

 **The murderous history of Ariel Sharon** [ Post [294302089](#) ]**Category:** News & Opinion (General) **Topic:** Crime & Corruption**Synopsis:****Source:** <http://psc.za.org/arielhistory.htm>**Published:** January 1, 2001 **Author:****For Education and Discussion Only. Not for Commercial Use.**

## The murderous history of Ariel Sharon

SHARON'S OFFICIAL BIOGRAPHY FROM THE ISRAELI MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS:

With annotations from The Electronic Intifada.

Ariel Sharon was born in Kfar Malal in 1928.

He joined the Haganah at the age of 14. During the 1948 War of Independence, he commanded an infantry company in the Alexandroni Brigade.

In 1953, he founded and led the "101" special commando unit which carried out retaliatory operations.[1]

[1] The Electronic Intifada notes: As commander of the notorious Unit 101, Sharon led attacks on Palestinian villages in which women and children were killed. The massacre in the West Bank village of Qibya, on October 14, 1953, was perhaps the most notorious. His troops blew up 45 houses and 69 Palestinian civilians -- about half of them women and children -- were killed. The U.S. Department of State issued a statement on 18 October 1953, expressing its "deepest sympathy for the families of those who lost their lives" in the Qibya attack as well as the conviction that those responsible "should be brought to account and that effective measures should be taken to prevent such incidents in the future." (Department of State Bulletin, Oct. 26, 1953, p. 552).

Sharon was appointed commander of a paratroop brigade in 1956 and fought in the Sinai Campaign.[2]

[2] The Electronic Intifada notes: On 16 August, 1995, Ohad Gozani in Tel Aviv, writing for The Daily Telegraph, in an article entitled, "Israelis Admit Massacre", reported: "Reports of how Israeli paratroopers killed about 270 Egyptian prisoners of war 40 years ago are straining relations between the two countries. Egypt has demanded an investigation into the alleged atrocities, which date back to Israel's involvement in the 1956 Anglo-French campaign to take the Suez Canal. The killings were revealed in a paper on the Sinai campaign commissioned by the army's military history division. They were described in graphic detail in newspaper and television interviews. In all, 273 Egyptians, some of them Sudanese civilian road workers, were killed in three separate incidents, according to the accounts.

Arye Biro, a retired army general, admitted shooting the Sudanese at a quarry two days into the campaign at strategic Mitla Pass in central Sinai. Mr. Biro, then a company leader in the 890 Paratroop battalion, said the 49 terrified prisoners were taken into a quarry and shot dead. He said: "We couldn't take care of anything else before we got done with them. One escaped with bullets in the chest and in the leg, but came back on all fours because he was thirsty. He soon joined his [dead] comrades." Mr. Biro said he and his troops later killed 56 Egyptian soldiers and irregulars as they were advancing in a truck to the oil port of Ras-al-Sudr on the Gulf of Suez. "Six survived the initial bursts of gunfire," he said. "They later went to sleep with the rest. Blood was coming out of every hole in the flatbed truck and in huge quantities." A witness told the newspaper: "When the rear flap was lowered, all the bodies poured out in one mass. I couldn't bear the thought that we shot people without a fight." Another 168 Egyptian soldiers were cut down as the paratroopers headed South. Mr. Biro's commanding officers were Ariel Sharon and Rafael Eytan..."

In 1957 he attended the Camberley Staff College in Great Britain.

During 1958-62, Sharon served as an infantry brigade commander and then as Infantry School Commander.

He was appointed Head of the IDF Northern Command in 1964 and Head of the Army Training Department in 1966.

He participated in the 1967 Six Day War as commander of an armored division.

In 1969 he was appointed Head of the IDF Southern Command.[3]

[3] The Electronic Intifada notes: On 21 January 2001, Phil Reeves writing for The Independent, in an article entitled, "Sharon's return puts Wreckage Street in fear," reported: "In August 1971 alone, troops under Mr Sharon's command destroyed some 2,000 homes in the Gaza Strip, uprooting 12,000 people [Palestinian refugees] for the second time in their lives. Hundreds of young Palestinian men were arrested and deported to Jordan and Lebanon. Six hundred relatives of suspected guerrillas were exiled to Sinai. In the second half of 1971, 104 guerrillas were assassinated."

Sharon resigned from the army in June 1972, but was recalled to active military service in the 1973 Yom Kippur War to command an armored division and lead the crossing of the Suez Canal.

Ariel Sharon was elected to the Knesset in December 1973, but resigned a year later, serving as security adviser to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (1975).

He was again elected to the Knesset in 1977 on the Shlomzion ticket.

Appointed Minister of Agriculture in the first government created by Menachem Begin, he pursued agricultural cooperation with Egypt.

In 1981, Sharon was appointed Defense Minister, serving in this post during the Lebanon War, which brought about the destruction of the PLO terrorist infrastructure in Lebanon.[4]

[4] The Electronic Intifada notes: As minister of defense in 1982, Sharon orchestrated Israel's invasion of Lebanon, a military operation that killed tens of thousands of civilians as Israeli forces sought to destroy the Palestine Liberation Organisation's infrastructure in the region. According to the statistics published in the Third World Quarterly (Volume 6, Issue 4, October 1984, pp. 934-949), over 29,500 Palestinians and Lebanese were either killed or wounded from 4 July 1982 through to 15 August 1982, 40 percent were children. Israel's stated motive for its "Operation Peace for Galilee" invasion of Lebanon was to bring peace to frontline Israeli communities in Northern Galilee. In fact, the disastrous events of 1982-85 were the very catalysts of the Hizbullah Shi'a resistance movement in South Lebanon. Previous to Israel's military interventionism in the early 1980s, the Shi'a of south Lebanon had not professed any aggression or hostility towards the Israelis. Ariel Sharon is responsible for the massacre of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, on the southern outskirts of Beirut. The slaughter in the two contiguous camps at Sabra and Shatila took place from the evening of September 16, 1982 until the morning of September 18, 1982, in an area under the control of the Israeli armed forces. The perpetrators were members of the Phalange (Kata'eb, in Arabic) militia, the Lebanese force that was armed by and closely allied with Israel since the onset of Lebanon's civil war in 1975. Prior to the massacre, Sharon had meetings with the Phalange forces. For over 60 hours -- aided by an Israeli siege around the camps and guided by the light of Israeli flares -- forces belonging to the Israeli-allied Phalangist militia went through the camps, killing Palestinian and Lebanese civilians. Some were lined up against walls and mown down by machine-gun fire. Others were left in heaps on the floors of their homes or on the streets of the camps. Children were shot dead, women and girls were raped and mutilated and men were disembowelled prior to being executed. The precise number of victims of the massacre may never be exactly determined. The International Committee of the Red Cross counted 1,500 at the time of the massacre but by September 22 this count had risen to 2,400. On the following day 350 bodies were uncovered so that the total then ascertained had reached 2,750.

Israeli military intelligence estimated that 700 to 800 were killed. UN Resolution UNSC 521 (1982) of 19 September 1982 offered unequivocal condemnation of the Sabra and Shatila Massacre, although it avoided naming any perpetrators at this early stage. The question of direct Israeli involvement in the massacre is one that has never been fully resolved. However -- despite denials -- it is not credible that Israeli troops surrounding the two camps were unaware of what was going on inside:

From 5-5.30 am low level flights of Israeli planes over Sabra and Shatila took place, after which shelling promptly commenced." (Source: The New York Times, 16 September 1982, quoting Dr. Witsoe, Gaza hospital.) "The Israelis established observation posts on top of multi-storey buildings in the north-west quadrant of the Kuwaiti Embassy. From these posts, the naked eye has a clear view of several sections of the camps, including those parts of Shatila where piles of bodies were found." (Source: Newsweek, 4 October 1982, Ray Wilkinson; The Guardian, 20 September 1982; and The New York Times, 26 September 1982.) "Throughout the night flares lit up the sky. They were fired at the rate of two a minute, as reported by an Israeli soldier from a mortar unit." (Source: The Jerusalem Post, 21 September 1982.) A Jewish-American registered nurse, Ms. Ellen Siegel, was working in Gaza hospital in the Sabra refugee camp in Beirut, where she and a

medical team treated the first victims of the massacre. She and other health workers were lined up against a bullet-riddled wall by Phalangists who were about to execute them, with rifles aimed, when an Israeli officer came running to stop this possible execution. She told The Electronic Intifada that: "I spoke with Zeev Schiff [a military affairs correspondent for Ha'aretz newspaper] in person about this incident. The wall was located just outside the camp but obviously if the commander could see this, he could see other things. We were taken to the area of the FCP [Forward Command Post]. From there one could look down onto the camps. My understanding is that the IDF had sophisticated visual equipment. There was a BBC film made in '92 ("See No Evil"). In this film they interviewed Israeli soldiers who were at the camps. They clearly allude to knowing what was going on." An official Israeli commission of inquiry -- chaired by Yitzhak Kahan, president of Israel's Supreme Court -- investigated the massacre, and in February 1983 publicly released its findings. The Kahan Commission found that Ariel Sharon, among other Israelis, had responsibility for the massacre, although it carefully sidestepped any accusation of direct involvement in the massacre and chose not to attempt to reconcile much of the contradictory testimony. The commission's report stated in pertinent part: "It is our view that responsibility is to be imputed to the Minister of Defence for having disregarded the danger of acts of vengeance and bloodshed by the Phalangists against the population of the refugee camps, and having failed to take this danger into account when he decided to have the Phalangists enter the camps. In addition, responsibility is to be imputed to the Minister of Defence for not ordering appropriate measures for preventing or reducing the danger of massacre as a condition for the Phalangists' entry into the camps. These blunders constitute the non-fulfillment of a duty with which the Defence Minister was charged." The Commission also concluded: "In his meeting with the Phalangist commanders, the Defence Minister made no attempt to point out to them the gravity of the danger that their men would commit acts of slaughter.... Had it become clear to the Defence Minister that no real supervision could be exercised over the Phalangist force that entered the camps with the IDF's assent, his duty would have been to prevent their entry. The usefulness of the Phalangists' entry into the camps was wholly disproportionate to the damage their entry could cause if it were uncontrolled." The Commission further noted: "We shall remark here that it is ostensibly puzzling that the Defence Minister did not in any way make the Prime Minister [Menachem Begin] privy to the decision on having the Phalangists enter the camps."

In the realm of international relations, he was instrumental in renewing diplomatic relations with the African nations which had broken off ties with Israel during the Yom Kippur War. In November 1981, he brought about the first strategic cooperation agreement with the U.S. and widened defense ties between Israel and many nations. He also helped bring thousands of Jews from Ethiopia through Sudan.

Between 1984 and 1990 Sharon served as Minister of Trade and Industry. In this capacity, he concluded the Free Trade Agreement with the U.S. in 1985.

In 1990-1992, he served as Minister of Construction and Housing. Following the fall of the Soviet Union and the waves of immigration from Russia, he initiated and carried out a program to absorb the immigrants throughout the country, including the construction of 144,000 apartments.[5]

[5] The Electronic Intifada notes: Sharon was a key player in the settlement explosion throughout the 1977-1992 Likud-era of Israeli government. This period was characterised by more land confiscation and more settlement activity than had ever been seen before in Israeli history. The number of settlers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories increased by over two thousand percent during this period, to approximately 110,000 people.

From 1992 to 1996, he served as a member of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

In 1996, Ariel Sharon was appointed Minister of National Infrastructure and was involved in fostering joint ventures with Jordan, Egypt and the Palestinians.[6]

[6] The Electronic Intifada notes: Yet again, Sharon was in charge of settlement construction. In the post-Oslo period, Israel established 30 new settlements and thus nearly doubled the settler population in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip from 109,000 in 1993 to nearly 200,000 in 1999 (figures exclude new settlements in the greater Jerusalem metropolitan area). Source: Foundation for Middle East Peace.

He also served as Chairman of the Ministerial Committee for Bedouin advancement.

In 1998 Ariel Sharon was appointed Foreign Minister and charged with conducting negotiations towards a final agreement with the Palestinian Authority. He accompanied Prime Minister Netanyahu to the Wye River Plantation as chief negotiator. While serving as Foreign Minister, Sharon met with U.S., European, Palestinian and Arab leaders to advance the peace process. [7]

[7] The Electronic Intifada notes: Sharon's concept of "advancing the peace process" remained somewhat flawed during this period. According to an Agence France Presse report of 15 November 1998, while addressing a meeting of militants from the extreme right-wing Tsomet Party, Foreign Minister Sharon stated: "Everybody has to move, run and grab as many hilltops as they can to enlarge the settlements because everything we take now will stay ours... Everything we don't grab will go to them."

He worked mostly to create and advance projects such as the Flagship Water Project funded by the international community to find a long-term solution to the region's water crisis and a basis to peaceful relations between Israel, Jordan, the Palestinians and other Middle Eastern countries.

Following the election of Ehud Barak as Prime Minister in May 1999, Ariel Sharon was called upon to become interim Likud party leader, and in September 1999 was elected Chairman of the Likud.

On February 6, 2001, Ariel Sharon was elected Prime Minister.[8] He presented his government to the Knesset on March 7, 2001, retaining also the Immigrant Absorption portfolio.

[8] The Electronic Intifada notes: Only four months before his election, the ever-confrontational Sharon visited al-Haram ash-Sharif, (One of Islam's holiest sites in Jerusalem), on 28 September 2000 and sparked off the Second Palestinian Intifada that has so far seen 393 Palestinians killed up to March 8th 2001, according to the Palestine Red Crescent Society. On 19 October 2000, the United Nations Human Rights Commission, meeting in an emergency session, adopted a resolution titled, "Grave and massive violations of the human rights of the Palestinian people by Israel," which condemned: "the provocative visit to Al-Haram al-Sharif on 28 September 2000 by Ariel Sharon, the Likud party leader, which triggered the tragic events that followed in occupied East Jerusalem and the other occupied Palestinian territories, resulting in a high number of deaths and injuries among Palestinian civilians." Sharon's visit to the third holiest site in Islam, guarded by -- according to the most conservative reports -- 1,000 armed Israeli soldiers, was overtly designed to demonstrate Israel's "sovereignty" over Jerusalem, especially over the Al-Haram Ash-Sharif (which most Israelis call "the Temple Mount") and provoke an angry response. It was also intended to impress the right wing of the Israeli public, who later castigated Labour Prime Minister Barak for his "restraint" in the face of the Palestinian uprising by electing Sharon, who sparked it off.

Sharon holds a degree in Law and Middle Eastern Studies from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1962). He has published a book and numerous articles in local and foreign newspapers.

He is widowed and has two sons.

#### A NOTE ON SHARON'S RECORD AND INTERNATIONAL LAW:

War crimes and crimes against humanity are particularly heinous crimes. Responding to the atrocities committed in the course of the second World War, the international community set itself an objective to combat such crimes. This ambition has found expression in a number of international treaties, notably under the aegis of the United Nations.

The 1998 request for the extradition of Augusto Pinochet and the legal battles that ensued demonstrated a heightened interest in bringing persons involved in grave crimes to justice. The Pinochet case reaffirmed the principle that human rights atrocities are subject to "universal jurisdiction" and can be prosecuted anywhere in the world. Two rulings by the House of Lords found that Pinochet was not immune from prosecution even though he was head of state at the time the crimes were committed.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's personal history is intertwined with war crimes and crimes against humanity. Cases such as those of Yugoslavian former president Slobodan Milosevic, the perpetrators of the Rwandan genocide, and others, provide compelling precedents for ending the impunity that Ariel Sharon has thus far enjoyed. Sharon should be indicted for the crimes in which he bears responsibility as the first step in a process of accountability that will bring justice to his victims and their families.

Judicial authorities in Israel have never shouldered their legal responsibilities and thoroughly investigated and prosecuted Ariel Sharon for the massacres and other crimes he committed. The failure of the Israeli legal system to act obligates the international community -- in particular the European Union since all its member states are High Contracting Parties of the Geneva Conventions -- to hold Ariel Sharon accountable, regardless of whether he is a private citizen of Israel, a cabinet minister, or the head of a government.

Article 146 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War states that each High Contracting Party "shall be under the obligation to search for persons alleged to have committed, or to have ordered to be committed" grave breaches of the Convention, "and shall bring such persons, regardless of their nationality, before its own courts. It may also, if it prefers, and in accordance with the provisions of its own legislation, hand such persons over for trial to another High Contracting Party concerned, provided such High Contracting Party has made out a prima facie case." Article 147 of the Convention states that the grave breaches noted in Article 146 include willful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, including biological experiments, willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, unlawful deportation or transfer or unlawful confinement of a protected person, compelling a protected person to serve in the forces of a hostile Power, or willfully depriving a protected person of the rights of fair and regular trial prescribed in the present Convention, taking of hostages and extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly.

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