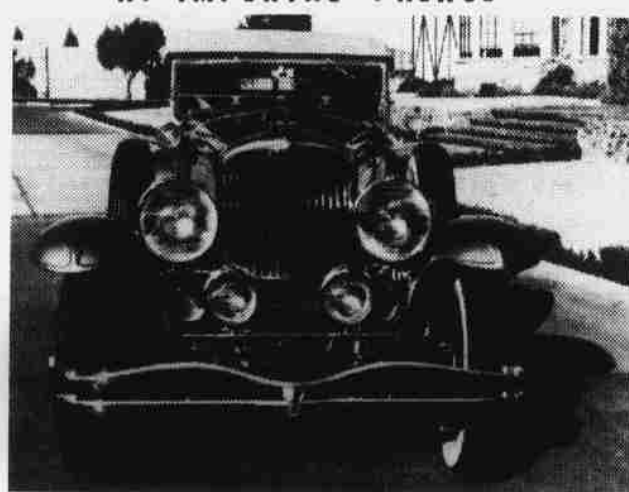
"We have no doubt that no conspiracy or plot was entered into between anyone from the Israeli political echelon or from the military echelon in the IDF and the Phalangists, with the aim of perpetrating atrocities in the camps. (Time may well prove that the whole 'tragedy' did involve a PLO-Lebanese-Moslem conspiracy or plot). The decision to have the Phalangists enter the camps was taken with the aim of preventing further losses in the war in Lebanon; to accede to public opinion in Israel, which was angry that the Phalangists, who were reaping the fruits of war, were taking no part in it, and to take advantage of the Phalangists' professional service and their skills in identifying terrorists and in discovering arms caches...."

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