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REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE ISRAELI
PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE POPULATION
OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Letter dated 11 February 1980 from the Permanent
Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter from the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

I request you to have it circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under the item entitled "Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories".

(Signed) M'Hamed ESSAAFI
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 7 February 1980 from the Permanent Observer of
the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations
addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon the instructions of Chairman Yaser Arafat, I have the honour to draw to your attention the recent serious violations which have occurred in the city of Hebron in occupied Palestinian territory.

On Thursday, 31 January, the Israeli forces of occupation placed a curfew on Hebron, bringing a halt to the life of that city, thereby imposing collective punishment on its entire population in apparent retaliation for the killing of an occupation soldier in the city.

On Friday, Moslems were prevented by the curfew from attending prayers and carrying out their religious obligations in Al Haram Al Ibrahimi. Jewish residents of the nearby illegal Qiryat Arba settlement were allowed into town for prayers in Al Haram Al Ibrahimi the following day and took advantage of the opportunity to tear out a microphone from the mosque, thereby preventing the broadcast of the Moslem call to prayer over the loudspeakers in the minaret and further impeding the free exercise of religion by Hebron's Moslems.

The New York Times reported that on the same day yeshiva students from the settlement attacked Palestinian residents with a barrage of stones and rocks, one of which struck a 70-year-old man, blinding him in one eye.

When the curfew over the city is periodically lifted, armed Jewish settlers, accompanied by Israeli soldiers, are allowed to enter the city, with the pretext of visiting the holy places. In fact, the purpose behind such visits is to provoke and antagonize the Palestinian inhabitants by reasserting the Jewish presence in that city.

According to Radio Israel, the Israeli Military Governor General in the Palestinian territories is personally conducting this operation of collective punishment, which is reminiscent of Nazi operations in occupied Europe. Hebron is under seige. Schools and educational institutions are closed. Citizens are receiving extremely inhuman treatment. They are called out at night and exposed in the open for long periods of time. At this time of year Hebron is very cold, temperatures reaching 0 degrees Celcius.

For seven days the blockade restrictions were such that even food supplies were not permitted into Hebron. Hundreds have been arrested and the residents of Qaytoun, Zahed and Alsheikh were forcibly expelled from their homes.

We wish to recall that the Security Council had met in the past to consider Israeli violations and provocations that posed a threat to international peace and security.

In recent months there has been an upsurge in incidents of violence on the part of the settlers of Qiryat Arba directed toward the Palestinian residents of Hebron and its environs. In March 1979, Israeli soldiers and civilians fired into a crowd in Hebron, killing two Palestinians. Although arrests were made in the case, no convictions were handed out. In May 1979, Jewish settlers broke into homes in Hebron, attacking the Palestinian residents, smashing furniture and whatever else they could get their hands on. The idea behind that attack, according to one of its perpetrators, as reported by The New York Times, was "to show the Arabs that they had no right to live there". In December these Zionist hoodlums went on a rampage in the market area of the nearby village of Halhoul, assaulting the clientele of the shops, smashing windows and destroying merchandise.

Chairman Arafat wishes to assert that the resumption of this campaign of intimidation and terror will only lead to an exacerbation of the already explosive situation, and he calls upon the Security Council to take the necessary action to put an end to this intolerable situation by dealing with its root cause, namely, the prolonged, illegal occupation of Palestinian territories.

(Signed) Zehdi Labib TERZI
Permanent Observer
