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WORLD CONFERENCE FOR THE
UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR
WOMEN, 1980

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF PALESTINIAN WOMAN
INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

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First - Introduction

1. Any serious attempt to tackle, even partially, the problems of the Palestinian woman must start from a sound grasp of the nature of these problems and of the special circumstances from which they have emerged. Such a grasp will not result from the study of these problems in isolation from the existing political, economic and social conditions which have accompanied them in both time and place. Any study of the problems of the Palestinian woman which fails to link them to the "Palestinian Question" and, consequently, to the "Palestinian Problem" as a whole, and to relate them to "developing societies" will remain study manqué which neither fulfils its objectives, nor contributes significantly to the desired drastic solutions. The specificity, characterizing the general social conditions of the Palestinian woman, originates and acquires its new extra-dimension from the specificity of the "Palestinian Question". The special character of the "Palestinian Question" is based on the comprehensive nature of the national "Palestinian Problem" which, in turn, acquires its special character against the background of the problems common to peoples of the "Third World" and "developing societies". The expression "Palestinian Question" refers here to the totality of abnormal living conditions of the Palestinian people, resulting from Zionist settlement in Palestine, be it through expatriation, occupation or colonization. However, the "Palestinian Problem" refers here to the Arab-Israeli conflict in general, and, as such, it is an expression of the existing contradiction, on the national level, between the Arab National Movement seeking independence, unity and social development and Israel as the fruit of "Zionist Action" and colonial penetration. It is within such a framework that the depth of the problems that face the Palestinian woman, and the magnitude of the efforts needed to deal with them, let alone solve them, become clear. She suffers from repression, in the broad meaning of the word, not only in her Palestinian society, but also on the national level. In addition to her problems as a woman in a Third World society, the Palestinian woman as such,

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along with her fellow citizens faces persecution on the national level, be that under Israeli occupation in the West Bank and Gaza or 1948 Occupied Palestine or in the diaspora. These problems are urgent, and they require a priority in research and diagnosis, and hence, special attention in formulating the appropriate solutions.

2. It is noteworthy to refer to the United Nations decisions that call for the study of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people and for the formulation of practical and specific programmes to help them to cope with vital issues and to improve their living conditions. On the regional level, members of the Economic Commission for Western Asia requested the Executive Secretary in decision 3/27 "to make arrangements to carry out a comprehensive study of the economic and social situation and potential of the entire Palestinian people in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization" (Third Session, Doha, 10-15 May, 1979). At the same Session members of the Economic Commission for Western Asia called upon the Executive Secretary in decision 3/28 "to take all necessary steps, in close co-operation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, for beginning the population census operations as soon as possible" (Third Session, Doha, May 10-15 1979).

3. The Economic and Social Council in two resolutions No. 2026 of 4 August 1976 and No. 2100 of 3 August 1977, invited the United Nations Development Programme, the specialized agencies, and other organizations in the United Nations system "to intensify, as a matter of urgency, and in co-ordination with the Economic Commission for Western Asia, their efforts in identifying the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people". The resolution also requests "the agencies and organization to consult and co-operate with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people, with a view to establishing and implementing concrete projects to ensure the improvement of the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people". It urged

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executive heads of these agencies and organizations to "formulate and submit to their respective governments and/or legislative bodies proposals for ensuring the implementation of the provisions" of the resolution.

4. The General Assembly, at its thirty-third session, recently adopted on December 20, 1978 a resolution entitled "Assistance to the Palestinian People" which declares that the General Assembly:

- "1. Endorses the resolutions of the Economic and Social Council concerning assistance to the Palestinian people;
2. Calls upon the United Nations Development Programme, in consultation with the specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system to intensify these efforts, in coordination with the Economic Commission for Western Asia, to implement the relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council in order to improve the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian people by identifying their social and economic needs and by establishing concrete projects to that end, without prejudice to the sovereignty of the respective Arab host countries, and to provide adequate funds for that purpose."

5. The United Nations Development Programme held a meeting for the United Nations organizations and the specialized agencies in Geneva, 15-16 February 1979, to study the means for implementing General Assembly resolution 33/147. A special inter-agency task force was set up to study the needs of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Territories (West Bank and Gaza) and elsewhere, and to formulate specific proposals on the basis of this study. The task force was drawn from the United Nations Development Programme, the Economic Commission for Western Asia, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the International Labour Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the

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United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization. After endorsing the report of the task force, the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme approved, at its 26th session in June 1979, the allocation of 3.5 million dollars to finance specific projects for the Palestinian people in the various social and economic fields.

6. The World Conference for International Women's Year, held in Mexico, June 19 - July 2, 1975, adopted a special decision on the Palestinian woman, which due to its significance, is being included in full, as follows:

"Palestinian and Arab Women

The World Conference of the International Women's Year,

Mindful of the objectives and goals of International Women's Year,

Reaffirming the fundamental purposes and principles of the Chapter of the United Nations, in particular the maintenance of international peace and world security, and the development of friendly relations among nations,

Deeply concerned about the prevailing conditions - political, social, demographic and economic - of the Palestinian people and, in particular, the conditions under which the Palestinian woman lives, and recognizing the close relationship between such conditions and the question of Palestine,

Reaffirming the futility of speaking about equality of human beings at a time when millions of human beings are suffering under the yoke of colonialism,

Considering that international co-operation and peace require national independence and liberation, the elimination of colonialism, neo-colonialism, fascism, zionism, apartheid and foreign occupation, alien domination and racial discrimination in all its forms and also respect for human rights,

Deeply concerned that no just solution to the problem of Palestine has yet been achieved and recognizing that the problem of Palestine and the situation in the Middle East continue to endanger international peace and world security,

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Expressing its grave concern that the Palestinian woman and people have been prevented from enjoying their inalienable rights, and in particular their right to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted, the right to self-determination and the right to national independence and sovereignty,

Recognizing that the mass uprooting from the homeland obstructs the participation and integration of woman in the efforts of progress,

Affirming the right of the Palestinian woman to develop a strong and more effective impetus to peace and the development of friendly relations among nations,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 and resolution 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974 adopting the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,

Recalling the final resolutions and declarations of the regional seminars held in Mogadishu, Kinshasa and Caracas,

1. Appeals to all women of the world to proclaim their solidarity with and support for the Palestinian women and people in their drive to put an end to flagrant violations of fundamental human rights committed by Israel in the Occupied Territories,
2. Appeals also to all women in the world to take the necessary measures to secure the release of thousands of persons, fighters for the cause of self-determination, liberation and independence, held arbitrarily in the prisons of the forces of occupation;
3. Appeals also to all States and international organizations to extend assistance - moral and material - to the Palestinian and Arab woman and people in their struggle against zionism, foreign occupation and alien domination, foreign aggression, and help them restore their inalienable rights in Palestine, and in particular the right

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to self-determination and the right to national independence and sovereignty in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

4. Requests the United Nations, its organs and specialized agencies, as well as all national, regional and international women's organizations, to extend their help - moral and material - to the Palestinian woman and its organization and institutes.

7. The World Plan of Action requested that the Regional commission of the United Nations formulate regional plans of action for the integration of women into development, with an emphasis on the characteristics and priorities of each region. The Economic Commission for Western Asia formulated a Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development in Western Asia which was finalized and endorsed at the Regional Conference for the Integration of Women in Development (Amman, May 29 - June 4, 1978) and adopted unanimously by the Commission members of the fifth session in Amman in October 1978. The Regional Plan assigns a special section to the Palestinian woman, as a primary priority for Western Asia. In addition, the recommendation on the Palestinian woman calls on the Commission's Executive Secretary to seek "to introduce an agenda item on the Palestinian woman at all world and regional conferences dealing with the problems of women and development, beginning with the regional preparatory meeting, to be sponsored for the countries of Western Asia in 1979, in preparation for the World Conference for the Decade for Women, to be held in 1980".

8. The recommendation was then submitted to the Preparatory Committee of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, 1980, which subsequently, took the following decision at its second meeting, August 27 - September 7, 1979:

a) The inclusion of the social and economic needs of the Palestinian woman in the review and evaluation document which will be submitted to the 1980 Conference;

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b) The conference secretariat is to draw up, in co-operation with the Economic Commission for Western Asia, a report on "Special Measures of Assistance to the Palestinian Woman" to be submitted to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development, Peace, after being considered by the preparatory committee at its next meeting."

Second: Scope and Limits of the Study

9. A number of factors determined the scope and the limits of this study which deals with the social and economic conditions of the Palestinian woman, among them:

a) International, regional and national sources and references lack specific information on the Palestinian woman and her living conditions which render the preparation of the study both incomplete and uncomprehensive;

b) The time factor determines the scope of work on this study, especially that the available information is incomplete and does not include Palestinian woman in all communities in the Occupied Territories, inside and outside the Arab countries;

c) The availability of resources plays an important role in determining the scope of the study. A study of the conditions of the Palestinian woman requires full-time personnel to gather and analyze data, as well as financial resources to guarantee the necessary mobility for data collection;

d) The most important factor that limits a study of the living conditions of the Palestinian woman is the specificity of her political situation, which directly affects her social and economic conditions and the possibilities of helping her to improve this situation. The Palestinian woman is part of the Palestinian people with abundant human resources but lack land, country, and other related social, economic, and cultural structures.

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Third: Main Outline of Study

The following constitutes the main outline of the study of the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian woman:

Main Outline of Study

Social and Economic Conditions of Palestinian Woman
Inside and Outside the Occupied Territories

Introduction

First: United Nations Resolutions and Decisions:

1. Resolutions of Economic Commission for Western Asia,
No. 3/27 and 3/28
2. Resolutions of Economic and Social Council,
No. 2026 and 2100
3. General Assembly Resolution 33/147
4. Decision of the Executive Council of the United Nations
Development Programme

Second: The Scope and Limits of the Study

The Main Outline of the Study

Chapter one: Zionism: Theory and Practice

- A. The Zionist Factor
- B. The Zionist Entity: In the Formative Period

Chapter two: Demographic Status of the Palestinian People

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Chapter three: Social and Economic Conditions of the Palestinian People

Especially the Palestinian Woman

- A. Palestinians in Lands Occupied in 1948
- B. Palestinians in Lands Occupied in 1967
- C. Palestinians in Refugee Camps

Chapter four: Palestinian Social and Economic Institutions

- A. Inside Occupied Territories
- B. Outside Occupied Territories
 - General Union of Palestinian Women
 - Samed Institution
 - Palestinian Red Crescent Society
 - Welfare Society for the Martyrs' Families

Chapter I

Zionism: Theory and Practice

A. Zionist Factor

10. A sound grasp of "Zionist Action" and its role in modern history of the Middle East and, subsequently, its impact in creating political, social and economic conditions currently prevailing in the region is possible only through linking the emergence of that political movement to the other political phenomena which accompanied it in terms of both time and place. The time is the end of the nineteenth century, the place is the Arab East, specifically Palestine. Four basic political phenomena dominated the area's history during the last century, and still do so to a large extent. The interaction and contradiction of those phenomena, and their subsequent negative and positive roles produced the current political, social and economic conditions in the Arab World, and they are as follows:

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a) The collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the last of the Islamic empires of the Middle Ages, with the consequent disintegration of some of the existing structures and the rise of others replacing those old structures or co-existing with them;

b) The increased competition between colonial powers for spheres of influence within the far-flung borders of the Ottoman Empire, with the consequent division of this domain after World War I into mandate areas;

c) The emergence of the Arab National Movement as an expression of the specificity of the Arab Nation among the Islamic peoples within the framework of modern nationalist thought, and its transformation into a political movement seeking independence, unity and social development;

d) The emergence of "Zionist Action" and its transformation into a political movement within the context of the general conditions prevailing in Europe in the nineteenth century, seeking to establish a "Jewish Nation-State" as the solution to the "Jewish Question". By participating in the activities of the colonial states, it received in return the Balfour Declaration at the end of World War I.

11. Within such a framework as above, the role of "Zionist Action", in its Jewish side, is manifested as a scheme to resolve the "Jewish Question" by establishing a Jewish settler state, with the consequent creation of the "Palestinian Question". Likewise, this action manifests itself, in its colonial side, as an integral part of a colonial scheme by the Western powers to divide the territories of the Ottoman Empire into spheres of influence, and consequently, confronting the national movements of its peoples striving for unity and independence. In its Jewish side, Zionism proposed a solution to the "Jewish Question" based on the creation of a "Jewish Nation-State" through evictive settlement in Palestine. The idea of both the state and settlement originated in the European thought that was prevailing at the time. Moreover, it was obvious from the beginning, especially to the leaders of the Zionist Action,

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that their movement, on its own capacity, will remain incapable of assuming the burdens of their scheme. Therefore, it had to depend on the support of all or some of the world powers to realize its goals. Consequently, it entered into international political alliances as an organic part of them, and has remained as such until today. It is on this level that the role of Zionism emerged in its colonial side on one hand, and in its national dimension on the Arab level on the other, within the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. If this conflict has affected the political, economic, and social growth and development of the Arab World, how much more would its effect be on the Palestinian people, in general and on the Palestinian woman in particular.

12. In fact, the two sides of Zionist Action, the Jewish and the Colonial, were never co-equal. The latter was the primary factor giving life to the former. The partnership in the "Zionist Project" between the colonial powers - each at its own time - and the Zionist movement within its Jewish context was never one of parity, rather it remained even today, reflecting the balance of power between the partners. As such, Colonialism has remained the senior partner in the "Zionist Project" and, as such, has retained the final word in political decisions related to it, as well as being the greater beneficiary from its activities. After a full century of Zionist Action, it is glaringly obvious that the colonial "partner" has scored much more success than the Jewish "partner" has achieved. The "Zionist Project" has been more successful in confronting the movement of the Arab peoples and in obstructing their advancement towards independence, unity and social development, especially in the case of the Palestinian people. At the same time it has failed to solve the "Jewish Question" and has been incapable of transforming its settler entity into a nation-state possessing national characteristics. In addition, to all this, it has on the one hand, created the "Israeli Question" which constitutes an expression of the isolation of the Israeli settlers and their inability to integrate in the peoples of the region and live harmoniously with them. On the other hand, it has created the "Palestinian Question" which is an expression of the existing abnormal living conditions of the Palestinian people.

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13. Zionist literature clearly shows that the Zionist leadership was fully aware of the implications of its scheme from the beginning, and of the impossibility to realize its objectives with the continued presence of the Palestinian people on their land. Consequently, they deliberately sought to "negate" the Palestinian people and to create a false consciousness that denies the material existence of the Palestinian people on their land, hence Zionist propaganda of the famous slogan of Lord Shaftsbury: "A land without people for a people without land". In so doing, the leaders of the Zionist Action sought to deny the physical existence of the Palestinian people, and to give the impression that the land was empty, crying out for settlers to build it. It would thus follow that Zionist settler activities would not harm anybody, but rather, to the contrary, it would reclaim a small portion of the large earth and put it on the map of the inhabited world. When the falseness of this approach was exposed, Zionist switched their propaganda to negate the Palestinian people culturally, which in essence is a higher degree of racist practices against the Palestinian people. Zionism attempted to strip the Palestinian people of all the features of culture, denying their possession of any traits of a cultured society, and attributing to them barbaric qualities, blaming them for the alleged destruction of the land which "flowed with milk and honey" and its ultimate deterioration into barren deserts and infected swamps. These allegations were refuted by visitors to Palestine during this period, including one of the spiritual leaders of the Zionist Action Ahad Ha'am, who, as a contemporary of the Zionist settlement at that time, confirmed, in his letters from Palestine that the country was both developed and prosperous. Zionism was evidently attempting to convince public opinion, within its frame of reference, that the abuses it was perpetrating in Palestine were only an attempt to rescue this land and its inhabitants from the claws of barbarism and to transform it, in the words of Theodore Hertzl in The Zionist State, into "an advanced base of civilization against barbarism". This slogan, however, soon lost its appeal due to overusage. Following the emergence of the Palestinian National Movement, Zionist propaganda replaced this worn-out phrase with the theory

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of political negation and with cliches designed to distort the humanitarian nature of the Palestinian struggle. This stage, which is at its height today, is based on the denial of the national affiliation of the Palestinian people to their land - Palestine, and hence, the denial of their right to return to it and to self-determination. This in turn, means the denial of their right to set up their own independent state in Palestine, the refusal to recognize the Palestine Liberation Organization as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and hence the refusal to negotiate with it for the settlement of the problem. While Zionist action towards the Palestinian people was characterized by negation, exclusion, and dissolution, the prominent feature of the counter Palestinian action was the insistence on presence, participation, and assertion of identity. The impact of Zionist Action was severer on the Palestinian woman than on the man, since she had to bear the consequences of this action above and beyond what she was exposed to from within her own society, both before and after the establishment of Israel. It is glaringly obvious fact that the poorer classes and those of the lower levels of the Palestinian social structure, including the Palestinian women, sustained greater losses from the Zionist action than did the rich and the more elite classes. In fact, the disaster that the Palestinians experienced pushed the Palestinian woman and her problems to the bottom of the list of priorities of the Palestinian movement and action, both politically and socially.

B. The Zionist Entity: In the Formative Period

14. Zionist lip-service to peace and co-existence with the Palestinian people which accompanied the Zionist settlement in Palestine from the beginning remained always without credibility. In fact, Zionist leaders were aware of the dimensions of their settlement plan from the beginning, and they recognized that it could only be realized through racist oppression and the forced expulsion of the Palestinian people. Recognizing the requirements for fulfilling their plan to establish their political entity they knew that there was no place for them in Palestine except through the expulsion of the indigenous population. They sought

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to accomplish the task through various methods and as quickly as possible. From the beginning Zionist Action sought to Judaize land, market and labour, along with serious efforts to build a military tool of aggression. The "Judaization of the land" is nothing but the transfer of ownership from Arab to Jewish hands, with the consequent uprooting of the Arab farmers from their land. "Jewish Labour" was merely a way to force Arab workers away from the production process in the country, and the "Jewish market" was merely the boycotting of Arab products. The role of the military machine was to ensure, by force when necessary, the enforcement of these policies. As such, Zionist settlement was seeking to eliminate the material base for the presence of the Palestinian people on their land. Actually, the struggle in Palestine between the Jewish settlers and the indigenous population was not determined by the successful cumulative effect of the Jewish settler activities, but, basically by military and terrorist violence carried out by Zionist organizations against the Palestinian people. It is well-known that the Palestinian people did not leave Palestine in 1948 due to the limited land left at their disposal, or that they sold the major portion of their land thus leaving themselves with insufficient space. Actually, all facts point in the opposite direction. In 1948, Jewish settlers owned only 6% of the land in Palestine. Likewise, Palestinians did not flee their country due to the lack of employment opportunities or due to the boycott of Arab labour, in accordance with the slogan of "Jewish labour", advocated by the Jewish settlers. Despite the efforts of these settlers to boycott Arab goods under the slogan of "Jewish market", Arab goods retained internal and external markets. In short, the Zionist settler movement did not succeed in taking over the country through efforts to Judaize land, labour and market. The country was taken over by repressive military action. Consequently, the occupation of Palestine through Jewish settlement left a severe impact on the indigenous population, especially on the weak and poorer segments of the Palestinian society, including the Palestinian woman.

15. The success of Zionism in achieving its goal of establishing a Jewish state, even on a portion of Palestine, had a profound influence on the determination

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of its future policy. The 1948 military victory increased Israel's self-confidence and strengthened the conviction of its leaders that the full plan could be achieved in one or more consecutive stages. Its success in expelling and displacing hundreds of thousands of Arab Palestinians and its consequent success in blocking their return strengthened the Zionist leadership's concept of "negation". It, therefore, embarked upon a course of action based on the concept that the local population was a transient element on the land, which could be expelled if the necessary power was available. As such, the dispersion of the Palestinian people and their forced dissolution remained central objectives of Zionist Action and permanent policies for its leadership, a policy which is being pursued until today. It is the conviction of the Zionist leadership that he who has political power determines the relationship between the inhabitants and the land. The general approach of the leadership has always been to sever the relations between the Palestinian and his land. The Palestinian people are today reaping the results of Zionist success in displacing them and distorting the general fabric of their society. The Zionists' insistence on following their traditional policies is the cause of all the suffering of the Palestinians on various levels. It is also a fact that the share of the Palestinian woman in suffering resulting from displacement and disruption of the social structure was longer and more bitter, and, consequently, more significant in delaying her development and the improvement of her status in society, be that on the narrow Palestinian level, or on the wider Arab scale. The priorities of the Palestinian people as an under-developed society seeking development and social growth were overturned by conditions resulting from their enemy's military victory, their consequent dispersion and the partition of their land, along with the fragmentation of their social structure, thus posing a threat to their identity. All these factors relegated the struggle of the Palestinian woman for the improvement of her status within her society to a lower position among the priorities.

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16. The establishment of Israel played a profound role in disrupting the social structure of the Palestinians and holding up their development and growth. The "exclusion" and "negation" approach that was slowly launched in the early days of Zionist settlement gained momentum with the Balfour Declaration (1917) and during the British Mandate in Palestine, and reached its peak during the military operations of 1948. It has continued ever since, with an increased momentum following the 1967 war. The most devastating impact of the establishment of Israel on the Palestinian society was its fragmentation and transformation from a harmonious human body constituting 70% of the population of its native land into a number of minority groupings of different sizes, scattered in a number of Arab countries and elsewhere. In addition, the Palestinian people not only lost their political entity, but their very national identity was endangered. In 1967 Israel completed the conquest of Palestine and even conquered territories of neighbouring Arab countries. In doing so, Israel eliminated any remaining semi-normal conditions of the Palestinians which has continued, in one form or another, in Gaza and the West Bank, between 1948 and 1967. After the 1967 war, the Palestinian were transformed from a people living in their homeland, in full or in part, to a people of three distinct groups: those dispersed in Arab countries and elsewhere, those colonized in 1948 occupied Palestine, and those living under occupation in Gaza and the West Bank. Such a reality influenced profoundly the determination of the goals of the Palestinian struggle, which inevitably moved towards resolving the most pressing problem, namely the normalization of the people's abnormal conditions. The issue of "return" constituted the highest priority.

17. It is noteworthy that the Zionist plan has not yet been fully realized. It has not achieved the tasks it assumed when it was presented as a political plan neither in its Jewish or colonialist side. So far, Israel has been unable peacefully or militarily, to end decisively its struggle with the Arab Nation, on its own terms, neither has it been able to subjugate the Palestinians to the dictates of its plan founded on Zionist principles. On the Jewish level,

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Zionism raised the slogan "solution of the Jewish Question", to mean the gathering of the majority of Jews in a political entity in Palestine, which would extend its protection and hegemony over the remaining Jewish minorities in various parts of the world. Today over thirty years after the establishment of Israel and after nearly a century of Zionist action, Zionism has failed in this central objective. Only around 20% of the Jews of the world settled in the Zionist entity which remained directly dependent upon the support of the majority outside Israel. Nevertheless, Israeli parties on the whole are still Zionist, and justify their *raison d'être* by continued effort to realize the full Zionist plan - a purely Jewish state on all of Palestine. Therefore, the central concern of the current Zionist action remains bringing Jewish immigrants to Israel and absorbing them there. In view of this obvious situation, the Zionist leadership must continue its efforts to realize the full plan or otherwise lose the justification for its existence, an act which it will not willingly do. As this leadership presses on its struggle to realize its full objectives, it will, naturally, refrain from defining the human, geographic and political limits of its plan until after it has decisively settled the question ideologically. In fact, the Zionist institution in power today not only does not want to adopt a clear decision on this issue, it is actually incapable of doing so due to the contemporary subjective and objective conditions of Zionism. Consequently, any settlement concluded or accepted by Israel will not be a final solution but rather a stage on the way to the full realization of the Zionist plan, and will be, as such, similar to other stages along the way such as the Conference of Basle, the Balfour Declaration, the Establishment of Israel, etc... This being the situation, no solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict can be expected soon, not to speak of a solution to the "Palestinian Question". This means the continuation of the struggle in the region, especially between the National Palestinian Movement and Israel, which will prolong the suffering of the Palestinians and will hinder their social and economic growth. Consequently, it will defer the Palestinian woman from turning to her specific problems and her struggle to solve them drastically.

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18. Talks and negotiations have continued ever since 1973 on what is called "political settlement". These talks proved that Israel is not ready for a final, comprehensive or just solution, not even a solution based on Security Council resolution 242. It is evident from an examination of the positions of the political forces active on the Israeli political scene and from their publicly announced settlement plans that no effective force within the ruling Israeli establishment will accept even the bare minimum acceptable to the Palestinians. This minimum, adopted by the Palestine Liberation Organization, is expressed in the resolution of the 14th session of the Palestine National Council, which called for the establishment of a Palestinian state on any portion of Palestine liberated from occupation. Furthermore, none of the various positions of the Israeli factions themselves enjoy enough support of the Israeli establishment or the public to constitute an officially adopted position on the basis of which negotiations can be held and agreements concluded. Consequently, the Israeli leadership will remain at least for the foreseeable future incapable of adopting a decisive position on the "settlement of the Palestinian Question", thus leaving "No Decision" as the only remaining alternative. Despite the slight shifts observed in some Israeli positions, compared to those of traditional Zionists, this development will remain, for many years to come, far short of meeting the requirements of the minimum position acceptable to the Palestinians, even within the framework of the United Nations resolutions on the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. On the other hand, the Palestinian people, under their present conditions and within the circumstances surrounding them both in dispersion abroad and occupation at home, are not in a position to accept the announced Israeli proposals. The struggle between Israel and the Palestinians will continue and will be prolonged, thus increasing the suffering of the Palestinian people, and centering their struggle around the political issue, which will continue to command top priority, with the consequent relegation of social issues, including that the Palestinian woman, to priorities of marginal importance. It is for this reason that it is important that help be extended to the Palestinian woman from external sources so that she can cope with her daily living demands.

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Chapter II

Demographic Status of the Palestinian People

1. The rise of Israel completed the process of destroying the Palestinian society that was launched by Zionist settlement. In addition to the uprooting, expulsion, and dispersion of large segments of the Palestinian population, other segments were subjected to occupation and oppression, thus the Palestinian people lost the moral and material components necessary for forming or maintaining a society. After the war of 1948, and including the war of 1967 and the period after it, the Palestinians found themselves scattered in different groupings in Arab countries and elsewhere faced by different and difficult political, economic and social conditions. The variety in the conditions of the different displacement locations, coupled with geographic, and to some extent political separation between the Palestinian groupings, had a profound impact on the disintegration of the Palestinian society to the point where it ceased to be an integrated social structure whose components interact to give it cohesiveness. According to the figures of the official population census of 1922, the population of Palestine was about seven hundred and fifty thousand (750,000), about eighty thousand (80,000) of whom were Jewish settlers and others who had taken up residence in the country prior to the Jewish settler movement. According to the second official census of 1931, there were over a million people in Palestine, including around one hundred seventy-five thousand (175,000) Jews. Since no official censuses were taken after that date, all figures cited by various sources are approximates. The population of Palestine before the outbreak of the 1947-1948 war was around two million, including around six hundred thousand (600,000) Jews who owned around 1.5 million dunums of the land, equivalent to 7 per cent of the total area.

2. After the fighting ended in late 1948, only one hundred and fifty six thousand (156,000) Arabs out of the total of nine hundred thousand (900,000) who had lived there before the fighting broke out, remained in the land occupied by Israel, which was 80 per cent of the area of Palestine. Around a million Palestinians congregated in the West Bank, which was annexed to Jordan, and in

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the Gaza strip, which remained under Egyptian administration. Half of these people were refugees from parts of Palestine occupied by Israel and the other half were local residents. In addition, an average of around one hundred thousand Palestinians (100,000) sought refuge in each of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan (East Bank), and ten thousands more fled to other Arab and non-Arab countries. From that event until now, the demographic distribution of the Palestinian people has changed radically due to a number of factors, the most important of which is the war of June, 1967, which thrust around half a million Palestinians, originally in the West Bank and Gaza, outside the borders of their country. The distribution was also significantly influenced by Palestinian migration from one country to the other, especially between the Arab countries, particularly to the oil-rich countries of the Gulf and Saudi Arabia. The big increase of Palestinians at all their locations of dispersion is a phenomena that draws the attention. Figures published in United Nations documents in particular, indicate that the number of Palestinians has reached three and a quarter million in 1975, around half of them within the borders of Palestine, with the others outside of it. Estimates indicate that this figure will reach three million eight hundred thousand in 1980, and over four and a half million by 1985.

3. 1975 figures indicate that the number of Palestinians living in areas occupied in 1948 reached four hundred thirty-six thousand (436,000), in the Gaza strip three hundred and ninety-five thousand (395,000), and in the West Bank seven hundred seventy-five thousand (775,000). These constitute one half of the Palestinian people, and they are divided into two groups: those in the land occupied in 1948, who are officially considered Israeli citizens but are actually under Israeli colonialism, and those in the areas occupied in 1967, who are under Israeli occupation and subject to its military authorities. The

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figures on Palestinians outside Palestine, for the same year, indicated the presence of six hundred and forty-two thousand (642,000) in Jordan (The East Bank) - other references put the number of Palestinians in the East Bank at over one million - one hundred and eighty three thousand (183,000) in Syria, two hundred eighty-five thousand (285,000) in Lebanon, two hundred and four thousand (204,000) in Kuwait, one hundred thousand (100,000) in other Gulf states, and one hundred ninety-five thousand (195,000) in other countries of the world. These figures also indicate that around one-fifth (20%) of the Palestinian people still live in camps, especially in areas occupied in 1967 and in the adjacent states. A total of seventy-six thousand (76,000) live in twenty (20) camps in the West Bank, around two hundred thousand (200,000) live in eight (8) camps in Gaza, around two hundred and fifteen thousand (215,000) live in ten (10) camps in the East Bank (Jordan,), around one hundred thousand (100,000) live in fifteen (15) camps in Lebanon, and fifty-four thousand (54,000) reside in ten (10) camps in Syria. This brings the total number of existing camps to sixty three (63), inhabited by a total of around six hundred and fifty thousand (650,00), which is a high ratio. It is to be noted, in this connexion, that most of these camps were set up near cities, and, in many cases, have become slums of those cities.

4. Several very significant features emerged from the statistics of the age structure of the Palestinian Arabs in the occupied lands in 1970^{1/}; and a comparison with the figures of Palestinians in other groupings did not reveal any major differences. One of the most prominent features was the high proportion of children under fourteen (14), which is nearly one-half (50%) as compared to only thirty (30%) per cent for the Jewish settlers. The 15-29 age group represents 24% of the Arabs and 26% of the Jews; the 30-44 age group is 13% of the Arabs and 20% of the Jews; the 45-64 age group is 8.6% of the Arabs and 20% of the Jews

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^{1/} Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1971.

and the above 65 group is 4% of the Arabs and 7% of the Jews. This means that children below the working age are 20% more among the Arabs than among the Jews, whereas there is a 16% margin in favour of the Jews among the (15-65) labour force. These figures underline the high fertility rates of the Palestinians, which ranged from 40-50 per thousand in all the areas where they are located.

5. Another 1970 survey of the population structure of the Palestinian Arabs, according to sex, revealed another very significant feature, namely, the low proportion of males, compared to females, in the 14-65 age bracket in the areas of Palestine occupied in 1967.^{1/} Whereas the proportion of males is slightly higher in the below-14 group, the ratio changes among members of the 14-65 group, where male and female ratio is almost equal in the areas occupied in 1948. The proportion of females to males rises in the West Bank and even more so in the Gaza strip, whereas the proportion of males remains slightly higher than females in all age groups, in Lebanon, Syria and Kuwait. This phenomena, which has increased in the years that followed, underlines the migration of young men of working age from the areas occupied in 1967, thus creating an abnormal situation especially for females in the age of marriage.

6. A 1973 survey of the characteristics of the labour force of both sexes, conducted in the areas occupied in 1967,^{2/} revealed the presence of a very high proportion of manpower outside the labour force, especially among the females. For example, two hundred and fourteen thousand (214,000) of a total of three hundred and forty-one thousand (341,000) of people in the above 14 group in the West Bank were outside the labour force, which meant that only one hundred twenty-seven thousand (127,000) were in the labour force. One hundred twenty-six thousand (126,000) of these were employed and the others were unemployed. During the same year the number of females in the same age group was one hundred seventy-nine thousand (179,000), of which one hundred and fifty-nine thousand (159,000)

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^{1/} Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1971.
General Census, Syrian Arab Republic, 1970
Palestinian Statistics - Palestinian Research Centre.

^{2/} Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1974.

were outside the labour force and only twenty thousand (20,000) in it. Of these, nineteen thousand (19,000) were employed and the remaining thousand were unemployed. In Gaza this trend was even stronger. Though the number of those in the labour force has increased in the years that followed due to the demand of the Israeli market, the situation is still far from its natural balance. It indicates, foremost, that the Palestinian woman has not entered the labour market in accordance with her potential, quantitatively and qualitatively, thus keeping away from economic independence and its consequent social dependence. The situation is basically the same outside Israel despite slight variations in a limited number of places such as in the suburbs of Beirut.

7. Available figures, despite their lack of comprehensiveness and accuracy, show high proportion of university graduates among the Palestinians. In Lebanon, for example, two per thousand in 1971 were university graduates. A survey of public opinion among the Palestinian population reveals that much importance is attached to education as a way to rectify social and economic conditions. However, figures of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) point to a sharp drop in the number of 14 year-old students, as compared to the figures of students in the (6-11) age group; 88.4% of the latter age group are enrolled in schools, but the figure drops to 67.1% for the (12-14) age group, and drops again to 37.3% for the (15-17) group and goes down to 8.3% for the (18-20) group. This sharp decline in the proportion of students among young people of school age is due, to a large extent, to the virtual absence of vocational schools, which forces large numbers of youth in these age groups to work in shops, garages, small factories or in services. The deprivation of Palestinian people of their land and country has left them with only one area for investment, namely the education of its human resources. In this field the Palestinians have scored significant success. The notable exceptions to this trend are camp residents and the Palestinian woman. Outside aid should concentrate on these two sectors.

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Chapter III

Social and Economic Conditions of the Palestinian People, Especially the Palestinian Woman

First: Palestinians in the Lands Occupied in 1948

1. It was only natural that Israeli policies towards the Palestinian population which remained under Israeli control in the lands occupied in 1948 be an extension of the Jewish side of the general Zionist approval, namely the judaization of Palestine land, labour, and market. Israel adopted a policy of both political and socio-economic repression against the Palestinian people in order to allow the identity of the new Jewish settlers to overshadow the identity of the indigenous residents of the country who were reduced, overnight, from a large majority to a small national minority. The basic instruments of repression were the organs of the military authority, with its repressive laws, imposed by Israel on the Arab minority directly after occupation, and which are still in effect in one form or another today. The primary objective of imposing military laws on Palestinian minority was the destruction of their political cohesion, disruption of their social growth, and the ruin of their economy. By so doing, Israel transformed the Palestinian population to groupings resembling the colonized "bantustans", an act which facilitated efforts either to uproot and evict them, or to continue to dictate their future in subsequent stages of the realization of the Zionist scheme. In the pursuit of this objective, they were subjected to various forms of racist, national, and socio-political repression.

2. When the armistice was declared following the end of military operations in 1948, a total of one hundred seventy thousand (170,000) people remained in the parts of Palestine occupied by Israel. These consisted of around one hundred and twenty thousand (120,000) Moslems, thirty-five thousand (35,000) Christians, fifteen thousand (15,000) Druze and a few thousand Bahis and Circassians. As such, the Moslems made up around 70% of the Christians 20% and the Druze 10%^{1/} of the population. ^{1/} By 1960, this total population reached around two hundred and sixty thousand (260,000) and went up to around three hundred thousand (300,000)

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^{1/} Habib Kahwaji. The Arabs Under Israeli Occupation, 1948. Research Centre of Palestine Liberation Organization, Beirut, 1972, p.9.

in 1965 and around four hundred thousand (400,000) by 1967, after Israel annexed East Jerusalem and its population. By 1974, the total population had risen to over half a million. This means that the natural growth rate of the Palestinians under Israeli rule was over 4%, which is one of the highest rates in the world. The Arabs living in areas occupied in 1948 (not counting East Jerusalem), lived in 104 purely Arab villages and towns, and in six cities with mixed populations, namely Acre, Haifa, Jaffa, Lydda, Ramallah and Jerusalem. Around 60% of the population, including residents of the three cities of Nazareth, Shofa, Omar, and Kafr Yassine, live in Ghalilee (northern district). Another 20% of the Arabs lived in the triangle (the central district), while the remainder are scattered in the areas of Haifa and Negev. Statistics indicate that 70% of them, including bedouins in the Negev, live in rural areas, while the remainder live in cities. Due to the nature of the geographic distribution of the Arab population within lands occupied in 1948, especially in upper and lower Ghalilee where communities actually formed pockets in which they were a majority and due to the proximity of these locations to the Arab borders, these Arabs retained their national affiliation and national identity. They were not overwhelmed by the fact that they were a minority within Israel as a whole, since they belonged to the absolute majority beyond the borders, and constituted the majority in their own localities. In addition, they had limited contact with Jewish settlements due to restrictions imposed by the military authorities on their freedom of movement, work and residence.

3. The first problem that confronted the Palestinian Arabs under Israeli rule was that they were considered Israeli citizens, but not treated on the basis of this citizenship, with all the rights and duties that pertain to it. Instead, they were subjected to repressive military measures and they were barred from participating in political, social and economic public life. The Koenig Document^{1/}, with its advice to the Israeli authorities concerning the Arab minority,

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^{1/} See Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol VI, No.1, IPS, Beirut, Lebanon, Autumn, 1976.

provides an example of Israel's policy towards the Arab minority under its rule. This document, named after the governor of northern Galilee in occupied Palestine, was actually a memorandum submitted by Koenig to the Israeli Interior Ministry and later to the Prime Minister, I. Rabin in 1976. It was supposed to remain confidential, but was published by the Israeli paper Al-Hamishmar. The document was an evaluation of the conditions of _____ of the Arabs in the northern district, Galilee, and contained a number of proposals for Israeli action in dealing with the Arabs whom Koenig regarded as very serious threat to the security of Israel.

4. A review of the document reveals that Koenig was mostly disturbed by two factors: the demographic issue and the growing nationalistic sentiment among the Arabs of Israel. To Koenig, the "demographic issue" meant the natural growth rate of the Arab minority which, according to projection, would make the Arabs a 51% majority in the northern district by the end of 1978. By mid-1975, the Arab population in the northern district reached around two hundred and fifty thousand (250,000), whereas the number of Jews in the same area was two hundred and eighty-nine thousand (289,000). During the same year the Arab population in some sub-districts of the north such as West Galilee, reached 67% of the population and in Lower Galilee reached 48%, which he considered a disturbing figure for the growth rate in 1974. During that year the Arab population in the northern district increased by nine thousand and thirty-five (9,035), whereas the growth of the Jewish population was only seven hundred and fifty-nine (759).

Koenig's fears is an example of a basic crisis which faces every settler entity, and Israel in particular. When such an entity fails to attract additional immigrants, then it has failed in fulfilling its central goal. Israel, in particular, has been giving intensive care to the issue of maintaining an overwhelming Jewish majority in its population at a time when the natural growth of the Arab population has alarmed its political leadership. It is this natural growth rate which prompted Israel's leadership to direct special attention to encouraging the immigration of Jews to Israel, including all the consequent

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external activities, especially the Zionist conferences. Despite all this, the flow of immigrants to Israel continues to decline, while the rate of emigration from Israel is rising. The number of Israelis living abroad reached around three hundred thousand (300,000) in 1976. In view of the decrease in the number of immigrants arriving to Israel, and the rise in the number of emigrants, leaving it, while its Arab population is increasing at a rate which is one of the world's highest, the Zionist leadership sent out demographic danger signals, as in the case of Koenig. If enough Jews cannot be drawn to Israel to maintain the population balance as envisaged in Zionist scheme, then the second best alternative facing the Zionist leadership is to make more Arabs leave Israel, which is what is proposed by Koenig in his document. This would be done by harassing these Arabs, applying economic and political pressures against them, and obstructing their social progress and economic growth.

5. The 1967 war, according to Koenig, gave a new and strong impetus to nationalist sentiments among the Arabs of Israel, which was further fostered by the opening of the borders, the consequent freedom of movement between territories occupied in 1948 and those occupied in 1967 and the consequent contact with the Arabs beyond the Jordan River. The 1973 war, the resulting political developments, and the emergence of the Palestine Liberation Organization, as a political force, that was being increasingly recognized in international circles as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, only strengthened and fostered this sentiment. Koenig pointed out that the increase in the number of Arabs in Israel over a period of time constitutes the basic factor in the Palestinians' sense of power. He was further alarmed by the fact that the Arab population groupings in the north with a growing sense of nationalism, are contiguous and constitute a majority in their areas. All this was viewed against the background of the northern district (Galilee) which was part of the proposed Arab state under the 1947 partition resolution, a fact which made Koenig fear the future possibility of the Palestinians' peace for self-determination, though a popular plebiscite, which would naturally be in their favour. Consequently, Koenig recommended the

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acceleration of the Judaization of Galilee, the whittling down of the Arab population pockets, and their separation by intensive Jewish settlement. He also called for the adoption of a stricter and sterner policy to confront manifestations of nationalist sentiment, especially in terms of parties and national leaders.

6. Koenig also regarded the improved economic conditions of the Arabs in Israel and the accumulation of capital by some of them as another reason for their growing nationalist sentiment, their sense of power, and consequently, their ability to resist Israeli policies. He pointed out to the inconsistency in the implementation of development and Judaizing projects in the north whose objective was primarily to attract Jewish settlers to that area, while 25-50% of the workers on the projects were Arabs, who were able to improve their economic conditions. In addition, social security and other economic benefits relieved the Arab worker of burdens of securing their living conditions, and thus, gave him time to examine national and social issues. Koenig finally proposed the following:

a. Limiting the employment of Arab workers on state development projects to no more than 20% of the total workers;

b. Increasing taxes on Arab income and intensifying tax-collection procedures;

c. Obstructing Arab agencies for the distribution of consumer goods and paralyzing of their operations;

d. Depriving large Arab families from state allowance, while maintaining such allowances for Jewish families by channeling these allowances through the Jewish Agency and other Zionist organizations that exclude Arabs from their programmes;

e. Exerting efforts to prompt control state institutions to give priority to Jews, both as individuals or groups over Arabs in all procedures.

7. Koenig who is by no means an isolated voice in Israel, goes on to list advances achieved in education by the Arabs of Israel, which resulted from

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improved economic conditions, social security and facilities they received in schools and higher institutions of learning, in terms of admission requirements and tuition, as another reason for the rise of nationalist sentiment among them. The continuation of this trend, in Koenig's view, will lead to greater numbers of educated Arabs who will form the core of a political leadership which is dissatisfied with the status quo. He therefore, recommended the following:

- a. Increasing restrictions on the admission of Arabs to universities and institutions of higher education, especially in the field of social sciences, which would inevitably lead to fewer college and university graduates;
- b. Directing Arabs towards the study of natural and applied sciences and professional and scientific disciplines which would be time-consuming and, therefore, not allow involvement in nationalist and political activities;
- c. Facilitating the departure of Arab students to pursue their studies abroad, while complicating their return and employment, ^{thus} prompting them to emigrate;
- d. Taking harsh measures against all activist university students.

8. The above constitutes a sample of the attitude of Israeli officials toward Arab minority population under their rule; a population which was previously an overwhelming majority exercising sovereignty over its land, but which had, as a result of the rise of Israel, become a nearly impotent minority, living as aliens on its own homeland, under the rule of an incoming settler majority which holds a class and national hostility towards it, and even denies it the right to exist on its native land. All this occurred despite the declaration of ^{the} establishment of the State of Israel, announced on the 14th of May, 1948, which stipulated that "Israel will seek to develop the country in the best interests of all its citizens, and will maintain political and social equality between all its subjects without sex, religious or ethnic discrimination, and will guarantee freedom of thought, worship, education and culture". What actually happened? In reality, Israel treated the Arabs under its rule as a persecuted ethnic minority, who were discriminated against socially, racially and economically. They remained third-class citizens, since oriental Jews were second-class citizens. Here are a few

examples of this discrimination.^{1/}

9. Four days after its establishment, Israel imposed military rule on the Arab areas under its control and later extended this rule to other areas it occupied, including all of Galilee and Negev. This rule was based on the Emergency Laws of the Mandate government which had been imposed on Jewish areas when the clandestine Zionist organizations intensified their activities. When the mandate government imposed these rules it was attacked by one of the Zionist labour leaders, Dov Youssef, who later became a minister in the Israeli Government, and held the post of Minister of Justice. He said:

" The question is this. Will we all become exposed to legally licensed terrorism ... or will the freedom of the individual prevail ? There is no guarantee that a citizen will not be detained all his life without trial. There is no chance of appealing a decision of the military ruler and no possibility of turning to the High Court. The authority has unlimited power to deport any citizen at any moment. Moreover, even if a person might have done nothing wrong, it is sufficient that a certain decision be taken in some office to determine his future. The only options are freedom or chaos. When the authorities in any country arouse wrath, fury and resentment against the laws, they cannot expect respect for the law. The citizen should not be asked to respect a law that deprives him of all that is lawful.^{2/} "

10. Military rule is one of the most important features of the repression and discrimination of the Israeli political authority, and it has been the only form

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^{1/} Refer to the annual reports of the Israel Committee to investigate Israeli measures that affect the Human Rights of the Residents of the Occupied Territories, which was established in accordance to the General Assembly Resolution 2443 (XXVIII) of 19 December 1968.

^{2/} Habib Kahwaji, op.cit. p.134.

of rule known to the Arab minority. In Israel, military rule is based on one hundred and seventy (170) articles, compiled under fifteen (15) chapters which cover restrictions on freedom of transportation, movement, and the choice of residence location. They also include restrictions on the freedom of speech, and the freedom of the press in all its forms. These laws give the military governor unlimited powers which threatened the freedom of the individual and his property. The military rule has its special courts, which are distinct from the civilian courts and not subject to them, and, consequently, their rulings cannot be appealed. The Israeli military rule differs from other similar systems in that it is the instrument of the authority in its implementation of the evictive settlement policy, and at no time was its duties confined to security. In Israel the military rule was responsible for breaking up the national unity of the Palestinians who remained in Israel, fragmenting of all factors of their social cohesion, and destroying their independent economic base. This led to the consequent economic dependence of the Palestinian people and their exploitation by the Zionist settlement structures, meanwhile, their political absorption was prevented and their social isolation within the Zionist entity as a whole was maintained. Military rule was exercised over all the Palestinian people in Israel without distinction, including urban, rural and bedouin populations. It affected all the Palestinians, thus serving as an incentive for the unity of the Palestinian struggle against oppressive rulings, and, as such, an incentive for their political unity as they were pushed into a growing confrontation with it. This led, in turn, to the escalation of their protest and struggle against it on one hand, and to the development of its repressive measures on the other hand. The primary duty of the military authority constituted basically in the suppression of the struggle of the Palestinians against the political authority, the subjugation of the struggle to its dictates, and finally forcing the Palestinians to accept political and socio-economic discrimination against them. An additional basic task of the military authority was to pave the way for the enforcement of the basic Zionist objective of depriving the Arabs of land ownership and the consequent seizure and judaization of the land. During the long years of military rule, which was severely imposed until 1966, after which it was eased in form but not in fact, Israel was able to accomplish mostly its objectives. It succeeded in reducing the Arab minority under

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its rule to population groupings in which they lived but of which they were not an integral part. By dividing the country into military zones between which travel was limited to people with special passes issued by the military governor, the Israeli authorities reduced the Arab population centres to isolated pockets, incapable of integration or interaction. By seizing the ownership of the major part of the Arab property while the bulk of the Arab population consisted of rural farmers, Israel destroyed the only material basis for the cohesion of a semi-autonomous Arab economy. Arab farmers were evicted from their own economic sphere, without being allowed to enter or be absorbed into the general economic sphere of the country. Most of them shifted from independent work in their farms and fields to hired labour, mostly as seasonal workers earning very low wages, at least during the first two decades after the founding of Israel. They worked in the Jewish labour market and lived in the Arab population centres, as is the case in the bantulands.

11. Thousands of farmers were evicted from their homes, lands and villages, and many of them were expelled from their homeland across the borders, under military rule and in accordance with its laws. Before the first population census following the establishment of Israel, the military authorities selectively expelled tens of people from every Arab village and town. The military authorities would surround a village before dawn, impose a curfew and gather the people in central squares, where the people were subjected to mass interrogation, after which "undesirable elements", chosen on the basis of previously-prepared lists, or on the basis of information received by these authorities on the political activity of these elements or their relatives, were expelled. The actual expulsion method, which is still used today, involved the moving of these people in trucks which dump them near the border of an Arab country. This kind of action, coming on the heel of dispersion which took place during the war, aggravated the disruption of the Palestinian family, some of which were divided into several parts, each located in a different country. It was in this context that reference was made, during the early years of Israel's existence, to the "re-unification of families".

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The impact of this scattering was much more devastating on the poorer and weaker families, and the Palestinian woman suffered much as the result of her separation from father, brother, husband or son. In addition, the remaining "fragments" of the rural communities from which many of the people had fled, were "merged" into large communities, with many of these people removed from the homes and lands and shipped to other localities where they were added to other villages. They resided in houses they did not own while their own property in their original villages was seized. They were given, in compensation, land which they did not own. This action created countless social problems in view of the sudden changes introduced in the life of the conservative farmer. In this way, hundreds of villages were emptied of their Arab residents, and these villages were then demolished and all their features were obliterated. Moreover, the whole population of certain villages were shifted, under the pretext of one "security reason" or the other, and they were told at the time that this was a temporary measure that would be revoked with the end of the state of emergency. These people have remained refugees in Israel, and still live outside their villages and homes today, as is the case with the residents of the two border villages of Akrath and Kafurghum in upper Galilee.

12. The military governors, who were chosen from among the allies of the ruling party, naturally remained the instruments of the party in the implementation of its internal policies, especially in terms of general and local elections. The military governor, with his wide powers and extensive relations and contacts, would concentrate along with his aides, on carrying out his role in the service of the ruling party after having nearly completed his Zionist mission on the various political, economic and social levels. His most significant activities were the following:

a. Intervention in parliamentary, municipal and local elections in favour of the ruling party through terrorism or enticement, especially during the election period;

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b. Banning of any political movement on the local or national level that was independent of the Zionist parties, and even the harassing of organizations attached to or allied with Zionist parties other than the ruling party;

c. Domination of the educational system, especially the appointment of teachers, in view of their vital role in Arab circles, with the application of pressure to ensure subjection to the political dictates of the ruling party;

d. Encouragement of sectarianism and tribalism in the Arab society, thus fueling internal struggles, to distract the attention of people from their real problems, and the isolation and harassing progressive forces, while giving support to the traditional, reactionary and collaborative elements in Arab circles;

e. Obstructing the growth and development of social and cultural institutions in Arab circles which could improve congenial ties among youth and raise their moral and material standards;

f. Creating an atmosphere of anxiety and despair in youth circles to prompt them to emigrate. This was done by making them feel that they were constantly humiliated and under seige, psychologically, economically and politically;

g. Making it possible for other "organs" of the authority to infiltrate Arab circles for inciting internal conflicts;

13. Hundreds of thousands of dunums of land were expropriated from Arab farmers in Israel under the military rule and on the basis of a series of laws issued by the Israeli authorities. Article 125 of the Emergency Law, which is the basis of military rule, entitles the military to condon whole areas and define the terms of entry or departure. This article specifies that the military commander is entitled to declare any specific region or part of region an area restricted for security reasons. Once farmers are barred from cultivating the land for three years, the land becomes subject to the provisions of the Othoman Law on "fellow land", under which the ruling authorities have the right to confiscate the land and deprive its owners of their ownerships. Over the years, Israel issued a number of

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laws which allow the authorities to confiscate "legally" Arab property to meet the needs for the judaization of the country. The military governor was the one who administered these laws or facilitated their implementation by other administrations. At the same time, the military governor served as a "safety valve" to ensure that civilian courts' verdicts favourable to Arab litigants were not enforced. This was arranged by declaring that the lands of disputed ownership, which the courts had decided belonged to Arab owners and could not be confiscated by the authorities, were "a restricted area" or an area of "military exercises" or a "border area" or a "security area". The lands were then confiscated and transferred to Zionist institutions to become "wagf" (religious endowments) of the "Jewish people" and could not be sold or leased to non-Jews. Consequently, once the Arab farmer was deprived of his land he had no alternative but to become a hired or seasonal worker, mainly working in agriculture for the Jewish settlers. In the beginning the Israeli settlers entered into share-tenancy arrangements (half or quarter shares) with the Arab farmers whose lands had been confiscated and turned over to the settlers. The settlers received the bulk of the crops, without exerting any effort beyond the exploitation of the privileges extended to them as Jewish new settlers. They merely had to go to one of the land lease authority offices and pay a small rental fee. Even this opportunity was blocked for the farmers when the authorities issued a law banning such arrangements. The decrease in the proportion of Arab villagers working in agriculture from 75% when Israel was established to less than 20% by the end of the seventies is a clear indicator of the success of Israel in uprooting the Arab farmer from his land and his traditional work.

14. Briefly, the most significant feature of the life of Palestinian Arabs in the lands occupied in 1948, and, consequently, the most influential, was their transformation from a population majority to a minority within an evictive settler entity, and the loss of their main base of economic independence, namely the land, with their consequent shift to hired labour, in construction or agriculture, generally on a seasonal basis, namely, their proletarianization. Since this

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shift did not take place naturally or spontaneously, but was planned ahead of time and forcefully executed, it had a stronger impact. The Arab minority struggled bitterly against the Israeli policies on all levels, political, economic and social, and especially against the general Israeli approach to the Judaization of Arab land not only as a means of production, but also as a national homeland. Actually, the record of the struggle for the land and attachment to it, with all that such attachment represents, in so many ways, is the record of the struggle of this minority against Zionist colonialism. The Arab woman shared in this struggle, and bore her share of the burdens and, in fact, the impact on her was even more severe and detrimental. However, the state had the upper hand, and was able to realize its goals, even though it has not yet completed its programme. In seeking to realize their goals, the occupation authorities exercised every possible form of repression and racial discrimination, including restriction of freedom of movement, of labour and of residence, as well as the freedom of political and cultural expression, limiting of educational opportunities, economic pressure, and restriction of social growth opportunities. The rebellion of the Arabs of lands occupied in 1948, such as on the "Day of the land" or the recent confrontation between the authorities and the farmers of the village of "Mi'ilya" are living examples which expose the claims of Zionist occupation authorities of the improvement in the living conditions of the Arab minority under that occupation. Along with its policy of political repression and social and economic havoc, Israel also strived diligently to demolish the Palestinian identity of its Arab minority, through a carefully-studied policy of programming education in schools in such a way as to define the human and national values of these Arabs according to the wishes of the Israeli planners. These planners continue to regard the Palestinian students as part of the Arab people, and, as such, the "national energy", presently living in Israel not by any "historical right", but rather, due to the "right of existence" granted them by Israel, and, as such, they are subject to its will and design. In this way, the national history of these students is distorted, along with the history of their country, which, according to Jewish philosophy of history, has no history in the absence of "God's Chosen People" from, "the promised land". In the absence of the "Jewish people" from the "full land of Israel", this land becomes a mere geographic entity, devoid of all history, as

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is the case of the people who lived on the land continuously, without interruption, but are not "chosen".

Second: Palestinians in Areas Occupied in 1967

1. Ever since Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, it set a policy in both areas based on encroaching annexation, economic attachment, the construction of settlements and the Judaizing of the land, with the consequent uprooting of the people or their transformation into hired workers in the Jewish labour market, in preparation for the annexation of both areas to Israel when circumstances permit. Actually, Israeli practices in Gaza and the West Bank after 1967 have not differed greatly, either in principle or in objective, from practices towards the Arabs of land occupied in 1948. The difference is one of size. The density of the Arab population in Gaza and the West Bank is much higher than in Galilee or the "triangle", especially when compared with the Zionist settlements in those areas. Consequently, the actions of the occupation authorities in Gaza and the West Bank seem to be severe, especially in recent years. Ever since Begin unveiled his "self-rule" plan, and Israeli plans to annex occupied territories became obvious, the struggle between the Arab population and the occupation authorities has intensified. As the residents of the West Bank are escalating their struggle to break the yoke of occupation, the Israeli authorities are also escalating their repressive measures and oppressive rules. This situation is inflicting extensive damage on the lives of the Arabs in these areas, seriously harming their economic and living conditions under that occupation. It is only natural that the end result of this struggle should be further suffering for this portion of the Palestinian people in general and for the poorer and weaker factions in particular, including the sector of women. The prominent feature of the struggle there is the battle against occupation which takes up most efforts and activities and diverts attention from the other problems - human, social and economic.

2. The Israeli proposals put forward as the basis for a "settlement" in areas occupied in 1967 obviously do not constitute an acceptable basis for negotiations on the future of those areas; they also fail to meet the minimum level required even

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within the framework of the United Nations resolutions, let alone the Arab position generally and the Palestinian position in particular, which is based on the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The Begin plan for self-rule, the broad outline of which was adopted at Camp David, is a transparent attempt to cover up the actual annexation of territories occupied in 1967, but without their people. The plan provides for the transforming of these people into isolated groupings, similar to "bantulands", in preparation for the expulsion whenever circumstances permit, or for the facilitating of their "voluntary emigration" because of pressures of their daily living conditions, be it political, social or economic. The plan deprives them of political sovereignty over their land, and its settlement programmes prevents the building of a cohesive Arab society with an independent economy in these territories. The plan places all domaniaal land (which constitutes the majority of agricultural land and includes all community property and wastelands) and all water sources natural resources, etc. under the control of the state - Israel. The Arab population will be given the right, theoretically at least, to choose their nationality. If they chose the Israeli nationality, and are granted it, they join their brethren of the lands occupied in 1948, which is an unenviable situation. If they retain their present Jordanian nationality, they become an ethnic community living in a foreign country, while they are still living on their own land, in their own cities and villages, and even in their own homes, thus constituting a situation unique in its abnormality. It is known that Begin's plan for self-rule is confined to local services, which prompted the Bethlehem municipality to describe it as an "administration for public cleaning and garbage collection services". The plan also requires that Israeli occupation army remain in these territories and military rule offices remain open in the cities and the larger villages; it will be responsible for "security" in them. The elections which are discussed within the framework of self-rule negotiations are no more than a compulsory referendum requiring response with "yes" or "no" to measures defined by the occupation authorities. These "elections" are by no means free elections on self-determination and the nature of political or administrative representation.

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3. The alternative Israeli plan, which is proposed by the official Israeli opposition, and which is based, originally on what is known as the "Allon Plan" named after former Israeli Foreign Minister Yigal Allon, is also inconsistent with the common understanding of the word "settlement", expressed in the simple formula: the withdrawal of Israel from Occupied Territories in return for Arab recognition of its legal existence. The Allon Plan fails to even reach the minimum level of Security Council resolution 242, since it provides for the annexation of the largest possible area with the lowest possible number of people, with returning of the dense population groupings of the West Bank and Gaza to Jordan. This would take place naturally within the terms of an agreement that would keep bridges open between the two banks of the Jordan, which would remain, according to this plan, the "security border of Israel". As such, the main concern of this plan is to get rid of the Arab population in the territories in order to avert the demographic danger and to maintain the "racial purity of the State of Israel". The most noteworthy feature of the "Allon Plan" is that it was not adopted by the Israeli Government, not even by the Government in which Allon participated as a foreign minister. Today, this plan has no hope of securing the support of the majority of the Israeli ruling hierarchy and becoming an official Israeli position which could be the basis for "settlement" negotiations. Nevertheless, the plan without being officially announced remained the basis for Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, until the Begin Government took office in 1977, at which time, the door was flung wide open for settlements in accordance with the policies of the new ruling party, the Likud.

4. At present there is no indication of any "settlement" possible being reached in the foreseeable future with regards to the proposal of the party currently in power is not acceptable neither to the Arabs, nor the Palestinians nor locally. Furthermore, the plan of the other alternative party is not also acceptable neither by the Arabs nor the Israelis. Consequently, the current occupation status will be prolonged, as will be the struggle against it, with more repressive measures by the authorities to enforce it, which means more suffering for the Palestinians living in areas occupied in 1967. This requires that all peace-loving people should mobilize

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its forces to lift the yoke of occupation off the Palestinian people and to help them escape its burden, which has truly become unbearable. The following summarizes the aspects of the situation in these territories:

a. Ever since the occupation in 1967, Israel has persisted in setting up civilian and para-military settlements in open violation of international conventions and agreements as spelled out in the decisions of the Geneva Conference (fourth convention - Article 49(6)). These settlements have clear-cut political objectives, as admitted by the Zionist institutions. The Israeli High Court also, in its verdict on the "Ellon Moreh" settlement near Nablus (November, 1979) contradicted the testimony given by the Chief of Staff of the Israeli Army; Raphael Etyaff which stated that "Ellon Moreh" settlement was set up for "security" reasons;

b. Israel allowed its citizens and civil institutions to own land in the Occupied Territories, contrary to international conventions. It also took over domaniaal levels and natural resources in the territories and it further exerted pressure on municipal and village councils to link basic utility networks (water, electricity, transportation, etc.) with those of Israel;

c. In violation of Article 49 of the decisions of the fourth Geneva Convention, Israel forcibly moved thousands of people from their places of residence to other locations, in order to facilitate the control of the occupation authorities of the areas and in order to pave the way for their annexation to Israel with the least possible trouble. One prominent example of such action are the measures taken by the Israeli military authorities when they forcibly moved thousands of people from Gaza to the West Bank and North Sinai;

d. The Israeli occupation authorities refused to allow members of Palestinian families residing in the West Bank or Gaza who had been outside Palestine to return to their homes and to re-unite with their families;

e. The Israeli authorities harassed extensively the educational institutions in Gaza and the West Bank, through police action against students, the suppression of student movements, the prolonged closure of these institutions and their

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deprivation of autonomy, especially in terms of determining the curricula and importing textbooks. A UNESCO report accused the Israeli authorities of adopting educational policies in Gaza and the West Bank designed to paralyze Palestinian culture;^{1/}

f. The Israeli occupation authorities sets restrictions on local medical, educational and social institutions in the West Bank and Gaza, which would obstruct "self-rule", an act in harmony with Israeli intentions for annexing these territories. It also contradicts the decisions of the fourth Geneva Conference which does not permit the interference in local institutions, except for security reasons; it is clear that Israeli interference does not stem from such reasons;

g. In the territories it occupied in 1967, Israel practices collective punishment, the demolition of houses, expulsion and deportation beyond the borders and detention without trial for prolonged periods. It also imposes curfews, restricts freedom of movement, meeting and political expression, imprisons and tortures, as attested by the reports of international committees set up to investigate Israeli practices in those territories, and which arrived at findings which condemn such practices as violations of human rights according to decisions of the Geneva Convention.^{2/}

5. Activities initiated in Gaza and the West Bank after their occupation in 1967, and which continue today, point towards changes in these territories similar to changes which took place in the areas occupied in 1948. Immediately after the occupation of these territories, the issue of their future was raised, and they were described as "bargaining cards" in the hands of Israel, from which withdrawal should take place upon reaching a "settlement". These views were based on a number of considerations, including apprehensions over the demographic issue. A few muted voices referred to the danger of Israel becoming a colonial power. However, all

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^{1/} UNESCO, 18th Session, November, 1974.

^{2/} See Report of Amnesty International, 1979, also the Annual Reports of the United Nations Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the United Nations Special Committee Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories.

these views were opposed to the integration of the occupied territories into the Israeli economy. However, those responsible for government policies in these areas at that time, headed by the then Defense Minister, Moshe Dayan, viewed the occupation as a ^{golden} opportunity to break the Arab boycott and to penetrate into Arab markets through the West Bank and the "open-bridge" policy, in order to exploit the natural and human resources of those areas. They paid no attention to the demographic problem since they were confident of the ability of Israel to cope with this problem, in another way. An Israeli defence ministry report on the economic conditions in areas occupied in 1967, stated: "These territories constitute a supplementary market for Israeli goods and services and a source of means of production, especially unskilled labour, for the Israeli economy".^{1/} Actually, the territories occupied in 1967 were promptly linked to the Israeli economy and put in its service. The 1967 Occupied Territories became the second most important importer of Israeli consumer goods, after the United States^{2/}, and the second source of cheap labour for the Israeli market after Israel itself. There was a high proportion of women and children among these workers, especially among those involved in seasonal work and the harvesting of crops.

6. Arab workers from the territories occupied in 1967 were employed in the Israeli labour market in large numbers, especially in the fields of agriculture and construction and, to a lesser extent, in industry, and they rapidly became one of the main pillars of that market. By 1973 there were over seventy thousand (70,000) officially registered workers, not counting the unregistered workers, who were around half that number as well.^{3/} Most of the second group made up of women and children, was more exposed to exploitation due to their lack of work permits and, as such, were at the mercy of the employer or contractor. This created an uproar in liberal and labour union circles in Israel itself. Due to the large

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^{1/} Unit for Co-ordination of Activity in the Administered Areas, Israel Ministry of Defense, Development and Economic Situation in Judea, Samaria, the Gaza Strip and North Sinai; 1967-1969, A Summary, (October, 1979) unpagued.

^{2/} Eric Rouleau, "The Palestinians in Purgatory", Le Monde (January 9, 1973).

^{3/} op. cit.

number of these Arab workers and the failure of the occupation forces to impose restrictions on Jewish employers in terms of wage scales or social and health securities, they soon became competitors of their Arab brethren of the areas occupied in 1948, who worked in the same sectors, but who had, over the years, acquired certain privileges in terms of wages and securities. It was only natural that Jewish employers would prefer to employ Arab workers from the 1967 territories, since that would decrease their expense and increase their profits. These workers, men, women and children, are not only exploited but they also work under harsh and humiliating conditions. These workers are transported to their work sites in trucks owned by the contractors, who charge them exorbitant rates in addition to the commissions they receive for employing them. They could also sleep at the work site, many times without a permit from the military governor, which would expose them to possible arrest and trial for the violation of military rule regulations imposed on them, an offense which carries the penalty of prison or fines. Agricultural workers who sleep at their work site live in shacks under shameful conditions, while construction workers live in the unfinished buildings, harassed by the police and the civil guards, who revenge on them for Palestinian Resistance operations carried in Israel. The very first act of the Israeli police following a Palestinian resistance operation is usually to round up the Arab workers in the area and to arrest, detain, interrogate and insult them.

7. The Israeli policy of the economic annexation of the Occupied Territories, Israeli control of their exports and imports and their manpower and natural resources opened a wide consumer market for Israeli goods and provided Israel's means of production with an abundance of cheap, unskilled labour, which could be exploited in the ugliest of manners. This also provided Israeli capital with new investment opportunities. As a result of these policies, these territories were transformed into Israeli "colonies", whose linkage with Israel became stronger with time. Simultaneously, Israeli dependence on them for the building of its economy became greater, thus increasing Israeli attachment to them and leading to the creation of pretexts for withdrawing from these territories and for their annexation. In addition to occupation, the issue of Israeli economic colonialization

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of the territories occupied in 1967 is actually the basic problem facing the Palestinian Arabs of those areas. Along with other concerned parties, the Palestinians attach to the Israeli economic colonization the highest importance by concentrating on ending occupation, thus eliminating the form of "colonialism". However, this does not necessarily constitute an exemption from efforts to improve the living conditions of the Palestinians in these territories and to relieve their daily burden, especially in the case of the Palestinian woman.

8. Arab workers of the 1967 Occupied Territories do not receive the same wages as the Jewish workers, or even as the Arab workers of Israel. In addition, they are deprived of all social and health security, unemployment and end of service compensations, etc... This violates international conventions and constitutes a violation of the most basic human rights. A large proportion of these workers entered the Israeli labour market "illegally", that is, without a permit from the military office in the area in which they reside. As such, by working "secretly", they become exposed to expulsion and prosecution from all sides. They also work under inhuman conditions, be it in terms of wages, working hours, the nature of the work, hardships in securing and discharging the work or in their mobility between residence and work site. This plight became so widespread that some Israeli newspapers attacked it and published articles exposing the maltreatment of those Arab workers in Israel.^{1/} Moreover, Israeli employers employed large numbers of young Arab children at very low wages, in violation of internationally-accepted labour laws, especially those involving child labour, and even in violation of Israeli labour laws as specified in the charter of the Israeli labour union (histadrut) itself, an act which aroused international and even local backlash against these practices.^{2/}

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^{1/} Examples of these Articles can be found in Israeli Newspapers such as "HA'ARETZ" (30/7/72), "HA'ARETZ" (3/8/72) and "YEDIOT AHRANOUT" (9/8/72).

^{2/} See UNDP, Report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Assistance to the Palestinian People to the Inter-Agency Meeting. April 20, 1979, p.21. The Hebrew Newspaper Ma'ariv, 21/7/71.

9. Once the Israeli labour market had absorbed all the male labour potential of the territories occupied in 1967, it started to recruit Arab women of those territories to serve the Israeli economy. A study on the conditions of the Palestinian woman in the Occupied Territories^{1/} indicates that a large number of Arab women of the villages of Galilee, the triangle, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are leaving household duties in the villages to become hired workers in the Israeli labour market, harvesting crops or, unskilled labour in textile, food, and other manufacturing industries. The study indicates that this trend started after the June, 1967 war, as a result of the consequent changes in the economic structure of Israel. A study by the Israeli Defense Ministry on the labour potential of the Occupied Territories and their ability to meet the needs of the Israeli market, takes note of the importance of recruiting women for this purpose. The study states: "It seems that the male labour potential in the cities and villages of the West Bank has been utilized fully, so any expansion of the labour potential must involve the mobilization of women for the purpose."^{2/} Actually, the occupation authorities set up seven vocational training centres, supervised by the government, to train women in sewing and embroidery, to prepare them for work in Israeli clothing factories. However, most of the women labour potential in the territories remain unemployed due to subjective reasons involving the social conditions prevailing in the Arab society and objective reasons involving the transformation of the economy of the Occupied Territories, especially the hegemony of the Israeli economy over it and its annexation to the Israeli economy. Under the impact of the opening of the Israeli labour market, the programmed assault on the independence of Arab economy in the Occupied Territories, and the

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^{1/} Amal Samad, "The Proletarianization of Palestinian Women in Israel", MERIP REPORTS, No.50, August 1976, Washington, D.C. pages 10-15.

^{2/} Unit for Co-ordination of Activity in Administered Areas, op. cit.

and the flooding of local markets with Israeli consumer goods, many economic activities were disrupted, especially in the agricultural and handicraft sectors. Consequently, the local job opportunities decreased and competition for the limited remaining opportunities increased; leaving women with a very small share. Since the prevailing traditions of large segments and sectors of the Palestinian population restricted the women's freedom of movement and, as such, her ability to work at sites far from her place of residence, many of these women preferred to assume household duties, and even to remain unemployed, rather than to work under the prevailing conditions of the Jewish market. Nevertheless, the number of women working in the fields of education, nursing and services is increasing.

10. In order to evaluate the impact of this transformation on the Palestinian woman, it must be considered within the framework of the general shift of Arab farmers from independent agricultural work to hired labour, a trend which was given increasing impetus with the launching of Zionist settlements in Palestine in 1882 and which has continued up to the present. This shift has been taking place under special conditions which distinguish it from similar phenomena, since it is taking place within the framework of the execution of an evictive settlement plan, with all the consequent political and social ramifications. In order to evaluate the impact of this shift, we must consider it within the following dimensions:

a. The cultural dimension: The Palestinian woman is Arab and her action is guided by the aggregate of social and religious traditions of her people and nation;

b. The national dimension: Palestinian woman joins her husband in the service of the Israeli economy, the capacity of Israel to continue its aggression against the Palestinian people and Arab nation is enhanced, while the components of the independent Palestinian economy, and, consequently, the cohesiveness of the Palestinian society, even in its narrow context, are further weakened;

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c. Class dimension

The shift of the Palestinian woman, in comparatively large numbers, from household work to seasonal work in farms, textile plants or manufacturing plants does not constitute a step forward in the improvement of her social position. Moreover, if she is uprooted from her traditional position in her society without being given guarantees of permanent work in which she can advance thus, will only create additional crises in her society, especially if the two previous dimensions are also taken into consideration.

Actually, the shift of the Palestinian woman from her household duties to seasonal hired labour, within the framework of her present family, national and class circumstances did not improve her conditions as much as it increased her burdens within her society. The problems of the Palestinian woman in the Occupied Territories are not restricted to the general political issue of the Israeli occupation of these territories nor are they restricted to economic, employment, or unemployment questions or to the issues of work location, wages, or the difficulty or ease of securing work. They go beyond all these to include the general social aspects of her life, such as the following:

a. A high proportion of illiteracy prevails among women over the age of 15, which reaches up to twice the illiteracy levels among men.^{1/}

b. The number of girls in secondary schools drops to half the number of boys. During the 1977-1978 school year the number of secondary school students in the West Bank was thirty-one thousand and fourteen (31,014), composed of twenty thousand one hundred and twenty-one (20,121) boys and ten thousand eight hundred and ninety-three (10,893) girls.^{2/}

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^{1/} Jamil Hilaal, *The West Bank, the Socio-Economic Structure (1948-1974)*, the Research Centre of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Beirut, 1974, p.196.

^{2/} UNDP, *op. cit.*, p.26

c. The number of women who have had nine years of schooling or more are few, especially among camp residents, because UNRWA does not operate secondary schools in camps, and because parents place a greater priority on the education of the boys, for several reasons, the most important being economic assistance provided by the boys;^{1/}

d. Domestic and family restrictions limit the movement of women and their ability to devote themselves to work outside the home;

e. The scarcity of nurseries and the lack of kindergartens prevent women from going out to work. This problem is intensified by the fact that most Palestinian homes lack the facilities that could compensate for this shortage, which increases the child-raising burdens imposed on the woman;

f. There is a lack of vocational and technical training centres which would enable women to acquire specific skills which they were unable to acquire in regular schools;^{2/}

g. The general health conditions in Palestinian groupings, especially in camps, malnutrition, the increasing cost of medical treatment and the shrinking medical services have left their impact on the segment of the population most exposed to danger - women and children. A reliable study on the health and medical services conditions in the West Bank points to a rise in Arab infant mortality between 1973 and 1975 from 70 to 80 per thousand.^{3/} Data contained in the study points to a general crisis in medical services, especially in relation to the needs of women in this respect.

^{1/} Jamil Hilaal, *ibid.*

^{2/} UNDP, *op. cit.*, p.29

^{3/} UNDP, *op. cit.*, p.33

Third: Palestinians in Refugee Camps

1. The uprooting of the Palestinian people from their land, their loss of their homeland and its eventual dispersion were accompanied by number of elements which were destructive to the social structure of the Palestinian people in general, and detrimental to the growth of the poorer and weaker segments of the Palestinian population in particular. One of the results of displacement was the reversal of the priorities of the general social activity of this people, especially in the case of those who left Palestine for nearby or far-off countries. In addition, the social gap between the classes of the Palestinian people became wider, and interaction between the people was interrupted. All this had a profound effect on the course of subsequent events in Palestinian groupings outside Palestine. The rich and middle classes were scattered in the Arab cities and elsewhere, especially in capitals, and busily sought to get settled in their new environment. The farmers and poorer classes were quartered in densely populated "camps" which, with time, mostly became "shanty towns" and slums, and were deprived of opportunities for work, education, health care and political participation. Regardless whether they were grouped in camps or scattered in nearby and far-off cities and villages, and regardless of whether they depended on UNRWA aid to camps or successfully built or rebuilt their lives in their locations of dispersion, all were subjected to the reality of being "refugees". This meant dependence on current developments in the countries of their residence, on the existing employment possibilities and on the extent to which they were endowed with skills and expertise.^{1/} In general, the collapse of the Palestinian society after the Zionist occupation of Palestine meant in effect, the collapse of the social position of all its members, to one extent or another.

2. Figures of UNRWA indicate that the number of Palestinians registered with it as refugees in 1975 was one million six hundred fifty-two thousand and four hundred and thirty-six (1,652,436) people, including six hundred forty-six thousand two hundred and fifteen (646,215) in camps and others outside the camps. They were distributed as follows:^{2/}

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1/ Sami Hadawi, Bitter Harvest: Palestine Between 1914-1967, New York, the New World Press, 1967, p.176.

2/ ECWA, Demographic Situation on the Palestinian People, 8 May 1979, p.131.

Number of Palestinian Refugees (1975)

<u>Number</u>	<u>C o u n t r y</u>	<u>T o t a l</u>	<u>Out of Camps</u>	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>No. of Camps</u>
1	West Bank	295,138	219,136	76,002	20
2	Gaza Strip	336,416	136,368	200,048	8
3	East Bank	636,778	421,966	214,812	10
4	Lebanon	197,974	96,358	101,616	15
5	Syria	186,130	132,393	53,737	10
<u>Totals</u>		<u>1,652,436</u>	<u>1,006,221</u>	<u>646,215</u>	<u>63</u>

Following the destruction of the independent Palestinian economy, a population with a peasant majority, which, as "refugees" had become a landless agricultural potential, assembled in the camps.^{1/} The land, as far as the Palestinian peasant was concerned, was not only a means of production but also the basis of his culture and the framework for the continuity of his inherited traditions, as well as the source of his self-esteem and his status among his people. As such, the loss of his land represented not only the loss of the material base of his life, but the total collapse of his world and his position. The groupings of farmers remained jobless, living off the rations distributed by UNRWA, since the labour markets in the three main host countries - Jordan, Syria and Lebanon - were very limited. In fact, they were ~~longstanding~~ labour exporters. The aid offered by UNRWA did not exceed 20 U.S. cents daily for the individual, which meant it could not be the sole source for a living, a fact which prompted Palestinians to be willing to do anything at any kind of wages, to meet the basic demands of life. This placed a cheap and eager work force at the disposal of Arab economic forces, without ensuring any tangible returns for the camp for the improvement of living and social conditions in general.

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^{1/} Sami Hadawi, Bitter Harvest: Palestine Between 1914-1967, New York, the New World Press, 1967, p.176.

3. Despite all negative or positive changes, the Palestinian camps remained a mere cumulative agglomerations which failed to constitute a social body or a society with the recognized human components. This grouping was imposed on the inhabitants of the "tents" without them even having the right to choose the location, which was not necessarily chosen on social or humanitarian basis. Choosing the geographical location of a camp was not based on the interest of the refugees themselves, in fact, it was not suitable for any human activity, nor was it fit for industry or agriculture, exception in the narrowest sense of the word, and, as such, could not constitute even a weak production base. Residents of camps lived under very harsh conditions, and still do, despite some improvements. The density of the population, the bad housing conditions, the absence or scarcity of basic services, all set against the background of the cumulative agglomerative social structure, the absence of social or political leadership, the lack of employment opportunities, and the repression and humiliation to which the camp residents were subjected, made life in the camps as far removed as possible from normal human conditions. It was only natural that these conditions with all their negative elements, should make a greater and more intensive impact on the Palestinian woman living in the camp since she was confined to the camp more than the man. This was further reinforced by the traditions of the Palestinian society which imposed restrictions on her movement or her departure from the existing structures.

4. Life in the camp did not create the world ambience which foster the acquisition of qualifications and skills by its people. In fact, the shabby conditions of camp life constantly reminded the people of what they had lost due to the loss of their homeland. In view of the few available opportunities for growth or progress or advancement towards future goals, the camp residents found themselves in a vicious circle which was difficult to break. A longing for an anticipated "return" based on the conviction that being a stranger was only a transitional phenomena, coupled with the difficulty of breaking away from the camp, or the state of being a "refugee" at large, and integrating into the surrounding societies, be they Arab or otherwise, created a state of loss, emptiness and social fragmentation and, consequently, frustration and alienation.^{1/}

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^{1/} Barakatt (Halim) and Dodd (Peter), River Without Bridges: A Study of the 1967 Arab Palestinian Refugees, the Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1968, p.32 and beyond.

It is very obvious that all the groups and segments of the Palestinians, whether located in areas occupied in 1948, or in Gaza, the West Bank, or in "diaspora" regarded their situation in the wake of the establishment of Israel and the consequent developments, as not being a final or accomplished fact, which required accommodation to its demands or submission to its consequences. They really regarded this situation as a summer cloud, a transitory phenomena that would soon fade away. For them, the "Palestine Question" was still a live issue on both the local and international levels, and a solution was inevitable, to them, a solution can not be considered a real solution if it did not contain their "return". Consequently, they regarded their abnormal conditions as transitory and that they should not be dealt with on a permanent way. Actually, irrespective of both the Palestinian and Arab perspectives of the political issue, the Palestinians were never, as they are not today, absorbed into the social and political framework in which they have been since the occupation of their homeland. Even though they have stayed within such a framework up till the present, they have never become a part of it. The issue is both subjective and objective in the sense that not only are the Palestinians inabsorbable, but the objective conditions do not permit absorption. The only remaining alternative is for the Palestinians to cleave to their identity, which requires that they work for their "return" to the homeland. This is generally applicable to all Palestinians but it is most conspicuous in the case of the Palestinians in camps, where the "return" issue overshadows all others. Thus the Palestinian camp has become the symbol of the obstinacy of the Palestinian problem to all proposed solutions, including absorption, settlement, etc. As such, it has become the target of all political forces which are active or involved in the Palestinian issue, regardless of their background and methods. This, in turn, has left both negative and positive impacts on the camp, without making camp life any easier.

5. It was only natural that the camps would become the main core of Palestinian political activism within the context of moves by the Palestinian people to regain their right to their homeland. As such, the Palestinian camps became the target of conflicting political forces. In addition to the harsh living conditions of the camps, the social deprivation and the political repression to which the people

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were subjected, these densely populated agglomerations became military targets for "Israeli retaliatory operations" or "disciplinary raids", and rarely was a camp spared collective repression, indiscriminate shelling or planned destruction. United Nations files are bulging with records of Israeli attacks on Palestinian camps and it has issued countless decisions condemning the savage Israeli aggression against these camps. Despite this, some camps, especially those near the Israeli borders, have suffered beyond imagination, as is the case today with camps in South Lebanon which are subjected to constant and indiscriminate shelling. As a result of the constant attacks on Palestinian camps, residents of some camps formed caravans of displaced people who no sooner settled in a place than they were forced to move on, going from one camp to the other. This only increased the people's misery and plight. In addition to the loss of large numbers of people, aggression against Palestinian camps deprived their residents of even the stability that prevailed under harsh conditions, and eliminated the social or material base that might have been realized and which could constitute the minimum level for the cohesiveness of any social unit, living in dispersion and alienation.

6. Life in the camps was not only hard and harsh, subject to repression, instability, but it also destroyed the initiative spirit, the self-reliance, and even the self-esteem of the people. The isolation of camp residents, the scarcity of opportunities available to them, the absence of means of training or acquiring skills to improve and advance themselves, along with the continued dependence of camp residents on UNRWA rations, with resentment all that follows in terms of self, destiny, society and people in general, had a destructive psychological impact on camp residents and, consequently, on their group spirit. Refugees can do nothing about their social situation, and consequently suffer from intense internal frustration, not knowing what will happen to them, nor how long their situation will continue. At the same time, they resent the feeling that they are wasting their lives in the camps after having already lost land, money, dignity and self-esteem, but simultaneously incapable of changing their situation. While a deep sense of frustration and impotence controlled the Palestinian man, especially the youth, over their inability to change the existing situation,

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this feeling of frustration and impotence is even more intense in the case of the Palestinian woman whose life is linked to that of her frustrated and powerless man.

7. The most prominent feature of the Palestinian refugee camps has always been the marginality of the economy of these cumulative agglomerations, especially as this relates to an independent Palestinian economy. As a Palestinian work force emerged in the camps, it was used to serve the Arab or foreign economic forces in the host countries or elsewhere, and was not utilized to build an autonomous base that would enable the Palestinians to return and to build for themselves in the future entity. UNRWA aid to camp residents was designed to keep body and soul together, and, as such, did not cover all their needs nor did it include them all. In addition, the Agency halted its food and health aid and has continued to support education. In the early years, the work force of Palestinian camps was outrageously exploited. Their miserable situation, the absence of work opportunities for them, their restricted freedom of mobility, their lack of union-membership and their inability to secure work permits were among the conditions exploited to transform them into a source of cheap labour, at the mercy of employers and without any political or union support to secure their rights, at least at a minimum level. In view of these circumstances, camp residents capable of working became hired, or seasonal, or daily workers who were engaged mainly in agriculture and, to a certain degree, in construction. In the beginning, due to the nature of the work available it was easier for camp women to find jobs in harvesting crops, or in textile factories or in domestic service. Consequently, the economy of the camps remained marginal, and education was the main outlet for improving conditions of the individual. The men were more advanced than the females in this respect for reasons related to the nature of the Palestinian society and because of the parental preference of boys over girls in ^{financing} education. The general result was that the continued and striking marginality of the Palestinian woman, above and beyond the marginality of economic activity in the Palestinian camp.

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8. This marginality is underlined by the figures prepared by the Lebanese Statistics Department in 1971,^{1/} on the labour potential of Palestinian camps. The figures showed that around 60% of all workers were still being paid on a daily basis and only 8% had long-term contracts. The figures also showed that 21 per cent of the workers were employed in seasonal agricultural jobs, 13.6 per cent worked in construction, 12 per cent in industry, 2.4 per cent in transport, and 14.4 per cent in business and hotel services. The figures indicated that a total of 36.7 per cent of all workers were employed in "other services" or "undefined services" and that only 40 per cent of the work force was actually working.^{2/} Another recent (1977) study^{3/} indicated that around ⁶³per cent of all who were working earned an income of less than five hundred (500) Lebanese Pounds, or less than 200 U.S. dollars. The study also pointed to a radical change in the kind of work in which the youth are engaged, as compared with the work in which their fathers and grandfathers were engaged. The study also pointed out that whereas around 80 per cent of those questioned were employed by others, they reported that 76 per cent of their grandfathers had been self-employed, as were around 60 per cent of their fathers. This tendency underlined a general trend of working Palestinians to shift from self-employment to hired employment, and it stressed the fact that they thus derived their livelihood from economies over which they had no control, and which they could only influence in an indirect manner. This study also underlined the high proportion of Palestinians who did not have a guarantee of permanent employment. As such, they hold more than one job. Around 75 per cent of all who responded expressed dissatisfaction with their current jobs, either because of the low wages, the difficult working conditions or because of the attitudes of their superiors towards them.

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^{1/} Rosemary Sayigh, Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries, Zed Press, London, 1979, p.120.

^{2/} Ibid. pp.121-122.

^{3/} Samir Ayyoub, The Palestinian Class Structure, a master's thesis, The Arab University.

9. One of the most conspicuous findings of the study was that around 85 per cent of all who were questioned indicated that they did not believe that the individual Palestinian could change his class status. Camp residents gave a number of reasons to justify this conviction, the most important of which were:

a) Dependence: The spirit of dependency and general despair continue to prevail in the camps. The nature of the services provided by UNRWA to refugees were instrumental, to a large extent, in creating this spirit of dependence, which was later generalized to the point where they depended on the Arab countries primarily, and, to a lesser extent, on the United Nations, to liberate their land and to restore their homes and possessions to them. This resulted in a general feeling of impotence even involving the inability of the individual to do anything to change his living or class status;

b) Repression: Camps were subjected to strict supervision by security agencies, as mentioned above, and camp residents were deprived of public freedoms to the extent that even movement and transport were restricted, as well as gatherings and organizations. Camps did not have the means for collective security, especially in the face of the Israeli attacks on them, so they remained a prime target for the continuing Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people. Under such conditions, very little initiative remains, and very few self-improvement efforts continue since even a bare minimum of security and stability is not available;

c) Domination: The average individual in the camp, especially the woman, was subject to domination from all sides. Tribalism still dominated the agrarian groupings, the old generation dominated the younger generation, man dominated woman, father dominated son, brother dominated sister, and all were subject to the authority of UNRWA officials, especially in matters related to their means of livelihood and to services provided by the Agency. In addition, the Palestinian camp was subjugated by the repression of the organs, laws, regulations and restrictions of the state, and the camp residents had no alternative but to offer concessions. They were dominated by fear and did not dare defy or confront in a situation where submission and surrender no longer helped, and in which there was no possibility

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of insubordination for fear of arousing external oppression. The rebellion and outrage of the camp residents remained repressed for a long period, eating them up internally, but not prompting them to open defiance against their situation until the Palestinian revolution broke out, turning over their situation;

d) Stagnation and Dissolution: Even though the camp continued to retain the factors of mechanical solidarity, which provided it with the minimum level of social cohesion, it lacked all the factors of organic solidarity, which are most important in achieving social interaction and growth.^{1/} With the fall of the Palestinian system there was none left to assume the collective responsibility to preserve the Palestinian people. The collapse of the institutions which protect and improve society posed a real threat to the basic continuity of the Palestinian people. With the advent of camp life, the pace of Palestinian social life decreased, and most efforts to rebel against this situation crumbled before the onslaught of despair, impotence and subjugation. This state continued to defy every attempt to break away from it until the rise of the Palestinian revolution, which opened new horizons which had not been available previously.

10. There is not enough data available to draw a map of the social structure in the West Bank, in general, or even in any one specific location. In the Palestinian camp measurements and standards become confused, but there is enough information to draw up a picture of the broad outline of social and political trends which, while not fully applicable to the Palestinian camp as such, are not alien to it either. These are:^{2/}

a) A general trend towards the services sector, with employment, basically, in jobs of low or medium salaries;

b) Slow progress in the emergence of a class of industrial workers;

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^{1/} Ahmad Abu Zaid, The Social Structure, Part 2, Cairo, The Arab Book Printing and Publishing House, 1967, p.192.

^{2/} Rosemary Sayigh, op.cit., p.123.

- c) Increasing from the agricultural sector, even in the agricultural countries;
- d) Greater involvement in intellectual professions, such as teaching;
- e) The migration of the educated and of skilled workers to the oil-producing countries;
- f) The continued poverty of the families that derive their livelihood from non-technical labour.

11. It is evident from the above-mentioned trends that education was a major factor in the development of the lives of camp residents. This is a recurring impression of many who have studied living conditions in Palestinian camps. Education was the means by which the Palestinians, especially the camp resident, could improve his personal conditions, and, consequently, his family conditions. Even though this impression is true to some extent, there is actually no basis for the so-called "educational miracle" of the Palestinians in dispersion. The Palestinian masses were not transformed by schools into skilled workers, teachers, doctors and engineers, neither did education revolutionize their social and economic conditions, as some occasionally claim. Nevertheless, there was an obvious increase in the proportion of university graduates in the population of the West Bank. The deep-set conviction that education was the key to success and to a better life, not only for the individual, but for the group as a whole. Deprived, as they were, of land and homeland, the Palestinians had nothing left for investment except their human resources which they accomplished through education. The success scored by the Palestinians in this field made it possible to talk about an "economic cycle" in which this investment played an important role, and ultimately helped in the achievement of a certain degree of cohesion. Parents made many sacrifices to ensure the education of their children and there are many stories of individual success in this field, each with its own special details. One feature common to all was the difficulty encountered equally by both parents and children in pursuing of higher education and securing admission into the professional world. This enthusiasm for education is in sharp contrast to the failure of UNRWA to provide

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all the educational needs of the Palestinian refugees; even though its educational services constitute its best service. The shortcoming of the Agency is obvious in terms of school curricula, training of teachers, the confining of education to elementary and preparatory levels, the scarcity of technical institutes and the low standards of those that are functioning. A study which examined the standards of educational services offered by the Agency in the Tel-el-Zaatar Camp drew attention to the following points:^{1/} (a) over-crowded classes; (b) the two daily session system; (c) automatic promotions; (d) shortage of teachers; (e) delays in appointment of new teachers; (f) failure to arrange for teacher transfers before starting the school year; (g) failure to provide school textbooks for students by the beginning of the school year.

12. Figures released by the Agency on the number of students in schools for 1970-1971 school year, clearly underline the limitations of the so-called 'Palestinian "educational miracle"'. These figures show the high ratio of drop-outs at the age of fourteen (14):

<u>A g e</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
6-11	88.4
12-14	67.1
15-17	37.3
18-20	8.3

At the age of fourteen (14) students move on to secondary schools, and later on, to institutions of higher learning. Fourteen is also generally the year of maturity, and many girls naturally drop out. However, the fact that the Agency does not offer educational services on the secondary level, as it does on the elementary and preparatory levels, coupled with the lack or shortage of secondary schools in or near the camps, only increased the number of drop-outs, especially

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^{1/} Hanı Mandas, Work and Workers in the Palestinian Camp, Research Centre of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Beirut, 1974. p.58-60.

among the girls. There is only a limited number of schools that will cater to drop-outs, and their enrollment capacity is limited. The Siblinc Technical Institute in Lebanon, for example, is the only one of its kind, and has an enrollment capacity of only two hundred (200) students. The expense of studying in comparable Lebanese institutions is beyond the means of camp residents. This means that a large number of students end up learning trades in handicraft shops, small factories, etc...^{1/}

13. The apprehension of the Palestinians over their economic dependence and over their political repression has not been allayed, despite developments in camps in recent years. Even high-income Palestinians do not view their social and economic conditions with equanimity and confidence because they do not possess the political ability to protect their gains. Continued harsh political, social and economic conditions in the camps led to a state of social insecurity that potentially created distrust in all values and beliefs, thus threatening to destroy the heritage of the past and erase all principles and standards. Even if some Palestinians succeeded in re-building themselves, they would not affect the society, which as a whole would remain incapable of choosing new models or general patterns of conduct. Consequently, it becomes impossible to draw up long-range plans. This situation is more readily observed among the lower groups because they are the ones who are affected more than any others.^{2/}

If the facts and figures listed above were only partially true and yet had such a strong impact on the Palestinian society and particularly on the camp population, and had left such a mark on the Palestinian man, how much more would the impact be on the Palestinian woman who lacks both resources and the components needed to improve her situation. Consequently, it is essential that her special problems be given the greatest possible care.

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1/ Rosemary Sayigh, op. cit., p.120.

2/ Wajih Diaeddine, The Palestinians in the Arab Homeland, Arab Research and Studies Institute, League of Arab States, Cairo, 1978, p.150.

14. General living conditions in the camps make camp residents more vulnerable to disease and increase the rapid spread of infection. The population groups most exposed to health hazards in the camp, namely women and children, suffer most as a result of these bad conditions. Camps are over-crowded, with people crammed into unsanitary houses, which hold up to ten persons per room. In addition, vital facilities, such as water networks, drains and public cleanliness are below any acceptable standard. Moreover, the low income level of camp residents forces them to live under harsh conditions, with insufficient food and inadequate clothing and to reside in houses that provide little protection from the cold of winter or the heat of summer. Medical services provided in the camp by various organizations are below the minimum acceptable level. The camp has virtually no preventive health measures, especially since there is no covered water supply system, the sewers are open, and the commonly-used toilets are few in number and unsanitary. In addition, the people, and especially the women, are only vaguely aware of the principles of public and preventive health, and this hampers efforts to combat and confine the spread of diseases. The health problems related to sex life, including their symptoms and causes, and the problems of pregnancy and child-birth pose some of the most serious challenges facing the women of the camps. Reports of doctors who have worked in camps indicate that the sex education of women of the camp is very low, which obstructs "family planning" efforts in the camp, not to mention the impact of inherited traditions. Some reports^{1/} referred to the frequent outbreak of contagious diseases, such as measles, chickenpox, typhoid, whooping cough, and polio among the children of the camp. Gastronomic ailments such as indigestion and worms were common, along with malnutrition, skin parasites such as scabies and others. Among women of the camps the common ailments were anemia (10%), pelvic disorders, tuberculosis, and teeth decay. Among the elderly the common ailments were respiratory and heart disorders, problems of the gastronomic system, diabetes, skin diseases, rheumatism and rheumatic diseases.

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^{1/} Dr. Abdul Salam Hussni, "Advanced Study by the Palestinian Red Crescent Society", Planning Centre, Palestine Liberation Organization, Beirut, 1975.

Chapter IV

The Social and Economic Institutions of the Palestinian People

1. The Palestinian people have continuously sought to organize themselves in their struggle to confront the Zionist plan for settlement. Different forms of organizations were adopted depending on the requirements of the political situation within the conditions of dispersion. As a result, a number of institutions were formed inside and outside the Occupied Territories which aim at meeting some of the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people.

A. Inside the Occupied Territories:

2. The Palestinian people under occupation have been subjected to many social and economic problems, which have already been delineated in Chapter III. These problems, resulting from occupation or dispersion, had a great impact on family life and the responsibilities and rights of its members. Exile imprisonment, forced separation of families, limited opportunities for education and employment and limited social services, qualitatively and quantitatively, made it a matter of utmost urgency to establish institutions in order to fill the gap created by the absence of national structures. As a result, multi-sectoral institutions were established to provide services in education, vocational training, health, community development, culture, and related fields. These multi-sectoral, multi-purpose social institutions are generally initiated and administered by Palestinian women. Often they serve a large sector of the Palestinian women.

3. In the West Bank today there are approximately 100 popular organizations. They all share the same characteristics: voluntary, non-profit, charitable, concentrated in the main cities, and providing multi-functions.

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4. These social institutions provide services which public institutions have been unable to meet. As a consequence of occupation, public services were transformed into a high priced commodity, thus placing a heavy burden on the limited income of the population. Making use of such public services was also hindered by the social and psychological reactions of the Palestinian people. Thus, popular institutions had to provide the following services:

- a) Services for children: nurseries, primary schools, orphanages;
- b) Services for women: hospitals, mother-child care centres, family planning guidance, literacy and home economics programmes, vocational education;
- c) Services for students: scholarships for intermediate, secondary and university education;
- d) Services for the mentally and physically handicapped: vocational rehabilitation and education;
- e) General services: general health care, libraries, assistance to poor families, either financial or in kind.

B. Outside the Occupied Territories

5. Following the dispersion of the Palestinian people in 1948, many social institutions were established in the Arab host countries. There are 18 organizations which constitute the socio-cultural institutions of the Palestine Liberation Organization. They cover social services activities, as well as professional groupings. In addition to these institutions, others were formed to complement them in terms of services and geographic distribution. Four of these institutions are particularly active and instrumental in reaching the Palestinian women, as participants in and beneficiaries of their programmes.

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a. The General Union of Palestinian Women: (GUPW)

6. GUPW was established in 1965 as the only popular representative of the Palestinian women. Its programme of action was set accordingly to meet the basic needs of the Palestinian women within the framework of the Palestinian struggle and to assist in dealing with the daily needs of women, especially in the camps. GUPW established centres for various services and it assigned priority to the establishment of kindergartens, which at this point serve only a 1500 children from a total of approximately 15000 children who are eligible for such basic services. GUPW also established two orphanages in Lebanon. It is in the process of setting up a vocational training centre so that women can increase their employment opportunities, add to the income of the family and prove their productive skills.

b. Samed:

7. SAMED was established in 1970 as the productive institution for the Palestinian people. Among its most important objectives are the following:

1. Qualifying Palestinians for employment through vocational rehabilitation.
2. Assisting in producing goods in accordance with the needs of the Palestinians, especially those in camps, and their purchasing powers.
3. Preserving Palestinian heritage through national handicraft and marketing the products in as wide a scope as possible.

8. SAMED has 33 workshops throughout the Palestinian communities, in Lebanon and Syria, with 70% of the workers being females. The workshops produce clothes, blankets, wooden and metal furniture, leather products and shoes, toys and related children equipment, plastic educational material, folkore needlework. At the present, SAMED is organizing literacy training programmes for its workers as well as on-the-job training for improving their productive skills.

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c. The Palestine Red Crescent: (PRC)

9. PRC was established in 1969 to provide health services to the Palestinians living in the camps. In Lebanon alone, the Red Crescent has established nine hospitals with a capacity of 600 beds. It has a clinic in every camp, as well. A special centre for the rehabilitation of the disabled was established in 1976, which provides artificial limbs, physical therapy, and vocational training for the disabled.

10. PRC has also established three centres to train young women and men in secretarial work and sewing arts. It has established centres for training nurses, laboratory and X-ray technicians, and assistant pharmacists. At present, it is involved in developing its nursing programme into a nursing school.

d. Welfare Society for the Martyrs' Families

11. As a result of the death of many Palestinians in their struggle for self-determination, many families were left without a primary source of financial support. In response to urgent and immediate needs, this institution was established in 1965 to assist families of Palestinian martyrs in various parts of the world. The service provided by this institution is essentially monetary to meet various needs: monthly allowances, medical services, elementary and secondary education for the children.

12. The living conditions in the camps and in the Occupied Territories require special concentrated attention from international bodies and various sources of assistance. It is important that such assistance be channelled through the Palestinian institutions which serve a great sector of the population, especially those institutions that serve women, thus serving the whole family. Assistance to the Palestinian woman must follow a co-ordinated well-planned pattern, with

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long-range provision, since the whole "Palestinian Question" seems to be far from reaching a solution. Political priorities will continue to be emphasized, thus relegating social issues and needs to a secondary position. Within this framework, the Palestinian woman will further continue her suffering and her struggle to meet the challenges of daily existence.

13. The document entitled "Special Measures of Assistance for the Palestinian Woman" constitutes a range of project proposals for social programmes that cover many aspects of the life of the Palestinian woman. It can act as a guide to international co-operation and co-ordination, when translating projects into specific activities during the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women.

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