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

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-seventh year

Letter dated 7 December 1982 from the Permanent Representative  
of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the President of  
the General Assembly

I have the honour to enclose herewith the testimony of Dr. Chris Giannou of Canada which he presented before the International Commission of Inquiry into Israeli Crimes against the Lebanese and Palestinian Peoples, which met at Nicosia on 15 and 16 August 1982.

The testimony of Dr. Giannou is an eyewitness account of the horrendous crimes which the Israeli army committed against the civilian population of southern Lebanon and the Palestinian refugee camps.

It is incredible indeed that such atrocities could have been committed against innocent civilians and civilian targets, including hospitals, schools and other installations.

I should like to stress that the testimony of Dr. Giannou covers only a tiny portion of what has been perpetrated by the Israelis against civilians in south Lebanon, within the small area around one of the hospitals at Sidon in which he performed his humanitarian tasks.

Inasmuch as Dr. Giannou was an eyewitness to these indescribable crimes, it would not take much imagination to understand what has befallen the other regions in south Lebanon.

There are other hair-raising accounts also presented in testimonies by neutral international observers working in purely humanitarian fields, which I shall have occasion to forward to you in due course.

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I request that the enclosed testimony of Dr. Giannou be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hazem NUSEIBEH  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

International Commission of Inquiry into Israeli Crimes  
against the Lebanese and Palestinian Peoples  
(Nicosia, 15 and 16 August 1982)

Testimony of Dr. Chris Giannou (Canada)

My name is Dr. C. Giannou. For the last two years I have been a surgeon with the Palestine Red Crescent Society (PRCS). I was Medical Director of the Nabatish Hospital and most recently was working in Sidon, Lebanon, during hostilities there. I am not a spokesman nor representative of the Lebanese Government, nor of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

I was detained by Israeli authorities from June 13th to June 15th in Sidon, Lebanon, and then until June 20th in the Megiddo (Armageddon) prison in the north of Israel. The Israeli authorities denied holding me and my two Norwegian colleagues (x) in detention until June 18th, in spite of presentation by the Canadian and Norwegian Foreign Ministries. My release from Israeli prison on June 20th was "unconditional". I was not released into the custody of the Canadian Embassy, nor was I expelled from the country, and no charges were ever made against me. We were released and are free today to appear before this Committee because we are holders of Canadian and Norwegian passports. My colleagues of various nationalities are still in custody. Surgeon, general practitioners, male nurses, para-medical technicians and ambulance drivers who have done no more or less than we, are still being detained because they are not in possession of passports such as ours.

I feel a little like a character from Dante. I have seen hell and returned. Many others were not quite so fortunate.

I have been witness to suffering and death on so massive a scale that looking back on it now from these quiet surroundings, there is something surreal about my memories.

I have been a witness to the total, utter devastation of residential areas, and the blind, savage, indiscriminate destruction of

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(x) Dr. Steinar Berge, Physician  
Mr. Oyvind Moeller, Child Psychologist

refugee camps by simultaneous shelling and carpet bombing from aircraft, gunboats, tanks and artillery. The scene in the refugee camp of Ain Al Helweh, several square kilometers large with a population just prior to hostilities of between 60,000 and 80,000 was one of an apocalypse. Now, not a single dwelling was left intact. There were areas where one could no longer distinguish where roads had been and where buildings had once stood. All that remained were large blackened craters filled with rubble and debris, broken concrete slabs and twisted iron bars, and corpses. The topography of certain areas had been changed. Nature itself, seemed to have been injured. There is a contradiction in terms, when an area of several square kilometers, with a population density of 15,000 to 20,000 per square kilometer is razed and then to say that the civilian population had been spared.

I have been a witness to hospitals being shelled, Government hospital in Ain Al-Helweh, across the road from the main refugee camp where I worked, from June 7 to 10, was hit on five or six separate occasions. The first shell hit the water pipes on the first floor and we were obliged to drink intravenous infusions for the succeeding days. One shell hit the emergency reception area on June 9, and killed between forty and fifty people who had taken refuge there.

I have been a witness to women and children being allowed to pass through Israeli Lines back into the refugee camp on June 11, and the shelling of the camp resumed two hours later. I have been a witness to reign of confusion amongst the civilian population in and around the camp. Leaflets had been dropped from Israeli airplanes telling people to cross over Israeli lines to get out of the zone of hostilities. Very few of the leaflets fell into the camp itself. Israeli authorities later stated that they had also used loud speakers, but we in the hospital never heard them. It was never clear where exactly the people were supposed to go; up into one set of hills or another, down to the sea shore, or even to re-group in the Government Hospital itself. At one point, on June 9, between 3,000 and 4,000 civilians had taken refuge in the hospital; entire families, the elderly and those that had been separated from their families.

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And the shelling of the hospital continued with all these people in it.

I have been a witness to the use of cluster bombs, as early as June 5 in the city of Nabatieh, and later in the camp of Ain Al Helweh. I have seen the pyramidal remains of steel with aluminum pods attached by springs at each corner, and the excavated concavity in the steel body where the explosives is placed. The sound of these bombs exploding in the middle of the refugee camp, is unmistakable; hundreds of little detonation over a period of 10 to 12 seconds resembling a pitched battle of small fire. I have seen the calcinated, carbonized bodies of the victims of phosphorous bombs, frozen in their position at the time of death. I have treated minor skin wounds covering mangled bone and muscle caused by the shrapnel of concussion bombs.

I have been a witness to 300 cadavers in the peripheral areas of the Ain Al-Helweh camp while I was evacuating the Government Hospital; to the 40 to 50 cadavers in the emergency reception area in the Government hospital, to 20 inside the hospital amongst my patients, including a woman killed by shrapnel coming in through the window from a shell that had landed in the hospital gardens and who left a five hours old orphan; to two cadavers in the PRCS hospital when I later returned to it after the evacuation of the Government Hospital. I later saw another 25 corpses in one of the large private hospitals of the city of Sidon (Ghassan Hammoud Hospital). These above mentioned figures do not include the rumors of yet other victims that were rampant in the city. I, therefore, was a witness to about 400 killed in only a few small blocks of the camp and city, which is approximately three-quarters of the total deaths admitted to by Israeli authorities for the entire region of South Lebanon.

I have been a witness to the entire male staff of the PRCS medical team in Sidon and Nabatieh being taken into custody, prevented from continuing their medical duties and being treated as ordinary prisoners without any respect to their person. The PRCS, once one of the main institutions for medical services in

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South Lebanon with 3 hospitals, numerous out-patient clinics and a center for mentally retarded children, and occupational rehabilitation where Mr. & Mrs. Moeller worked, no longer exists there.

I have been a witness to men being taken prisoner upon the denunciation of hooded collaborators, neither accuser or accusations ever being made known to us. The entire male population of Sidon which had crossed Israeli lines to get out of the zone of hostilities were herded onto the beach and then taken one by one, and paraded past three parked jeeps. In each jeep sat a man wearing a hood with the eyes punched out, or a blanket wrapped around him to cover his face; an Israeli soldier sitting next to each one. As the men paraded past, a number of them would be singled out, pulled from the line, a large "X" or something in Hebrew written on their backs, then placed against a wall. In this way, there were 4,000 to 5,000 men arrested, including myself, two Norwegian colleagues, and the entire male medical staff of the PRCS in Sidon. I later learned that the same situation prevailed in Tyre, and that the PRCS staff there suffered a similar fate.

This was the most terrifying experience of all. One could learn to cope with the fighting. But when you stand in front of someone who is hidden behind a mask, you cannot defend yourself. You cannot face accuser... or even try to explain. You don't know what you are accused of and are completely at the mercy of some blind denunciation.

After being taken into custody, the prisoners were led to a convent school and placed there in the schoolyard. There were 500 to 600 prisoners at any one time in the yard, and new groups of prisoners were being continuously brought in, and other being taken out. The conditions of detention were difficult; hands bound, stifling heat, food and water in short supply. Prisoners would be taken into one of three classrooms, used for interrogation purposes. I, myself, was interrogated five times during the four days that I was kept there. During one of my interrogations, I could hear blows struck in the next room, and saw the prisoner as he existed; his face was puffed up, eyes blackened and blood trickled from

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the corner of his mouth. The scene in the schoolyard, however, was one of savage and indiscriminate beatings of the prisoners by the forty Israeli guards. A prisoner would call out for water and told that there was none. When he continued to call out, he would be insulted and then a guard would wade into the crowd and start to beat him. The physical abuse ranged from simple punching and kicking to beatings with wooden sticks, plastic hose or even a bunch of pieces of rope with nuts and bolts tied to the ends; a sort of modern cat-o-nine-tails. One Palestinian, Dr. Nabil, was at one point hung by his hands from a tree and beaten. An Iraqi surgeon, Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim was beaten by several guards viciously, and left to lie in the sun with his face buried in the sand. Other surgeons and doctors were also beaten: Dr. Ahmed Soubra, a Lebanese; Drs. Saifeddin, Mohammad Iman and Shafiq El-Islam, Bangaladeshi nationals. The two Norwegians and I were not beaten. I, myself, was struck but once. It was obvious that orders had been given that we were not to be molested. The darker-skinned Arabs, Africans and Asians (Pakistanis, Bangaladeshis, Indians), present were those who were beaten the most severely.

I have been a witness to four prisoners who were beaten to death. I was called upon by an Israeli soldier to examine two of the cadavers. Mr. Berge examined another two cadavers and saw another five or six piled into an ambulance. It is impossible to say whether the two corpses that I examined were amongst the five or six in the ambulance, and therefore, I cannot say with exactitude the number of prisoners beaten to death during those four days.

I have been a witness to the Israeli officers and even the military governor of Sidon, a Colonel Arnon Amozar, being witness to these beatings and not doing anything about it. I have also been a witness to several of the Israeli guards who attempted to stop the beatings, and on several occasions, actual arguments breaking out amongst the guards, between those doing the beating and those who attempted to have them cease.

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I, at one point, asked one of the officers interrogating me that if it were absolutely necessary that I be detained, that I be detained in the PRCS Hospital in order to be able to take care of my patients. Permission was refused. Mrs. Moeller, who remained in the hospital after we had been detained, has stated that one of the patients died, and others suffered severe complications because no other medical services were made available to them. Conditions of detention inside the prison at Megiddo were much improved; water and food were available and we were no longer bound. But, only a small minority of the prisoners were detained inside the prison; the two Norwegians and I, a couple of hundred Egyptian Nationals who were being rehearsed by an Israeli officer to shout "Long live Begin", and a dual Lebanese-Austrian national who had spent several days in the fields around the prison with several thousands of other prisoners. The conditions there, in the fields, resembled those of the schoolyard in Sidon; the prisoners bound and left out in the open with food and water rationed, and a continuation of the beating. After two days there, we were hand-cuffed, blind-folded, and taken out-of-doors for 48 hrs, during which time we were interrogated in one of the series of wooden shacks in the compound around the prison.

We were finally taken to Tel Aviv on the evening of June 20, and released to the Foreign Military Attache Liaison Office.

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