

The Sabra and Shatila Massacre

By the dawn of the twentieth century, Jewish presence in Palestine was modest: a scattering of agricultural **kibbutzim**, a few urban communities, and a revival of Hebrew confined largely to liturgy and scholarship. The landscape began to shift with the **Haavara (Transfer) Agreement** of 1933 and the **Evian Conference** of 1938, both of which - in very different ways - facilitated Jewish emigration from Nazi-controlled Europe. Within a few years, immigration multiplied the Jewish population in Palestine several-fold, transforming the demographic balance and the political horizon of the land.

The **Balfour Declaration of 1917**, later incorporated into the terms of the **British Mandate**, pledged support for “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people,” while - crucially - stipulating that “nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities.” Yet from the earliest days of the Zionist movement, its leadership had spoken of *conquest* and *colonization* as necessary stages toward statehood. Thinkers such as Theodor Herzl, Chaim Weizmann, and later David Ben-Gurion debated not whether a Jewish polity should exist in Palestine, but how to secure and expand it in a land already inhabited.

For the native population - Muslim, Christian, and Jewish alike - the prospect of large-scale immigration under a colonial mandate provoked both anxiety and resistance. The Arab revolts of the late 1930s reflected fears that what was presented as a refuge from European persecution was, in practice, becoming an instrument of dispossession. What had begun as parallel communities under Ottoman rule was being recast into rival national projects under British supervision.

The Nakba

In November 1947, the **UN Partition Plan (Resolution 181)** proposed dividing the land into two states, assigning **56 percent of Palestine** to the Jewish population, which at the time constituted roughly one-third of the inhabitants and owned about **7 percent of the land**. To the Palestinian Arab majority, this appeared less a compromise than a dispossession sanctioned by international decree. When civil war erupted between the communities and the British withdrew, Zionist forces moved rapidly to secure and expand the territory allotted to them.

By 1948, events accelerated beyond recall. The armed struggle that Zionist paramilitaries - particularly the **Irgun** and **Lehi** - had waged against both Arab communities and the British administration widened into open insurgency. Their bombings and assassinations reached far beyond Palestine; one attack even struck the **British embassy in Rome**. Exhausted and increasingly unable to contain the violence, **Britain relinquished its mandate**, passing the intractable question of Palestine to the newly formed **United Nations**.

The result was the **Nakba** - "the Catastrophe" - in which more than **700,000 Palestinians** were expelled or fled their homes amid systematic campaigns of intimidation and destruction. Villages were razed, families scattered across neighboring Arab states, and a national society was dismantled almost overnight. The United Nations acknowledged their plight through **Resolution 194** (December 1948), affirming the refugees' right to return or receive compensation. Yet that promise was never enforced. Its non-implementation allowed both Israel to consolidate its new borders and the Arab host countries to treat the refugees' presence as *temporary* - a provisional condition that has endured for more than seven decades.

The Palestinian Diaspora

The violence of 1948 left a landscape of ruin and exile. Between **10,000 and 15,000 Palestinians** were killed during the fighting while thousands more were wounded in massacres and expulsions carried out as towns and villages fell. Contemporary research, including the meticulous documentation of historian **Walid Khalidi** in *All That Remains*, records the destruction of **over 400 Palestinian villages**, some entirely erased from the map, their ruins later overbuilt by new Israeli settlements or forests planted by the Jewish National Fund to obscure the traces of habitation.

By the summer of 1949, the **refugee population had reached roughly 750,000**, out of a prewar Arab population of 1.2 million. Families fled in waves: first from coastal cities such as Jaffa, Haifa, and Acre; then from the Galilee and central highlands as Zionist militias - soon to be integrated into the **Israel Defense Forces (IDF)** - advanced under **Plan Dalet**, a strategic blueprint that authorized the depopulation of areas deemed hostile or strategically vital.

Neighboring countries absorbed the human tide unevenly.

- **Jordan** received the largest share, around **350,000**, many of whom later acquired Jordanian citizenship.
- **Gaza**, under Egyptian administration, took in approximately **200,000**, swelling its narrow strip into one of the most densely populated areas on earth.
- **Lebanon** received about **100,000–120,000**, who were placed in hastily built camps around Tyre, Sidon, and Beirut.
- **Syria** accepted **80,000–90,000**, resettling them around Damascus and Aleppo. Smaller numbers reached **Iraq** and **Egypt proper**, though these refugees often moved again in search of stability and work.

The United Nations established the **Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)** in 1949 to provide food, shelter, and schooling. Yet the agency's mandate - intended as a temporary humanitarian measure pending repatriation - became the scaffolding of a permanent limbo. While **Resolution 194** recognized the refugees' right to return, neither the international community nor the new State of Israel took steps to implement it. Arab host states, citing that same resolution, declined to grant citizenship, insisting that to do so would legitimize Israel's refusal to repatriate the displaced. Thus, from the outset,

the refugees of 1948 were caught between two negations: the denial of return and the denial of belonging.

Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

Lebanon, the smallest of Palestine's neighboring states, bore a burden disproportionately large to its size and fragile social fabric. When the first waves of refugees crossed its southern border in 1948, they arrived exhausted, often on foot or by donkey, carrying only the keys to their homes and deeds to their lost properties. Around **100,000 to 120,000** Palestinians entered Lebanon between 1948 and 1949 - roughly one-sixth of the total refugee population created by the war. The newly established **United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)** registered **127,000** of them by 1952, settling families in makeshift camps near Tyre, Sidon, Tripoli, and the outskirts of Beirut.

Lebanon's reception was shaped by its own **confessional balance** - a delicate division of power between Maronite Christians, Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, and Druze - and by a pervasive fear that granting citizenship to tens of thousands of mostly Sunni refugees would upset that equilibrium. Unlike Jordan, which later naturalized many Palestinians, Lebanon kept them **stateless**, offering residence but no nationality. They were labeled *guests*, a term that implied both temporary protection and political exclusion.

Initially, the refugees lived in tents pitched on muddy lots, dependent on UNRWA rations and emergency aid. Over time, the tents gave way to zinc-roofed shacks and, later, concrete huts, but their **legal impermanence** remained codified. By law, Palestinians were barred from owning property, joining trade unions, or working in over seventy professions, including medicine, law, and engineering. Movement between camps and cities required permits; access to education and healthcare depended on the perpetually underfunded UNRWA system.

Twelve official camps eventually took shape, from **Ein el-Hilweh** near Sidon - now Lebanon's largest - to **Shatila** and **Bourj el-Barajneh** in Beirut. Overcrowding soon reached staggering densities: in Shatila, **30,000 people lived within less than half a square kilometer**. Infrastructure was minimal; sewage and water systems decayed; electricity flickered for a few hours a day. Yet amid deprivation, the camps also became spaces of resilience - with schools, clinics, and political organizations that sustained a collective identity anchored in the *right of return*.

Lebanese authorities, backed by much of the political establishment, insisted that the Palestinians' presence was temporary. This insistence was not only demographic but ideological: to integrate the refugees, it was argued, would dissolve the very claim that they must one day return to their homeland. As a result, **Palestinian exile in Lebanon became both a humanitarian condition and a political statement** - a visible testament to a wound the Arab world vowed never to heal prematurely.

The Right of Return

For decades the camps were not only a geography of exile but a slow-burning moral emergency. Imagine generations born inside tented alleys where your grandparents' house exists only in the memory of a key kept beneath a pillow - where you are told, repeatedly and officially, that you may never belong. After more than thirty years in which the **right of return** remained a paper promise, UN resolutions echoed but were unenforced, and host states treated displacement as a temporary administrative problem, many Palestinians in Lebanon faced a bleak arithmetic: no citizenship, limited work, curtailed education, and no legal route to reclaim land or dignity. Poverty was not merely material; it was juridical: a condition produced and reinforced by laws and policies that made permanence impossible.

It is not difficult to see how such a condition radicalizes. When diplomatic remedies stall and international institutions fail to deliver enforcement, ordinary people often reach for tools within their reach - organized politics at first, and then, for some, armed resistance. The emergence of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its constituent guerrilla groups must be read against that background of dispossession. For many refugees, taking up arms was not an abstract ideology but a concrete response to an everyday humiliation: the denial of basic civil and economic rights, the sealing of borders, and the slow erasure of home. To a population that had watched villages razed and neighbors expelled in 1948, and then saw the international system recognize their rights without enforcing them, violence began to look like the only language capable of producing attention, leverage, and - however tragically - security.

That human logic helps explain why armed factions established bases in and around the camps, why they organized social services there, and why the camps in time became militarized. It does not excuse the harms that followed. Guerrilla operations across the Israeli border invited reprisals that fell overwhelmingly on civilians; collective punishments deepened Lebanese fears and provided pretexts for harsher measures. In short, the turn to force created a feedback loop: statelessness and marginalization pushed parts of the refugee population toward militancy; militancy elicited military responses and political delegitimization; those responses reinforced the refugees' exclusion.

Seen this way, the 1982 invasion - and the massacre that would follow in Sabra and Shatila - was not a spontaneous rupture but the catastrophic end point of a chain forged by failed rights, truncated remedies, and escalating cycles of retaliation. The moral complexity is plain: the state and international system that produced the limbo of the camps bear responsibility for creating conditions in which people felt compelled to resist - but resistance that takes violent form, especially when it targets civilians, also produces new victims and widens the moral abyss.

The Right to Resist

International law itself offers some grounding for how those choices were later justified. Under the **Fourth Geneva Convention** and the **1977 Additional Protocol I**, a population living under **foreign occupation** has the right to resist that occupation - including, under certain circumstances, by armed means - so long as such resistance respects the prohibi-

tions against targeting civilians. The United Nations General Assembly reaffirmed this principle repeatedly during the 1960s and 1970s in resolutions recognizing “the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples under colonial and foreign domination to exercise their right of self-determination.”

Whether those provisions apply to Palestinians **living in exile** rather than directly under occupation is debated. Their land and homes remained under the control of the State of Israel, yet they themselves were confined in neighboring territories, denied return, and effectively stateless. For many Palestinian thinkers and jurists, that exile did not annul the right to resist; it only displaced the battlefield. In their view, the right to armed resistance extended to a people whose *occupation had followed them across borders* - through expulsion, blockades, and military incursions into the refugee camps themselves.

In practice, these legal arguments did little to alter the lived reality: Israel regarded all armed activity from Lebanese soil as aggression, while Lebanon treated the refugee fighters as both guests and liabilities. The result was a state within a state - the **PLO's quasi-autonomous presence in southern Lebanon** - tolerated by some factions and despised by others. As the 1970s wore on, the camps became not only symbols of dispossession but also front lines in an expanding regional conflict.

The PLO in Lebanon

By the end of the 1960s, Lebanon's refugee camps had become the epicenter of the Palestinian national movement in exile. After the **1967 Six-Day War** and Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, Palestinian resistance groups found themselves dispersed across the Arab world, their bases in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon turning into nodes of a transnational struggle.

In **September 1970**, the Jordanian monarchy expelled the PLO after a bloody civil war known as *Black September*. Thousands of fighters fled north across the border into Lebanon, where the camps offered both refuge and ready recruits. The influx transformed Lebanon's political balance. The PLO built a parallel administration - running schools, hospitals, and welfare systems through its **Palestine Red Crescent Society**, while also organizing armed wings such as **Fatah**, **Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)**, and **Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP)**.

To many refugees, the PLO's arrival symbolized empowerment: for the first time since 1948, Palestinians were not merely recipients of aid but agents of their own destiny. To much of Lebanon's political establishment, however, it looked like a state within a state. Cross-border raids into northern Israel drew retaliatory airstrikes that killed Lebanese civilians and destroyed infrastructure, deepening resentment among communities that had not chosen to host a war.

The uneasy coexistence between the Lebanese state and the PLO was formalized in the **1969 Cairo Agreement**, brokered by Egypt. It granted the Palestinians limited autonomy within the camps and the right to carry arms for the purpose of resistance against Israel - an unprecedented concession on sovereign Lebanese territory. For a time, this arrange-

ment maintained a fragile equilibrium: Lebanon could claim solidarity with the Palestinian cause while offloading responsibility for the refugees' welfare and security.

But as Lebanon's own sectarian tensions worsened, the arrangement unraveled. The PLO's military strength and political influence grew, aligning it with leftist and Muslim factions in Lebanon's **1975–1990 civil war**, while right-wing Christian militias, particularly the **Phalangists**, came to see the Palestinians as both a demographic threat and a foreign army. Clashes between the Phalangists and PLO-aligned forces erupted across Beirut and the south, turning neighborhoods and camps into frontlines.

Israel, observing the chaos across the border, began to view Lebanon not just as a security threat but as an opportunity. The Israeli leadership sought to neutralize the PLO militarily while cultivating alliances with Christian militias who shared a common enemy. Beginning in the late 1970s, Israel supplied arms, training, and logistical support to the **South Lebanon Army (SLA)** and elements of the **Phalangist movement**, effectively constructing a proxy force along its northern frontier.

In **March 1978**, following a PLO attack on Israel's coastal highway that killed thirty-eight civilians, Israel launched **Operation Litani**, invading up to the Litani River and killing more than a thousand Lebanese and Palestinian civilians. Although the operation was justified as a counterterrorist measure, its underlying goal was to drive the PLO northward and establish a buffer zone patrolled by the SLA. The **UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL)** was deployed in response, but its mandate was weak and its presence largely symbolic.

The next few years witnessed a cycle of escalation: PLO raids, Israeli airstrikes, retaliatory shelling, and the gradual entrenchment of both sides. By **1981**, Israeli officials claimed more than two hundred Israeli deaths annually from cross-border fire, while Lebanese towns suffered regular bombardments in return. In the same period, **Ariel Sharon**, then Israel's Defense Minister, conceived a broader plan - to crush the PLO militarily, expel it from Lebanon, and install a friendly Christian-led government in Beirut.

The 1982 Invasion: Operation Peace for Galilee

On **June 6, 1982**, Israel launched a full-scale invasion of Lebanon under the code name **Operation Peace for Galilee**. Officially, the stated goal was limited: to push Palestinian guerrilla forces forty kilometers north of the border to stop cross-border rocket fire. In reality, the operation's scope had been drawn far more ambitiously by Defense Minister **Ariel Sharon** and approved by Prime Minister **Menachem Begin**. The unspoken objectives included the destruction of the **PLO's military and political infrastructure**, the expulsion of its leadership from Lebanon, and the installation of a pro-Israeli government in Beirut under **Bashir Gemayel**, the Maronite Phalangist leader.

The scale of the offensive revealed its true intent. Nearly **60,000 Israeli soldiers**, supported by **800 tanks, armored brigades, and air squadrons**, crossed the border in coordinated thrusts along the coast, through the central highlands, and in the eastern Bekaa Valley. The invasion quickly overran UNIFIL positions and Lebanese villages, advancing far beyond the 40-kilometer limit within days. By June 8, Israeli forces had captured **Tyre and**

Sidon; by June 14, **Beirut** itself was encircled - a city of nearly a million civilians, now under siege.

The human toll was staggering. According to Lebanese government estimates, **approximately 17,000–18,000 people** - overwhelmingly civilians - were killed in the initial phase of the war, and many thousands more were wounded. Entire neighborhoods in Sidon and West Beirut were flattened under sustained bombardment. Journalists on the ground, including **Robert Fisk** and **Thomas Friedman**, described scenes of apocalyptic destruction: hospitals running on candlelight, bodies piled in alleys, and children carrying white flags as they searched for water.

The Siege of Beirut

By late June, the PLO's remaining fighters - roughly **11,000** - were entrenched in West Beirut, surrounded by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) from land, sea, and air. The siege lasted nearly ten weeks. Israeli artillery and airstrikes pounded the densely populated quarters day and night, cutting off electricity, food, and medical supplies. Hospitals such as Gaza Hospital and Makassed were overwhelmed. The death toll mounted daily. Western diplomats compared the bombardment to the siege of Stalingrad, noting that Israel's fire-power against a trapped civilian population was "utterly disproportionate."

International outrage mounted. The **UN Security Council** condemned the invasion in **Resolution 508**, calling for an immediate ceasefire. U.S. envoy **Philip Habib** negotiated tirelessly to broker a truce. After weeks of pressure, an agreement was reached in **August 1982**:

- The **PLO would evacuate** Beirut under the protection of a **Multinational Force (MNF)** composed of U.S., French, and Italian troops.
- Israel would halt its advance and guarantee the safety of civilians left behind.
- The MNF would remain temporarily to oversee the transition and prevent reprisals.

Between **August 21 and September 1**, nearly **14,400 PLO fighters** and their families departed Beirut for Tunisia, Syria, and other Arab states. The evacuation was conducted under international supervision and was hailed at the time as a diplomatic success - an orderly end to the siege that might finally stabilize Lebanon.

But peace proved illusory. Israel did not withdraw from Beirut's periphery as promised; its forces remained poised around the city. On **September 14**, only days after the last PLO convoy sailed from the port, a massive explosion tore through the Phalangist headquarters in East Beirut, killing President-elect **Bashir Gemayel** - Israel's chief ally and the cornerstone of Sharon's postwar political vision. The assassination, attributed to a member of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, shattered Israel's plans and plunged Lebanon back into chaos.

The Sabra and Shatila Massacre

When Israeli tanks entered **West Beirut** on **September 15, 1982**, the **Sabra** neighborhood and the adjacent **Shatila refugee camp** lay within the area they quickly sealed off. These were densely populated districts, home to an estimated **20,000–30,000 civilians**, mostly Palestinian refugees and poor Lebanese Shi'a families. The last PLO fighters had left the city two weeks earlier. What remained were unarmed civilians - men, women, children, and the elderly - believing they were under the protection of the ceasefire guaranteed by the United States and Israel.

The assassination of **Bashir Gemayel**, the Phalangist leader, provided the pretext for vengeance. On the afternoon of **September 16**, **Defense Minister Ariel Sharon** and **Chief of Staff Rafael Eitan** met with **Phalangist commanders**, including **Elie Hobeika**, at the Israeli Defense Forces' forward command post near Beirut International Airport. The Phalangists - Israel's close allies - were authorized to enter the camps "to root out terrorist remnants." Israeli officers coordinated logistics, supplied transport, and surrounded the area with troops and armored vehicles. They also fired **illumination flares** throughout the nights to facilitate the militias' operations.

Once inside, the Phalangist units began killing indiscriminately. Over the next **forty hours**, from Thursday evening until Saturday morning, they moved from house to house, executing entire families, assaulting women, and bulldozing bodies into mass graves. Many victims were shot at close range; others were killed with knives or grenades. Survivors later described streets lined with corpses and the stench of decay filling the air.

Throughout the massacre, **Israeli soldiers maintained cordons** around the camps, controlling entry and exit points. Reports of atrocities began filtering to Israeli commanders by radio within hours. Observers from the **International Red Cross** and journalists in nearby districts also alerted IDF officers to mass killings. Yet the army did not intervene. The killings continued for nearly two full days before the militias were finally ordered out at 8:00 a.m. on **September 18**, following international outrage and direct U.S. protests.

Casualties and Evidence

The death toll remains disputed but horrific in any accounting.

- The **International Committee of the Red Cross** reported at least **1,500 bodies recovered**, with total deaths possibly reaching **3,000**.
- A **UN General Assembly investigation (1982)** estimated between **2,750 and 3,500** dead.
- The **Israeli Kahan Commission** confirmed **700–800** identified victims but acknowledged that many more perished.

Among the dead were Palestinians, Lebanese Shi'a, and a few Syrians - virtually all civilians.

Responsibility and Complicity

Although the massacre was carried out by the **Phalangist militia**, the **Israeli command structure's involvement** in enabling the operation was undeniable. Israeli forces had:

- **Authorized** the Phalangists' entry into the camps.
- **Encircled** the area, preventing civilians from fleeing.
- **Illuminated** the night sky for the killers' convenience.
- **Received reports** of mass killings and did nothing for nearly two days.

When the first international journalists - including **Robert Fisk**, **Loren Jenkins**, and **Janet Lee Stevens** - entered Shatila on September 18, they found a nightmare: alleys clogged with bodies, bulldozed pits filled with corpses, and survivors wandering in shock. The images seared global consciousness and shattered Israel's claim that it sought "peace for Galilee."

Investigations and Global Reaction

The massacre provoked immediate international outrage. The **UN General Assembly**, in **Resolution 37/123** (December 1982), condemned it as an "act of genocide" and held Israel responsible for failing to prevent it. In Israel itself, public anger reached unprecedented levels: an estimated **400,000 people** - nearly one-tenth of the population - marched in **Tel Aviv** demanding accountability.

Under public pressure, the Israeli government established the **Kahan Commission of Inquiry** in 1983. Its findings were damning, though carefully worded. The commission ruled that:

- Israel bore "**indirect responsibility**" for the massacre.
- **Ariel Sharon** was "personally responsible" for failing to take action to prevent bloodshed despite clear warnings.
- Other senior officials, including **Rafael Eitan**, bore "personal culpability."

Sharon was forced to resign as Defense Minister, though he remained in the cabinet and, two decades later, became Prime Minister. No Israeli or Phalangist officers were ever criminally prosecuted for the massacre. In 2001, survivors sought justice through a **Belgian war-crimes case** against Sharon and others, but the case was dismissed on jurisdictional grounds in 2003.

The **Multinational Force (MNF)** - whose prior withdrawal had left the camps unprotected - returned to Beirut in late September 1982, but its presence could not undo what had already occurred. Within months, new violence erupted: suicide bombings against U.S. and French troops, the withdrawal of Western forces, and Lebanon's deeper descent into chaos. Amid the ruins of West Beirut, survivors of Sabra and Shatila buried their dead in hastily dug mass graves and began the long, invisible work of mourning.

In **Lebanon**, Sabra and Shatila deepened sectarian wounds. For Christian militias, it cemented a legacy of guilt and retribution; for Shi'a and Palestinian communities, it became a rallying symbol of suffering and injustice. The civil war dragged on for eight more years, leaving some **150,000 dead** before the **Taif Agreement (1989)** finally restored a precarious peace. Yet the refugees remained excluded from that accord's national compact, still

without citizenship or property rights, still confined to the camps that had been their parents' and grandparents' homes.

Internationally, the massacre exposed the limitations of humanitarian law when political will is absent. The **UN resolutions**, the **Geneva Conventions**, and the nascent concept of **"responsibility to protect"** all proclaimed obligations to prevent atrocities, yet none translated into effective enforcement. The Belgian war-crimes case in the early 2000s briefly reopened the question of accountability but was ultimately curtailed by jurisdictional reform. To this day, no court has adjudicated the killings at Sabra and Shatila.

Culturally, the massacre endures as both wound and mirror. Films such as **Ari Folman's *Waltz with Bashir*** (2008) explore Israeli soldiers' haunted memories of complicity; literary works like **Elias Khoury's *Gate of the Sun*** and **Robert Fisk's *Pity the Nation*** document the human devastation with searing intimacy. For Palestinians, the anniversary each September is less a commemoration than a ritual of continuity - a reminder that the same statelessness that left them unprotected in 1982 persists today in Lebanon's camps and across the occupied territories.

Four decades later, **Sabra and Shatila** remains more than a historical episode; it is a moral landmark. It forces a confrontation with the consequences of displacement unhealed, of promises unenforced, of impunity unchallenged. It shows that when an entire people are stripped of legal belonging, violence becomes not an aberration but an inevitability waiting for its hour.

The massacre's survivors are now old, their memories fading into the historical record, but their testimony endures as a warning - that the rights of the stateless are the measure of the world's conscience. In the end, Sabra and Shatila is not only the story of a massacre; it is the story of the twentieth century's unfinished question: *how long can justice be deferred before history repeats itself?*

Epilogue: The Geography of Exile

The **Nakba** and **Sabra and Shatila** are not isolated tragedies but chapters of a single continuum - a history of human beings rendered invisible by power, of laws proclaimed but unenforced, of memory weaponized and forgotten in turn. Each moment in that chain reminds us that suffering, when unacknowledged, reproduces itself in new forms and on new ground.

The promise of justice has remained largely rhetorical. Yet the persistence of those who remember - the survivors who still hold keys to vanished homes, the children who grow up in refugee camps still waiting for return - testifies to something indestructible: the refusal to let erasure be the final verdict.

If there is a lesson in this history, it is that no security built on dispossession can endure, and no peace that excludes justice can last. Until the right of the displaced to live with dignity - whether in return or in recognized belonging - is honored, the geography of exile will continue to expand, and the ghosts of **Sabra and Shatila** will walk beside us all.

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