

## Cases of Historical Interest In the Southern District of New York

### **Sharon v. Time, Inc.**

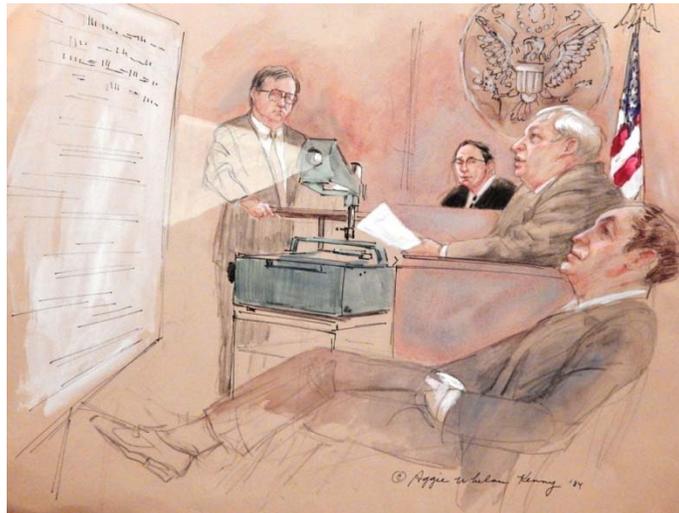
Judge Abraham D. Sofaer

In 1982, Israel became involved in the Lebanese Civil War and invaded southern Lebanon. During the war, members of a Christian Phalangist militia allied with Israel entered the Sabra and Shatilla Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut and killed hundreds of Palestinian civilians, many of them women and children. The killings were purportedly in revenge for the assassination of the Lebanese president, Bashir Gemayel, himself a Phalangist. An Israeli investigation found that Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon was indirectly responsible for the incident, as he failed to consider the possibility of revenge. Sharon resigned from his post. After the investigation concluded, Time Magazine published an article titled “The Verdict is Guilty: An Israeli commission apportions the blame for the Beirut massacre,” claiming that Sharon “discussed . . . the need for the Phalangists to take revenge for the assassination” and implying that Sharon knew of, and condoned, the killings. Claiming that the statement was false, Sharon sued Time Magazine for libel. After a month-long trial, a jury found that Time did not act with malice in publishing the article, leading to a verdict in Time’s favor. In an unusual step, Judge Sofaer allowed the jury foreman to read a statement saying that the jury felt that, notwithstanding their verdict, Time had acted “negligently and carelessly”.

<http://www.nytimes.com/1984/11/14/nyregion/libel-trial-begins-in-sharon-v-time.html>

[http://articles.latimes.com/1985-01-25/news/mn-9288\\_1\\_libel-suit](http://articles.latimes.com/1985-01-25/news/mn-9288_1_libel-suit)

599 F. Supp. 538 (S.D.N.Y. 1984).



Artist: Aggie Kenny



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