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BULLETIN

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Diplomatic initiatives may lead to greater security for Israel and an end to its oppression of the Palestinian people. Any changes in the Middle East as a result of that diplomacy will, however, be a long time time in coming. Those initiatives should not, therefore, diminish attention to Israel's violations, under international law, of the human rights of the Palestinians. Surely the Congress will want to consider, in its response to Israel's request for $10 billion in loan guarantees, reports such as that cited in this Bulletin.

B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, recently published a 151 page (English-language version) report titled "The Interrogation of Palestinians During the Intifada: Ill-Treatment, "Moderate Physical Pressure" or Torture?" This March 1991 report describes the tortures of Palestinian detainees in the interrogation wings of prisons and detention centers.

Aryeh Neier, executive director of the Human Rights Watch, writing in The Nation, June 24, 1991 calls the B'Tselem report "*...among the most convincing human rights reports that I can recall reading.*"

Tikva Honig-Parnass wrote (Voices From Within, published in Jerusalem) "*...because of its growing reputation for thorough investigation and care in the presentation of its data, B'tselem has earned credibility with broad circles in Israel.*" That author goes on to say "*...the report did create a public response. With the exception, of course, of the harsh reactions against it by the Right, it earned sympathetic press coverage from quite a broad range of papers, rated several formal questions in the Knesset...*" But Honig-Parnass said "*...the thundering silence of the elites of Israeli society and of the legal and academic communities, and...the lack of expression of profound shock which surely must have touched progressive circles in Israel...These and the response of former High Court Judge Moshe Landau - essentially like that of the extreme right - lead one to conclude that we are fast heading towards the demise of the principle of human rights as part of the climate of our Israeli culture and society - driving yet another nail in the coffin of the rule of law in Israel.*"

Who is Moshe Landau? He headed a commission established in 1987 by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir to investigate charges of torture by Shin Bet. Neier says the Landau commission "*...found that abusive interrogation methods had been employed by the Shin Bet as a matter of policy and that the Shin Bet had systematically lied to*

(over, please)