



SUMMARY RECORD (PARTIAL)* OF THE 34th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. STARČEVIĆ (Yugoslavia)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/SPC/38/SR.34
29 November 1983

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 73: UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST (continued) (A/SPC/38/L.13 and L.14)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/13)
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- (e) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/149, 361 and Add.1, 382, 386, 418, 419 and 420)

1. Mr. BENCHEKROUN (Morocco) said that once again the members of the Committee had gathered to hear the many cries of distress and despair from all parts of the international community directed against the behaviour of a single State, a Member of the United Nations, because of its constant and obstinate refusal to render justice to the refugees which it had chased from their lands and their homes. It was, therefore, not surprising that the international community sought to outlaw that single nation, Israel, itself born from suffering and injustice. The different reports before the Committee, gave ample proof of the intolerable behaviour of the Israeli authorities towards the Palestine refugees.

2. All wars produced refugees and, because those refugees were generally civilians, the international community had established conventions and treaties to protect them. In general, while the situation of refugees was certainly not enviable, they at least lived a peaceful and tranquil existence while awaiting better days. However, that was not the case with the Palestine refugees. From the very establishment of the Jewish State, not only were international laws and conventions not applied, but they were constantly violated and trampled under foot by collective punishment, inflicted on entire sectors of the population, by mass destruction of housing and by the rigorous establishment of prolonged curfews, often without pretext. One could not imagine a more intolerable situation than that currently being experienced by the Palestinians under Israeli control. The comparisons of Israel with the South African régime were not a bad joke or mere rhetoric. The behaviour of the Israeli authorities towards Palestine refugees was a clear parallel to the fundamentally racist system of apartheid.

3. The Israeli authorities had claimed, by their invasion of Lebanon, that they were seeking to ensure protection of their northern borders. The facts gave the lie to those claims, because, in reality, it was an attempt to occupy south Lebanon and to enter Beirut, the capital of an Arab country and a symbol of coexistence

(Mr. Benchekroun, Morocco)

between religions and different ethnic groups. The Israeli authorities sought to destroy all symbols of coexistence and dialogue between different ethnic groups and different beliefs. They had taken up the torch of the colonial Powers in seeking to reduce the resistance of the indigenous people, because, it must be said, the Jewish colony, inhabited by natives of the Ukraine, Poland or Germany, was in no way different from that of some regions of Europe. Not only did the Israelis destroy the camps of the refugees, but they refused to permit the survivors to rebuild.

4. Under those circumstances, he wondered how effective relief could be provided to those Palestine refugees for whom UNRWA had been established. UNRWA was attempting to maintain a minimum of decent living conditions in the camps despite the abuse and destruction carried out by the Israeli leaders. The behaviour of the Israeli army in the Sabra and Shatila massacres and the establishment of concentration camps were even more sinister examples that would brand the Israeli leaders as true criminals in the eyes of future generations.

5. Throughout the ages, Jews had been in the forefront of knowledge in various disciplines and, inspired by noble ideas, had led revolutions. Their impact on the course of history was well established. With that brilliant past, one would have thought that the culture of others, above all that of their closest relatives, the Palestinians, would have found some merit in their eyes. Yet, instead of opening schools and universities, they closed them. Instead of encouraging teaching, they sabotaged it. He wondered whether such was the behaviour of the cultivated and humanist Jewish scholar, descendant of a people, a history and a culture that had given mankind knowledge, science, culture, humanism and civilization. There was one means whereby that situation could yet be changed: both sides should accept and open themselves to the culture and civilization of their neighbours. Without that, there was no hope of salvation for the Israelis, for the Palestinians, or for those who wished a true Arab-Israeli reconciliation. He supported the establishment of a university at Jerusalem.

6. Mr. ABOUASSI (Lebanon) said that, with respect to the protection of the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, it should be remembered that they had been in that country since 1948, when the then President of the Republic of Lebanon had called upon all Lebanese to open their homes and their hearts to the flow of Palestine refugees pouring into Lebanon. Lebanon had subsequently become a haven for refugees, who had found the free and democratic Lebanese society an ideal place to express themselves and their aspirations and to take advantage of the facilities offered to them, while respecting the laws of the host country.

7. Distinction should be made between the various regions of Lebanon under the effective authority of the Government of Lebanon and those regions out of its effective control. Thus, the Israeli forces were still occupying south Lebanon as a result of the June 1982 invasion. The Lebanese army was prevented from reaching those regions, and UNIFIL was not allowed to implement its mandate. In north Lebanon and in the Beqa'a non-Lebanese forces were still illegally present and exercising effective control. In the regions under the effective control of Lebanese Government, especially the Beirut area, the Government was doing every

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(Mr. Abouassi, Lebanon)

thing possible in order to secure the safety of Lebanese and Palestinians alike. It had largely succeeded in establishing security and stability in the area of greater Beirut and in some of the camps as mentioned in the Commissioner-General's report.

8. It was not possible, as a general rule to separate the question of protection from the question of security and the need to respect the host country's laws. Secondly, it was not possible to speak about protection of the Palestine refugees in Lebanon in a vacuum; one should consider the geographic, social and political context in which they lived. For the past 15 years, the camps had been transformed into closed and fortified barracks. It was not possible to speak about the security of Palestine refugees without speaking about the security of Lebanese civilians. The war of others waged on Lebanese soil in north Lebanon was further proof of the interdependence between the security of the Palestinians and the Lebanese, whose safety was a prime responsibility of the Lebanese Government.

9. The Lebanese people had been facing tragedy, suffering and destruction. Despite that, they had not lost their faith and their resolve to survive and to rebuild their country. Lebanon was determined to uphold and maintain its sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. Lebanon was also determined to liberate its national soil from all unauthorized non-Lebanese forces and to extend the unifying authority of the State to every inch of its territory. Lebanon was the oldest constitutional democracy in the Middle East. Its Constitution went back to 1926, and the succession of the civilian power had been carried out peacefully through democratic elections every six years since. Moreover, Lebanon had never committed aggression or plotted against any other State and had distinguished itself by being a land of freedom and a haven for refugees. He wished to reaffirm that the Lebanese Government regarded all Palestinians residing legally in Lebanon as being under the protection of Lebanese law, as were Lebanese nationals and other foreigners residing legally in the country.

10. Lebanon had responded to the request in General Assembly resolution 37/120 J, paragraph 6, to provide housing to the Palestine refugees whose houses had been demolished or razed by the Israeli forces. Lebanese officials had also informed the Commissioner-General of the authorization granted to UNRWA to reconstruct the camps. The implementation of a reconstruction policy must take the following into account: (a) the geographical distribution of the camps meant that houses should be built in the light of security and technical considerations; (b) the Palestinians concerned were only those who were legally residing in Lebanon; (c) financing and implementation should be with the approval of and in co-ordination with the Lebanese Government. The Government of Lebanon was studying the possibility of forming a committee drawn from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the Directorate of Urban Planning and UNRWA to study the matter from all its political, security and administrative aspects. The human consideration should always be uppermost in the minds of all, and Lebanon would co-operate with the Commissioner-General and his staff towards the fulfilment of his mandate.

(Mr. Abouassi, Lebanon)

11. The financial difficulties still facing UNRWA remained serious and were a matter of concern, especially for the host countries. Lebanon considered that it was imperative to continue seeking suitable solutions to that problem. The failure to meet the Agency's needs added to the frustrations of the Palestinians and would exacerbate further the tension and bitterness.

12. The CHAIRMAN, speaking in his capacity as representative of Yugoslavia, said that, although the Palestine refugees had been deprived of their homeland and denied the right to national self-determination, their sense of national identity and their national aspirations had never faltered. They had shown to all who had thought otherwise that it was illusory to expect the Palestine problem to disappear in the absence of a just and lasting solution. There seemed to be no limit to the force used against them and the sufferings inflicted upon them. Even the carefully measured language of United Nations documents, as used in the report of the Commissioner-General, revealed the magnitude of their tragedy.

13. The killing of hundreds of Palestinian civilians in the Sabra and Shatila camps, for which Israel bore full responsibility, had had a profound impact on the security of all Palestinians in Lebanon. As had been stressed in the forward to the Commissioner-General's report, the most serious problem in the period under consideration had been the personal security of the Palestine refugees. Large-scale arrests, intimidation and killing of Palestinians had taken place during the period. UNRWA, limited in the action it could take, had reported and made representations to the authorities responsible. Even UNRWA staff members had been killed or detained, in violation of the privileges and immunities of international organizations and of international law, and responsibility for such acts was borne by Israel as the occupying Power.

14. It was beyond comprehension that some States could support UNRWA and its programmes and yet stop short of censuring Israel for acts that had brought the continuation of those programmes into question. The words of the Commissioner-General that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon had largely undone the Agency's work of 30 years there could not be taken lightly. The destruction of refugee housing in south Lebanon and in Beirut and the demolition of refugee shelters by Israel on punitive grounds had created a massive housing shortage, which the Agency was being called upon to alleviate. It had also had to undertake an emergency relief operation, which had placed a heavy burden on its already limited resources, and had not yet succeeded in raising the \$13 million required for phase I of the Lebanon emergency reconstruction programme. At the same time, the Agency had had to cope with Israeli obstruction of its operations in the occupied territories.

15. In spite of almost insuperable difficulties, the Agency had rapidly re-established its own health services and had made progress in reactivating the school system and in reconstructing refugee housing facilities, while at the same time carrying on all its regular operations in the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The devotion and sense of purpose shown by the Commissioner-General and his staff throughout that extraordinary relief operation had been exemplary.

(The Chairman)

16. Against that background, the great importance of continuing the activities of UNRWA was evident. Current events in north Lebanon showed that the emergency situation in which the Agency operated was far from over and that there remained an urgent need for its relief operations and other activities.

17. The Agency's assistance to the Palestine refugees was also a stabilizing factor in the volatile situation in the region. There was no alternative to UNRWA in the absence of a political solution to the Middle East problem, and it must therefore be provided with sufficient funds to carry out its task in a manner commensurate with the needs of the Palestine refugees. The international community had a moral obligation to provide that funding to UNRWA, and his delegation therefore supported the appeals of the Commissioner-General and of the Working Group on the Financing of UNRWA for increased contributions. It was already evident that the favourable circumstances of the 1983 budget year would not be repeated in 1984.

18. His country would continue to contribute to the efforts of the international community to assist the Palestine refugees to the best of its ability. It contributed regularly to the Agency's budget, made contributions in kind, and provided scholarships at its schools and universities.

19. While the Agency's work was indispensable, it was certainly no answer to the problem of the Palestine refugees, which could only be resolved through a just and comprehensive solution to the Middle East conflict.

20. It had been the non-aligned countries that had given the strongest support to the Palestinian people, its just cause and its sole legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization. Their views on the necessary elements of a just solution had been reiterated on a number of occasions: the attainment and exercise, in Palestine, of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the rights to return, to self-determination and to national independence and sovereignty. The realization of those rights, together with the withdrawal of Israel from all Arab territories occupied since 1967 and the recognition of the right of all countries and peoples of the region to live within recognized boundaries free from threat or use of force, was the only way to liquidate the problem of the Palestine refugees. While continuing to support UNRWA, the international community should seek a political solution along those lines.

21. Mr. NAZARI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the question of Palestine was an explosive issue which could severely threaten peace all over the world. The grave violation of the principles of the Charter and the denial by the illegal Zionist entity of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people was the main cause of the dangerous situation in the Middle East. The struggle of the Palestinians was an Islamic struggle against Zionist colonization of part of the Islamic lands. Unfortunately, despite the Palestinians' continued fight to free their homeland from foreign domination and to regain their inalienable rights, international efforts had been made to give the Palestinian refugee situation a permanent status. The history of Palestine was not simply the history of refugees but a history of human dignity. The services provided by UNRWA could be no

(Mr. Nazari, Iran)

substitute for the Palestinian people's right to live in freedom and dignity in their own national homeland. The Agency should not merely function within a framework of charity which might eventually extinguish the Palestinian people's urge to struggle against zionism.

22. It was unfortunate that some States which were responsible for the conditions in which the Palestinian refugees were living should use contributions to UNRWA as a means of salving their conscience. Even the Zionist entity, despite its responsibility for the Sabra and Shatila massacres, had contributed a considerable amount to the Agency.

23. Iran, which was host to over 3 million refugees, 2 million of whom had been forced to abandon their homes in western Iran by continuing enemy attacks on civilians, as well as Afghan brothers who had fled the foreign occupation of their country, was well aware of the difficulty faced by UNRWA in providing facilities for Palestinian refugees and consider the level of its assistance to UNRWA as symbolic. When the international community found a just and lasting solution to the Palestine question, the need for UNRWA would disappear.

24. The Chairman announced that the Committee had concluded its general debate on agenda item 73 and invited the Commissioner-General to respond to the comments made by delegations in the course of that debate.

25. Mr. RYDBECK (Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East) made a statement.*

26. Mr. CHAMMAS (Lebanon) said that he hoped that a procedural debate would not ensue if he was formally to request that the important statement just made by the Commissioner-General should be reproduced in extenso. That statement was extremely pertinent to the work of the Committee, and its reproduction would afford members the opportunity of effectively appraising the work of UNRWA in the light of the Commissioner-General's remarks. The statement was of interest to all Governments, including host Governments and contributing Governments. He would like the Chairman formally to pronounce on that request.

27. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to the reproduction in extenso of the closing statement of the Commissioner-General.

28. It was so decided.

29. Mr. CHAMMAS (Lebanon), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Lebanon was ready at all times, under all circumstances, and within the limits of its capacity, to collaborate with the Commissioner-General and his staff in order to help them carry out the tremendous task entrusted to them by the General Assembly.

* The full text of this statement will be reproduced as a document.

(Mr. Chammas, Lebanon)

30. His delegation noted that the Commissioner-General had spoken of only five detainees in Lebanon, and wished to reassure him that the Lebanese authorities were ready to communicate to his representatives the reasons why those persons had been detained. Lebanon would continue to meet its obligations under the relevant Conventions, in particular the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, as one of the few countries that had often had recourse to the Organization for assistance.

31. His delegation did not often ask to speak in exercise of the right of reply and derived no pleasure from doing so. It was a course of last resort, taken only under a sense of compulsion.

32. His delegation had not wished the situation in Lebanon to become a subject of debate in the Committee's consideration of agenda item 73. Its statement in the general debate had had to be rewritten at the last moment in the light of developments in that debate.

33. He understood and accepted the right of the representative of Israel to choose whatever style he saw fit in promoting his own interest. He had hoped, however, that the representative of Israel would not inject certain views into the debate which were of such a grave nature that, if accepted, they would give a distorted impression of what the Lebanese tragedy was about. From the moment the representative of Israel had made his first reference to the report of the Commissioner-General, it had been evident where he had intended to lead the Committee.

34. The representative of Israel had begun his statement by referring to "a protracted civil war, a religious/ethnic strife". It was difficult to believe that the representative of Israel, with his thorough study of the history of Lebanon and its people, really believed that the essence of the Lebanese tragedy could be summed up in those words. He had gone on implicitly to refute that view himself, by adducing factors which proved that what was going on in Lebanon was a war being waged by forces from outside Lebanon. If the war in Lebanon was a civil war, why were the Israeli and the other non-Lebanese forces, whatever they might be, still in Lebanon? The representative of Israel had had no monopoly on that approach. Other delegations, no doubt in good faith, had referred to the situation in Lebanon as one of civil strife.

35. The Lebanese did not ask for pity; they asked for understanding and demanded compassion from all those who addressed themselves to the tragedy of Lebanon. The Lebanese had, of course, their differences; they were deep differences and they did have religious connotations. But they had been caught in the web of a power struggle of a global nature taking place in a regional context and in local wars being fought, regrettably with Lebanese means. The Lebanese had allowed themselves to be victimized, but were determined to save themselves. What they requested and indeed demanded of others was that they should meet their obligations to assist the Lebanese to find peace and tranquillity in their own country.

(Mr. Chammas, Lebanon)

36. He had had no intention of falling into the trap of injecting the Lebanese equation into the debate on the report of the Commissioner-General. But certain pronouncements had been made of so grave a character that, if they had not been dealt with immediately and explained without delay, they might convey an erroneous impression.

37. In the course of its history, Lebanon had had its internal problems, as had all countries, and the Lebanese had sometimes indeed killed each other. They were not, however, students of mass murder. That had not been part of their history. A study of the last four centuries and of the four centuries of Ottoman rule would show how the Lebanese had stood fast in fighting for their autonomy. The Lebanese were by no means newcomers to the body politic of the Middle East and, if at times it appeared that their body politic had been impotent, it was not unique in the political history of nations that certain systems did succumb to a certain degree of impotence only to recover from it once more. It was his hope that Lebanon would not become politically senile, and that the Lebanese people would do all in its power to regain its unity. There had been problems in the previous century, and they had been overcome. There was not only a condition of passive coexistence in Lebanon, but one of active participation. Lebanon was a mosaic of communities and there were frictions between them, but once the extraneous elements were removed, the representative of Israel, and indeed all members of the Committee, could rest assured that the Lebanese would surmount their problems, because it would then be within their social, psychological and political capacity to do so.

38. Mr. SHEHATA (Egypt) said that it was not the custom of his delegation to present conjectures or fabrications, but well-substantiated and soundly documented evidence, and it had also adopted that approach in its statement on agenda item 73. His delegation had enough such incontrovertible material to take up 10 days of the Committee's time or even an entire session of the General Assembly. It would be no exaggeration to say that his delegation was prepared to present evidence from now until Judgement Day of its conviction of the justice of the Palestinian cause.

39. The representative of Israel had made frequent references to the fact that there was a Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt. The peaceful relations between the two countries were precisely the same as those maintained by Egypt with a great many other countries, which conferred no privileges on those countries and recognized no special status for them. The Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel did not give carte blanche to Israel to implement policies of aggression and invasion and was not a licence to Israel to pursue expansionist policies. Egypt had opened the door to Israel so that it could abandon those policies. Israel had, however, remained the prisoner of its past, its mythology and its illusions and had obstinately persisted in closing the door to peace offered to it by the largest Arab country in the area.

40. The situation of the refugees in Gaza and Rafah had been made abundantly clear in the statement of his delegation. The representative of Israel had referred to certain pragmatic proposals made to Egypt. The nature of those "pragmatic proposals" to solve the problem of Rafah, part of which was in Egyptian territory

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(Mr. Shehata, Egypt)

and part in Palestinian territory, should be made clear. It had been proposed that Egypt should take over Palestinian Rafah in return for parts of Egyptian territory. It was inconceivable that Egypt should ever relinquish any part of its territory or annex any part of Palestinian or any other territory.

41. The references contained in the statement of his delegation to the Ansar camp and the condition of its inmates had been characterized by the representative of Israel as conjecture or ignorance of the facts. If the memory of the representative of Israel failed him, he was prepared to recall some of those facts. The statement had quoted the views of Mr. Yuri Avneri, who had visited the camp and had characterized it as a cancer in the body of Israel and a stain that should be wiped out. Those had not been the words of his delegation but of that well-known Israeli personality. There had also been a medical report drawn up by three Jewish doctors from the United Kingdom who had visited the camp and an article by Arie Eliav in The New York Times. None of those reports could have been exaggerations and none of their authors could be accused of anti-Semitism. The representative of Israel could expect to hear in a very short time more painful and well-documented facts in the course of the Committee's debate on agenda item 69. He hoped that the representative of Israel would then be able to give a more convincing and logical reply than had been heard at the Committee's 33rd meeting.

42. The representative of Israel had mentioned the role of the late President Gamal Abdel Nasser in the Lebanon agreement of 1969. That agreement had been reached at the request of the lawfully constituted authorities in Lebanon, and the representative of Lebanon could confirm that.

43. In connection with the subject of saboteurs and infiltrators in the Gaza Strip, he was himself, unfortunately for the representative of Israel, a student of history. In 1954, in what became known as the Lavon Affair, infiltrators had been sent from Israel to blow up the United States Consulate in Alexandria in order to disrupt relations between Egypt and the United States.

44. Much could be said on the subject of terror and terrorists. The French Maquis had been called terrorists by the Nazi occupying forces, and the representative of France could tell the Committee whether he considered them terrorists or freedom fighters. During the Second World War, the British Government had referred to some of the present leaders of Israel as terrorists. It was a relative matter, and depended on the point of view of the observer, whether the same persons were regarded as terrorists or freedom fighters. The concept of terrorism was fluid and required to be placed in its proper legal, historical and political context.

45. Finally, his delegation had a great deal of documentary evidence, and, unfortunately for the representative of Israel, the study of history was one of its hobbies.

46. Mr. AZZANI (Democratic Yemen), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he was fully aware that the Israeli representatives mention of Democratic Yemen at the preceding meeting had been intended to divert the attention of the international community and the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices

(Mr. Azzani, Democratic Yemen)

Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories from the real reasons for the number of Palestinian refugees. Democratic Yemen's position had never changed. Israel must bear the full responsibility for its aggression and occupation of Palestinian Arab territories, and the international community must adopt the necessary measures to put an end to that occupation because that was the only solution to the problem of the refugees.

47. Mr. ABOUCHAER (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, although in his lengthy statement at the preceding meeting, the Israeli representative had raised various points which were irrelevant to the matter under consideration and all those points could be refuted, he would deal only with four pertinent issues raised in that statement. The Israeli representative had suggested an exchange of Arab refugees against Jews living in Arab countries. He knew full well that many Jews living in Arab States had migrated to Israel because of Israeli propaganda or because, as described in the book by a Jewish author, The Gun and the Olive Branch, Israeli intelligence pursued a policy of terrorist activities against Jews living in Arab countries to make them believe that it was unsafe to go on living there. It had never been proved that any Arab State had forced those Jews to leave; in fact many had repeatedly declared that they would welcome the return of Jewish immigrants to their original Arab countries. On the other hand, there was categorical proof of Israel's policy of clearing the Arab lands of their indigenous inhabitants in order to create a State in which Jews alone would have full citizenship. Israel also claimed that Jewish residents in many countries were hostages and called for their release. That was yet further proof of Israel's distortion of facts to serve its own interests.

48. The Israeli representative had also alleged that the Arabs who had remained in Israel and the Palestine refugees suffering from military occupation in the West Bank and Gaza had flourished and he had called upon the peoples of the world to come to the paradise of the racist and exclusive State. That representative could not, however, deny that the rate of inflation in his country was 200 per cent and that it was living on charity at the expense of the taxpayers of other States.

49. Another allegation was that Israel wanted to resolve the question of the refugees and that the Arabs were preventing that solution. He had not, however, said what that solution would be, but, since 1948, Israel had shown that it would be the expulsion and genocide of the Palestinians. The United Nations had categorically declared that the problem of the refugees could be resolved by their return to the homeland in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194 (III). In fact, Israel had been admitted to membership of the Organization only on the basis of its pledge to implement that resolution. No solution to the refugee problem could be valid if it ignored their right to return to their homeland and to retain their Palestinian Arab identity.

50. In his statement, the Israeli representative had reviewed in great detail many events in Lebanon. There was no need to remind the Committee of the horrific events described in the Commissioner-General's report at the preceding session. The Israeli representative seemed to be able to manipulate history to serve his attempt to mislead the Committee.

(Mr. Abouchaer, Syrian Arab Republic)

51. A representative of Israel had earlier declared to the Committee that the Palestine refugees could not return to their homelands because it was impossible to turn the clock back. It was difficult to understand why the clock could not be turned back 36 years whereas it was perfectly admissible to turn it back 3,000 years in order to justify the racist Zionist myth of the Jewish motherland.

52. Ms. TUDROUS (Palestine Liberation Organization), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Zionist representative's statement at the preceding meeting had been almost as long as the history of Israeli crimes committed against the Palestinian people but had not been so consistent. He seemed to think that length could be a substitute for truth. In that statement, Palestinians and other Arabs appeared as the wrongdoers, while Israel, whose actions lay at the root of the Palestine refugee problem, appeared blameless. Those fabrications might be interpreted as the result of some political schizophrenia from which Israel had suffered for the past 36 years since its words were totally unrelated to its deeds; or as a demonstration of arrogant disrespect for the consciences and intelligence of the members of the Committee as well as of United Nations resolutions; or as a pathetic attempt by a criminal to put the blame on his victims. In fact, they were probably a combination of all three.

53. The Zionist representative had begun his "historical" analysis of the problem at the point which suited his purpose, without mentioning who had initiated the series of aggressions in a once peaceful area.

54. It was unfortunate that those who, before 1948, had been considered bands of illegal terrorists were now heading one of the most powerful armies in the area. Not only had Israel driven the Palestinians from their homes and expropriated their lands, but also its monstrous war machine followed the refugees, killing innocent women and children in the areas to which they had fled. The Zionist representative had had the audacity to claim that his country was today the benefactor of the Palestine refugees in south Lebanon, without mentioning who had destroyed their homes, killed them and erected the biggest concentration camp in modern history.

55. Nor did he speak of the harassment of the refugees in the camps in the occupied West Bank. Very recently five armed men dressed as civilians had entered Dheisheh camp, upon which a curfew had been imposed, and had shot three Palestinians. The Israeli authorities were currently referring to the million Palestine refugees in the West Bank as a threat to Israel's security in preparation for new expulsions and massacres.

56. It was ridiculous for the representative of one of the most murderous armies in modern history to denounce children whose only way of resisting was to throw stones.

57. It was an insult to the world conscience that those who had perpetrated the greatest injustices against the Palestinian people had the arrogance to pretend that the meticulously documented information in the Commissioner-General's report (A/38/13) was biased, without having the intellectual honesty to state where the information was false. Israel's total disregard for UNRWA was shown not only by

(Ms. Tudrous, PLO)

its rejection of the report but also by its arrests of UNRWA employees and occupation of the Agency's facilities contrary to all international practices.

58. She could not understand the admiration expressed by the representatives of the United States and Norway for that statement, which was merely a piece of false political propaganda in total contradiction with the history of the area, unless that admiration reflected a complete lack of knowledge of the true events in the Middle East. If that was so, the United States should welcome the dissemination by the United Nations of information on the question of Palestine.

59. The strategy of the Palestine Liberation Organization was based simply on the return of all refugees to their homeland and the need for the Palestinians to exercise their right of self-determination and their right to establish their own State on their national soil, thus putting an end to the plight of the refugees and bringing lasting peace to that war-tormented region.

60. Mr. ZAHAWIE (Iraq), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he hoped that the 10-minute limit for statements in exercise of the right of reply would not be applied too strictly, in view of the extremely lengthy statement by the representative of the racist Zionists at the preceding meeting.

61. Mr. LEVIN (Israel) pointed out that his country should be called by its proper name which was the State of Israel and not that mentioned by the representative of Iraq.

62. Mr. ABOUCHAER (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking on a point of order, deplored the Israeli representative's attempt to impose new procedures on the Committee. He would like the Israeli representative to give the number of the rule of procedure which prevented any State from using whatever expression it wished to describe a specific situation.

63. Mr. ELHOFARI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), speaking on a point of order, said that no such rule existed. The representative of the Zionist entity wished his country to be called by the name used by the United Nations, yet that entity constantly flouted the Organization's resolutions, including the one under which it had been admitted.

64. Mr. LEVIN (Israel), speaking on a point of order, observed that a point of order should not be used for excursions into political propaganda. A State should be called by the name under which it had been admitted to the United Nations.

65. Mr. ZAHAWIE (Iraq), speaking on a point of order, explained that he had twice asked the President of the General Assembly to make a statement clarifying the matter, since the United Nations recognized neither the boundaries claimed by Israel, which included territories annexed from other States, nor the capital it claimed. The President had said that what the United Nations recognized was the State of Israel at the time of its acceptance into the Organization. Consequently, every delegation had the right to refer to it as an entity, which was unlike any other Member of the Organization.

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66. Mr. LEVIN (Israel), speaking on a point of order, said that Israel, as a Member of the United Nations, should be called by the name under which it had been accepted into the Organization. The representative of Iraq had said that he had asked the President of the General Assembly several questions but had not said what the ruling had been. He would therefore like the Chairman to issue a ruling on the subject at the current meeting.

67. The CHAIRMAN replied that, rather than issuing a ruling, he would express the opinion that, generally speaking, countries were addressed in the way in which they were known as Members of the United Nations but that there were numerous occasions on which countries were referred to differently, in which case he assumed that the representative of the country concerned had every right to raise a point of order. However, in the absence of a universally accepted practice, it was difficult to force any representative to use a country's official name.

68. Mr. ZAHAWIE (Iraq), said that in his book The New Diplomacy: International Affairs in the Modern Age Mr. Abba Eban, a former Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs, had stated that not a single country in the world community, including those countries which supported 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 of the Israeli population was opposed to the idea of incorporating the population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into Israel. The representative of Israel would have the Committee believe that the question of the Palestinian people was one of the falsest issues in modern political history and that any refugees should be absorbed by neighbouring Arab countries. The views expressed by the representative of Israel at the previous meeting had been frequently refuted by his delegation. The position of Iraq in that regard had been clearly set forth in documents A/SPC/36/PV.25 and A/SPC/37/PV.32.

69. The representative of the Zionist entity had claimed that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon had been justified because the Palestine Liberation Organization had repeatedly carried out terrorist acts against Israel during the cease-fire in effect from July 1981 to June 1982. In actual fact, however, not a single shot had been fired during that cease-fire. In an article published in The New York Times on 27 June 1982, Mr. Abba Eban, had stated that the Israeli security situation had been satisfactory and that the Government of Israel should never have launched Operation Peace for Galilee.

70. The representative of Israel had alleged that the Palestine Liberation Organization had given support to international terrorist organization. Israel itself, however, had attempted to collaborate with international terrorists. On 4 June 1983 the International Herald Tribune had published a report concerning an offer made by the Israeli secret service to supply arms and money to the Red Brigade in Italy in 1974. According to the report the Red Brigade had received arms shipments from the Palestine Liberation Organization but had refused the Israeli offer in 1974 out of fear of being manipulated by foreign secret services. The report suggested that the Israelis had hoped that instability in Italy, an ally in the Mediterranean region, would prompt the United States Government to commit itself even more closely to Israel. The representative of Israel had accused Palestine freedom fighters of hiding behind the skirts of women. He had neglected,

(Mr. Zahawie, Iraq)

however, to say that the terrorist leader Menachem Begin had used similar tactics and had hidden weapons under the beds of children and in schools and synagogues. With regard to the medical care provided to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, he drew attention to a recent ABC television programme entitled "Under the Israeli Thumb", which demonstrated the policy of Israel designed to undermine the local medical infrastructure in the occupied territories, in order to make the inhabitants dependent on the services provided in Jerusalem.

71. There were numerous newspaper reports about cases of brutality carried out by Israeli vigilantes and soldiers against Palestinian residents in the occupied territories. Amnesty International had received reports from eyewitnesses about the mistreatment of prisoners captured by the Israeli forces in south Lebanon. There were, in particular, allegations that the prisoners held in the detention centre in Saida had been subjected to continual beatings by Israeli soldiers.

72. The Israeli representative had stated that all the wars in which Israel had been involved had been caused by the Arabs. However, in an article published in The Jerusalem Post on 20 August 1982, Menachem Begin had said that the Israeli Government had decided in June 1967 to attack the Egyptian forces in the Sinai. He drew attention also to an article published in The New York Times on 18 January 1983 in which former United States Presidents Ford and Carter contended that the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip by the Israeli Government was a major obstacle to any moderate Arab initiatives for peace in the Middle East and that Israel had failed to carry out its commitments under the Camp David accords. Israel continued to confiscate property in the occupied territories and build settlements in order to establish de facto Israeli ascendancy there. The profound disappointment and concern caused by that policy was shared by many of Israel's staunchest supporters.

73. Mr. HAMADNEH (Jordan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of Israel had tried, at the previous meeting, to depict the Palestinian people as an alien people who had come to attack Israel. He had ignored the fact that the Palestinian people had been expelled from their homeland by the Government of Israel and continued to be the victims of Israeli aggression. The allegation that Jordan had carried out a massacre of Palestine refugees in 1970 was totally false. Jordan had received the Palestine refugees expelled by Israel in 1948 and 1967. Within its limited resources, his Government endeavoured to provide those refugees with all possible assistance. The Israeli representative had tried to accuse the Arab States of not wanting to solve the Palestine refugee problem and refusing to absorb the Palestine refugees. The solution to the problem of the Palestine refugees must be based on the return of those refugees to their homeland and the exercise of their inalienable rights. That solution, therefore, must be based on the implementation by Israel of all relevant United Nations resolutions.

74. Mr. LEVIN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic had inquired whether the Palestinians living in the occupied territories had prospered. The Palestine refugees living in camps in Judea and Samaria had experienced a period of development unparalleled in

(Mr. Levin, Israel)

Arab countries. It was not a paradise, but it was not the hellish situation found in the prisons of Palmyra. With regard to the question of genocide, the representative of Syria should have exercised greater caution. It was well known that tens of thousands of people had been killed in Hama and that hundreds of people were being killed in north Lebanon in the area of Tripoli because of Syrian interference. With respect to the alleged atrocities committed by Israel in Lebanon, the Syrian representative would do well to examine closer the statement made by the Israeli delegation in that regard and take a closer look at the role of Syria in Lebanon.

75. The representative of Iraq had cited a number of books and articles. It was unfortunate that his statement contained so many non sequiturs and contradictions. He had misquoted Prime Minister Begin. On the occasion in question, Mr. Begin had said that he extended his hand in friendship to all Arab countries. Furthermore, the representative of Iraq should have been aware of the fact that Judea and Samaria had not been annexed to Israel. He had also admitted that the Red Brigade had received arms from the Palestine Liberation Organization. His criticism of the medical assistance provided to Palestine refugees was totally unfounded. The medical assistance in Judea and Samaria was excellent. Furthermore, the reports of Amnesty International year after year were replete with information concerning the widespread use of torture against prisoners in Iraq.

76. Mr. ZAHAWIE (Iraq), speaking on a point of order, said that the representative of Israel should confine his remarks to the agenda item under consideration.

77. The CHAIRMAN said that, in view of the complexity of the situation in the Middle East, it was difficult to limit one's remarks to a particular aspect of that situation. Nevertheless, he asked the representative of Israel to confine his remarks as much as possible to the agenda item under consideration.

78. Mr. LEVIN (Israel) speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of Egypt would do well to study the period of Egyptian history under Nasser, particularly the war in Yemen, which had resulted in 250,000 casualties and the abortive attempt of Egypt to take over Syria.

79. Mr. ZAHAWIE (Iraq), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he had referred to a statement made by Mr. Begin concerning the decision of the Israeli Government to attack the Egyptian forces in the Sinai. He had cited an article written by Mr. Abba Eban on the policy of the Israeli Government in favour of annexing the occupied territories. The representative of Israel, of course, believed that those territories had been liberated, not annexed. The report of Amnesty International dealing with the situation in south Lebanon since the Israeli invasion on 6 June was dated 5 August 1982.

80. Mr. SHEHATA (Egypt), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Egyptian forces had entered Yemen at the request of the Government of Yemen. His country and people were proud to have assisted the fraternal people of Yemen in achieving independence. The Israeli representative should also know that the proposed unification of Egypt and Syria had been completely voluntary on both

(Mr. Shehata, Egypt)

sides. That initiative had been halted in 1961, upon the decision of the Syrian Government. Efforts to unify the two countries would continue when both sides were willing to do so.

81. The intentions of Israel in Lebanon were quite clear. In a letter dated 27 February 1954, Prime Minister Ben Gurion had advocated the establishment of a Christian State in Lebanon as a natural ally of Israel. In a speech made on 28 May 1954, Mr. Ben Gurion had said that it was necessary to find a Christian leader in Lebanon in order to create such a State and that the Lebanese territory south of the Litani River should be totally annexed to Israel. Those plans had been made in 1954, before the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization and at a time when there had been no security threat to Israel from the north.

82. Mr. LEVIN (Israel) said that he had listened with great interest to the remarks of the representative of Egypt. In that regard, he urged him to bear in mind the words of Sir Winston Churchill to the effect that to jaw-jaw was better than to war-war.

83. Mr. ABOUCHAER (Syrian Arab Republic), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, in his right of reply, the representative of Israel had referred to the Syrian Arab Republic. With reference to the terrorist policy of the Zionists in expelling the Palestine Arabs, he wished to remind the Committee of some statements by Zionist leaders. In 1954, Ben Gurion had written in his introduction to his book on the history of the Haganah that it was clear that Judea was for the Jews, just as Egypt was for the Egyptians. The Arabs would, therefore, be told to leave the country and, if they resisted, they would be expelled by force. Menachem Begin, the leader of the Irgun terrorist organization had written in his book The Revolution about the terrorist activities of his organization and had said that terrorism was the only effective way to attain Jewish objectives in Palestine. He had also said that the Arab culture should be destroyed and Jewish civilization established on its ruins. In the early days of Israel, Ben Gurion had stated to Jewish students that the establishment of the State of Israel was only a beginning and that the contemporary map was not the Zionist map, which Jewish youth should transform into reality so that Israel extended from the Nile to the Euphrates. In his introduction to the Annual Yearbook of the Government of Israel for 1952/53, Ben Gurion had said that Israel had been established on only part of the land of Israel, and, in his introduction to the Yearbook for 1955/56 had said that the establishment of the State in no way meant that the final objective of the historic land of Israel was abandoned. In 1956, Ben Gurion had said that the population of Israel should be increased to 4 million over the next five years and that additional land must be provided. That was why the Israeli representative had never acknowledged that that land had been annexed because he considered it part of the land given by God to Israel.

84. In conclusion, he fully supported the Egyptian representative's statement about the free acceptance and dissolution of Egyptian-Syrian unity and shared his hope that that unity would again be achieved.

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85. Mr. ALSHAWKANI (Yemen), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, expressed full support of the Egyptian representative's statement concerning assistance to his country. That generous assistance had been of great importance to the revolution of 26 September 1968 and had enabled the people of Yemen to start on the path to development. There was therefore no foundation in the allegation by the representative of the Zionist entity.

86. Mr. LEVIN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, requested information about the financial implications of the publication in extenso of the statement by the representative of Jordan which had been requested by that representative. With regard to the publication in extenso of his own statement at the preceding meeting, he would like to postpone any decision until the matter could be voted on in a conference room with electronic voting equipment.

87. Mr. HAMADNEH (Jordan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that it was not he who had requested the reproduction in extenso of his own statement but another delegation, with the support of all other delegations, in view of its clear analysis of the situation, illustrated with positive proof.

88. Mr. QIU (Secretary of the Committee) explained that, in accordance with the General Assembly's decision that the Special Political Committee might obtain transcriptions of the whole or part of the discussion at some of its meetings, such texts were furnished by the Secretariat within existing resources and did not entail any additional expenditure. The transcriptions were prepared from the tapes by the verbatim reporters and typists when they were not servicing meetings normally provided with verbatim records, so that no translation work or overtime by regular General Assembly staff was involved.

89. The CHAIRMAN agreed that if any delegation wished to raise the point raised at the preceding meeting by the United States representative, he could do so when the Committee was in a room with electronic voting equipment.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.