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THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE PROBLEM OF PALESTINE

1947-1949

by

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Submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts

to the University of Durham

after research in the School of Oriental Studies

September 1973

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SUMMARY OF THESIS

This thesis examines the effect of the existence of the United Nations upon the Palestine Question, from its reference to the U.N. by Britain on April 2, 1947, to the admission of Israel to the U.N. on May 11, 1949.

It examines how the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine was established in the First Special Session of the U.N., and traces in detail the Committee's activities in Palestine, the Arab States, and Germany. The preparation of the Committee's report and the reactions of the different parties involved in the Palestine Question are then described. In the Second Regular Session, a full description is given of the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question, its activities, and the events in the General Assembly which led to partition being recommended for Palestine in the form it was. The forces throughout the World behind these events are explored as fully as possible. Russian, American, and British policies after the Second Regular Session and the work on Palestine of the Palestine Commission, the Trusteeship Council, and the Security Council are described. The reasons for the calling of the Second Special Session, its events and results are examined. British, American, and Russian attitudes to Israel after its declaration as a state are described covering the period to the First Truce in the Arab Israeli War of 1948, the Truce itself, the Ten Days Campaign, the Second Truce, and the Second Regular Session. The thesis concludes with the events surrounding the admission of Israel to the United Nations.

There are appendices on the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, the boundaries of its partition plan, and population statistics of the plans proposed divisions.

NOTE ON REFERENCES

United Nations documents are referred to by the classification used in the U.N. e.g. A/C.1/149 would be the 149th document submitted to the First Committee and A/705 the 705th submitted to the General Assembly. In a few cases, which have been noted, the same document appears twice with different classifications, generally due to appearing first in a committee then being re-issued for use by the General Assembly.

Books are referred to by the surnames of author or editor only, except where additional detail is necessary to avoid confusion. Full details of author, title, publisher, and date and place of publication are given in the bibliography.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FIRST SPECIAL SESSION, APRIL 28-MAY 15, 1947

i) The Acceptance of the British Proposal to Establish a United Nations Special Committee on Palestine.

The Palestine Question was first brought to the attention of the U.N. on April 2, 1947, when Sir Alexander Cadogan transmitted the following message from the British Government, to the Secretary-General:-

"His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to place the Question of Palestine on the Agenda of the General Assembly at its next regular annual session. They will submit to the Assembly an account of their administration of the League of Nations Mandate and will ask the Assembly to make recommendations under Article 10 of the Charter, concerning the future government of Palestine."

Sir Alexander added that, "In making this request, His Majesty's Government draw the attention of the Secretary-General to the desirability of an early settlement in Palestine, and to the possibility that the General Assembly might not be able to decide upon its recommendation at the next regular annual session unless some preliminary study of the question had been made under the auspices of the United Nations. They therefore request the Secretary-General to summon, as soon as possible, a special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of constituting and instructing a special committee to prepare for the consideration, at the regular session of the Assembly, of the question referred to in the preceding paragraph."(1)

With 11 days, 28 countries had replied to the Secretary-General in favour of holding a special session on the British proposal. This provided the majority, required under the U.N. Charter, authorising a special session.

1.A/286

The Arab states then decided to enter a rival proposal, "The termination of the mandate over Palestine and the declaration of its independence."(1)

The first two meetings were spent on procedural matters.(2) Oswaldo Aranha (Brazil) was elected President of the General Assembly. His suggestion that the normal rules of procedure should apply to the Special Session was adopted.

The General Committee then held 4 meetings to decide which items it should recommend the General Assembly to place on its agenda.(3)

1. Identical proposals were submitted by Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia, on April 21, 1947 (A/287 to A/291)
2. Meeting No.68, Monday 28 April, 1947, dealt with,
 1. The opening of the session by the Chairman of the Belgian delegation.
 2. The election of the Credentials Committee.
 3. The election of the President.
 4. The admission of Siam.
 5. Organisation (i.e. the acceptance of normal rules of procedure).
 6. The election of the Vice-Presidents.
- Meeting No.69, later on Monday, 28 April, dealt with,
 1. The election of the Chairmen of the Main Committees.
 2. The report of the Credentials Committee.
3. No.28, Tuesday, April 29, 1947, at 11 a.m.
No.29, " " " " " 3 p.m.
No.30, Wednesday " 30 " " " 11 a.m.
No.31, " " " " " 3 p.m.

The Committee consisted of the President of the General Assembly, its 7 Vice-Presidents, and 6 Chairmen of Committees(1).

At its first meeting, the Arabs, represented by Egypt, apparently thought it a waste of time to oppose the British item, since a majority of U.N. members had already approved it in principle by agreeing to the Special Session. Hassan Pasha (Egypt) contented himself with the vague objection to "the item as it stands," but did not force a vote.

More significant was a very early statement of British policy. Asaf Ali (India) challenged British sincerity in calling the Special Session. Press reports, he declared, of Lord Hall's speech in the House of Lords, had indicated that Britain was not prepared to accept U.N. recommendations. Since in the General Committee such a challenge was not in order, and the Chairman pointed this out to Asaf Ali, Sir Alexander Cadogan's insistence on replying shows the importance Britain attached to making the British position clear at an early stage. He replied:-

"I cannot imagine His Majesty's Government carrying out a policy of which it does not approve...if it were a decision we could not reconcile with our consciences, should we single handed be expected to expend our blood and treasure in carrying it out?"

At the second meeting, the representatives of Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Syria, were present to sponsor their proposal. Mr. Jamali (Iraq) acted as spokesman.

1. Brazil, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, Honduras, India, Poland, Sweden, United Kingdom, U.S.A., U.S.S.R.

He concentrated mainly upon attacking the legality of Jewish claims. During the First World War, Arabs had aided the Allies, and had been promised their independence, in return. However, this promise was superfluous, because President Wilson of America had put forward the principle of self-determination. The Mandate System had been intended to lead countries towards independence. Independence had been achieved in Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan, and Iraq, and he saw no reason why Palestine should be made an exception, against the wishes of its people. The Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate had been mistakes, and this was demonstrated by Britain's inability to make the Mandate work. Zionism, he declared, was simply imperialism at its worst.

Only towards the end of his statement did Mr. Jamali turn to practical politics. He urged that Zionism was disturbing the whole Arab World, and jeopardising the status of Jewish minorities in other Arab countries.

He concluded that, after 20 committees and 3 white papers, a U.N. special committee was unnecessary. The solution was simple. Palestine should be given its independence, in accordance with the U.N. Charter.

The Arab proposal found little favour, even with Arab sympathisers, like Asaf Ali (India), who declared the British proposal did not rule out the solution proposed by the Arabs. He considered it would be better to let both sides state their case before taking a decision. America strongly opposed the Arab item. U.S.A. opinion was that the Special Session had only been called to establish a special committee, not to take decisions.

Russia, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, however, were careful not to commit themselves to either side. Russia and Czechoslovakia declared that they would like the substance of the Palestine Question discussed, if only to help the proposed special committee.

The other members of the Committee, apart from Brazil (Chairman), followed the American lead. The Arab proposal was decisively defeated, receiving only one vote (Egypt) against 8, with 5 abstentions (Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, India, and Brazil). The General Committee, therefore, in its report to the General Assembly, recommended only that the Assembly consider the British proposal to establish a U.N. special committee on Palestine. This report was debated in 2 meetings of the Assembly.(1)

Mr. El-Khouri (Syria) and Mr. Jamali (Iraq) made detailed attacks upon the inclusion of the British proposal. Both, However, were ruled out of order for attempting to discuss the substance of the Palestine Question. Mr. Malik (Lebanon) then tried to lead the Assembly astray by suggesting that some aspects of the Palestine Question were more appropriate to the other four U.N. committees than to the First (Political and Security) Committee, which most members, until then, had considered the natural choice to deal with the Palestine Question. Mr. Malik was unsuccessful, and the Chairman declared the British proposal adopted.

Mr. El-Khouri, in the next meeting, spoke in support of the Arab proposal. He declared some states were eager to vote for a special committee before hearing any evidence. However, when he tried to go into detail, in support of the Arab proposal, he was again ruled out of order. The Arabs then began to accept that their proposal might be rejected. Hassan Pasha (Egypt) made the point that a vote against the Arab item did not necessarily mean a vote against Palestine's independence. Mr. Jamali declared that, although a special committee was unnecessary, it could be instructed to investigate how Palestine might be given its independence.

1.No.70 and No.71, Thursday, May1, 1947, 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Other states then spoke against discussing the Arab proposal. Colombia, however, suggested that, although a special committee was necessary, it could be instructed to study the "termination of the Mandate over Palestine and the declaration of its independence." Mr. Entezam (Iran) seized on this point, and suggested a vote be taken on the Colombian proposal, which, if accepted, could have allowed the Arabs to withdraw their proposal, without complete defeat. The President, however, hastily called for a vote on the Arab item, which was rejected, and the debate was, therefore, closed.(1)

The Arabs did, however, muster 15 votes, including the U.S.S.R. bloc, the Moslem countries, and Argentina.

Russia then proposed that the General Assembly hear representatives of the Jewish Agency, before taking any decision. This was debated in the General Committee, but received no support. Instead, no objection was raised to a joint U.S.A./U.K. proposal that all requests for hearings by the U.N. be referred to the First Committee. This General Committee recommendation, however, was considerably debated, in 4 meetings of the General Assembly.(2)

After Russia had again urged that the Jewish Agency be heard by the Assembly, the delegates seem to have become absorbed by the question of whether the Agency should be heard by the Assembly or the First Committee. Finally, a composite resolution of Chile, Uruguay, Byelorussia, Yugoslavia, and Argentina, prepared during the lunch break, between Meetings No.74 and 75, was accepted.(3)

1. Dr. Aranha's handling of the debate was widely criticised in the press, mainly on grounds of lack of command of English, but, in this case, he seems deliberately to have frustrated Arab aims.
2. No. 72 to 75, Saturday May 3, 11 a.m. to Monday, May 5, 2.30 p.m.
3. A/305 (also classified as A/C.1/144)

This instructed the First Committee to hear the Jewish Agency, and referred other communications to that Committee, for its decision. A vote to close the debate was taken despite Arab protests, approved, and the joint proposal was accepted by 44 votes to 7 with 3 abstentions.

In view of the same delegates' later efforts in the First Committee to emphasise the Arab Higher Committee's equal status to the Jewish Agency, it seems that they had simply forgotten about the Arab Higher Committee, and intended no disparagement.

ii) The Establishment of Unscop's Terms of Reference.

The delegates reassembled the following day as the First Committee to discuss the British proposal. Altogether, 11 First Committee meetings were held during the First Special Session. During these meetings, another meeting each of the General Committee and the General Assembly were held.(1)

During these meetings U.S.A. policy was to avoid committing America in any way, and also to prevent Russia from involving herself.(2) America wanted the proposed special committee on Palestine to consist of small, independent powers, with terms of reference giving them the maximum possible freedom. Russia, however, was anxious to take part in a committee which would have real power to establish Palestine's independence, and therefore favoured the inclusion of the Great Powers. The small powers generally followed the U.S.S.R. stand, but were helpless in face of the other Great Powers' refusal to serve on the special committee. The Arabs lacked an effective plan of attack within the U.N. Their first proposal on the committee's terms of reference appeared on May 10, 1947, after proposals of America, Argentina, and El Salvador. This suggests that the Arab states had difficulty in agreeing on tactics. Also, when the Arab proposal was presented, it was obvious, by then, that such a proposal stood no chance of being accepted.

By far the most effective exponent of the Arab cause was Asaf Afi (India), who suggested numerous compromises which could not be easily opposed, e.g. by concentrating on the question of independence, he forced America into the embarrassing position of seeming to oppose Palestine's independence.

1. First Committee meetings 46-56, Tuesday May 6 to Tuesday May 13, 1947.
- General Committee meeting No.34, Wednesday May 7, at 2.30 p.m.
- General Assembly " No.76 " " " " 4.45 p.m.
2. Granados pp.5-6

The first meeting was taken up by a squabble on procedure between Argentine and America. Both presented proposals asking for the Arabs of Palestine to be heard as well as the Jewish Agency. America, however, wanted Britain's advice on who should represent the Palestine Arabs given special consideration, or even to be accepted outright.(1) Naturally, delegates were unwilling to bind themselves, in advance, to accept a British decision. Since there was no other viable representation for the Palestine Arabs than the Arab Higher Committee, American tactics appear misguided and over cautious.

Over lunch, after the first meeting, American and Argentinian delegates agreed to amalgamate their proposals, and the result was presented to the afternoon session.(2) First, Johnson (U.S.A.) asked Cadogan (U.K.) if the Arabs of Palestine were represented by the Arab Higher Committee. Cadogan replied, definitely, that they were. Johnson then proposed that a hearing be granted to the Arab Higher Committee as well as the Jewish Agency. Britain was still to have a special position in the choice of other applicants for hearings. This last aroused further opposition, and the proposal was accepted, following amendment to establish a subcommittee to examine applications from other organisations for hearings.(3)

The whole debate threatened to become irrelevant, since the Arab Higher Committee had withdrawn an earlier application to state its case at the U.N., on grounds that the Jewish Agency was being given higher status by the General Assembly instruction to the First Committee to grant a hearing to the Agency, but leaving the Committee application to the First Committee's discretion.(4)

- 1.A/C.1/146 (Argentina) and A/C.1/147 (America)
- 2.A/C.1/148
- 3.A/C.1/151
- 4.A/C.1/143 (Cablegram of May 4, 1947)

This problem was solved by Asaf Ali's (India) suggestion that the General Assembly should be recalled to accord equal honour to the Arab Higher Committee as to the Jewish Agency. In the necessary preliminary General Committee meeting, a formula was agreed, that "to grant a hearing" to the Arab Higher Committee was the correct interpretation of the General Assembly's intention, and this was suggested to the General Assembly, where it was eagerly accepted. Debate had hardly begun, when a proposal by Entezam (Iran) was accepted. The formula also proved acceptable to the Arab Higher Committee.

Rabbi Silver presented the Jewish case to the First Committee at its 5th meeting of the Special Session.(1) Following a rehearsal of promises made to the Jews since 1917, and broken, Silver concentrated on 3 points. First, the Jewish Agency would give the committee complete co-operation. Since most states were anxious not to become involved in the Palestine Question, Silver's statement was calculated to make the committee appear viable, something onto which the problem could be unloaded, and, therefore, U.N. members would be likely to support it. Secondly, Silver urged that the committee visit the displaced persons' camps in Germany. He implied that a solution to the Palestine problem might also solve the refugee problem. Again, this was a telling argument, for many governments were under pressure to help the displaced persons for humanitarian reasons, but had good political reason for doing nothing. Thirdly, he attempted to place responsibility for Palestine on Britain. He declared, "a decisive contribution can only be made by the Mandatory Government." This was a real appreciation of the

1.No.50

situation, and gave another opportunity for U.N. members to avoid responsibility by placing it on Britain, and simultaneously putting pressure on Britain to produce a solution favourable to the Jewish Agency.

Mr. Henry Cattan presented the Arab Higher Committee's case to the First Committee's 7th meeting of the Special Session.(1) He concentrated almost completely on legal issues. The Arabs, he declared, were not against the Jews, but simply against invaders. Jewish economic developments in Palestine were not a justification for a take-over. Displaced persons were a World problem, not Palestine's. Jewish historical claims were false or irrelevant.

On the recommendation of the subcommittee on applications,(2) no further testimony was heard, and delegates set about framing the committee's terms of reference. Already, Argentine and America had submitted proposals, but discussion had been judged premature until after the hearing of the Jewish Agency and Arab Higher Committee.(3) The Argentine proposal was complex, although it contained features which were incorporated in the Committee's final recommendations, e.g. that the special committee should have "the widest powers to ascertain and record facts," that it should receive "written and oral testimony...from the Mandatory Power," and that it should report "not later than 1 September, 1947." The really controversial features were that the five permanent members of the Security Council "should not be excluded," and that the remainder of the committee should be chosen on a complex geographical basis.

1.No.52

2.A/C.1/164

3.A/C.1/149 (Argentine) and A/C.1/150 (U.S.A.)

The American proposal was much simpler. It was couched in very general terms, apart from practical details of organisation. Its most important feature was to name 7 countries as members of the committee, all of which later served.(1) Before meeting No.50, El Salvador had circulated a vague proposal that the committee should produce proposals on Palestine leading to "the destiny it deserves."(2) This did not survive debate apart from a minor paragraph referring to the interest of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity in Palestine, which persisted into the committee's terms of reference. At meeting No.57, a further subcommittee was set up to try to reconcile these proposals.(3)

The subcommittee reported to the next meeting, but made no recommendations on membership, a question which was postponed. The only controversial proposal in their report was that the committee should bear in mind that independence was the "ultimate purpose" of their work.(4) Mr Gromyko (U.S.S.R.) promptly began to emphasise the importance he attached to Palestine's independence. Russia prepared a resolution for the next meeting, which implied support for the Arabs.(5) By emphasising that the committee should investigate "on the spot" he implied that the committee should not visit the displaced persons' camps, a vital element in the Jewish case. The proposal further declared that the committee should prepare proposals for establishing, "without delay, the independent state of Palestine." Asaf Ali (India) realising that if the committee were instructed to prepare plans for the independence of Palestine, it implied rejection of partition, tried to preserve the Russian principle by incorporating the Russian proposal with the subcommittee's, in a further proposal.(6)

1.Canada, Czechoslovakia, Iran, Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, and Uruguay.

2.A/C.1/156

3.Argentine, Australia, China, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Russia, Britain, America, Canada, and Czechoslovakia.

4.A/C.1/165

5.A/C.1/166

6.A/C.1/167

The Philippines then produced a practical draft of terms of reference, leaving blank the names of the members.(1) It was only at this point, that Iraq produced the first Arab proposal.(2) This emphasised that independence for Palestine was the commission's "primary purpose," and that it should consider the effect of its proposals on the Middle East as a whole. This proposal came too late to be taken seriously, and obviously better tactics would have been to try to amend the draft, produced by the subcommittee, in Arab favour.

Still attempting to produce an agreed text, the subcommittee was enlarged to include Iraq and Philippines, and met 3 times, during the weekend, May 10-11. It reported to the First Committee on Monday May 12, but had only been able to produce a text with many alternative paragraphs. These were debated and voted consecutively, with the exception of membership, which was postponed again.(3)

Chile proposed that, in the preamble, the words "future government of Palestine" should be changed to "question of Palestine:" Cadogan (U.K.) accepted this readily, and this indicates, that, at this stage, Britain was looking for a wider solution from the U.N. than simple advice on how Palestine should be governed by Britain. The Arab states certainly appreciated the change of emphasis. They objected to "question," insisted that there was no "question," and declared that the U.N. had only to follow its Charter. However, Chile's proposal was adopted by a large majority.(4)

- 1.A/C.1/168
- 2.A/C.1/169
- 3.A/C.1/171
- 4.A/C.1/175

Russia then indicated that she was changing her tactics, in a manner which might suit the Jewish Agency. Poland introduced a proposal that the committee should visit the displaced persons' camps in Germany and the internment camps in Cyprus, where Britain was holding illegal immigrants to Palestine.(1) This was rejected, and the committee received simply the "widest powers."

There was no objection to the committee determining its own procedure.

Panama and Guatemala were not satisfied that the committee had not been implicitly denied the right to visit Cyprus and Germany, therefore they proposed the committee should investigate "wherever it may deem convenient," which was accepted with "convenient" amended to "useful" at Australia's suggestion.(2)

Paragraph 5 then led to conflict. Iraq had prepared an alternative, emphasising that Palestine should become independent. America obviously did not like this, but equally obviously did not want to vote against independence for any country, therefore introduced an ambiguous motion, allowing Palestine independence, but not explicitly unpartitioned.(3) France solved the problem by suggesting leaving out the embarrassing paragraph, and this was readily done.

Very little interest was taken in the religious clause, and the simplest version was chosen.

In paragraph 6, Russia again had an opportunity to emphasise that she wanted Palestine independent. The Russian proposal for

- 1.A/S.1/174
- 2.A/C.1/172
- 3.A/C.1/173

the establishment "without delay, the independent State of Palestine," also incorporated in the Indian amalgamation of subcommittee text and Russian text, was pressed by Russia, but rejected.(1) Gromyko (U.S.S.R.) then insisted that Poland persist with an almost identical proposal,(2) which was rejected likewise. The majority of delegates preferred to let the committee "submit such proposals as it may consider appropriate."

The deadline for the committee to submit its report was fixed at September 1, 1947, and the Secretary-General authorized to make the necessary arrangements. The First Committee then turned to the question of membership.

Since most of the permanent members of the Security Council had refused to serve, Argentina withdrew her proposal on membership. Norway then tried to interest the delegates in a compromise scheme, but failed. Russia, however, persisted in proposing great powers. Two Russian proposals and one Polish were rejected before the Committee decided to accept an Australian proposal to have a committee of 11, not including the 5 permanent members.(3) Since America had already proposed 7 members and Chile 2, (4) Bolivia suggested voting on the 9, and they were accepted. Australia and India were voted in, in preference to Philippines and Siam, to complete the 11.

Finally, a vote was taken on the Committee's recommendations as a whole. Of the Arab states, Saudi Arabia and Lebanon abstained. Malik (Lebanon) explained his country did not want to be associated in any way with the report. The other Arab states voted against it. The report was therefore approved by 39 votes to 3, with 10 abstentions.

1.A/C.1/166 and A/C.1/167

2.A/C.1/174

3.A/C.1/149 (Argentina), A/C.1/177 and alternative (Russia), A/C.1/166 (Poland), and A/C.1/178 (Australia).

4.A/C.1/ (America) and A/C.1/180 (Chile).

The delegates reconvened the next day as the General Assembly to give the report of the First Committee full authority as a General Assembly resolution. No change of attitude was expected. Iraq and Syria restated their previous positions, emphasising that Palestine should be made an independent state. However, Gromyko (U.S.S.R.), after his early attempts to get Palestine's independence written into the Commission's terms of reference had failed, began a fresh approach. He described his ideal solution as a sort of bi-national state, "independent, dual, homogenous, Arab-Jewish," but, if relations between Arabs and Jews were so bad as to make this impossible, then partition might be the best solution. This statement indicates that the Russians had decided, at this time, that their main aim, the removal of the British presence in Palestine, might be better served by supporting partition than by supporting the Arab demands for immediate independence as a unitary state.

The gaining of Russian support was a great step forward for the Jewish Agency, but does not seem to have been the result of their diplomacy. Instead, it seem to have come as a complete surprise.(1)

In the final vote, most of the abstainers decided, presumeably on their governments' instructions, to vote for the resolution. Lebanon and Syria decided to vote against. The final vote therefore, was 45 in favour, 7 against, and 1 abstention (Siam). The 7 votes against were the Arab states plus Afghanistan and Turkey.(2)

1.Horowitz Chapter 24

2.For the terms of reference, including a list of members, see App.I

iii) Reactions to the Establishment of Unscop.

The reaction of the Jewish Agency to the establishment of Unscop, as the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine quickly became known, was to make a firm decision to fight for partition. Until this time it had been possible for the Agency to avoid committing itself completely, although it had produced a partition plan for discussion in London, at the end of 1946. However, at the U.N. it was necessary to make definite proposals which would be brought to the attention of the whole World. At a meeting of the Jewish Agency Executive, Aubrey Eban and David Horowitz were nominated liason officers to Unscop, and Moshe Shertok, the head of the Agency Political Department, gave them clear instructions "to work for the establishment of a Jewish state in a suitable area of Palestine."(1) By Unscop's first meeting, May 26, 1947, the Agency had offered full co-operation and had formally applied to establish liason.(2)

The Agency was optimistic, but realised a hard struggle lay ahead. Ben Gurion, in the Vaad Leumi on May 22, spoke at length of the "moral and political value of the Soviet Union's approach to the dual problem of the Jewish people and Palestine." However, he warned against undue reliance on the words of statesmen.(3) In the Agency Executive meeting, Shertok was likewise cautious. "The decision," he said, "to exclude the big powers directly was taken in Committee after a long debate in the General Assembly. But their influence will, no doubt, be evident behind the scenes."(4)

The decision to work for partition had one great advantage; it was the policy favoured by Chaim Weizmann, therefore the Agency could rely on his influence and prestige. Of course, Weizmann had

1. Horowitz p.159

2. Times May 27, 1947, and Unscop Report, Vol.1, p.4, para.30

3. Times May 23, 1947

4. Horowitz p.159

been in the political wilderness ever since the World Zionist Congress at Basel, but this did not prevent the Agency using his services or Weizmann rendering vital aid to the Zionist cause. Indeed, at times, Weizmann being officially a private individual was an advantage. The Agency could present the most extreme demands, which were really bargaining counters, against which Weizmann could present, as a moderate compromise, the maximum they really hoped for. The right tactics to follow seem to have caused some confusion at first in the Zionist Organisation.(1) In fact, Ben Gurion made public that the Agency would accept partition, in a speech to the Vaad Leumi.(2) Silver promptly telegraphed a "strongly worded rebuke," and Ben Gurion was severely criticised in the Palestine Jewish press. Finally, when the Agency Executive met on May 26, he was severely "reprimanded." Altogether, the Jews took considerable trouble to give the impression that partition would not necessarily be welcome.(3)

Agency decisions, of course, did not bind Irgun or Stern Gang. Begin of the I.Z.L. particularly^{av} believed in a Jewish state incorporating the whole of the original mandated Palestine, including Transjordan. On May 15, 1947, when it was obvious Unscop would be established, the New York Herald Tribune carried a full page advertisement for funds for terrorists. Begin ignored resolutions of the U.N. of May 15 and the Vaad Leumi of May 22, condemning terrorism. However, his attitude to Unscop is contradictory. While denying charges that his activities after May 15 were designed to attract Unscop's attention, he appeared to be very proud of the meeting he arranged with the Unscop Chairman, 8 days after Unscop's arrival.(4)

1. Weisgal and Carmichael p.297, Eban states that "responsibility oscillated between Ben Gurion in Jerusalem and Silver in New York."

2. Times May 23, 1947, reporting May 22.

3. Times May 27, 1947

4. Begin pp.293-4

Unlike the Jewish Agency, the establishment of Unscop was the signal for a major dispute among the Arabs. The Arab Higher Committee announced, on June 19, that it would boycott Unscop. No Palestinian Arab was to discuss any political matter with any member of Unscop. None was to take up a position with Unscop except as a result of being employed on Government service. When Unscop arrived, the Committee organised a 15 hour protest strike, and the Mufti issued a statement, in the most extreme terms, calling on Arabs to unite against invaders. Later, rallies were organised at Haifa, Jaffa, and Jerusalem, protesting against Zionist immigration. The Arab League, however, after a preliminary statement declaring Unscop established contrary to the U.N. Charter, 11 days later declared they would co-operate with Unscop.

The motives of the Arab League appear quite understandable. They had fought, both against Unscop being established, and against Unscop's terms of reference. However, once Unscop had been established, if the Arab case were not put to it, then the Unscop Report would inevitably be very strongly biased towards the Jews, for Unscop would have a choice of producing a report which satisfied Jews only, or nobody. The Arab Higher Committee does not seem to have appreciated this, or considered it irrelevant. The best explanation of the Committee's action may be that the Mufti saw a settlement coming as a result of Arab pressure on Britain. Zionist success seemed associated with Zionist terrorism. However, by early 1947, the Mufti must have been fairly confident that the Arabs could put on the same sort of pressure, for he had managed to co-ordinate the activities of his own group (Al Fut^uuwah) with Al Najjadah and the Moslem Brotherhood. By Unscop's departure, Arab terrorism had become a real problem.(1)

1. Hurewitz p.294

The Palestine Government did not welcome the establishment of Unscop, but was not in a position to refuse them entry. Neither did they want to be involved in defending the British record. They, therefore, received Unscop politely, tried to restrict themselves to giving factual information, and at the same time tried to demonstrate that they alone held power in Palestine. They objected to Unscop's request for them to appoint a liason officer, within the meaning of Unscop's rules of procedure, because they objected to being placed on the same level as the Jewish Agency and Arab Higher Committee, which was a possible interpretation of Unscop's rules. Also, they were not prepared to bind themselves to "supply such information or render such assistance as the Committee may require," which was the duty of the liason officers, specified in Unscop's rules. However, just before Unscop left Palestine, the Palestine Government declared that their liason officer, MacGillivray, was a liason officer within the meaning of Unscop's rules of procedure, and, at a farewell party the High Commissioner, Sir Alan Cunningham stated his views regarding a solution.

During most of Unscop's stay in Palestine, however, there was ill-feeling between Unscop and the Palestine Government. The pro-Jewish delegates, Granados (Guatemala) and Fabregat (Uruguay) became most unpopular, but the pro-Arab Abdur Rahman's pointed remarks and persistent questioning annoyed Sir Henry Gurney. Finally, relations became very strained during the death sentence question.

CHAPTER TWO

THE UNSCOP INVESTIGATION, MAY 15-SEPTEMBER 1, 1947.

i) Unscop at Lake Success.

At the request of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General nominated for Unscop a secretariat of nearly 60. In charge was Dr. Hoo, an experienced diplomat, formerly Chinese minister to Switzerland, a linguist proficient in French, English, Russian, and German, as well as Chinese. He held the post of Assistant Secretary-General in charge of Trusteeship, on which he was considered an authority. How far he influenced Unscop's work is difficult to estimate. He was always discrete, and seldom ventured an opinion, but he was continually seen with Sandstrom (Unscop Chairman), whom he accompanied on his meetings with Begin, Haganah, and Abdullah.

Hoo was supported by his principal secretary, Dr. Alphonso Garcia Robles, a Mexican lawyer, Director, General Political Division, Department of Security Council Affairs, who seems to have kept strictly to routine business, and his aide, Dr. Ralph Bunche. Bunche probably had more influence on the shape of the Unscop report than any other member of the Secretariat, and possibly more than some members of Unscop. He identified the Jewish struggle with his own efforts to overcome racial prejudice against himself as a negro, took a considerable part in the preparation of the Report, and earned the highest praise from Jewish writers.(1) He was also chairman of the subcommittee dealing with Unscop's tour of Palestine, and his sympathetic attitude must have helped the Jews impress Unscop.

1. Horowitz pp. 159 and 176

By Unscop's first meeting, the Secretariat had prepared a "Working Documentation on Palestine," containing general information and the most important documents dealing with previous attempts at a solution.

Unscop met, for the first time, on Monday May 26, 1947, at Lake Success. The Secretary-General presided, but only 5 delegates, Hood (Australia), Rand (Canada), Granados (Guatemala), Entezam (Iran), and Sandstrom (Sweden), were able to attend. Fabregat (Uruguay) had been called to Montevideo, and the rest had not arrived. The Secretary-General's speech of welcome was heard in public session, then the Committee went into private session to discuss its future work. Since only 5 members were present, election of officers and adoption of rules of procedure was postponed, but a Preparatory Working Group was formed to work out proposals on various organisational details for the consideration of the full Committee. This group met 3 times in the Empire State Building, and produced provisional rules of procedure, which were adopted at the second meeting, on June 22, 1947. Also at this meeting, rule 31, concerning liaison officers, was communicated to the Jewish Agency, Arab Higher Committee, and the Palestine Government. Unscop's first press release was authorised, inviting organisations which wished to give evidence to the Committee in New York to submit statements in writing, on the basis of which hearings might be granted.(1) Finally, a plan of work was adopted. Unscop would first, after arriving in Palestine, request the Palestine Government to provide factual information, then the Jewish and Arab liaison officers would be asked to comment upon it. Next would follow a brief survey of the country, and last would come hearings of witnesses.

1. In the end, no hearing was granted in New York.

The first disagreement arose over the election of Unscop's Chairman. Sandstrom (Sweden) had been in Stockholm when nominated to Unscop, and had planned to fly direct to Palestine, but "several friends" of Granados (Guatemala) had suggested that Granados should be Chairman, and "a move began in that direction. Professor Fabregat of Uruguay had left word for Roberto Fontaina, one of the Uruguayan delegates, to propose my name. Dr. Brilej supported supported this move," therefore, Britain and America caused "a high U.N. official to wire him (Sandstrom) to alter his plans and hasten at once to New York so that he would be present at the voting and insure his election. (Shortly before the second meeting, Dr. Hoo invited all the delegates, save Granados, Brilej, and Fontaina, to lunch, over which they agreed to support Sandstrom. Granados, therefore, was outvoted.(1) Granados did not even become Vice-Chairman, this, probably to satisfy the Latin American bloc, went to Dr. Ulloa (Peru). The Vice-Chairman, however, had little power, and Dr. Ulloa in the end did not even go to Palestine but delegated all his duties to his alternate, Dr. Garcia Salazar.

Disagreement continued. Certain delegates had informed the press that Unscop was to visit the displaced persons' camps in Germany and Austria. Since Unscop later did visit the camps, it is probable that most delegates were then in favour of a visit, but the question was shelved, because a decision to visit the camps would have been interpreted by the Arabs as a recognition of the validity of the Jewish case. This would certainly have destroyed all hope of Arab co-operation in Palestine, which was already very much in doubt.

1. Granados pp.13-15 Although Granados was inclined to over-dramatise events, this account is consistent with activities of Unscop later.

Another question which caused disagreement was whether to contact any of the terrorists. Hood (Australia) had contacted underground movements as a delegate to the recent Balkan Commission, but he refused to reveal his methods. In the end, each delegate was left to make arrangements as he thought fit, although Sandstrom made it clear he agreed with contact, in principle.

The delegates also decided to make private arrangements for travel to Palestine. Most wanted to break their journey in London, but Entzam (Iran) protested at what might appear an official visit suggesting bias in British favour.

ii) Unscop's Early Work in Palestine, June 14-June 17, 1947

At first the Palestine Government considered housing Unscop in the Y.M.C.A. building opposite the King David Hotel, and within the security area closely guarded by British troops. However, the Government finally decided that U.N. representatives should not need military protection, and housed them in Kadimah House, a new building in the Jewish area of Rehavia, which had been intended as police accommodation. Three Arab policemen were provided as guards. The choice of location and police was a tacit admission by the Government that it considered Unscop could expect more trouble from Arabs than Jews. However, the Government decided that Unscop's meetings should be held inside the security area in the Y.M.C.A.

An advance party of the Secretariat arrived on June 5, 1947, and Sandstrom, who had decided to fly direct to Palestine, arrived with 2 others on June 14. He was met by the Chief Secretary of the Government, Sir Henry Gurney, and he informed the press that Unscop would tour Palestine, visiting both Jewish and Arab areas "to get the feel of the land and the background of the situation." He later visited the High Commissioner, Sir Alan Cunningham, with Dr. Hoo and Dr. Robles. The remainder of Unscop arrived on June 15, and their first official meeting in Palestine(1) was on June 16.

At this meeting was read a telegram from the Secretary-General informing the Committee that the Arab Higher Committee was refusing to co-operate with Unscop. The delegates⁶ do not at first seem to have taken this very seriously, after all, the Committee had made a great show of refusing to give evidence to the Special

Session, but had relented after a suitable formula had been devised to satisfy their dignity. Sandstrom was authorised to appeal over Jerusalem Radio for full co-operation from "all elements of the population." He also asked for Unscop to be sent written statements and requests for hearings from interested parties. The Arab Higher Committee, however, never weakened, and on July 8, Unscop sent the Committee secretary a further appeal for co-operation. This was immediately rejected.(1)

At Unscop's first meeting in Palestine, the most controversial matter was whether the meeting with the Palestine Government, decided upon in their plan of work, should take place in camera. The Government had announced that they would meet Unscop in camera, to the press, on May 29, 1947. However, this had never been mentioned in New York, and most delegates were still unaware of this statement until the first Palestine meeting. Granados, however, produced a copy of the Palestine Post, which indicated that Sandstrom had made an unauthorised press release on June 16, that Unscop would meet the Government in camera. Sandstrom was embarrassed. Most delegates would have preferred a public hearing. However, since private hearings had been promised to all who requested them, and there was no way of compelling the Government to a public session, Unscop gave in. Unscop did announce, however, that it preferred public hearings, and did not approve the Government's desire for a private hearing. At the press conference, Sandstrom had difficulty explaining that the Palestine Government was not dictating Unscop's procedure.

1. For the text of the exchange of letters between Unscop and the Committee see Unscop Report, Vol. II, p.6. Annex 7 and 8.

In its original plan of work, Unscop had decided to ask the Palestine Government for "factual information on its constitution and functions, together with other relevant data." However, when Unscop reached Palestine, the Palestine Government presented them with copies of the "Survey of Palestine," which had been prepared for the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, 1945-6, plus a supplement bringing the information up to 1947, prepared specially for Unscop. Altogether, it was 1524 pages, in 4 volumes. Not satisfied with this, the Government, for its meeting produced a 14 page memorandum on the administration of Palestine under the Mandate. Unscop's meeting with the Government, therefore, was to "seek further information."

The meeting took place on Monday June 16. The Palestine Government was represented by Sir Henry Gurney and Mr. D.C. MacGillivray, their liason officer. Sir Henry began with an outline of Palestine's constitution and administration. He was then questioned on detail, and MacGillivray provided most of the statistical answers. To direct the discussion, Sandstrom had prepared a list of questions, directed first at details of Palestine's administration, legal system, education, industry, and trade, and second at the extent to which Jews and Arabs had developed as separate communities. Most Unscop delegates were happy to follow Sandstrom's lead. In fact, their questions showed they had not digested the information in the Survey of Palestine, and most queries were answered by reference to the appropriate volume, chapter, and page. However, Sir Abdur Rahman (India) and Jorge Garcia Granados (Guatemala) asked very pointed questions.

Rahman questioned Gurney closely on the numbers of the native population which had obtained positions of authority, explaining he was just trying to find out how far Britain had

carried out the League of Nations Mandate. Gurney refused to be drawn into damaging admissions, as Rahman's questions were obviously intended. Granados went further than simple cross-examination, but tried to call into question the right of the Palestine Government to make laws regulating Jewish immigration, but his questioning was cut short by Sandstrom. The meeting was closed when it became obvious that further discussion was pointless until the delegates had digested all the material already available to them.

The following afternoon, Unscop heard Moshe Shertok, Head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, and the Agency liason officer, David Horowitz, give evidence. Although the meeting was scheduled only to obtain information from the Agency, Sandstrom invited Agency comments on the Palestine Government's publications, available to Unscop. Shertok then gave his appreciation of the situation, and then he and Horowitz answered questions. The content of Shertok's speech indicates that, at this stage, the Agency was being careful to appear reasonable, and concentrated on facts. However, implicit in it was a Jewish claim to all Palestine which would have a Jewish majority if Jews were allowed to enter Palestine freely. He also touched on Jews' historical claims to land, even beyond Palestine, including Transjordan, emphasised Jewish achievements in Palestine, and stressed that Jewish economic developments, and Jewish immigration, brought benefits to the whole community, including Arabs. Finally, he sought to prove that Palestine could absorb all Jews who wished to come.

At this point again, most delegates remained uncommitted, but Rahman took great pains to force Shertok to admit that laws

restricting immigration were not necessarily wrong, and were quite properly applied in many parts of the World. Entezam (Iran) also showed lack of sympathy with the Jewish case. Granados, however, put the Jews in a much more favourable light, by asking for a comparison between the percentage of Jews in the population and the percentage of Palestine's revenues contributed by the Jews.

iii) Unscop's Tour of Palestine.

Following their plan of work, Unscop next made a tour of Palestine. Their itinerary was based on suggestions of the Jewish Agency, the Palestine Government, a third version based by Blom (Netherlands) on the previous two, and the recommendations of a subcommittee of alternate delegates, with Bunche as Chairman. Jewish policy was to take advantage of the Arab boycott to present Jewish industry, agriculture, and civilisation at its best, and the Arabs' at its worst. Unscop alternate delegates obviously had far too inadequate a knowledge of Palestine not to be guided by Agency recommendations, and MacGillivray does not seem to have opposed their suggestions.(1) Horowitz managed to have the superiority of Jewish industry impressed on the Committee by his suggestion, which was accepted, that Jewish and Arab factories should not be visited in equal numbers but in proportion to their total numbers.

In the end more Arab factories were visited than was strictly allowed by this rule. However, no modern Arab factories were visited. Arab factories included the Karaman, Dick, and Salti cigarette factory at Haifa, on June 19, the Golden Spindle textile factory at Beit Dajan, on June 24, the Palestine Iron and Brass foundry at Jaffa, on June 24, the Riad building Estate at Jaffa, on June 24, the Shaker soap factory at Nablus, on June 28. The Jews displayed the Shemen soap factory at Haifa, on June 19, the Alta textile factory at Haifa, on June 19, the Elite chocolate factory at Tel Aviv, on June 25, Goldberg's laboratory for precision optical instruments, at Tel Aviv, on June 25, and Weizmann's private laboratory in the Daniel Sieff Institute, on July 3. Jews also impressed by the Permanent Industrial Exhibition of Palestine Products, visited by Unscop in Tel Aviv, on June 25.

(1) ?

Probably the Jewish Agency did not ask for Horowitz's suggestion to be adhered to rigidly, because it was vitally important for the Jews to impress Unscop with their agriculture. This was because the Jews could only make a reasonable claim to unrestricted immigration if they could prove that they could increase agricultural production to feed them. However, Jewish agriculture was restricted by limitations on Jewish land purchase imposed in 1939, and the vast majority of agricultural production was by Arabs. Jews had a more than proportional representation in agriculture, and used it to demonstrate their show-pieces, particularly where they had reclaimed the desert at Beth Haarava Kibbutz by the Dead Sea, and Revivim, Nir Am, and Hafetz Haim, in the Negev. Other Jewish agricultural settlements included Zichron Yaakov, Mishmar Haemek, Nahalal, Dan, Kfar Giladi, on June 30, and Yavne on July 3. Despite Arab traditional skills, particularly in citrus, cereals, and olives, Arab agriculture was only represented by a visit to the Kadoorie Agricultural School, which was really a Government institution, and a visit to a fruit farm run by a Radi eff. Nabulsi. In Jerusalem, Unscop visited the Hebrew University, Palestine's Jewish past was emphasised by a visit to the ruins of Jericho and Elisha's well, and, while being shown Jewish agriculture, Unscop was shown 10 variations on the Jews' special social group, the kibbutz.

However, Jews were careful to explain that Jews and Arabs could work together. Haifa was chosen as Unscop's first visit, because it was a mixed community. There, the Mayor gave his address of welcome in Hebrew, which was translated into English by the Arab town clerk, and then by a Jew into Arabic. The next day Unscop visited the Palestine Potash Company, which employed equal numbers of Jews and Arabs. Also, a Jew at Revivim claimed to Granados that the Arabs were really friends with the settlers, but had been warned to stay away by the British.

Everywhere, Unscop was overwhelmed with Jewish hospitality, which contrasted strongly with the hostile reception from the Arabs. However, the Higher Committee's boycott was not completely effective. At a few places the Arab Mayors were willing to talk to Unscop, but at most Arab towns receptions were arranged by the local British representative. Unscop, however, was always most unwelcome in Arab factories, officès etc. Sometimes there was a point blank refusal, at others excuses were made.

During the whole tour, the Jewish liason officers lost no opportunity to press their case. There can be no doubt that the impression gained during this tour of an advanced Jewish civilisation, only capable of helping its backward neighbour, the Arab civilisation, had a great influence upon the Unscop Report.

24v.) The Question of the Death Sentences.

The most controversial matter, in Unscop's earliest days in Palestine, was what to do, if anything, about the death sentences passed on three Irgun terrorists captured after attacking Acre Gaol, on May 14, 1947. The sentences were passed on June 16, 1947, the very day on which Unscop held its first hearing in Palestine, and Jewish propagandists claimed the Palestine Government had chosen the day deliberately, to demonstrate its strength to Unscop at the expense of the prisoners.

The sentences worried Sandstrom (Sweden) and Granados (Guatemala). Granados met Sandstrom on an evening walk, and suggested that they should approach the Palestine Government informally, and urge that the executions would lead to disorder likely to prejudice Unscop's work. They agreed to take advantage of a reception to be held the next evening, June 18, by Sir Alan Cunningham. Granados was to press his views on General MacMillan, the British commander in chief in Palestine, who was therefore responsible for the military courts which tried terrorists. Sandstrom was to approach Cunningham himself. However, MacMillan only replied that it was his duty to administer the laws of Palestine, and that only the High Commissioner could grant clemency. Sandstrom either had no opportunity to speak to Cunningham, or had changed his plans because he had just received a petition from the relatives of the condemned.(1)

The same evening Sandstrom invited all delegates to his room for an informal discussion of the death sentence question, which implies he was no quite sure whether Unscop was competent to deal with the matter, and an informal meeting where delegates could speak more freely, might be more fruitful than a proper meeting. The problem was that Unscop's terms of reference only

1. For text see Unscop Report, Vol.2, annex 10, pp.11-12

covered investigations, and the only basis for action on the death sentences was the resolution of the General Assembly calling for all parties to "refrain from...the threat or use of force, or any other action which might create an atmosphere prejudicial to an early settlement of the question of Palestine." However, should this appeal be ignored, there was no procedure recommended for Unscop to follow to try to enforce the appeal. Sandstrom (Sweden) had miscalculated, if he thought the matter could be settled informally. As soon as he announced the purpose of the meeting, heated arguments began, plus persistent demands from Hood (Australia) that the meeting be made into a regular Unscop session. Informal discussion proving fruitless, Hood's demand was granted, but it required 3 more meetings to arrive at a decision.

Most delegates considered the question beyond Unscop's terms of reference, but, in view of the U.N. resolution against actions which might hinder Unscop's work, they considered Unscop's opinion should be communicated to the Palestine Government. A resolution was prepared with difficulty. Granados (Guatemala), Fabregat (Uruguay), Brilej (Yugoslavia's alternate delegate), and Simic (Yugoslavia) who arrived during the discussions, argued that Unscop had full competence to criticise the Palestine Government, and wanted to do this in a strongly worded resolution. Rand (Canada) and Elom (Netherlands) were unwilling even to express concern, but were willing that the Palestine Government be notified that the majority of Unscop were concerned. Rahman (India) declared Unscop was not competent to do anything at all. Hood found it difficult to come to a decision. He agreed Unscop might be exceeding its terms of reference, but still wanted Unscop to express concern.

Finally, Sandstrom was authorised to inform the relatives of the condemned that the question was outside Unscop's terms of reference, but the "proper authorities" were being informed of the relatives' petition, and to send a copy of the petition to the Palestine Government, with a covering letter, in which it was stated that, "the majority of the members of the Committee have expressed concern as to the possible unfavourable repercussions that the execution of of the three death sentencesmight have upon the fulfilment of the task with which the General Assembly has entrusted the Committee."(1)

The reaction of the Palestine Government was immediate and hostile. Without waiting for the letter to go through U.N. channels, Sir Henry Gurney sent a reply, based on press reports. He declared that the sentences had not been confirmed, therefore the matter was still sub judice, and therefore Unscop's comments were inappropriate. He, further, denied the suggestion, also implied in the letter, that the sentences had been passed deliberately on "the day on which the Committee held its first meeting in Jerusalem."(2) On receiving this letter, the majority of delegates decided that it was pointless to pursue the matter, although they did not necessarily accept Gurney's views.

1.For the text of this letter see Unscop Report, Vol.I, p.6, para.51

2.For the text of Gurney's letter see Unscop Report Vol.2, annex 15; pp.13-14. Gurney sent a reply, after receiving Unscop's letter officially, in which he quoted the Emergency Regulations to show the case was still sub judice, informed Unscop that clemency was a royal prerogative, delegated to the High Commissioner, with which His Majesty's Government never interfered, and declared that the normal administration of justice could not be interpreted as a threat to peace.

For text, see same volume, annex 16, p.14.

v) Unscop and the Underground Movements.

The Jewish underground, i.e. organisations which were illegal under the laws of Palestine, and which carried out acts of violence against British soldiers or property, consisted of the Haganah, which was really a branch of the Jewish Agency, and the Irgun and Stern Gang which tried to press more extreme demands than the Agency. Evidence is available only for some contacts between the underground and Unscop. Since all contacts were arranged privately, there may have been others unrecorded.

On June 26, 1947, Sandstrom, accompanied by Hoo and Bunche, met Menachem Begin, the Irgun leader, and, about two weeks later met Granados (Guatemala) and Fabregat (Uruguay). Both visits were arranged by American press men. At both meetings, Begin declared that all Palestine should be given to the Jews as their national home, and that the Jews were really due to Transjordan as well. He also asked for Unscop to make representations on behalf of the terrorists under death sentence, not only against the sentence but against the prison conditions. None of the delegates were much impressed. Even Granados, who was coming to sympathise very strongly with the Jews, considered his demands too extreme and impractical, and urged him to refrain from reprisals against the executions, if they were carried out. (1) However, Begin kept in touch with Fabregat, Granados, and Bunche, in Geneva, in August, 1947, during the preparation of Unscop's report, via his agent Samuel Katz. (2)

The meeting with the Haganah took place towards the end of Unscop's stay in Palestine. Again, for security reasons, Sandstrom

1. For accounts of the meetings, see Begin pp.294-307, Granados pp.147-61, Horowitz p.178.
2. Katz p.170 and p.175

only was invited, with Hoo and Bunche as assistants. The Haganah leaders presented the same demands as the Jewish Agency had been presenting at public hearings. In response to questions prepared by Sandstrom, they declared they would accept a partitioned Palestine, but only if it was a viable state. If such a state was not offered, the Haganah would "do its utmost to continue Jewish immigration," and would not "permit peace in Palestine" as long as there was a regime there which sought the "liquidation of Zionist aims." The Haganah stated it was confident it could deal with any Arab resistance to a solution which admitted Jewish claims, even if Arab resistance included the Arab states, provided that no large power supported the Arabs. It was not worried about danger to Jewish communities in Arab countries in such a conflict, since "one of the first acts of a Jewish state would be to transfer them to Palestine." Meanwhile, illegal immigration was the only way of attaining Zionist objectives. There was only peace in Palestine, at that moment, because of Unscop's presence, and the Haganah could only "cope with terrorist activity" if "immigration and settlement" were "freely permitted in Palestine." (1) The meeting with the Haganah, unlike his meeting with Begin, was discussed by Sandstrom with the whole Committee, and made a great impression. (2) It was a strong argument for partition that Haganah could prevent peace in a unitary state and continue illegal immigration against the wishes of an Arab majority, while, with Haganah help, Britain could easily enforce any partition scheme.

1. Granados pp. 183-88
2. Horowitz Chapter 27

vi) The Evidence of the Jewish Agency.

The Jewish Agency, having decided to work for "a Jewish state in a suitable area of Palestine," made it obvious in their evidence what this state was to be. It was to be the recommendations of the Peel Commission, of 1937, plus the Negev. Peel had suggested a Jewish state in the coastal plain and all Galilee. The rest of Palestine, he considered, should be re-united with Transjordan, except for a few strategic areas which would remain under the Mandate. This would have deprived the Jews of Jerusalem. However, the Agency seems to have decided that Jerusalem, buried deep in predominantly Arab territory, could not be extracted from Unscop. Jerusalem remained a secondary objective, and the Agency concentrated on the value of the Negev to the Jews.

Agency tactics were to continue to press as hard as possible for their official program of a Jewish State in all Palestine, and to represent any reduction of their aim as a great concession. Any other solution than their official program, or partition was rejected vehemently. The Agency did not want Unscop to be impressed with Dr. Magnes' idea of a bi-national state, which had so much impressed the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry.

Ben Gurion opened the Jewish case, laying the foundations upon which later witnesses based a huge mass of technical detail. He declared the Jews to be a people in their own right, who had historical and religious connections with Palestine. This people needed a home because of their insecurity, due to lack of statehood, and being permanent minorities in all countries. Palestine was quite suitable, because the land was largely waste, but capable of development. It had been promised to the Jews internationally, and, he claimed, quoting the Feisal-Weizmann agreement of 1919, even the Arabs had agreed to this. Home, he claimed, meant a

had meant a Jewish state in the whole of Palestine, and he quoted several statesmen and the Peel Commission Report to support this.

While discussing the Peel Commission, Ben Gurion quoted at length its views that partition would benefit both Jews and Arabs, and stated that, while at the subsequent Zionist Congress a considerable minority had been against partition in principle, many had been willing to discuss a state based on this plan.

Ben Gurion then returned to the promises which had been made concerning a national home for the Jewish people. These had been embodied in the Mandate for Palestine, but Britain did not keep them. Instead, Britain had deliberately obstructed the Jews. The worst example was the White Paper of 1939, which restricted Jewish immigration and land purchase. Ben Gurion particularly emphasised his opposition to the White Paper.

He then spoke at length on the Jewish contribution to the Palestine economy, which he claimed had benefitted the Arabs.

Finally, he turned to possible solutions. He ruled out a bi-national state in any form, specifically mentioning that proposed by Hashomer Hatzair, a Jewish organisation, although he admitted that they were proposing a "full-blooded Jewish solution." This implicitly ruled out any other version, including Dr. Magnes'. He then declared that, "Only by establishing Palestine as a Jewish state can the true objectives be accomplished: immigration and statehood for the Jews, economic development and social progress for the Arabs.

He emphasised that co-operation with the Arabs was quite possible, and that the current difficulties were the entire

responsibility of the ex-Mufti, in charge of the Arab Higher Committee, and concluded that, "Co-operation between Jews and Arabs will prove the truest blessing for both peoples."

Various witnesses enlarged on Ben Gurion's statements. Rabbi Fishman explained further the Jew's historical and spiritual connections with Palestine. He emphasised that the Jews did not want a theocratic state, because they were "members, not only of one religion, but of one nation." They did not want to "adapt to an alien life," and had "only one homeland in the World-the land of Israel." David Horowitz supported Ben Gurion's claim that Palestine was largely waste land, by quoting various statistics. He emphasised that the Jews could develop this land, and this would benefit the Arabs. Of course, for this, Jewish immigration was necessary on a large scale, and demonstrated this with graphs, illustrating that Palestine's Gross National Product was related to immigration of Jews. Although Jews were found in a limited range of occupations, outside Palestine, he claimed that they could adapt themselves to any kind of employment necessary in building up a state. His statistics showed Jews in Palestine to be distributed in occupations, in a pattern similar to the average man throughout the World. Horowitz, without going into very great detail, sought to prove the Jewish presence had contributed to Arab economic progress, and the reduction in the Arab mortality rate. Mr. F. Bernstein concentrated on Ben Gurion's claim that Britain had deliberately set out to prevent the Jewish national home. He charged Britain with causing trouble between Jews and Arabs and restricting Jewish economic development, to provide an excuse to limit immigration. The British Government, he claimed, had turned the Arabs against the Jews, by concealing from the Arabs the fact that much Arab economic progress was due to the Jewish presence. He claimed the potential of Palestine

industries was "nearly unlimited," and would have been developed to a far greater extent, but for British obstruction. He dismissed the Arab League's boycott of Palestine manufactures as ineffective and against Arab interests.

Mr. E Kaplan gave a final summing up of the Jewish case. His main points were that, "Jewish immigration has created ~~new~~ new economic absorbtive capacities," and had "given great impetus to economic progress...to the benefit of all." The Jews had already established "a self-sufficient Jewish economic entity," and Palestine had great potential for development, given large scale immigration, which could be financed international co-operation.

This concluded the main presentation of the Jewish case, and the witnesses made themselves available for questioning in the order in which they had appeared. Various other organisations also gave evidence, some associated with the Jewish Agency, and some with ideas of their own, but no representatives of the Palestine Arabs appeared. This occupied 7 days, then Moshe Shertok made a final appearance for the Agency to answer any questions arising from the evidence of other organisations, and to give a final summing up of the Jewish case.

Weizmann appeared before Unscop as a private individual. The Agency appreciated the advantage of this, for he could put the case for partition openly, the objective for which the Agency was working, but which for tactical reasons, was much less than their official demand.(1) Weizman was, in fact, working closely with the

1.Weisgal and Carmichael p.297

Agency. (1) Weizmann appeared before Unscop, just after Ben Gurion had been questioned, for the first time by Unscop. The timing appears to have been deliberate. Ben Gurion was at his most intransigent, which contrasted considerably with the statements he had made earlier in the Vaad Leumi, for which he had been criticised by Silver. Weizmann appeared at his most reasonable. When Ben Gurion appeared again, after Weizman, he appeared more moderate, though still more extreme than Weizmann, giving the impression he might, in the end, accept Weizmann's proposals. Unscop, in questioning Ben Gurion, for the first time, was mainly interested in a possible conflict between Jews and Arabs. This, Ben Gurion emphatically denied existed. When he was questioned on what might happen if there was an attempt to impose a Jewish state on the whole of Palestine, he was evasive, even to such a direct question as when Rahman (India) demanded, "Would it not mean war between the Jews and Arabs? Let us put it straight. Would it not mean an absolutely bloody war between you and the Arabs?" He was equally evasive when asked if the Jews wanted the U.N. to impose a solution, or what sort of a timetable the Jews had in mind for the establishment of a Jewish state.

Weizmann appeared as a complete contrast. He praised the ideals he saw behind the Balfour Declaration, and excused the "utilitarian" motives which had inspired many of its supporters. He emphasised Jewish homelessness, and insisted that only Palestine was acceptable to the Jews as a home. He declared, making it clear his knowledge was from personal experience, that the statesmen behind the Balfour Declaration really meant a Jewish state to emerge eventually. For this, immigration was necessary. The Arabs opposed this, but only from a natural resistance to change. Britain had introduced the White Paper of 1939 as "appeasement" to Arab reactionaries. It had been a contradiction of the Mandate, and had

(1) ?

provoked acts of Jewish terrorism, "which are un-Jewish, contrary to Jewish ethics, contrary to Jewish tradition." Meanwhile, exclusion from Palestine had resulted in thousands of Jews dying in the gas chamber. The White Paper was not even a clever political expedient, for Arab opposition to the Jews was only due to "one small group of men headed by the Mufti." The national home did not then exist, and Jewish energy should be used in building it, not, for example, in dissipating their energies in rebuilding Europe. The Mandate had been workable, but had ceased to be workable due to the administrators' "lack of confidence." A solution was needed, which could only be partition. Transjordan had been separated from Palestine, and the Jews had to accept that. They also had to realise that they could not have the whole of Palestine. Weizmann suggested the Jews should have the area recommended by the Peel Commission, plus the Negev. This would be accepted by the Arabs, except the Mufti, who did not matter, and could be implemented by moral force alone. In conclusion, he admitted that his agreement with Feisal, in 1919, had been overtaken by events. He thought a bi-national state impractical because it was not a final solution, but he thought some sort of economic union of the two states in partitioned Palestine was possible. When questioned further on the possibility that Arabs might try to violate a partition scheme, he replied some Jews might also, but he hoped everybody would accept it eventually.

After Weizmann, various other witnesses reappeared. Ben Gurion appeared more reasonable, and said that the Agency would consider a state in "less than the whole of Palestine." Kaplan, Horowitz, Bernstein, and Rabbi Fishman cleared up a few points of detail. Then followed evidence by Jewish organisations, including the Vaad Leumi, which declared, from the first, that it supported

the Agency position, the Chief Rabbinate, and Agudath Israel, who supported the arguments of Rabbi Fishman, the Jewish Women's Organisation of Palestine and the General Federation of Jewish Labour who explained their contributions to Palestine society and their support for the Agency program. Moshe Shertok returned in two final meetings to answer questions and sum up for the Agency. He managed to introduce many new items of evidence, and informed Unscop that, at the Second Regular Session, the Agency was going to ask the U.N. to abolish the White Paper and allow large scale Jewish immigration.

Long before the end of the session, Unscop was suffering from a surfeit of evidence, possibly even to the extent of reacting, to a small degree, against the ever present Zionist arguments. However, this was more than counter-balanced by an invitation to visit Weizmann in his home. The invitation was prompted by the Agency, and two groups visited Weizmann, on June 23 and 29. Bunche was particularly impressed, but Entezam (Iran), who opposed partition, "could not disguise his feelings," and Rahman (India) the strongest opponent of partition, refused the invitation.(1)

1. Vera Weizmann p.217 Horowitz Chapter 27 Weisgal p.245

vii) The Evidence of the Hebrew Communists, Ihud, and the League for Jewish Arab Rapprochement and Co-operation.

Apart from the Jewish Agency's demand for Palestine to be made a Jewish state, with a broad hint that partition might be acceptable, and Weizmann's open advocacy of partition, the only other solution presented with any clarity was for a bi-national state. The Communists claims^{ed} to be presenting ideas for a solution but their evidence is so vague and contradictory, it is impossible to say they had agreed on anything beyond an early withdrawal by Britain.

The Communists gave evidence in three separate meetings. In the first, they accused Britain of holding on to Palestine for strategic reasons, particularly Middle East oil, but they also implied as a base against Russia. To facilitate holding Palestine, Britain had repressed the people, and deliberately aroused antagonism between Arabs and Jews, on the principle of "divide et impera." The solution was simple. End the Mandate, and Jews and Arabs would find they had no quarrel. As for the displaced persons, they should be helped to go where they liked, even to Palestine. However, Palestine after a British withdrawal was not precisely described. The Communists considered a state would arise, "independent, democratic, bi-unitarian state, which means, a single state inhabited and governed by the two peoples, Jews and Arabs, having equal rights." After considerable questioning, the Communists said that the state would have an assembly elected by proportional representation, and they declared, in this state, there was no possibility of a conflict between a minority of one race and a majority of another.

In a second incoherent meeting, the Communists claimed not to have heard of Dr. Magnes' proposals, given in public the previous day, and published in his book, "Towards a Union in Palestine,"

published February 1947, therefore they could not say whether they supported them. Under close questioning, they suggested an additional assembly, in their proposed constitution, containing Jews and Arabs in equal numbers. However, they seemed not to have given a possible constitution any real thought, and Rahman (India) made obvious his disgust at their inadequacy. They did however, insist, once again, Britain had to leave Palestine quickly. Communists concluded with a new group of witnesses under the title of the Palestine Communist Union. These suggested "territorial federalism," and then after Britain withdrew, a constituent assembly of Jews and Arabs in equal numbers under U.N. supervision.

Dr. Magnes presented his proposals in a manner which impressed Unscop, even if it did not convince.⁽¹⁾ He declared that co-operation between Arabs and Jews was not only desirable but possible, and he wanted an "honourable and reasonable compromise" between "Arab natural rights" and "Jewish historical rights." The Anglo-American Committee had been right to suggest that Palestine should be neither Jewish nor Arab, but, unfortunately, it had not suggested a constitution. Magnes, therefore, proposed his own. Majority rule, he considered, was impractical, because of the disparity in numbers between the two races. Therefore, he proposed that the Palestine Government should set up a commission of Jews and Arabs in equal numbers, to draft a constitution. In case of deadlock, decisions should be taken by a tribunal appointed by the U.N., which would be necessary for some time. 100,000 Jews should be admitted from the displaced persons' camps in Germany and Austria immediately, and further immigration should be allowed, limited only by the economic absorptive capacity of Palestine, until Jews were present in equal numbers to the Arabs, then it should cease. Magnes considered that 100,000 Jews should not frighten the Arabs, and after this, it was

1) Granados pp.143-4 Magnes represented Ihud.

unlikely that enough immigrants would even arrive to give the Jews parity with the Arabs, as provided in the constitution.

The League for Jewish Arab Rapprochement and Co-operation, consisting of Ihud, Hashomer Hatzair, and several lesser organisations and individuals, proposed a similar scheme to Magnes, except that they believed Jewish immigration should be unlimited.

viii) The Evidence of the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, the Ashkenasic Jewish Community, and the Father Custos of the Holy Land.

Representatives of the churches provided information, but only to help Unscop, not as support for a solution proposed by them. The Churches of England and Scotland declared that Jews and Arabs could live in peace perfectly easily, and the conflict arose because of the leaders on both sides. The Ashkenasic Community complained that neither the Palestine Government nor the Vaad Leumi treated it fairly, and wanted its position safeguarded in any settlement. The Father Custos wanted Unscop to bear in mind the significance of the Holy Places of Palestine to people all over the World. He agreed to provide Unscop with a list of places for which, he considered, special provision was necessary.

ix) The Evidence of the Government of Palestine.

Unscop's last formal hearing in Jerusalem was with the Palestine Government, which was represented by Sir Henry Gurney, Mr. D. C. MacGillivray, Mr. B. De Bunsen, and Mr. M. Hogan.

Unscop's intention was to ask questions on matters arising from the other evidence, already presented, but Sir Henry Gurney requested that they should consider first the main points contained in a supplementary memorandum to the "Survey of Palestine." This was a strongly worded refutation of Jewish criticism, and occupied most of the meeting.

Gurney denied Ben Gurion's charge that Britain had frustrated the development of the national home. Instead, only Britain had made it possible. This fact had been concealed by extremists to support their demands. However, there was no need to grant "the most extreme Jewish demands in the face of bitter opposition from the inhabitants of the country." He further emphasised that the Jews ignored the obligations of the Mandate towards the Arabs. It was wrong to claim Jews died in concentration camps because they could not get into Palestine. They had died there because the War had closed the frontiers of Europe, and, in fact the total of immigration allowed under the White Paper had not even been filled until the War was over. On the ^current problem of illegal immigration, he declared "illegal" immigration was illegal, and that was all there was to say. Britain had not turned Palestine into a police state by the emergency regulations. In fact, the regulations had been introduced before the War to protect Jews, and had been welcomed by them. Jewish terrorism made it necessary for them to remain in force, and for the presence of large numbers of troops. The Palestine Government had not fomented trouble between Jews and Arabs, and censorship was not directed against Jews alone, but had prevented many inflammatory statements by Arabs.

x) Hearing the Arab States

By Unscop's terms of reference, it could consult governments, and, towards the end of Unscop's stay in Palestine, the question arose of whether to consult the Arab states. Rahman (India) and Entezam (Iran) were in favour, but several others wondered whether to do so would be to establish these states as interested parties, and, if so, whether this was desirable. Entezam saw representatives of the Arab states privately in Jerusalem, and obtained agreement that, if they were approached officially, they would meet with Unscop, in one of the Arab states. He proposed this to Unscop, and it was accepted. Unscop and the Arab states, therefore, agreed to meet at Sofar, in Lebanon. The only exception was Transjordan. Abdullah, obviously wanting a separate meeting with Unscop, made the peculiar excuse that, as Transjordan was not a member of the U.N. he could not meet with them at Sofar, but, instead, invited them to Amman.

Abdullah's invitation caused some controversy in Unscop. At first, Unscop decided to postpone discussion until after the Sofar meeting, but Sandstrom made arrangements with Abdullah for a visit of himself and a few other delegates privately. This led to accusations of underhand practice against Sandstrom, and, in the end, Fabregat refused to go because of a quarrel of accommodation available on the aeroplane to Amman, Rahman, because he thought the visit wrong in principle, Hood, because he was not interested, and Granados, because he thought no good could come of it. Abdullah, in public, supported the stand consistently taken by all the Arab states, but when asked whether he would join with the Arab states in opposing a Jewish state established by the U.N., with force, he replied, privately, "That is a very serious statement to make, for it clearly means declaring war on the United Nations.. Transjordan would not take such an extreme attitude."(1)

1. Granados p.210 This quotation is second hand i.e. Granados did not go to Amman.

Unscop heard evidence from representatives of the Arab League, at meetings on July 22 and 23, 1947, in the Grand Hotel, Sofar. The first meeting was public, to allow the Arab League to present a prepared statement in the presence of the press. The second was private, to allow Unscop to put questions arising from the statement. The Arabs views at this conference, were almost identical with those put forward at the London Conference, September 1946. There was a minor concession, that any immigrant who had obtained citizenship from the Mandatory Government, would be allowed to retain it in the unitary state which the Arabs proposed. Previously, they had demanded a 10 year residence qualification. The manner in which the Arab case was presented must have had an unfortunate effect on Unscop. There was no attempt to present evidence, building up an argument leading to an inevitable conclusion. Nor was Unscop treated with the respect to which it must have become accustomed in Jerusalem. Finally, the Arab states made it clear, whatever Unscop recommended would count for nothing with them unless it was a complete acceptance of their demands.

The first meeting began with a speech of welcome by the Vice-President of the Council of Lebanon, in which, before Unscop had heard a word of Arab evidence, he declared that the Arab states would "destroy the home of evil in the Middle East." Hamid Frangie then prefaced his reading of the League statement by saying that "any investigation of so obvious a question has become unnecessary," and the Arab Governments were not even going to bother to go through all the arguments in their favour. He concentrated on Palestine's right to self-determination and the need to maintain peace in the Middle East. He quoted promises made by the Allies in the First World War, declaring that the Balfour Declaration contradicted them. Also, the Declaration was contrary to Article 22 of the League of Nations Charter. The King-Crane Commission, too, had, in 1919,

reported that, "a national home for the Jewish people is not equivalent to making Palestine into a Jewish state." He then declared that Jewish ambitions went far beyond the current frontiers of Palestine, and that Jews planned to realise these ambitions by terrorism. Meanwhile, the state which the Zionists planned in Palestine was completely impractical, and could not possibly absorb the immigration which the Zionists wanted.

During the second meeting the Arabs tried to stick to agreed answers to Unscop's questions, previously presented in writing. However, under examination, they began to argue their case more freely and effectively. Unscop's main question was what would be the attitude of the Arab League if the U.N. tried to establish a Jewish state in Palestine. This embarrassed the representatives. At first, they declared a Jewish state could not possibly be established. Then, when pressed, they agreed that such a decision would be contrary to the U.N. Charter, and would, therefore, "make us free to make our own decisions there."

xi) Unscop's Visit to the Displaced Persons' Camps.

After the Sofar meeting, Unscop travelled to Geneva to prepare its report for the Second Regular Session of the U.N. However, the first business in Geneva was the questioned, postponed at Lake Success, of visiting the displaced persons' camps. The question had been raised again, briefly, during Unscop's stay in Palestine, but no delegate pressed for a decision until after the meeting with the Arab states, probably in case the states were offended and refused to meet Unscop. Granados and Fabregat were eager for a visit, in order to get evidence of Jews' desire to go to Palestine. Rahman (India) and Entezam (Iran) were just as eager for the visit not to take place, presumably because they did not want this desire emphasised. Hood was in favour of a visit. In his case, however, it did not mean he supported the Jewish case. Until then, he had not been particularly sympathetic, and explained his desire for a visit was simply to find out if opinion had changed among the refugees since the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. Hood (Australia) seems to have felt it possible that fewer Jews would want to go to Palestine in 1947 than in 1946. Simic (Yugoslavia) was against a visit as a waste of time, because the Jews' desire to go to Palestine was common knowledge.(1)

When the question was voted, Granados (Guatemala), Fabregat (Uruguay), Hood (Australia), Rand (Canada), Blom (Netherlands), and Sandstrom (Sweden) were in favour. Rahman, Entezam, Simic, and Salazar (Peru) were against. Brilej (Czechoslovakia) abstained. The next question was the composition of the visiting delegation. Most delegates were in favour of sending their alternates, and getting down to work in Geneva on the preparation of the Unscop Report. Granados and Fabregat, however, were

1. Information in this section is drawn from the report of Subcommittee 3, which visited the camps (Unscop Report annex 18) and Granados Chapter 20 and 21.

were eager to go themselves and persuaded Unscop to allow delegates to choose whether to send their alternates or to go in person. Granados claims that the other delegates were embarrassed when only Granados and Fabregat of the delegates wanted to go, and Hood changed his mind and visited the camps to make sure neither Granados nor Fabregat became Chairman of the subcommittee. Hood, therefore, was elected.

The subcommittee met on July 31 and August 1, 1947, to draft an itinerary and terms of reference. These were approved by Unscop, and stated that, "The Sub-Committee shall visit selected representative assembly centres for Jewish refugees and displaced persons in Germany and Austria, with a view to ascertaining and reporting to the Committee on the attitude of the inmates of the assembly centres regarding resettlement, repatriation, and immigration into Palestine."(1) The subcommittee then visited 5 camps in Germany, between August 8 to 14. All but one, the Hohne Camp, near Bergen-Belsen in the British Zone, were American controlled. The total of inmates was over 23,000, and about 85% were Polish. Not all were Jews. The subcommittee then split. 8 members visited 2 centres in Vienna, containing about 6,250 Romanian Jews, while Mohn (Swedish alternate) and Spits (Netherlands alternate) visited 3 more camps in Germany and 1 in Austria. All 6 camps were American-controlled.

Evidence was collected by means of a standard questionnaire, which asked how the person had become a refugee, whether he would like to return home, would he like to emigrate, and where, and why. They were also asked if they had applied for immigration into Palestine before the War, and what was their attitude to Palestine. Many officials also were interviewed, particularly Rabbi Bernstein, the official adviser on Jewish affairs to the Military Governor,

1. Unscop Report Vol.1, pp.7-8, para.68

U.S. Zone, Germany, Lieutenant Colonel McFeeley, Chief of the Displaced Persons Divisions, .U.S. Zone, Austria, General Clay, the American Military Governor, and General Sir Brian Robertson of the British Army in Germany.

The subcommittee reported to Unscop that, "practically all the persons...wish, more or less determinedly, to go to Palestine." They did not want to return home through fear of anti-semitism, and because of their "incapability to start life again in places haunted by memories of endured horrors." Nor were they willing to consider other countries than Palestine, there being "a reasonable estimate...who would in fact accept offers... if they were firm offers and not merely hopeful expectations, would be some 20 to 25%." The subcommittee declared that "such a situation must be regarded as at least a component in the problem of Palestine." It suspected that part of the desire to go to Palestine might be the result of indoctrination, and pointed out that several Jewish organisations were in a position to impress Zionism on the refugees. However, particularly in the Romanian case, the desire, was the result of Jewish education in general plus "present political, economic, and social conditions" and memories of Nazi persecution, and, in any case, the origin of the desire had no effect on whether it was a factor in the Palestine problem. Most Jewish refugees regarded Palestine as their own country, and, if they were left alone Arab-Jew relations would be satisfactory. Even if they were not, they felt the Yishuv could take care of itself.

The delegates were deeply moved by the distress they had seen, and included in their report a special plea that action should be taken to help displaced persons apart from the Palestine Problem. This plea

was repeated in Unscop's report, as one of its unanimous recommendations, although it was outside Unscop's terms of reference. The report also influenced both Unscop's majority and minority plans. The majority declared "Jewish immigration is the central issue in Palestine today," and the minority agreed that immigration was "closely related to the solution of the Palestine question."(1)

1.Unscop Report Vol.1, p.47 (majority) and p.64 (minority)

xii) The Preparation of the Unscop Report.

By the time the subcommittee had finished its tour of the refugee camps, each delegate had developed his own view of the problem, and his own deductions on how the problem might be solved.

Hood (Australia) had been very reticent throughout the whole of the Unscop investigation, which now makes an estimate of his opinion difficult. However, certain facts suggest he was eager to avoid embarrassing Britain, e.g. he did suggest a compromise which enabled Unscop to avoid a clash with Unscop over whether the first hearing should be in public or camera; he did refuse to allow Unscop, despite Sandstrom's wishes, to discuss the letter from the relatives of the condemned Irgun terrorists informally; he then abstained from the resulting resolution; he was in favour of a visit to the refugee camps but only because they might have changed their opinions; he was unwilling to let Granados or Fabregat, who had become extreme critics of Britain, occupy positions of authority, even at cost to his convenience. On a solution, Hodd stated that he did not think a choice easy. Partition was not practical, and, possibly, a U.N. trusteeship might have been best. However, he considered Unscop's real task was to present the facts to Unscop, with as many possible solutions as Unscop could, and Unscop should then let the U.N. decide.

Rand (Canada), like Hood, wanted to avoid embarrassing Britain. He had made no fuss over the Palestine Government's desire to be heard in camera, or over the question of the condemned, in which he said Unscop could not interfere with the laws of Palestine. However, he had developed a bias towards the Jews, due to Arabs' hostile behaviour and the public relations work of the liaison officers and Weizmann. He believed a solution possible, because he was impressed by Jews' administrative ability, and because he thought

the Arabs would not produce any real opposition. Because of his association with the Jews, it is reasonable to suppose that his proposals were inspired by them. He wanted partition, but did not believe the 2 states could be economically independent, and wanted some sort of treaty guaranteeing economic co-operation written into their constitutions. However, his main aim was to produce a satisfactory solution, and within Unscop, he was willing to compromise.

Lisicky (Czechoslovakia) appears to have been influenced by the Czech desire not to offend Russia, which resulted in him favouring partition. However, he also wanted good relations with the Czech neighbour, Yugoslavia, therefore, at Geneva he began to suggest a joint Czech-Yugoslav federal state plan. However, the Jewish Agency managed to contact Masaryk, who, in a recent conversation with Stalin, had learned that Stalin favoured the Agency line. Lisicky was informed of this, and he consistently supported partition, thereafter.

Granados (Guatemala) had, at first, favoured a cantonisation plan, but Horowitz (Agency liaison officer) persuaded him against this. From then on, he worked for partition, accepting the Jewish Agency's case to such an extent that, even the Agency, thought he often lost touch with reality. Granados believed the establishment of a Jewish state would solve the whole Jewish problem. They were entitled to a state, not only because of anti-semitism, but because they were "a highly civilised and capable community in Palestine." Britain was present purely for selfish reasons, and her presence led to violence. However, although he would not admit the Arabs had any right to Palestine, he did think that some provision had to be made for them.

Rahmann (India) gave his views at considerable length in his reservations to the Unscop Report. He considered that the Balfour Declaration should not have been made, and that the Mandate was in conflict with the Covenant of the League of Nations. However, in his opinion, this did not invalidate the Mandate. In fact, if the Mandate were found to conflict with the Covenant at any time, then the Mandate should be followed. This reasoning, he seems to have felt necessary in order to avoid coming to the conclusion that all the Jews who had entered Palestine since the Mandate had no right there and ought to be expelled. He was at pains to deny he wished any Jew then resident in Palestine, expelled. However, he completely rejected the Agency's case, based on history, religion, their economic contribution, their homelessness, their international promises, and their suffering. He considered immigrants were being used by the Agency to establish a state. This, he considered not justified under the Mandate. His solution was that all immigration should cease, all Jews then in Palestine should become citizens of Palestine, and Palestine should be a unitary state. Bi-national or cantonal systems were impractical. Partition, he considered, particularly impractical, as it was impossible to produce two viable states, and any Jewish state would be surrounded by hostile Arab states. This ruled out completely any plan for an autonomous Jewish state, or partition with economic union.

Entezam (Iran) had decided that the object of the Mandate was to establish a national home for the Jews, and that this task had been completed. He suggested a bi-national state, on the lines of Dr. Magnes', but he was ready to compromise, he said, claiming he had had no instructions from his government.

Elom's (Netherlands) opinion is very difficult to estimate, because he hardly ever stated his views directly. However, he implied that he would like Unscop to suggest a solution which would allow Britain to remain in Palestine. He did not think

absolute independence was possible, therefore there had to be some supervising authority, but he did not think a U.N. Trusteeship suitable. Also, on the question of immigration, he considered Unscop was not competent to give a decision, and a higher authority was needed. This should have been given by the League of Nations, which no longer existed. Blom seemed to imply, therefore, that a decision on immigration should be taken by the U.N. as the League's successor, but he was strangely reluctant to say so explicitly. However, he did give his views on the transitional period necessary between the end of the Mandate and any solution coming into force,, in a memorandum.

- "1. A transitional period is unavoidable.
2. The solution must be imposed.
3. Hence the use of force appears indispensable.^a
4. Such a force probably cannot be an international force."(1)

Therefore, it is probable Blom's solution would have been for Britain to remain in Palestine, impose a solution, and administer Palestine until that solution was accepted by Jews and Arabs. By asking for a postponement of a decision on the immigration question, it is at least possible that he considered the current British regulations of 1,500 per month about right.

Salazar (Peru) had decided that the object of the Mandate was to establish a national home for the Jews, and that this had been achieved. Independence for Palestine was therefore due. However, since Jews and Arabs would not co-operate, Palestine would have to be partitioned, with, perhaps, the most tenuous links between the two states. The enmity between Jews and Arabs made it necessary to establish a Jewish state only in those areas where Jews were in a majority, to avoid a large discontented minority in the Jewish state. Salazar's solution, therefore would have produced a Jewish state too small to be acceptable to the Jewish Agency.

1. Granados p.241

Sandstrom (Sweden) had arrived at definite conclusions, by the time Unscop reached Geneva. The Mandate should be ended, independence should come after a transitional period, and Palestine should be partitioned. Partition was essential, because Jews and Arabs would not co-operate. He rejected a bi-national state because of the difficulty of framing a constitution, and because partition would be final. He did not anticipate trouble from the Arabs, whose threats and protests he regarded as "no more than a form of Oriental haggling." (1)

Fabregat (Uruguay) had become deeply emotionally involved in the Palestine Question. (2) He was regarded as a friend by both the Jewish Agency and the Irgun. His ideas on a solution were strongly held and not quite consistent. He believed a Jewish state and an Arab state should be established, and they should be completely independent, in no way a federation, but believed they should co-operate economically, while certain areas of Palestine, particularly the Negev, should be administered by both states, as mandated territory with the help of a U.N. nominee. There was to be a special administration for Jerusalem, which should not be independent, otherwise a sort of theocracy might arise. Finally, special arrangements should be made for the transport to Palestine of Jewish women and children unable to face another European Winter.

Simic (Yugoslavia) had been working with the Hebrew Communists, and, on August 7, 1947, presented a memorandum containing a plan based upon the proposals of the Communist Central Committee. There was to be a constitution with two houses, one based on proportional representation, and one with Jews and Arabs in equal numbers, the approval of both being required for legislation. Simic claimed this solution was practical because it was only the British presence which caused

1. Horowitz p.183

2. The presence of a "well-organised and active Jewish community" in Montevideo (Kirk p.240) seems not have influenced Fabregat personally, although it might have resulted in him being chosen in the first place.

trouble between Jews and Arabs. Simic's attitude suggested that he was acting under strict orders from his government. This is consistent with the growing estrangement between Yugoslavia and Russia, and could have been inspired by Yugoslavia being determined to demonstrate it could take an independent line from Russia.

The Secretariat's opinions are important because it was agreed, during discussions on procedure, that the Secretariat should be allowed to submit memoranda on each point in the program of work in the same way as the delegates. Since there was very little time to complete the report, and much time was wasted by disagreements, the Secretariat came to play a large part in its preparation, and its views must have influenced points of detail at least. Bunche, who had become deeply committed to the Zionist cause, took the greatest initiative. He wanted a final solution, but saw, as the greatest difficulties implementation and obtaining a 2/3 majority in the General Assembly. At the beginning of August he had not made up his mind whether two states were economically viable, and he considered Transjordan's reactions important. Dr. Hoo and Dr. Robles did not make their opinions obvious, but both worked on the partition plan.

Two meetings and some informal discussions decided the procedure to be followed in preparing the Report, the ideas adopted being mainly worked out by Sandstrom. Unscop's work was divided into, matters of fact, religious interests, and proposed solutions.

Matters of fact caused no controversy. Unscop had received many thousands of pages of documents from the Palestine Government, the Jewish Agency, and hundreds more from the British Government, other Jewish and non-Jewish organisations in Palestine and elsewhere. Also, they had the testimony of 18 meetings, and the Working Documentation on Palestine, prepared by the Secretariat.

Unscop approved three chapters, based on a summary prepared by the Secretariat. The first, entitled "The Origin and Activities of Unscop," contained a summary of the work of the First Special Session of the U.N., its decisions, Unscop's work at Lake Success, Palestine, Sofar, Germany, and Geneva. The second, entitled "The Elements of the Conflict," contained an outline of the geographic, demographic, and economic factors relating to the Problem of Palestine, a brief history of Palestine under the Mandate, and a discussion of the Jewish and Arab claims. The third, entitled "The Main Proposals Propounded for the Solution of the Palestine Question," contained summaries of the proposals of the Peel Commission Report, 1937, the Woodhead Commission Report, 1938, the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry Report, 1946, the Morrison Plan, 1946, and the Bevin Plan, 1947, plus proposals of Jewish organisations, including those opposed to the Agency, and Arab states' proposals.(1)

Unscop was required to "give most careful consideration to the religious interests in Palestine of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity," therefore a committee of alternate delegates was set up under Spits (Netherlands alternate). Their report outlined the development of the extremely complex situation existing in Palestine. Some Holy Places were fully owned by one sect, but most were owned, jointly, by two or more, with very complicated systems of use and maintainance. The committee, therefore recommended that the status quo be allowed to stand in the new states' constitution. The only exception was the City of Jerusalem. At first it was referred to the alternates, but when the delegates began to examine partition seriously, the question arose of to which state, if any, should Jerusalem belong, and Jerusalem became inextricably bound up with the debate in the main committee, and, although the alternates produced recommendations, their votes were dictated by the main delegates.(2)

1. These chapters formed Chapter I, II, and IV of the Unscop Report.
2. Religious recommendations are found in Chapter III of the Unscop Report.

No real progress was made upon recommendations for a solution, because delegates were afraid to commit themselves to a proposal which might not be supported by the other delegates, and because Fabregat (Uruguay), Granados (Guatemala), and Hood (Australia) were absent in Germany. When they returned, therefore, Rahman suggested the delegates might be willing to speak freely if discussions were informal, with no record taken. This was agreed, and Sandstrom put 4 questions in turn to each delegate. When asked whether the Mandate should be ended all agreed it should. When asked whether Palestine should be wholly Arab or wholly Jewish, all agreed it should be neither. When asked whether Palestine should be bi-national, 3, Rahman (India), Entezam (Iran), and Simic (Yugoslavia) agreed that it should. When asked whether Palestine should be partitioned all the others, except Hood (Australia) agreed it should. Hood insisted it was Unscop's duty to present all possible solutions for the U.N. to make a choice and refused to commit himself to any. All Unscop members felt that a joint report was preferable to a majority and minority report, particularly as in matters of fact there was no dispute, but separate provision had to be made in the report for supporters of the bi-national state and for those who supported partition. Therefore it was decided to present recommendations which were generally agreed, a plan for partition, and a bi-national state plan.(1) The "partitionists" then separated from the "federalists" in working groups, at Sandstrom's (Sweden) suggestion.

The chapter on recommendations which were generally agreed was made up of points in common in the two plans. It was unanimously agreed that the Mandate should be ended and Palestine given its independence as soon as possible; that existing religious rights should be guaranteed; that the General Assembly take immediate steps to relieve the plight of refugees in Germany; that a transitional

1. Chapter V, VI, and VII of the Unscop Report.

period was necessary, but it should be short, and the U.N. should take responsibility for Palestine during that time; Palestine should be democratic, with protection for minorities and obey the U.N. Charter in its foreign affairs; there should be economic unity; the capitulations, which gave special rights to some foreign countries to protect their nationals in Palestine, which had been suspended during the Mandate, should be abolished; the General Assembly should appeal to the people of Palestine not to commit acts of violence. The last recommendation, that a solution of the Palestine Problem should not be considered a solution of the Jewish problem in general, was opposed by Fabregat (Uruguay) and Granados (Guatemala). Granados considered Palestine was quite capable of accepting all Jews, it was quite practical to transport them there, and Arab opposition was not important.

In the Working Group on the Federal State, a compromise had to ^{be} worked out. Rahman (India) wanted a unitary state, Simic (Yugoslavia) the Communist based plan, previously mentioned(1), and Entezam (Iran) a cantonal system, involving considerable fragmentation of Palestine. The compromise, therefore, was to accept as a middle course, Simic's plan. Palestine was to be ruled by two houses, one elected by proportional representation, the other with an equal number of Jews and Arabs. Both houses' approval was necessary for legislation. In case of deadlock, there would be arbitration by the Head of State and a Federal Court. Palestine was to be divided into Jewish and Arab areas, each with local self-government. The Jews were to have a coastal strip from Tel Aviv to Acre linked to their settlements around lake Tiberias. West and central Galilee would be an Arab enclave, the Jews would have the eastern Negev as an enclave. Jerusalem was to be divided into Jewish and Arab areas. Immigration was to be controlled by a council of 3 Arabs, 3 Jews, and 3 U.N. nominees.

1. pp.61-2

Very soon after the Working Group on Partition began its discussions, it concluded that it was impossible to draw boundaries which produced two economically viable states without putting unacceptably large minorities in each state, therefore the delegates compromised by declaring that each state should be independent politically, but economically united. It was hoped that by forcing the two states to work together economically, an eventual political reunion might happen. The group, therefore, divided, Salazar (Peru), Lisicky (Czechoslovakia), Fabregat (Uruguay) and Hood (Australia) began to consider possible boundaries, and Sandstrom (Sweden), Blom (Netherlands), Granados (Guatemala), and Rand (Canada), assisted by Hoo, Robles, and Bunche, began to work out a constitution.

The internal constitutional matters of each state were settled without difficulty. A constituent assembly was to be elected by each state by universal adult suffrage, and each state could then settle its own constitution. However, economic matters led to problems. A customs union, common currency, common operation of transport and communications, and joint economic development of irrigation and reclamation schemes ^{were} ~~was~~ specified. This was to be enforced by a treaty, signed simultaneously by both states as they gained their independence. Exactly how the granting of independence was to be supervised caused some controversy. The obvious choice was Britain, with perhaps help from America, but Britain had given Unscop no assurance that she would implement a plan, and it was clear from the First Special Session, Britain would not implement a plan of which she did not approve. Atyeo (Australian alternate) suggested that he be authorised to contact the Foreign Office, to find out British opinion, but the other delegates were against this. Finally, Unscop partition plan recommended that Britain be asked to help,

which suggests that the delegates thought there was a very good chance Britain would refuse, but they were afraid, if Britain did refuse, they would be at a loss to suggest how the plan might be implemented.

The boundaries group, however, by August 28, 1947, decided they could not agree, and each of the group was to write his own recommendations. The delegates had refused to compromise their previously expressed views, and, in two weeks, no progress had been made. Instead, each delegate had enlarged on his own ideas. Fabregat (Uruguay) had abandoned his idea of a joint Jewish-Arab-U.N. mandate for the Negev and special arrangements for Jerusalem. Instead, he wanted the Negev partitioned with the rest, west of Beersheba to the Jews, east to the Arabs. Jerusalem was to be divided, the Old City going to the Arabs, and the new city to the Jews. Jewish Jerusalem was to be linked with the main Jewish area by an indentation from the coast. Fabregat justified including western Galilee in the Jewish state, despite its overwhelmingly Arab majority, by the success of the Jewish settlements at Nahariva and Hanita. However, he wanted Jaffa to be an enclave in Jewish territory. Lisicky (Czechoslovakia) pressed for a wider area than Fabregat, for the Jewish state, including the whole Negev, but he thought the future of western Galilee should be decided by the U.N. Salazar (Peru) tried to work out a state with a reasonably small Arab minority for the Jews, and which would be economically viable even if economic union broke down. He thought in terms of the Peel Commission's recommendations, and wanted Jerusalem to be an international city. Hood (Australia) does not appear to have come to a decision. The group on the constitution, however, had decided that Jerusalem ought to be international, but, apart from Sandstrom, who seemed to want a similar solution to Salazar, but with western Galilee in the Arab state, none had worked out any other ideas.

The failure of the boundaries group, was considered a disaster by the Jewish Agency. They feared that, either there would be no partition, or the Jewish state would be extremely small, therefore the liaison officers contacted their two strongest supporters, Granados (Guatemala) and Fabregat (Uruguay) to see if anything could be done. The two Delegates suggested the liaison officers approach Rand (Canada), who promised his support for a viable Jewish state. The problems were Jerusalem, the Negev, and western Galilee. Most delegates, Granados, Fabregat, and Lisicky (Czechoslovakia) excepted, wanted a compact Jewish state, similar to that recommended by the Peel Commission. The Agency, however, were totally against this, because the state would be too small, and Jerusalem and the Negev would be excluded. Also, some delegates were doubtful about even allowing western Galilee to the Jews, and, with^{out} it, the Jewish state would hardly have been viable. The Agency, therefore, inspired the final boundaries. The central area, on the coast, with its Jewish majority, had never been questioned as part of a Jewish state, nor had eastern Galilee, with its Jewish minority of considerable size and economic strength. The Agency, therefore, made it clear, it would give up its claims to Jerusalem, provided it was internationalised, and its claims to western Galilee, in return for the Negev. The delegates eagerly grasped the chance of producing recommendations to which, the Jews at least agreed, and followed the Agency suggestions, excluding only the 100,000 Arabs in the Gaza area from the Jewish state..

The result was boundaries of astonishing complexity, each state being divided in three, and each part isolated from its other(1) parts. The plan was drawn up in haste, and, in its final form, may have owed its shape mainly ~~due~~ to Mohn (Swedish alternate) and Reedman, an economic expert of the Secretariat.

The plan was, therefore, completed just within the time limit of September 1, 1947.

1. For a map of the partition plan, see app.2.

CHAPTER THREE.

REACTIONS TO THE UNSCOP REPORT AND THE SECOND REGULAR SESSION.

i) Reactions to the Unscop Report.

The Jewish Agency was delighted with the majority report. "In the opinion of us all," wrote Horowitz, "it was a brilliant success which surpassed all our expectations." (1) The Agency interpretation of the majority plan, was, naturally, based on their view of the situation as it was in September, 1947. They assumed that the Arab leaders were so suspicious of each other that violent opposition to a plan of partition was unlikely, (2) and that, if Britain withdrew, Britain could not avoid handing over authority to states established by the U.N. in an orderly fashion. (3) This meant that there appeared to be a very good chance of obtaining the partition plan, which had been very largely inspired by the Agency, through its liaison officers, working unopposed by the Arab Higher Committee, in all its details. The main fear appears to have been that Britain would find some excuse to remain in Palestine, perhaps if the U.N. did not approve partition by a 2/3 majority. (4) This made acceptance of the Unscop plan by the U.N. vital, because, Weisgal wrote, "we knew that this was the final nail in the coffin of the British Mandate." (5)

The advantages of the partition plan, which had so delighted the Jewish Agency, were that it set up the largest possible Jewish state in which Jews were a majority. Assuming that the U.N. could not possibly approve a racialist state, or the expulsion of Arabs from their homes, it was pointless to ask for more. This, of course, ruled out the usual revisionist cry for a Jewish state in all Palestine, or even Transjordan as well. At the U.N., such a proposal

1. Horowitz p.222

2. Sykes p.388

3. Begin p.332-3 says that many people thought the U.N. could enforce a solution.

4. Until September 26, Britain made no unqualified statement that she was leaving Palestine, and then few took her seriously at first.

5. Weisgal p.245

could, too easily, by removal of the discrimination against Arabs, be converted into exactly the unitary state that the Arabs wanted. The Jewish state, in the partition plan, however, would dominate the whole of Palestine economically and strategically. The way would be open for the extension of Jewish control, perhaps via the joint economic institutions, when immigration had raised Jewish numbers sufficiently, over all Palestine. In short, the partition plan gave the minority of Jews effective control over the majority. As for Jerusalem, as an international city, it, at least, was not in Arab hands, and therefore some way towards becoming Jewish. Of course, the Agency could find details to criticise, like the Jewish state having to pay a subsidy to the Arab state to make it viable.

The Irgun rejected the report, remaining consistent in their demand for all Palestine. However, there is no reason to suppose that Begin was much less optimistic than the Agency. Katz does not mention the Irgun reaction, and Begin only criticises the Agency for hoping for a peaceful implementation, by quoting his "Voice of Fighting Zion," for October 1, 1947, after the British statement of intention to withdraw, which the Irgun, with its extreme assumption of British malevolence, interpreted at its worst.

The Jewish Agency, however, still had to convince the Zionist General Council, which met in Zurich from August 25-September 2, 1947. It is an indication of the unsoundness of the partition plan, as a permanent solution, that the General Council first rejected it, and a tribute to the plan's possibilities and the perceptiveness of the General Council, that it was finally accepted by an overwhelming majority. Revisionist and other proposals to maintain the integrity of Palestine were decisively defeated.(1)

1. Details in Cohen p.360. Sykes, p.386 called it "the boldest essay in moderation that the Zionist ruling body ever made."

Even at this stage, the Agency attempted to negotiate with the Arab League, hoping to gain some concessions. A meeting was arranged by Jon Kimche with Azām Pasha, the League Secretary, in the Savoy Hotel, London. The Agency had prepared a scheme defining the relations between the partition states, guaranteeing the Arabs against further Jewish expansion, and offering economic co-operation throughout the Middle East. Azām Pasha, however, considered negotiations no longer relevant. This conversation finally convinced the Agency that a peaceful solution was impossible.(1)

The Arab reaction to the Unscop Report was consistent with all their previous statements. They declared complete opposition to any settlement which might remove any part of Palestine from Arab sovereignty. They, therefore, rejected the report in total, partition plan and federal state plan. On September 19, 1947, the Arab League Political Committee met at Sofar and announced that any attempt to implement the Unscop report would be resisted by force of arms. At a subsequent meeting, in Beirut, on October 9, it was resolved that the secret decisions, taken at Bludan, in 1946, should be executed, if Palestine's integrity were threatened, that "military precautions" be taken on the frontiers, that Palestinians receive material and moral assistance, and that a defence fund should be set up.(2) In Palestine, the Arabs were confident that they would succeed at Lake Success, despite Unscop, or, if not, they would fight and win. Compromise was rejected utterly. The Arabs, therefore, put on a brave show, and kept it up until well into 1948. However, it is possible some of the Arab leaders were neither so confident or enthusiastic as they seemed, but were unable to make concessions because of pressure from their peoples. Azām Pasha certainly believed this was the situation.(3)

1. Horowitz pp.233-4

2. Khalil pp.164-5

3. Horowitz p.234

By September, 1947, pressure had increased on the British Government to wash their hands of Palestine. The British public had been particularly horrified by the murder, by the Irgun, of two sergeants in reprisal for the hanging of three terrorists. In August there was a financial crisis, and Palestine was costing £30-40 million p.a. In India, a deliberate British withdrawal, even if it had been followed by over 2,000,000 Indian deaths, had taken the problem of India off British hands. Also, on August 28, the Security Council rejected the Egyptian attempt to have the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 declared invalid. This left Britain with a legal right to a base in Egypt, as an alternative to Palestine.(1)

Obviously, the British reaction ultimately depended on whether Unscop produced a plan which Britain felt able to implement. Since partition had been discussed since 1937, probably Bevin and his advisers expected a partition plan, which would be rejected by both sides, but at least would produce viable states, with the Jewish state small enough for the Arabs to accept eventually. At the U.N. request, Britain would implement this solution, and get out. What Britain had not expected was a partition plan which did not produce two viable states, which, therefore, would require years of supervision, with frontiers of enormous length, requiring huge forces of troops to guard, and putting such a huge minority in the Jewish state that no Arab could consider it as other than an enormous injustice, thus undermining the British position in the whole Arab World if Britain Co-operated with the U.N. in implementing the solution. It is impossible to know exactly what Bevin was hoping for. Sir Alan Cunningham's farewell speech to Unscop suggested that a solution, could not give "absolute justice to everybody," would not be agreed to "wholly" by everybody, therefore a solution had to be imposed, and it had better be imposed soon.(2)

1. Munroe pp.165-7
2. Granados pp.291-2

Logically, Bevin might have expected areas of Jewish majority to form a Jewish state. This might have resulted in the plan being similar to the Grady-Morrison plan of 1946. In fact, this would have been very much the effect if Unscop had given the Negev to the Arab state. It is possible that Bevin, by threatening to leave Palestine, during the Second Regular Session, was actually trying to get America to agree to this. Bevin told Alami, in November, that America would not accept the Mandate and would insist Britain kept it. Then Bevin would only agree to stay if given a free hand.(1) The State Department were certainly quite willing to hand over the Negev to the Arabs, but Bevin's policy, if such it was, collapsed completely when Truman intervened against the State Department to prevent this happening.

The Americans, having shelved the problem with the establishment of Unscop, had to take it up again, but were in a state of internal confusion. Truman wanted a Zionist solution, the State Department wanted good relations with the Arabs, and the military advised that America could not spare any troops for the Middle East. These factors made American policy inconsistent and ineffective, at least in producing a viable solution. Truman, naturally, committed America to partition in the opening debate of the Second Regular Session. However, it was impossible to reconcile conflicting advice to produce a considered statement of opinion before October 11. It appears that Truman insisted the partition plan be supported without any major change. However, he accepted the Chiefs of Staff advice not to involve American troops. Since American policy was against increase of Russian influence, this meant that America had to oppose the use of Russian troops. This, in American calculations, only left Britain to implement the plan, for no small country would get involved in such a difficult problem. It would have suited America well for Britain

1. Furlonge pp.148-9

to implement the Unscop partition plan, bringing down Arab wrath on British heads. This encouraged much wishful thinking in the State Department, even as late as April, 1948, that Britain might be persuaded to do this.

ii) Establishing the Ad Hoc Committee.

Three items on Palestine appeared in the Provisional Agenda, prepared by the Secretariat, for the Second Regular Session of the U.N. (1) No.21 was the original U.K. request, which had resulted in the establishment of Unscop. No.22 was the Unscop Report. No.23 was an Arab states' proposal to terminate the Mandate and establish Palestine's independence as "one state." The Secretary-General suggested that items 21-3 be dealt with by an ad hoc committee, (2) otherwise the First Committee would have been overloaded and unable to complete its work until long after the other committees. (3)

In the General Committee, Mr. El-Khoury (Syria) opposed the reference of Palestine items to an ad hoc committee, on grounds that it should not be made a special case. America and Britain, however, supported an ad hoc committee as a practical way of solving U.N. organisational problems, which followed logically from the First Special Session. The Committee, therefore, decided to recommend to the General Assembly to establish an "Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestine Question," to deal with items 21-3 of the Provisional Agenda. (4)

When the report of the General Committee was considered by the General Assembly, Mr. Jamali (Iraq) repeated Mr. El-Khoury's plea that Palestine should not be singled out for special treatment. Mr. Malik (Lebanon) went further, declaring that "peculiar standards were being applied" to Palestine. Also, in an ad hoc committee, alternate delegates would probably be assigned, and therefore the problem would not get the attention it deserved, and make the delegates easily susceptible to pressure. However, despite Arab protests the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian

1.A/329 July 18, 1947

2.A/BUR/82 September 12, 1947

3.A/BUR/83 " " "

4.General Committee meeting No.35, Wednesday, September 17, 1947.

Committee was Brazil, China, Cuba, France, Mexico, U.S.S.R., U.K., U.S.A., Luxembourg, New Zealand, Chile, India, Poland, and Syria.

Question was established by 26 votes to 11, with 6 abstentions.(1)
This Committee met 34 times between September 25 and November 25.
Its work fell into three parts, general debate and hearing witnesses,
division into subcommittees to prepare possible solutions, and
consideration of subcommittees' reports. During all this time
delegates were under considerable pressure, and on two occasions
the Committee met three times in the day, in order to complete
its work without an unreasonably long delay.(2)

- 1.Meeting No.90, September 23, 1947 (N.B.slight change of title during debate).
- 2.On Saturday November 22 (meetings 27-9) and Monday November 24 (meetings 30-2)

iii) General Debate and Hearing Witnesses in the Ad Hoc Committee.

At the Committee's first meeting(1) Dr. Evatt (Australia) was elected Chairman, Siam Vice-Chairman, and Iceland Rapporteur. The Committee approved the Chairman's suggestion that the Arab Higher Committee and Jewish Agency be invited to give evidence(2) and that business should not otherwise begin, until the Committee had heard a statement from the U.K., which was to be given the next day. Meanwhile, the Chairman asked the delegates to consider a time limit on proposals for solutions to the Palestine Problem.

Creech-Jones (U.K.) delivered the expected statement at the next meeting.(3) He began with general comments on the Unscop Report. Britain agreed that the Mandate should be terminated, that Palestine should be independent, and that displaced persons were an international responsibility.(4) However, the most significant statement was that Britain would not enforce a solution, unless approved by both Arabs and Jews. Of course, the U.K. would not obstruct a U.N. settlement, but would not enforce it unless the above conditions were met. If they were not, then Creech-Jones was instructed to say that Britain would withdraw. He warned, therefore, that any solution that did not meet with the approval of both Arabs and Jews should be accompanied by a properly worked out plan of implementation. The effect should have been, and probably was intended to be a clear warning to Arabs and Jews that it was in their best interests to compromise, and to the U.N. that they should not propose plans on the assumption that some-one else was going to bear the cost of enforcement.

The Arab Higher Committee gave evidence at the third meeting and the Jewish Agency at the fourth.(5) The Agency answered questions and gave further information at meeting No.17, and the Higher Committee at No.18.(6) Also at No.18, Weizmann appeared

1. September 25, 11 a.m.

2. A/AC.14/2 (invitations) A/AC.14/4, A/AC.14/5 (replies)

3. Friday September 26, 11 a.m.

4. Unscop recommendations I, II, and VI. (see A/364)

5. September 29, October 2. 6. October 17 and 18

at the request of the Agency, although he was not acting for them in an official capacity.(1)

The Higher Committee completely rejected both the majority and minority proposals of Unscop. After a detailed exposition of the Arab case and condemnation of the Jewish case, the Higher Committee proposed that there should be an Arab state in the whole of Palestine. It should guarantee the generally accepted human rights, protect minority interests and freedom of worship. A constituent assembly should be elected, by all genuine Palestine citizens, to draw up a constitution base on the above. A government then elected on the basis of this constitution should take over from the Mandatory Government. These proposals were incorporated, with only detail changes, in a Syrian draft resolution, on October 14, 1947.(2) This indicates that the Higher Committee was working closely with the Arab states, but the delay of 11 days between the Higher Committee's appearance and the Syrian proposal suggests conflict, inefficiency, or both.

The Agency stated that it accepted, in principle, the Unscop majority plan. It also re-stated the Jewish case and attacked the basis of the Arab case. Much more important, when later events are considered, was its declaration that, if force was necessary to implement a a solution, but British forces were not available and no other force was forthcoming, then the Agency would maintain order in its own areas. When U.N. members began to realise that Britain actually meant what she said when she talked of leaving Palestine, the chance that the plan of partition might be enforced without outside intervention, must have weighed, at least to some small extent, with governments wanting to support the Jews for political reasons, but not wanting to vote for an unworkable scheme or to get involved themselves.

1. Weizmann pp; 554-5
2. A/AC.14/22

In the general debate which followed, 32 states expressed opinions, with varying degrees of clarity, on the Palestine Problem. The partition plan was most favoured with 14 states in favour.(1) The Arab states' proposal for a unitary state in Palestine was next with 10.(2) The Unscop minority plan died a natural death, with the support of only 2 of its original 3 supporters.(3) About half the U.N. did not commit themselves. On secondary issues, there was an even greater reluctance for members to commit themselves, particularly over implementation and the connection between displaced persons and Palestine. Delegates appear either to have forgotten Creech-Jones' statement of British policy, or chosen to ignore it.(4) The supporters of the Arab states' plan assumed that no measures of implementation were needed, and to have forgotten that, in their scheme, the co-operation of Britain was necessary in establishing a provisional government, although to a lesser degree than in the partition plan. 5 of the supporters of partition ignored implementation or accorded it no consequence in their speeches.(5) Russia agreed the question was important, but made no definite proposals. The American view, that an international force might be used, was supported by Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand. Only Czechoslovakia, Sweden, and Guatemala considered the questions of implementation vitally important.(6)

On the question of displaced persons, Britain made a proposal that the U.N. should ask all countries to take a share of refugees, and therefore solve the problem.(7) Since it was Jewish policy that

- 1.Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, Haiti, New Zealand, Panama, Peru, Poland, Sweden, South Africa, U.S.A., U.S.S.R., Uruguay, Venezuela.
- 2.Afghanistan, Argentine, Egypt, India, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen.
- 3.Iran and Yugoslavia (India was now supporting the Arab proposals)
- 4.Creech-Jones felt obliged to restate British policy at the close of debate (meeting No.15 Thursday October 16, 3 p.m.)
- 5.Panama, Poland, Uruguay, Peru, Haiti, Yugoslavia.
- 6.Sweden wanted the permanent members of the Security Council to take — ?
Guatemala (A/AC.14/13) wanted any but them.
- 7.A/AC.14/14

all Jewish refugees should go to Palestine, Britain appeared to be working against the Agency. The separation of the refugee issue and the Palestine Question was supported by those delegates who had spoken in favour of the Arab states' proposal. However, of the uncommitted, only 2 declared for a separate solution for the refugees.(1) Yugoslavia made a proposal which partly linked the issues.(2) Of the supporters of partition, only 2 made definite proposals, both linking displaced persons with Palestine.(3) Only 4 states took the realistic view that unless the U.N. produced a plan agreed to by both Jews and Arabs, any solution proposed by the U.N. was likely to be ignored, and therefore it was vitally necessary to get the agreement of both parties, otherwise the U.N. was wasting its time.

America, despite its earlier declaration in favour of partition, delayed, until meeting No.11, its statement of policy. This seems to have been due to extreme caution, great care being given to the editing of the text, and the President's approval being required.(4) This makes the statement worthy of close study, both for what it said, and for what it did not. America definitely supported the partition plan, in the U.N. However, in U.S.A. opinion, the U.N., by discussing Palestine, had not taken responsibility for Palestine. Responsibility lay with the Mandatory Power. However, this did not mean that the U.N. could ignore the problem of implementing partition. America would co-operate with the U.N. during a transitional period, would help the new states economically and financially, and to maintain law and order. This last might involve a volunteer force, recruited by the U.N. Enforcement of law and order however, did not refer to meeting external intervention, which the U.S.A. declared would not happen. This really was a declaration that, while the U.S.A. would fight for partition in the U.N., it would not use its troops to enforce partition. Instead, America seemed to hope that Britain could be persuaded not to throw off responsibility for Palestine, while reluctantly admitting Britain could not be relied on to co-operate completely.

1.China and Cuba

2.A/AC.14/19 Yugoslavia wanted entry from refugees in Cyprus only.

3.Poland wanted 250,000 admitted immediately, Uruguay 30,000 children added to Unscop's proposals.

4.New York Times October 12, 1947 (see Riggs pp.49-50)

At the next meeting, Russia stated her policy, insisting that it was unchanged from the First Special Session. The U.S.S.R. would have liked a unitary state in Palestine, if both Jews and Arabs would have agreed on one. However, since they would not agree, the partition scheme stood more chance of success. Russia did not approve of the Unscop plan as it stood. Adjustments would have to be made over frontiers, the arrangements for the transition from mandatory rule to independence, and the status of Jerusalem. Although the Soviet delegate referred to the need to make proper arrangements for implementing a solution, he did not stress this. In fact, Russia was not committed to more than qualified support for partition.

The Arab states' major failure at this stage was their inability to arouse interest in their scheme to have the Palestine Question referred to the International Court. The scheme does not seem to have been well planned. Iraq, on October 14, presented a proposal to ask the International Court whether the Palestine Mandate was consistent with Britain's promises to the Arabs during the First World War.(1) Apparently, the other Arab states found the idea attractive, and two days later, Egypt and Syria presented proposals to ask the Court whether the U.N. or any state was competent to impose partition on Palestine, against the wishes of the majority of its inhabitants.(2) If this scheme had succeeded, then, whatever the Court's ruling, there would have been sufficient delay for any U.N. action to be left behind by events. However, nearly all delegates ignored the proposals, and only Iran gave support to the Arab states.

On the conclusion of the general debate, the Chairman (Evatt, Australia) proposed that two committees be established to deal with some of the proposals. The first was to be a

1.A/AC.14/21

2.A/AC.14/24 and A/AC.14/25

committee of conciliation, as suggested by El Salvador, to see if it was possible to get agreement between Jew and Arab.(1)
 The second was to consider the U.S.A./Canadian proposal for a subcommittee to prepare a plan based on the Unscop majority plan.(2)
 The Chairman referred to the possibility of a third subcommittee to prepare a plan based on the Arab states' proposals. This was opposed by America, who had already proposed that the partition plan be studied exclusively.(3) Russia supported this, and asked the Committee to take a decision immediately, approving partition in principle as a solution. The U.S.S.R. proposal was, however, voted down, receiving only 14 votes. Three subcommittees, therefore, were established.(4)

At the Chairman's suggestion, it was agreed that the committee on conciliation should consist of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee, and that the subcommittees on the partition plan and the unitary state plan should be known as Subcommittee 1 and Subcommittee 2, each consisting of 9 members. The Chairman also suggested that Subcommittee 1 be composed of Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Sweden, U.S.S.R., U.S.A., Uruguay, and Venezuela. Belgium promptly refused to serve, declaring that Belgium had not yet taken up a position on the issue. Russia tried to get the whole of the permanent members of the Security Council on Subcommittee 1. Russia presumably hoped that if Security Council members supported a solution in the Subcommittee, then they might also support it in the Security Council, which Russia later made it clear she saw as the supervising authority to implement a solution. Russia insisted on a vote, despite two Security Council members (Britain and Belgium) having already stated they would not serve. The proposal was defeated, 32 to 6.

1.A/AC.14/21

2.A/AC.14/17 and A/AC.14/23

3.A/AC.14/16 jointly with Sweden

4.Voting was for subcommittee on conciliation, unanimous,
 on partition 35 to nil (8 abstentions)
 on unitary state 30 " 10 (6 ")

i.v.) The Acceptance of Partition by the Ad Hoc Committee.

The Committee then agreed to let the Chairman choose the subcommittees from those willing to serve.

For convenience, Subcommittee 1 divided into 7 working groups, each considering one important aspect of the Unscop Report.(1) These groups recommended no important changes to Unscop's provisions for the Holy Places, citizenship, international conventions and financial obligations, or economic union. Jerusalem was to be controlled by the Trusteeship Council. None of the above caused any controversy. Boundaries seem to have caused the Agency most worry, but delegates regarded implementation as the most difficult problem. Britain, the Arab Higher Committee, and the Jewish Agency were invited to send observers to the subcommittees. However, the Higher Committee, true to its policy of complete non-co-operation with partition, refused to send an observer to Subcommittee 1.

On boundaries, the most critical area was the Negev. If it were transferred to the Arab state, then the strangle hold which the partition plan gave to the Jews over Palestine would be removed. Yet it was extremely difficult to justify placing many thousands of Arabs under Jewish rule in an area where Jewish population was negligible. There was a possibility, how much appreciated by the Jews it is impossible to say, that, if the Negev were excluded from the Jewish state, Britain might implement the U.N. partition plan, at least to the extent of excluding Jews from Arab areas. The Agency believed that Bevin held the Negev outside Jewish interests,(2)

- 1.No.1 on Holy Places directed by Czechoslovakia.
 - No.2 on Citizenship directed by Uruguay.
 - No.3 on International conventions and financial obligations directed by Guatemala.
 - No.4 on economic union directed by Guatemala.
 - No.5 on boundaries directed by Poland and Uruguay
 - No.6 on implementation consisting of Canada, Guatemala, Russia, America.
 - No.7 on Jerusalem directed by Czechoslovakia.
- 2.Horowitz p.268 says Bevin said so to Creech-Jones.

and Britain certainly raised objection to the Jews having the Negev in the working group on boundaries. They may have been right, since Bevin said privately in November, that he would only stay in Palestine if America gave up interference and gave him a free hand.(1) Britain apparently did convince the State Department. After consultation with American delegates at Lake Success, the Department ordered that the U.S.A. should support the transfer of the southern part of the Negev to the Arab state. The Agency frustrated this however, by an appeal, via Weizmann, to Truman. The President was convinced by Weizmann's presentation of the case, and countermanded the State Department's orders.(2) Apart from this, no major change was attempted. No real Jewish objection was made to the transfer of Jaffa to the Arab state. This was not surprising. Jaffa, in an isolated enclave, was no threat to the Jewish state, but its transfer to the Arabs reduced the Arab minority in the Jewish state.

In discussion of implementation, the weakness of the American policy became obvious. Debate dragged on for 13 meetings, and the report of Subcommittee 1 was delayed until November 19. At first America persisted in assuming Britain would, finally, implement a U.N. solution. In the end, the section on implementation might well have been drafted by the British representative. On October 31, America proposed that Britain hand over control to the new states, gradually, as she withdrew. Withdrawal was to be completed by July 1, 1948. This, in effect, was asking Britain to implement the partition plan in a mere 6 months transitional period. The reaction of the British delegate was to repeat the September 26 statement, that Britain would not implement a plan unless both sides agreed to it. Russia then proposed that the Mandate should end on January 1, 1948, and Britain withdraw by April 30. Order was to be preserved by an armed militia of Jews and Arabs, under Security Council supervision.

1. Furlong pp.148-9

2. Weizmann pp.561-2 reports his meeting with Truman and influence of Weizmann over Truman is obvious.

America and Russia then reconciled their proposals, after an interval which suggested very careful consultation with their governments, and possibly talks with Britain.(1) The result was a joint proposal for the Mandate to end to end on May 1, 1948, with the new states to become independent by July 1. A commission of 5 small powers, under directives of the General Assembly, but supervised by the Security Council, would implement the solution. The implication was clear. The commission could not possibly implement any solution requiring use of force, but the necessity for force was becoming steadily more obvious, therefore it was being assumed that Britain would co-operate with the commission and implement a solution.

British reaction was to announce that troops would not be withdrawn completely before August 1, and, while they remained in occupation of any area, they would retain responsibility for law and order in that area, but they would not enforce a U.N. solution. The civil administration would be maintained until it was obvious the U.N. decision was not accepted by both Jews and Arabs, and would not necessarily be maintained in the areas still occupied by Britain during a withdrawal. In response to questioning, the British delegate did not appear well briefed. He declared if the U.N. approved a solution, Britain would not obstruct it. However, he had no instructions on the British attitude to the proposed U.N. commission's activities, in areas where the civil administration had been laid down but were still occupied. He did not know the date when the withdrawal would begin, the stages it would follow, or even the exact definition of an occupied area, therefore he could not say which areas the commission might be able to take over before the withdrawal was completed.

In response, therefore, the working group altered its plan so that the Mandate should terminate and British forces be withdrawn

1. Granados p.253

on a date to be agreed, but not later than August 1, 1948. Partition would become effective by October 1, 1948. Britain would maintain law and order and public services in areas where they were not handed over to the commission. The five members of the commission were to be Guatemala, Iceland, Norway, Poland, and Uruguay. During the activities of the working group, many people were surprised at the co-operation between America and Russia, apparently not realising that, although in this case their immediate objectives were similar, their motives were entirely different.(1)

Subcommittee 2, on the unitary state, completed its work much more quickly than Subcommittee 1, but refused to release its report other than simultaneously with that of Subcommittee 1. Its report asserted that Unscop had failed to consider the legality of the Balfour Declaration and similar international agreements, and had ignore the question of the rights of the inhabitants of Palestine to self-determination. These points should be refered to the International Court. The Committee declared that Palestine had accepted a "disproportionately large" number of Jewish refugees, called upon countries of origin to take them back, and other countries to accept them where return to their native lands was impossible. A special committee was suggested to co-ordinate the re-settlement of Jews among U.N. members. Palestine should be established as a unitary state, on lines previously suggested by the Arab states and the Arab Higher Committee.(2)

The Committee on Conciliation had no success. Actually, it does not seem to have tried very hard, although this is understandable, considering how vehemently both sides were expounding irreconcilable principles.(3)

1. For the report of Subcommittee 1, see A/AC.14/34 and A/AC.14/34 add. 1.
2. For the report of Subcommittee 2, see A/AC.14/32.
3. For the report of Subcommittee , see A/AC.14/SR.23. For criticism of Subcommittee, see remarks of France and Syria, General Assembly meeting No.127, November 28.

Reports were presented at meeting No.23 of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question, Wednesday November 19, and discussed at the 11 subsequent meetings between then and Tuesday, November 25.

Sir Alexander Cadogan (U.K.), now appearing better briefed than in the working group, clarified the British position, to some extent, by raising further objections. These indicated that Britain was going to control Palestine with no interference from the U.N. until a certain date chosen by Britain. At that date, the Mandate would end and Palestine become a U.N. responsibility. Britain, therefore, would not accept Security Council control over the timing of the end of the Mandate or the British withdrawal, both of which being ^{were} implied by Subcommittee 1's report. Britain would not hand over authority to a provisional government, but only to the U.N. Sir Alexander warned, therefore, that proper provision for the U.N. to assume control of Palestine still had not been made.

In the end, the question of transfer of authority from Britain to the provisional governments of whatever plan the U.N. should adopt was never cleared up. Subcommittee 1 held 3 meetings and struck out the references to Security Council interference, which Britain found so offensive, but did not clarify the status of territory still occupied by British troops after Britain had declared the Mandate ended. Subcommittee 2 should have had an easier task. It could simply have declared that Britain should transfer authority to the U.N. commission when the Mandate ended, and that the commission should then transfer it to the provisional government. However, the subcommittee refused to accept British dictation and its recommendations remained unaltered.

America still persisted in trying to soften the blow which partition would deal to the Arabs. The inclusion of the Negev in

the Jewish state was still widely criticised, but American delegates were under strict orders not to deviate from this part of the partition plan. However, the Jewish Agency itself responded to this criticism by offering to transfer Beersheba to the Arab state, and this was incorporated in an American proposal.(1) The Agency offer aroused much surprise, and was welcomed as a generous gesture, but is understandable if it is assumed that the Agency was concerned to preserve the essentials of the partition plan, and were not worried about the transfer of the Arab population of Beersheba from the Jewish state. Another conciliatory gesture by America towards the Arabs was the removal of the commission's two most ardent Zionists, Granados (Guatemala) and Fabregat (Uruguay). America supported a proposal by Pakistan and Norway that the membership of the commission should be left to the General Assembly. Granados was very bitter at being excluded, and afterwards wrote that those who had supported his membership of the commission changed their minds after American liaison men had spoken to them in the delegates' lounge.(2)

America also remained determined that American troops should not become involved. When Denmark proposed that the Security Council should be instructed to regard any attempt to frustrate a UN solution by force as a threat to peace, which would have obliged the Council to raise U.N. forces against the Arabs if they carried out their threats against partition, America objected. Obviously America considered U.N. forces would probably have to be American. The result was the Danish proposal was watered down to a simple exhortation to the Council to do its duty.(3)

Surprisingly, Britain did not object to Subcommittee 1's request for the Mandatory power to make available a port for

1. A/AC.14/38

2. Granados pp.258-260

3. A/AC.14/43 and A/AC.14/43 Rev.1, November 24 and 25, 1947

Jewish immigration, before the Mandate ended. Britain's attitude seems to have raised some Jewish hopes that Britain would, in the end, grant this request, but Britain's real intention seems to have been that, since it was only a request it could be ignored eventually and, meanwhile, it was better not to make a fuss in the U.N.

Subcommittee 2's recommendations were voted first. The proposal for reference to the International court was defeated, but with enough votes in favour to show that many delegations would have been happy to see the whole problem shelved.(1) The proposal to ask the Court whether the U.N. could enforce a decision contrary to the wishes of the majority of the inhabitants of Palestine was only defeated by one vote.(2) Of three proposals on displaced persons, one was actually passed,(3) and the whole section was only rejected by the Chairman's casting vote.(4) The proposal for a unitary state, however, was decisively defeated.(5) A long list of amendments, mostly trivial, had been prepared for the report of Subcommittee 1.(6) Pakistan attempted to get the Subcommittee's recommendations on boundaries referred to a new commission, but failed.(7) The plan for partition with economic union was then accepted, but with nothing like the 2/3 majority required for approval by the General Assembly.(8)

1.18:25:11 (i.e. votes for:against:abstentions)
2.20:21:13
3.17:14:23, 18:16:21, 15:18:22
4.17:16:26
5.12:29:14
6.A/AC.14/35-40 and 42-46
7.A/AC.14/40
8.25:13:17 (as No.1)

v.) The Passage of the November 29, 1947, Resolution for Partition.

Although, when the delegates assembled, on November 26, 1947, to consider, in the General Assembly, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question's report, the plan for partition seemed only to lack one vote for a 2/3 majority, appearances were deceptive. There was the usual large proportion of abstentions to be found in a U.N. committee, where many countries were eager not to get involved in the issue being discussed. In the General Assembly, however, these countries often committed themselves after consulting their governments. However, if the supporters of partition divided the votes of former abstainers equally with the opponents of partition, then a 2/3 majority would be further away. After November 25, when the last vote was taken in the Ad Hoc Committee, the supporters of partition had to gain one extra vote plus two extra votes for every extra one gained by the opposition. The result was, when 3 previous abstainers, Belgium, Netherlands, and New Zealand announced support for partition, and 3 others, Philippines, Greece, and Haiti announced opposition, the partitionists were in a worse position, needing 4 extra votes. (1) Zionists had hopes of Luxembourg and France voting for partition, (2) but even this left a deficit of 2 votes. A South American friend told the Jewish Agency leaders, who were horrified at this situation, "Go home, The sight of your faces is demoralising your friends." (3) The only solution seemed to the Agency to be to work for a postponement so that pressure could be used on uncommitted or weakly committed delegations to obtain a majority when the partition plan was finally voted. Zionist supporters, particularly Fabregat (Uruguay) made long speeches, to which little attention was paid. This prevented the speakers' list being completed in meetings 124 and 125. The partitionists mustered enough votes to prevent a proposed night meeting to complete the Assembly's business, and therefore a vote was postponed

1. See p.92 for a stage by stage examination of the voting and potential voting November 26-29 (Table entitled "The Struggle for Partition").

2. Granados p.267

3. Horowitz p.299

until, at least, Friday, November 28.(1) What was significant about the partitionists' success in this case was its narrow margin, only 24, votes against the night meeting to 21 in favour. The vote showed that, not only were many abstainers prepared to see partition rejected, but several who had voted for partition in Committee were prepared to see it fail to gain a 2/3 majority.

By Friday November 28, 1947, the situation had changed. Two abstainers, Paraguay and Liberia, had been won to partition, plus two of the opposition, Haiti and the Philippines. Also, one of the opposition, Thailand, was absent, the delegate being disowned by his government as a result of a revolution. This gave the partitionists 8 votes beyond that required for a 2/3 majority. Zionists and their supporters were eager for an immediate vote, but when France proposed a postponement to allow a final attempt to bring both sides together, the majority of the U.N. approved, showing again that partition was not regarded as a vital issue by the majority.(2) Not surprisingly, this last attempt at conciliation failed, and the General Assembly met for a final debate and vote on Saturday, November 29, 1947. Lebanon, in an obviously desperate attempt to avoid defeat, proposed a new federal plan. Iran, with similar motives, tried to have the General Assembly adjourned. Both attempts failed when the Chairman (Brazil) gave the partition vote priority. The final vote, therefore, was 33 in favour, 13 against, 10 abstentions, and 1 absent. Partition of Palestine was, therefore, approved by the U.N.(3)

1. Thursday November 27 was a holiday for Thanksgiving.
2. Voting was 25 to 15.
3. The only surprise between Friday and Saturday was Chile's move from support to abstention.

The Struggle for Partition.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Votes</u>				
November	For	Against	Abstention	Absent	Credit/deficit for partition
25	25	13	17	2	-1
26 (a)	28	16	12	1	-4
(b)	30	16	11	-	-2
28	34	13	9	1	+8
29	33	13	10	1	+7

Key

November 25 is the final vote of the Ad Hoc Committee.

November 26 (a) is the Committee vote adjusted by declarations of intent of delegates at General Assembly meetings 124 and 125.

November 26 (b) is the above adjusted by Granados' estimate of the situation on the evening of November 26.

November 28 is the above adjusted by Granados' estimate for that date plus declarations of delegates.

November 29 is the actual vote of the General Assembly on partition.

vi) The Forces Which Produced a Majority for Partition.

Much has been written about the Zionists' skill in using pressure to gain a 2/3 majority in the U.N. However, the effect of pressure used by the Zionists would have been minimal without the special advantages they enjoyed in the situation which existed in November 1947. These advantages tend to be overlooked.

Zionist ideas were always more acceptable in countries with European and Christian traditions than in other parts of the World. In European and Christian countries, in the 20th Century, a feeling of guilt at past persecution of Jews and anti-Jewish prejudice in general, always lay close to the surface of people's consciences. In 1947, this feeling was very strongly re-enforced by the recent revelations of Nazi massacres of the Jews in Germany and eastern Europe. In these countries also, the Jews had their strongest organisations. This produced a special advantage, because, in November 1947, of the 57 states in the U.N., 37 could be described as predominantly Christian and European in tradition.⁽¹⁾ The key factor in Zionist success, however, was their domination of America. America's large Jewish population, led by Zionist organisations, was able to sway the American people to the Zionist cause, even to tolerating barely disguised advertisements for funds for guns for terrorists, to be used against Britain, which was supposed to be America's most important ally. Through Weizmann, Zionists had access to the President. Through Jewish donations to party funds, and Jewish votes, Zionists had a political influence which the President could not ignore. While there is little doubt that President Truman always believed that what he was doing was morally justified, and even praiseworthy, it seems hardly likely that he would have been prepared to back his own judgement against that of the State Department, which opposed partition, if personal and political pressures had been pro-Arab and not pro-Zionist.

1. This can be seen by examining the table entitled "Policies and votes of U.N. members," given on p. 94 and 95.

Policies and Votes of U.N. Members

<u>1. Europe</u>	<u>Policy stated in</u> <u>Ad Hoc Committee</u>	<u>Vote in Ad</u> <u>Hoc Committee</u>	<u>General Assembly</u> <u>Vote November 29</u>
a) <u>Western</u>			
Norway	Y	Y	Y
Sweden	Y	Y	Y
Iceland	-	Y	Y
Denmark	A	Y	Y
Belgium	A	A	Y
France	-	A	Y
Luxembourg	-	A	Y
Netherlands	-	A	Y
Britain	A	A	A
b) <u>Eastern</u>			
Czechoslovakia	Y	Y	Y
Yugoslavia	N	A	A
Greece	-	A	N
2. <u>The Americas</u>			
Bolivia	Y	Y	Y
Donimican Republic	Y	Y	Y
Guatemala	Y	Y	Y
Panama	Y	Y	Y
Peru	Y	Y	Y
Uruguay	Y	Y	Y
U.S.A.	Y	Y	Y
Venezuela	Y	Y	Y

(continued p.95)

Key

Y = vote or statement in favour of partition.
 N = " " " against " "
 A = abstention on partition.
 - = absence or no policy stated

Within the geographical divisions, countries with a similar voting pattern have been grouped together.

The Americas (continued)

Brazil	-	Y	Y
Costa Rica	-	Y	Y
Ecuador	-	Y	Y
Nicaragua	-	Y	Y
Paraguay	-	-	Y
Haiti	-	A	Y
Chile	Y	Y	A
Argentina	-	A	A
Colombia	-	A	A
Honduras	-	A	A
Mexico	-	A	A
El Salvador	A	A	A
Cuba	N	N	N

3. The Soviet Bloc

Poland	Y	Y	Y
U.S.S.R.	Y	Y	Y
Byelorussia	-	Y	Y
Ukraine S.S.R.	-	Y	Y

4. The Commonwealth

Canada	Y	Y	Y
South Africa	Y	Y	Y
Australia	-	Y	Y
New Zealand	A	A	Y

5. The Arab League

Egypt	N	N	N
Iraq	N	N	N
Lebanon	N	N	N
Saudi Arabia	N	N	N
Syria	N	N	N
Yemen	N	N	N

(continued on p.96)

6. Other Countries of Asia and Africa

Philippines	-	-	Y
Liberia	-	A	Y
Ethiopia	-	A	A
Thailand	-	N	-
Turkey	-	N	N
Afghanistan	N	N	N
India	N	N	N
Iran	N	N	N
Pakistan	N	N	N

Success in America brought American influence in other countries to the aid of the Zionists. Western Europe was recovering from the Second World War and was largely dependent on American aid. Latin America was very much influenced by American economic policy. Also, Latin American countries had been encouraged to rely for arms on the sale of U.S.A. surplus or obsolete military supplies. Europe and Latin America together totalled 29 U.N. members, just over 50%. American political and economic influence was also important over the whole World.

Finally, for reasons entirely unconnected with Zionist^m, Russia had decided to support partition. This automatically provided 4 votes dominated by Russia, and, of course, Russia was able to put pressure on other countries, particularly in Eastern Europe. Altogether, therefore, the Zionists could rely on, or have reasonable hopes of at worst an abstention, about 41 countries out of 57.

Policy statements and votes cast support the thesis outlined above. Only 3 countries with a Christian/European background voiced opposition to partition. Of these, two (Greece and Yugoslavia) were of Eastern rather than Western Christian traditions, and one (Yugoslavia) had a Moslem minority. Only Cuba was a real exception. In Western Europe there is circumstantial evidence of American pressure, particularly after the Ad Hoc Committee vote of November 25, 1947. In the Committee, only 2 (Norway and Sweden) declared support for partition, while 3 (Denmark, Belgium, and Britain) declared they would abstain, and 4 (Iceland, France, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands) did not declare an attitude. However, in the Committee vote, one previously uncommitted (Iceland) and one previous abstainer (Denmark) supported partition. At the General Assembly vote, on November 29, 1947, all Western Europe, except Britain, voted for partition. Britain, of course, was in a desperate financial situation and dependent on America. However, it would probably be a mistake to assume American influence had no effect in Britain's case. Rather than defying American pressure by abstaining, Britain, more likely was being forced, by American pressure, not to oppose a U.N. action, of which Britain very strongly disapproved.

American influence does not appear so obviously in Latin America, but the pattern of voting suggests that American pressure converted to support many countries which would have preferred to abstain. 9 refused to commit themselves in the Committee, but, of these, at the Committee vote, 4 supported partition, 4 abstained, and 1 was absent, but later supported partition. Of the rest, 7 consistently supported partition, and 1 (Cuba) consistently opposed it. 5 appeared determined to avoid taking an attitude. Only Haiti and Chile's behaviour was erratic.

Russian controlled votes were solidly behind partition throughout. Czechoslovakia's support for partition suggests Russia pressure (Czechoslovakia was still independent), and in the case of Yugoslavia there is evidence that Russian pressure changed the Yugoslavian vote from opposition to abstention.

Since voting in the U.N. is supposed to be free, the use of pressure is generally concealed and therefore not well documented. However, America was accused in the U.N. of "tackling each delegation in hotel room, in bed, in corridors and ante rooms, to threaten them with economic sanctions or bribe them with promises."(1) Sir Mohamed Zafrullah Khan (Pakistan) declared that, although he succeeded in persuading a "sufficient number" of delegates against partition, "they were not permitted to stand by the right as they saw it." These accusations, which might well be taken for propaganda, are confirmed by Sumner Welles, who declared that "every form of pressure" was used where it had a chance of succeeding.(2) David Horowitz wrote afterwards that partition was only accepted because of American pressure.(3)

It is difficult, however, to give examples. The votes for Haiti and Philippines seem likely examples of pressure, with their delegates

1. General Assembly meeting No.124, November 26, 1946 (speech by Lebanon)
2. Welles p.63
3. Horowitz p.301

making sudden changes of attitude. Cuba, whose geographical position and traditions suggested support for partition, declared she was voting against partition, "despite the pressure which has been brought to bear on us." American pressure is also confused with Zionist pressure, which, in America, often came from Zionist supporters in high official positions, acting on their own initiative. 26 senators sent a telegram to the Philippine delegation asking for a vote for partition, and at least two Supreme Court judges saw the Philippine delegation in person. Harvey Firestone, with considerable business interests in Liberia, telephoned the Liberian Government asking for a vote for partition.(1) This may explain Liberia's vote for partition, when Liberia might have been more naturally inclined to vote against.

A further difficulty arises in trying to estimate what pressure was used. Zionists seem to have overestimated the efforts of some American officials on their behalf. Bernard Baruch is included in Weizmann's list of those who did valuable work in obtaining the partition vote(2), but Baruch was a close associate of Forrestal, who certainly was not a supporter of Zionism, and he found, on consulting Baruch, that "not all Jews are Zionists."(3)

American pressure does not seem to have been used to any great extent until near November 25, when the final vote was taken in Committee, and only became very strong after the Committee vote indicated the partition plan was in great danger. Other countries, of course, also used pressure, Russia on Yugoslavia(4), the Arabs on Costa Rica and Guatemala(5), and the few examples available are, almost certainly, only a tiny fraction of the activities inside and outside of Lake Success, during the last days of November, 1947.

1. Lilienthal pp.60-67 gives these examples.

2. Weizmann p.560

3. Rogow p.156

4. Granados p.265

5. Granados p.264

CHAPTER FOUR

UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES BETWEEN THE SECOND REGULAR SESSION AND THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

i) Russian, American, and British Policies.

If the work of the Second Regular Session was proof that the U.N. could take decisions if only Russia and America co-operated, then the work of the U.N. after the Second Regular Session is proof that, without their co-operation, nothing effective could be done. The contrast was obvious. Up to November 29, 1947, Russia and America were willing to compromise to reach agreement. After November 29, "every word was weighed cautiously lest it should commit the speaker to some action."⁽¹⁾ This was understandable. From the First Special Session onwards, the lesser powers had wanted to thrust responsibility for Palestine onto the Great Powers. Nothing had happened to make them change their minds, not even the minds of the majority who had voted for partition. Rather, the increasing violence in Palestine, in early 1948, was likely, more than ever, to make them determined not to become involved. In the Security Council, in 1948, of the 6 non-permanent members, 2 (Argentina and Colombia) had consistently abstained on partition. 1 (Belgium) had been a last minute conversion, despite its delegate's obvious dissatisfaction with the plan. Only 2 (Canada and the Ukraine) had consistently supported partition, while 1 (Syria) was totally opposed. Little, therefore, could be expected from the lesser powers in the Security Council. Little more could be expected from the permanent members. 2 (Britain and China) had abstained. France had been a last minute conversion. Only America and Russia had consistently supported partition. Upon their co-operation, therefore, depended any hope of effective action in Palestine, either to enforce the partition resolution, or to seek and agree an alternative solution. This co-operation, however, was not forthcoming.

1. Horowitz p.315

Russia's attitude was the simplest of the three powers most involved. Russia's aim had been to get Britain to leave Palestine. If Britain withdrew, and no great power dominated the Middle East, then, to Russia, it would have been very satisfactory. Therefore, Russia had no real incentive to see partition properly implemented. Indeed, any plan to enforce partition after a British withdrawal raised the danger of American troops entering the area. The Russians, however, appeared to realise that America would be very reluctant to send in her troops, and the ~~main~~ fear of the Russians, at this time, which can be deduced from U.N. records, seems to have been that the Security Council might find some formula to satisfy Britain and allow Britain to stay. Britain's determination to leave Palestine must have appeared to the Russians to be based on her objections to partition, therefore, to ensure that Britain did not change her mind, the Russians strongly opposed any attempt to water down the partition plan, still, of course, with ^(su) seriously proposing any means on f implementation. As months passed in 1948, it became obvious that Britain was leaving, whatever happened, and, therefore, the Russians lost interest. Their suspicions were, however, aroused, when America proposed a second special session to consider a temporary trusteeship for Palestine, which seemed again to raise the possibility of a halt in the British withdrawal, and which, therefore, was opposed by Russia. 72

U.S.A. policy was produced by a complex situation inside America. The partition plan had never been popular within the State Department. From his appointment on September 17, 1947, the Secretary of Defence, Forrestal, had become convinced that support for Zionism would be a disaster for American interests in the Middle East. By early 1948, this conviction had become an obsession. In his belief, he was largely supported by his colleagues, particularly the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who believed that support for partition might lead to American forced being committed which were needed elsewhere. The Joint Chiefs

were particularly conscious of the need to economise on men and materials, because Truman had insisted on cuts in the defense estimates, for the financial year, July 1948-June 1949, to a level far below that considered safe by the Joint Chiefs. Since it was generally considered that the reduction in defence expenditure was to curry favour with voters in the 1948 election, State Department Chiefs were sympathetic to charges that Truman was putting political considerations before national security, both on defence spending and Palestine. They became particularly worried after the Russia coup in Czechoslovakia, February 22, 1948. However, this would have made little difference if, by about the end of March, 1948, Forrestal, and probably Marshall, the Secretary of State, and other State Department officials, had not become convinced Truman was going to lose the Presidential election.(1) The State Department, therefore, concluded they could act without reference to Truman, and resulted in the American delegate in the Security Council proposing a temporary trusteeship for Palestine to replace the partition plan. This was announced on March 19; and Marshall took full responsibility for advising Truman, although Truman had not been advised at all. That the State Department could take such an action shows that Truman, at this time, was very preoccupied with his election campaign, and had not been supervising the State Department as closely as he might have been expected normally. Also, Truman had not been informed of the possibility by Zionists. The Jewish Agency certainly appreciated such a change of policy was likely, but, over-persistent Zionist propagandists had caused Truman to exclude Zionists from his presence. However, on March 18, Truman had given one interview to Weizmann, gained by the intercession of Truman's former business associate, Eddie Jacobson, and Truman had promised continued support for partition. The following day, Truman was shocked to hear the State Department's proposals. He felt he had been made to appear a liar. He could hardly contradict

1. Rogow pp.164-73 and 253-58

the American delegate's proposal without making America appear ridiculous, therefore he allowed the State Department to carry on with arrangements for the Second Special Session. However, he remained determined to support the Zionist cause, and did so by giving Israel immediate recognition, as soon as the state was declared. This was done without prior notice to the State Department, which was till, in the U.N., struggling with various proposals for a solution in Palestine, other than partition. The State Department officials were very bitter about the President's action, but his authority was not questioned again over Palestine.

Much has been written about the incomprehensibility of British policy, or lack of British policy, between November 29, 1947, and May 14, 1948, when Britain ended the Mandate. However, examination of the scanty evidence that is available suggests a thesis that explains these inconsistencies.

Britain had decided to leave Palestine, before the Second Regular Session began. This was not taken seriously at the time, but cannot now be doubted. However, Jews and Russians were afraid Britain was looking for an excuse to stay, and Americans assumed Britain would stay, at least long enough to enforce partition. When it became obvious Britain would not enforce partition, the State Department believed that Britain might stay on some other terms, and this was regarded as a serious possibility by Jews and Russians. Writers since then have persisted in these views, despite it being obvious that, if Britain was anxious to leave in September 1947, Britain would be even more anxious to leave in January 1948. Britain's financial state was even worse, and violence in Palestine was increasing. Above all, the U.N. had produced a plan which Britain could only enforce by going back on all her solemn declarations of policy during the Second Regular Session, and by turning her troops on the Arabs, whose friendship Britain

considered vital, and co-operating with the Jews, whose terrorist activities had certainly not endeared them to the British Government. By the U.N. plan, British troops might be committed to hazardous service in Palestine for a long time, and, at the end of it, when Britain withdrew, there would probably be a war between Arabs and Jews. Britain might have considered staying in Palestine if the U.N. had produced a plan which the Arabs might possibly, under duress, have accepted, but, since the U.N. did not, it must have seemed to Britain that to stay in Palestine was going to do nobody any good and Britain a lot of harm. However, by leaving, it is most unlikely that Britain's motive was to sabotage partition, as was rumoured at the time. This was explicitly denied by Creech-Jones to Weizmann. More likely, Britain would have preferred to see another country enforce partition, or attempt to. Creech-Jones, in fact, told Weizmann Britain would have welcomed an international force.(1)

British neutrality, therefore, was bound to be "benevolent" towards the Arabs, but it is hardly likely that the Foreign Office expected or desired a complete Arab victory. Apart from humanitarian considerations, for the Jews would have gone down fighting, prospects of an Arab victory would have brought pressure from Zionists in America for U.S.A. intervention. The complications which might have resulted from this could not be taken lightly. Most likely, therefore, Britain did not desire a complete Arab victory, but rather that the Arabs would fight the Jews, be forced to realise they could not be eliminated, but save their pride to some extent by modifying the U.N. plan by force of arms, until it was acceptable without too much loss of face. Creech-Jones told Weizmann that he believed Jews and Arabs would have to fight it out, and the result would be favourable to the Arabs.(2) The exact extent of Arab gains, hoped for

1.Vera Weizmann p.224

2.Weizmann p.580

may never have been defined precisely in Britain. It is not likely that Britain hoped for the Jews to lose both Eastern Galilee and the Negev, for a too great Arab victory would have produced other complications, although there is evidence that some Foreign Office staff felt this would be desirable.(1) What would probably have suited Britain was for the Jews to have the smallest possible viable state, which would have had to include Eastern Galilee, and, perhaps, some or all of Western Galilee.

A complete, or nearly complete Arab victory was undesirable to Britain, because it would have brought conflict in the Arab World between the Mufti's supporters (Egypt and Syria) and Abdullah of Transjordan., who was supported by Iraq. Abdullah was ambitious to extend his frontiers. Since Abdullah had an efficient British trained and equipped army, better placed than any other Arab country's to invade Palestine, there was a danger that Abdullah would enter Palestine as a liberator and remain as a conqueror, arousing the hatred of his opponents against Britain for helping him do it. On the other hand, Abdullah's most attractive quality to Britain was his appreciation, unique among Arab leaders, that the only possible solution was a compromise with the Jews, therefore, of all Arab rulers, he was the only[^] suited to administer Arab Palestine with any hope of peace. The Mufti certainly was not. If he had been established in an Arab division of a partitioned Palestine, he would certainly have attacked the Jewish part. The obvious course, therefore, for Britain, was to allow Abdullah limited success. In the light of the above, the apparent inconsistencies in British policy become comprehensible. The Jews were hampered by arms searches and a blockade until the end of the Mandate, but the Arabs received no extra deliveries of arms. Abdullah was encouraged by Bevin to invade the eastern Arab area, but told not to invade territory allocated to the Jews. Arab

1. Horowitz, who was in London December 17-29, 1947, writes that Harold Beeley told him the U.N. frontiers were impractical, but partition was unavoidable. He thought the Jews would lose Eastern Galilee and the Negev. Horowitz says Beeley's views were similar to a certain "British V.I.P." he met at Weizmann's in New York.

irregulars were tol/erated before the end of the Mandate, but Arab regular armies were told not to invade. The result was the Jews did establish themselves, but not in the whole of Palestine. However, the extent of Jewish success seems to have been greater than was expected in Britain, and certainly was too much ever for the Arabs to be expected to tol/erate. However, before the end of the Mandate British hopes were reasonable, and, in late May seemed to be coming true. If Britain did miscalculate the situation early in 1948, and it would be reasonable to say the situation was incalculable except within very wide limits, then it is understandable. Palestine had been an exasperating problem, but was not a major issue at that time. British diplomats felt Palestine wasted time better devoted to more important issues, and may not have been prepared to give it their full attention. In a very undiplomatic outburst to Mrs. Weizmann, Creech-Jones revealed, "I have to look after sixty million people. I have on my desk papers on the Argentine trouble, Ceylon, Malaya, China, and others-and here is Palestine!"(1)

1. ?

ii) The Work of the Palestine Commission

In these circumstances, the activities of the U.N. became ineffective. The Palestine Commission's duties were to take over Palestine as Britain left, establish frontiers and provisional governments, supervise the election of constituent assemblies and then of regular governments. No provision had been made for a refusal by the British Government to co-operate. The Commission was to act "under the guidance of the Security Council," which was to "take the necessary measures as provided for in the plan for its implementation." The Council was to "consider whether the situation in Palestine constitutes a threat to peace," and take action, if necessary, under Articles 39 and 41 of the U.N. Charter. It was to "determine as a threat to peace...any attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged by this resolution." The Commission's members(1) were nominated by the President of the General Assembly (Brazil) after the acceptance of the partition resolution, and accepted without objection. Lobbying had excluded at least one strong supporter of partition (Guatemala) and, of the members, only Czechoslovakia had been a strong supporter of partition and had been a member of Unscop, although the rest had voted in favour.

The Commission met, for the first time, on January 9, 1948, and elected Lisicky (Czechoslovakia) Chairman, with Medina (Bolivia) Vice-Chairman. After the first meeting, the Commission met in private, although press conferences were given afterwards. By the sixth meeting, January 14, 1948, rules of procedure had been adopted. The Commission then produced a plan of work, based on Part 1B of the partition plan, and invited Britain, the Jewish Agency, and the Arab Higher Committee to send representatives to co-operate with the Commission. At this point,

1. Raul Diez de Medina	(Bolivia)
Karel Lisicky	(Czechoslovakia)
Per Federspiel	(Denmark)
Eduardo Morgan	(Panama)
Vincente J. Francisco	(Philippines)

the Commission's weakness became obvious. The Jewish Agency and Britain accepted the invitations, but the Arab Higher Committee refused to appear, pointing out that it had rejected partition completely. Then in a meeting with Sir Alexander Cadogan (U.K.), the Commission learnt that Britain still insisted on retaining complete control until the Mandate ended, and would not co-operate in implementing the partition plan in any way. Britain was not prepared to allow the Commission into Palestine before May 1, 1948, although, a concession was made, in that an advance party would be allowed. This arrived in Palestine on March 2, and had to find its own accommodation and servants. It did however, send some reports to Lake Success, which was the only work done by the Commission in Palestine.

The Commission, therefore, concentrated on gathering such information as was available at Lake Success, and on presenting a report on the situation in Palestine to the Security Council. In this report, the Commission concluded that, unless adequate military force was available, after the termination of the Mandate, there would be "uncontrolled, widespread strife and bloodshed." The Commission informed the Council that even British troops were losing control, Arab forces were organising, both inside and outside of Palestine, to resist the partition plan, and the Arab Higher Committee had declared that a Jewish state would be resisted by force. The Commission did not exclude Jews from blame, for "certain elements were committing irresponsible acts of violence." The Commission, therefore, asked the Council for help against the forces being used to frustrate the partition plan.

iii) The Work of the Trusteeship Council

Meanwhile, the Trusteeship Council had been preparing a draft statute for the City of Jerusalem, in accordance with its instructions in part III C of the partition plan. A working Committee on Jerusalem was established on December 1, 1947, to prepare a first draft. The Committee produced a comprehensive plan, (1) which, after a preliminary debate on February 18, 1948, the Council considered in detail from February 19 to March 10. At the suggestion of Belgium(2), during meeting 35, on March 10, formal approval and the appointment of a governor, which were specified in the partition plan, were postponed until not later than April 29. However, on April 21, the Council accepted an American suggestion(3) to hand the whole question over to the General Assembly.

1. T/122 (the plan, as amended in the Trusteeship Council, appears as T/118 and T/118/Rev.1)

2. T/SR.62

3. T/SR.63

iv) The Work of the Security Council

At the very first meeting in which the Palestine Question appeared on the Security Council's agenda, there was a fore-taste of the conflict which was to stifle all initiative during much of 1948. On the simple question of taking note of the Secretary-General's letter, communicating the resolution of November 29 to the Council, America made it clear that it did not welcome the responsibility placed on the Council by the resolution. While Russia wanted the Council to "accept" the resolution, America wanted to "take note" of the resolution. The importance America placed upon what might be considered a trivial matter of wording showed quite clearly that America wanted a way left open for the Council to reject partition.

Serious discussion on Palestine in the Security Council did not begin until February 24, 1948, when Lisicky (Czechoslovakia) presented the Palestine Commission's first special report. At the next meeting Colombia presented a proposal which assumed that the Council had to reject the Commission's plea for help because the General Assembly's request to the Council to give such help if required was not covered by Articles 39 and 41 of the Charter. Colombia, therefore, wanted the permanent members to consult among themselves about what should be done, and a committee of 2 permanent members and 3 non~~p~~-permanent members to consider whether conciliation was possible. As a last resort, a second special session was suggested to reconsider the whole Palestine Question. A comparison of the Colombian proposal and America's in the next meeting suggests that Colombia's was U.S.A. inspired. In fact Colombia withdrew her proposal in favour of America's. America, however, wanted no more than consultation among the permanent members. The American proposal contained a paragraph stating that the Security Council should accept the partition plan, subject to the U.N. Charter. The debate on this paragraph is an illustration of how determined was the Security Council not to get involved in Palestine. It became clear that the

majority of members would regard this paragraph, if accepted, as a rejection of responsibility for Palestine, because, by the American and Colombian interpretation, the Council could not take action to enforce the plan, and keep within the Charter. If the paragraph were not accepted, then again responsibility would be rejected. Belgium proposed that the paragraph be omitted, but the majority was determined on a vote. Finally, this paragraph was rejected, although the provision for consultation among the permanent members was retained. The permanent members, therefore, held private talks, between March 5 and 19, 1948.

On March 19, 1948, Austin (U.S.A.) reported to the Council on the talks.(1) He declared first that Britain had not participated in the talks but had given information. The permanent members had concluded that the Jewish Agency had accepted the partition plan, but the Arab Higher Committee had rejected it, neither would accept a modified partition plan, both believed partition could not be implemented peacefully, illegal arms and armed groups were entering Palestine, and the British withdrawal would be followed by violence. However, as Gromyko (U.S.S.R.) remarked, everybody knew this already. What all wanted was the permanent members' recommendations on what should be done. This was not impressive. The Council was to make it clear that it would not permit a threat to international peace and would take action to restore order. However, the action was not specified. Russia made a reservation that partition could still be implemented peacefully, and ought to be implemented.

Most of two meetings had been spent in discussing this report, when the situation was completely changed by a new American proposal. Austin made a long speech, in which he amplified his previous arguments that the Security Council was not competent to enforce

1.S/P.V.270

partition. In the light of America's previous support for partition, the U.S.A. seems to have felt obliged to make a very full case. Austin (U.S.A.) declared that the U.N. was not automatically the heir to the League of Nations, and, since Article 21 of the Charter had not been invoked, the U.N. had not taken responsibility for Palestine. This meant that the U.N., in the November 29 resolution, had only taken responsibility for Jerusalem, under a trusteeship. The Council had rejected responsibility for Palestine by rejecting the paragraph accepting the resolution in the American resolution of March 5. The Council's only responsibility in Palestine, therefore, was the maintenance of international peace. Austin, therefore, declared that a second special session should be called to arrange a temporary U.N. trusteeship for Palestine.(1)

This proposal was debated in two more meetings before being voted, on April 1, 1948. Gromyko (U.S.S.R.) accused America and Britain of plotting to retain Palestine as a strategic base. Shertok (Jewish Agency) condemned the proposal in the strongest terms as unjust and unrealistic. Canada, France, and Belgium gave the proposal guarded support. The Arab states declared they regarded a temporary trusteeship as acceptable, provided that it led to a unitary state in Palestine. Finally, the proposal was accepted with 9 in favour, and only Russia and the Ukraine abstaining. At the same meeting, the Council also approved unanimously an American proposal to call on the Jewish Agency and Arab Higher Committee to arrange a truce. Austin (U.S.A.) declared this was purely to "save human life."(2) Immediately official business was over, Austin invited all members of the Council to his office at 2 Park Avenue, on April 5, for informal conversations on the trusteeship proposal.

1. American suggestions were circulated as a working paper (S/P.V.271) at first, and not as a formal proposal until March 20 (S/705)
2. S/704

To enforce the truce, the Council established a Truce Commission, consisting of those Council members, except Syria, which had career consuls in Jerusalem (America, France, and Belgium). The Commission was not supported by any military force, and was, therefore, branded by Russia as "toothless." However, there was a reasonable prospect of a cease fire, as both the Jewish Agency and Arab Higher Committee had been consulted before Colombia presented formal truce proposals.(1) These proposals asked for both sides to cease both military activities and preparations, and also political activities which might prejudice the rights or claims of either side.(2) Only Russia and the Ukraine abstained in the vote, after Russian attempts to have the Arab forces coming into Palestine named as invaders had been defeated. Jews and Arabs accepted this truce, though with reservations which appear intended to provide a justification for truce breaking if it should prove convenient. In fact, the acceptance seems to have been on paper only, for widespread fighting continued. The Truce Commission, at first, continued negotiations which had been begun in Jerusalem on April 18, for a truce in Jerusalem only, by the High Commissioner. However, Arab forces, which then appeared to be winning, would not agree, to a truce, although the Jews would have accepted one. Later, the situation was reversed. On April 28, agreement was reached on a cease fire in the Old City, but, on the night of April 29-30, the Jews launched attacks on Arabs outside the Old City. The Arab position deteriorated, and by May 9, they were willing to accept a truce. However, this time the Jews, now on the offensive, prevaricated. A cease-fire was finally forced on both sides by the British Army's use of artillery, which lasted from about May 8 until the Army's withdrawal on May 14. During all this time the Commission played a subordinate role to the High Commissioner. They reported great difficulty in contacting leaders on both sides, and, when the British Army withdrew, were helpless to prevent fighting being resumed.

1.S/P.V.287
2.S/P.V.283

CHAPTER FIVE

THE SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

i) American, British, Jewish, and Arab policies.

The Second Special Session presents an extremely confusing picture. There were far more subcommittees, proposals and amendments than in the First Special Session, yet the result was far less. The sterility of the Session can be blamed on four serious mistakes of the State Department. First, they thought the Jews could be persuaded to accept trusteeship if the alternative was war with the Arabs. Secondly, they thought that, even if the Jews did not at first accept trusteeship, the Arabs would be certain to win, and the Jews would finally accept trusteeship as the price of American protection. Thirdly, they believed Britain could be persuaded to stay, to help to enforce trusteeship. Last, they believed President Truman would allow them to defy his wishes on Palestine policy.

The Department probably thought the Jews might accept trusteeship because some Jewish Leaders in America, possibly even Shertok, may have given this impression, perhaps because they thought trusteeship might have been accepted as a temporary expedient.(1) However, they were overruled by Ben Gurion. The Department, also, seems to have had hopes of winning Weizmann to their side. Shortly after announcing their trusteeship proposal, three members of the U.S.A. delegation (Austin, Jessup, and Ross) visited Weizmann: They appear to have suggested to Weizmann that the declaration of a state by the Jews, when the Mandate ended, would result in a war in which the Jews would be beaten, and that the Jews should accept trusteeship for their own good. The Department, therefore, wanted Weizmann to help them convince the Agency of this. Weizmann completely rejected their proposals.(2)

The Department's belief that the Arabs would win was a common misconception, except among those closely acquainted with Palestine.

1. Bilby p.260

2. Weizmann p.579, Weisgal and Carmichael p.309

However, the State Department was not in close touch with affairs in Palestine.

The Department's belief that Britain might be persuaded to stay was an astonishing blunder, shared by many others, including the Jewish Agency. It seemed inconceivable that such an old established and recently victorious imperial power should withdraw voluntarily from an area it dominated. The example of the British withdrawal from India, the previous year, appears to have been generally ignored. However, the State Department's persistence in this belief, at least in public, right into the Second Special Session, in face of point blank British refusal to have anything to do with trusteeship, or to entertain the idea of staying in Palestine on any terms, needs another explanation. The most likely is that the State Department had run out of ideas when they found that the Jews would not co-operate with trusteeship and were not going to be beaten by the Arabs easily.

Finally, as already explained, the Department thought they could defy Truman's wishes, because he was unlikely to remain in power much longer. Truman, however, did not face an election until November, and was quite prepared to assert his authority before then. He replaced Hendersom, who had been in charge of Palestine affairs in the State Department, with Hilldring, formerly alternate delegate to the U.N. and a supporter of Zionism. The appointment may have been Zionist inspired, and Hilldring may have been reluctant to accept it but was persuaded by Weizmann.(1) In the end, Truman recognised Israel without first informing the State Department, so that when news reached the U.N., Jessup had to telephone the White House for confirmation. At least one member of the U.S.A. delegation felt deeply humiliated.(2)

1.Vera Weizmann p.230

2.Granados p.290 writes that a member of the delegation, a few minutes after Jessup read a statement confirming that America recognised Israel, declared, "That is White House language, not State Department."

The British attitude was unchanged from the Second Regular Session. Britain concentrated on getting out her troops. Areas where either Arabs or Jews were in a considerable majority were simply abandoned to them, beginning with Tel Aviv to the Jews and Jaffa to the Arabs, on December 15, 1947. Violence between Jews and Arabs steadily increased as reprisal was followed by counter-reprisal. British policy was justified by the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, who stated, on January 20, 1948, that troops were better employed in mixed areas and Jerusalem, to preserve order there. Britain persisted in refusing to implement the partition resolution in any way. She refused to permit unlimited Jewish immigration, and refused entry to the Palestine Commission until a fortnight before the Mandate ended. The result was the Commission never even arrived in Palestine. The British justification was that the Commission would be liable to attack by the Arabs, and would receive no co-operation from Arab civil servants, whose co-operation was necessary for the success of the U.N. plan. Britain began to disengage completely from Palestine. On February 22, 1948, Palestine's sterling balance (about £100 million) was blocked and Palestine was excluded from the sterling area. The only British initiative in the U.N. was her proposal of May 3, 1948, for a neutral authority to take over Palestine when Britain left. Although often accused of some plan of Machiavellian cunning associated with this proposal designed to frustrate the Jewish state and ensure the continuation of British presence in Palestine, it seems more likely the proposal was only intended to facilitate a more peaceful British withdrawal.

The Jews were constantly afraid, before and during the Second Special Session, that the partition plan might be revoked. In Eban's opinion, "No American President would recognise a Jewish State after the United Nations had voted to place its territory under trusteeship." He considered the adoption of trusteeship a real possibility, "in the absence of an alternative solution." A still greater danger, he considered, was the possibility that some of the Jewish leaders would be frightened by the Second Special Session into postponing the

declaration of a state. Weizmann, holding similar opinions, thought the declaration of the state, on May 14, to be "now or never."(1)

The only real support for trusteeship, therefore, came from the Arab states, but only because it was a step away from partition towards their ideal of a unitary state, and the Arab states were certainly not prepared to give up pressure outside the U.N. against partition, during the Second Special Session. Following their declared intention of resisting the partition of Palestine by force, the Arab League, on January 15, 1948, announced that it was going to give all possible help to the Arabs in Palestine, and Arab armies were preparing to occupy Palestine as soon as Britain left. By January 23, Fawzi el-Kawukji, who had previously led Arab irregular forces in the Arab Revolt of 1936-9, had entered Palestine from Syria, to organise the Arabs against the Jews. Following further discussions in February, it was decided, if the U.N. set up an international police force to implement partition, then the League would unite its armies into an Arab People's Army," to liberate Palestine. By April 1948, only the fact that Britain had, on January 23, warned Transjordan that an invasion of Palestine before the end of the Mandate would result in a refusal of Britain's annual subsidy to Jordan's Arab Legion, had prevented an invasion by Abdullah. This held back the Arab's best prepared force until May 14. Britain also warned the other Arabs' armies to stay out of Palestine, therefore, no invasion took place by regular forces before May 14. It was, therefore, very much in the Arabs' interest to support the trusteeship proposal. The American working paper would, if implemented, have prevented partition, and have removed the necessity for war. If accepted, but, like the November 29, 1947, resolution, without effective implementation, then, at least, it would destroy the title deeds of a Jewish state. The Arabs could then repent their invasion as a police action to restore order, instead of it being represented as aggression against a

1. Vera Weizmann p.231

sovereign state. At the very least, consideration of the trusteeship proposal would call into question the partition proposal, and, in these circumstances, chance events were more likely to favour the Arabs than the Jews. The Arabs, Therefore, welcomed the trusteeship proposal from the moment it was announced in the Security Council.

ii) The Work of the Second Special Session.

The Second Special Session opened on Friday, April 16, 1948, at 11 a.m., with meeting No.129 of the General Assembly. Unlike the First Special Session, no country tried to prolong the initial proceedings. Argentina was elected Chairman, in the morning session. In the afternoon the General Committee was chosen, which met that evening, to decide, with no real opposition, to recommend to the General Assembly, that the Security Council's request "to consider further the question of the future government of Palestine," be placed on the agenda of the First Committee. The General Assembly, at its next meeting, on Monday, April 19, 1948, approved the General Committee's recommendation by 44 votes to 0 with 10 abstentions.

Debate in the First Committee began on April 20. Most delegates simply restated the positions they had adopted during the Second Regular Session. America, therefore, proceeded cautiously. Instead of presenting trusteeship as a formal proposal, the U.S.A. asked for the discussion of a working paper. This avoided the necessity of asking immediately for the partition resolution to be revoked, and allowed time, before a vote was likely to put pressure on other countries. The working paper indicates that, even at this time, the State Department was still relying on being able to persuade Britain to stay in Palestine for a considerable period to administer trusteeship. Although emphasizing that trusteeship was to be temporary, the plan provided that trusteeship would end when Arabs and Jews had agreed on Palestine's future government. Any possibility of agreement between Arabs and Jews, had, by April 20, 1948, receded into the very distant future. Trusteeship was to be "without prejudice to the rights, claims, or positions of the parties concerned, or to the character of the eventual political settlement." However, the integrity of Palestine was to be maintained, which certainly prejudiced Jewish claims to partition. Further restriction of Jewish ambitions was implied by immigration being regulated by the Governor-General, "in accordance with the absorptive capacity of Palestine." Provided America persuaded the Trusteeship Council to appoint a Governor-General who was not committed to Zionism, immigration would probably

have been just enough to remove the displaced persons problem, and therefore destroy the Agency's greatest propaganda asset, but would have been nothing like enough to give the Jews a majority in Palestine. The working paper also specified that the Governor*General was to be supported by a judiciary chosen by the Trusteeship Council. The people were to be represented by two houses, one chosen on a geographical basis, and one by the two communities separately. No country, however, was named as the trustee, who was to provide the force need to make the scheme work.(1)

In Committee, America was immediately opposed by Australia and New Zealand, who declared that the U.N. should stick to its decisions. Russia tried, unsuccessfully, to ruin America's plans at an early stage, by asking that a decision be taken at once on trusteeship for Palestine, in principle. This move was defeated, but most U.N. members seem to have been at a loss about what to do, having been first subjected to American pressure to vote for partition, and now faced the prospect of equal American pressure to vote against. Their reaction was to avoid committing themselves to anything. Granados wrote, "in the last days of April and the first days of May, 1948, a strange lethargy overtook the United Nations....repetitious speeches....an interminable orator would unfold a voluminous stack of notes.....the same arguments we had heard over and over for an entire year."(2)

On April 26, three days after the Truce Commission had been established, the Committee interrupted debate on the working paper, to approve a French proposal to ask the Trusteeship Council to do something about the fighting in Jerusalem, which the Truce Commission seemed unable to prevent.(3) when debate reopened, Granados (Guatemala), who was working closely with Fabgegat (Uruguay) and the Jewish Agency,

1.A/C.1/277

2.Granados pp.278 and 280

3.A/P.V.132

introduced a delaying tactic. He proposed a subcommittee to examine whether trusteeship was actually desired or practical in Palestine. Granados considered such a subcommittee would spend several days hearing witnesses, several more in discussion and preparation of a report, and, with luck, business would drag on until after the Jews had declared their state. This delay was considered vital by the Jewish Agency, because public opinion, throughout the World, would approve a Jewish state set up in accordance with a U.N. resolution, but would definitely oppose it, if established contrary to the U.N.(1) Granados was immediately successful in delaying proceedings, for two days, April 27-8, 1948, were spent discussing his proposal.

On April 29, the Committee again began to consider the working paper, item by item. On May 3, Creech-Jones (U.K.) reminded the Committee that time was running short, and urged that a neutral authority be appointed quickly to take over from Britain, to hold assets, further mediation, and work towards a solution. On May 4, the Committee returned to Granados' proposal for a subcommittee. However, Granados' original proposal had been much modified by amendments urged on Granados privately by America. The subcommittee's task had become to work out a plan for a provisional government of Palestine. Granados had only accepted these amendments because he realised that, without U.S.A. support, his subcommittee would not be set up, but with American support it certainly would be, and he considered any subcommittee would be useful in prolonging the work of the Session. The American motive in supporting this amended subcommittee is obscure. State Department officials may have felt that there was a real possibility of Granados' original proposal being accepted against American pressure, and this might have produced a recommendation against trusteeship. Perhaps, in working with Granados, they hoped to convince their new chief, Hildring, that they were now trying to follow the President's wishes. Whatever the Department's motives,

1. Weizmann pp.581-2, Granados pp.280-1

Granados had judged the situation better. The subcommittee contained so many shades of opinion that it proved impossible for it to carry out its allotted task.(1) It began work on May 5, and decided to ask the Rapporteur (Norway) to draft a working paper. This was considered by the subcommittee on Monday, May 10, but Moe (Norway) declared that the paper did not necessarily represent the official view of the Norwegian Government. Russia, therefore, objected to the working paper because it did not represent an official Norwegian proposal, and also because Russia considered Moe had gone beyond his instructions. Finally, the subcommittee could only agree to discuss the paper informally. The only result of the informal discussions was to take a formal decision to ask the Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency their opinions of the working paper. They rejected it completely. By then, it was May 12.

Meanwhile, the Trusteeship Council had been debating the First Committee's request of April 26 regarding Jerusalem. The Council, on May 5, recommended to the General Assembly, that the Mandatory Government appoint a special municipal commissioner, who should be neutral, acceptable to both Arabs and Jews. The Council emphasised that this alone would not bring violence to an end,(2) therefore, on May 11, the General Assembly set up a subcommittee(3) to consider further the protection of Jerusalem. Britain appointed Evans (U.S.A.) as Municipal Commissioner, following agreement between Arabs and Jews. The Trusteeship Council's work was, however, completely overtaken by events.

The consistent lack of success with its trusteeship proposal seems, by May 12, 1948, to have forced the State Department to realise that trusteeship was, almost certainly, going to fail. Therefore,

1. This was Subcommittee 9 (China, Poland, Norway, Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Cuba, Guatemala, France, India, Russia, America) Its report is A/C.1/299
2. A/544
3. Subcommittee 10

America persuaded Subcommittee 9 to recommend that a U.N. commissioner be appointed for all Palestine, to act as mediator. A French proposal for a commission rather than a mediator was rejected. The Subcommittee's recommendation was discussed by the First Committee on May 13 and 14. The title "commissioner" was amended to "Mediator" because some delegates objected to the similarity between "Commissioner" and the Mandatory Government's "High Commissioner." The General Assembly met at 5 p.m. to consider the First Committee's report, on May 14. The proposal for a Mediator was approved, but the whole resolution on the Mediator's terms of reference was still being voted, paragraph by paragraph, when news arrived of the declaration of the State of Israel and its recognition by America. The American delegation were in confusion, and had to confess ignorance of the recognition for some minutes.

The net result of the Second Special Session, therefore was the appointment of a Mediator.(1) As Granados points out, the Mediator's duties duplicated those of the Truce Commission, and, in fact, the Mediator could just as well have been appointed by the Security Council, like the Truce Commission, without all the trouble and expense of a Second Special Session.(2)

- 1.A/555
- 2.Granados p.286

CHAPTER SIX

THE UNITED NATIONS AND PALESTINE FROM THE DECLARATION OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL TO THE ADMISSION OF ISRAEL TO THE UNITED NATIONS

i) British and American Policies, and the Russian Attitude.

Once the State of Israel had been declared and recognised by both America and Russia, the Jews ceased to have a special need for the U.N., therefore the existence of the U.N. did not have a special effect upon the situation. However, U.N. influence did not disappear completely, for the Great Powers found the Security Council a convenient means of expressing their wishes, and the existence of the U.N. facilitated the setting up of neutral bodies to supervise truces and arrange armistices.

The effectiveness of the Security Council was small because of the difficulty of agreeing on solutions, or, if solutions were agreed, on the means of enforcement. The three powers most concerned were all prepared to accept a Jewish state, but had different approaches to Palestine. Russia's main aim was, as usual, the elimination of Western influence in the Middle East. The withdrawal of Britain was a great success. To establish a strong Israel, detested by the Arabs would be to introduce a discordant element into the area, which might be exploited to Russian advantage in the future. It is possible the Russians even hoped the new state would become their client. However, in any case, Russia had nothing to lose and the chance of gaining a great deal by supporting Israel. They, therefore called for support for Israel, in the Security Council, and ignored Arab protests. By the end of May, 1948, Britain and America seem to have developed similar views. Both saw the best way of dealing with the situation in handing over Arab Palestine to Abdullah. In this case, Britain seems to have persuaded America to accept British ideas. The main difference between Britain and America was the amount of support each was prepared to give to Israel. America seems to have considered Israel much weaker in relation to the Arabs than she really was and wanted an Israel much larger than Britain would have liked. Also, U.S.A. Palestine policy was dominated by the forthcoming Presidential

election, in November, 1948, in which the Jewish vote was of far more immediate concern than the niceties of politics, far away in the Middle East. Britain, however, took the Middle East situation very seriously, probably made a much more accurate assessment of the forces involved than America, and made more constructive proposals during this period. In the Security Council, therefore, America and Britain both supported truces, although America supported truce terms more favourable to Israel than did Britain. Both seem to have hoped that the truces could be prolonged into armistices, and the armistice lines become the basis of a new partition. This, finally, did happen, although it was never formally accepted by the Arabs. However, a truce could not be imposed without American pressure, and, while America was willing to put pressure on the Arabs for a cease-fire, during early Arab successes, America was not willing to put pressure on Israel, during the rest of 1948, while the Israelis were winning, until after the November election had seen the Jewish vote safely gathered in. In December, therefore, American pressure was applied firmly, for the first time, to Israel, and major fighting quickly came to an end by January, 1949.

Following the cease-fires, the way was open for armistices. Since the Arab states refused to recognise Israel, the U.N. was a convenient mediator. The last armistice was signed with Syria, on July 20, 1949, after Israel had become a U.N. member on May 11.

ii) The United Nations and Palestine from the Declaration of the State of Israel, May 14, 1948, to the First Truce, June 11, 1948.

In the war which, until May 14, had been restrained by British forces, the Arabs, at first, had some successes, particularly in Jerusalem and the Arab area according to the U.N. partition plan. This was not due to any respect for the U.N., but simply because of the trivial Jewish population in the areas allocated to the Arabs. Isolated settlements like Kfar Etsion, 12 miles south west of Jerusalem, were easily overwhelmed. Arab attacks on the Jewish areas were less successful. The Egyptians launched two attacks, one advanced through the S.W. Arab area and attacked the central Jewish area, only being halted by the Jews 20 mile south of Tel Aviv. The other crossed the Negev, which was by the U.N. Jewish, but was not defended by the Jews because of the almost total absence of Jewish population, re-entered the Arab area at Beersheba, and advanced to the outskirts of Jerusalem. The Arab Legion of Jordan went to the help of the Arabs in Jerusalem, who were in danger of being driven completely out of the city, isolated the Jews in Jerusalem by occupying the police post at Latrun, which dominated the road from Jerusalem to the coast, and took control of the Old City. Palestinian forces siezed control of Palestine's most important airport at Lydda, 12 mile from Tel Aviv, but just within the U.N. Arab area. Iraq forces occupied Tul Karm on the edge of the central Arab area, but only 10 mile, through the Jewish area, to the sea. Lebanese forces, however, although obviously best placed to defend western Galilee, were ineffective, and remained so for the entire war. Saudi Arabia and the Yemen supplied negligible forces. By the First Truce, June 11-July 7, 1948, the Arab attacks had lost momentum, due to bad staff work and their refusal to co-operate with each other, and the Jews were preparing a counter-attack.

On May 17, Austin (U.S.A.) introduced in the Security Council, a resolution (1) and a questionnaire, which suggested he was now firmly under Truman's control and working to support Israel. The questionnaire demanded detailed information from the Arab states, the Arab Higher Committee, and the Provisional Government of Israel, of

their forces operating in Palestine. The object of the questionnaire appears to have been to provide evidence of Arab aggression to justify further American proposals for action to expel the Arab armies from Palestine, for later the American view was expressed that the Arab states were acting contrary to international law, and that action should be taken, particularly against Jordan, who had the most successful Arab army. The resolution was to declare the situation in Palestine a threat to peace within the meaning of Article 39 of the U.N. Charter, to order all parties to issue cease-fire instructions, and to request the Truce Commission to report violations. Probably the mention of Article 39 was intended as an extreme measure, to frighten the Arabs, because America thought a quick cease-fire was necessary to save the Jews. If the Americans wanted a speedy solution, then they had miscalculated. Discussion of Article 39 delayed proceedings. America was only supported by France, Russia, and Colombia. Belgium and Canada pointed out that no U.N. forces were available, and that to invoke Article 39 without proper provision for enforcement would bring the U.N. into contempt. Britain, probably embarrassed at the thought of having U.N. forces mixed with her own, suggested that Article 39 was inappropriate as no threat to peace existed. The British attitude was also acceptable to the Arabs, who regarded the whole affair as a police action in aid of the Palestinians, and not a war.

On May 18, 1948, a much amended questionnaire was approved by the Council. The Arab states were still asked for detailed information of the activities of their forces operating in Palestine, but a distinction was drawn between areas of Jewish and Arab majority. They were asked to justify their presence in both these areas, and to give any evidence they had of Jewish incursions into areas allocated by the U.N. to the Arabs. The Arab Higher Committee was invited to declare its exact status, and to say whether it, or the Arabs of Palestine, had requested foreign assistance, and again to report on Jewish invasions of U.N. allocated Arab territory. The Jews were

asked what areas they actually controlled, whether they had forces outside that territory, and whether the Arabs had forces within the territory they claimed to control. Finally, would they accept a truce in Jerusalem?(1) The Arabs replied that the Arab states had been invited into Palestine to subdue a rebellious minority, and the Jews replied that they were in possession of a substantial part of the proposed Jewish state, and would accept a truce in Jerusalem.

Under these circumstances, therefore, the Council voted on the American proposal on May 22, 1948. A British attempt, probably aimed at gaining Arab favour, to declare the status of Palestine still in need of clarification, was defeated (France, Russia, and America abstained) The American proposal to declare the situation a threat to peace within the meaning of Article 39 was also defeated (France and Russia voted in favour). The result was another call for a truce, again without proper provision for enforcement.(2) The Arab states accepted the truce on condition that the Jews ceased immigration, and, since this was totally unacceptable to the Jews, fighting continued. On May 24, therefore, the Russians raised the question of applying Article 39, but when it was voted, on May 29, it was rejected again.(3) On the same day, however, an amended British proposal was accepted.(4) The original proposal had been for a truce of 4 weeks, during which no fighting men, men of military age, or war materials should be brought into Palestine. The amendments, proposed by America, extended the ban to all the Arab states, but allowed the entry of civilians, provided they were not trained after entry. Although Britain had not proposed an arms embargo, Cadogan (U.K.) had declared in the Security Council, that Britain would respect a U.N. arms embargo, if it were imposed on the Arab states. Under pressure from Britain, and afraid of losing their arms

- 1.S/735
- 2.S/773
- 3.S/P.V.310
- 4.S/P.V.311

supplies from Britain permanently, the Arab states agreed to the truce, while the Jews, facing a critical situation in Jerusalem, also agreed.(1) Probably a truce would have been welcome, in any case to the Jews. Their forces could be trained, organisation developed, and truce regulations evaded, so that they would be stronger in relation to the Arabs when the truce ended.

1. Levin pp.243-4

iii) The First Truce, June 11 to July 7, 1948

During the truce, the Arab states' main suppliers of arms, in the West, ceased to send them weapons, but Russia did not respect the Security Council resolution, and allowed supplies to Israel from her client state, Czechoslovakia. Arms from this source arrived in increasing quantities in Israel throughout the war. The Jews also succeeded in smuggling aircraft out of Europe and America, obtained appreciable quantities, including two tanks, by corrupting British officers, then in the last stages of withdrawal, and intercepted at least one consignment due to be delivered to the Arabs. Also, Jewish production of small arms continued in Palestine. The result was, by the end of the first truce, Israel was much better equipped than on May 14, 1948. The Arabs failed to use the truce to re-equip, as far as possible, reorganise, and plan future strategy. Instead, the truce revealed the Arab governments either could not or would not co-operate. They could not, very largely, because public opinion, inflamed by Government propaganda predicting an early victory over Israel, demanded a renewal of the war. This was particularly so in Egypt, Iraq, and Syria. This reduced their room for manoeuvre. They would not co-operate because Abdullah had made it clear he intended to annex eastern Palestine and recognise the existence of Israel, while other Arab states opposed this. The conflict between Abdullah and the the other Arab states had a particularly bad effect in that Egyptian forces in the south, which were not allowed to co-operate with the Arab Legion, in the centre, were separated by the Legion from the other Arab forces in the north east and north.

In Palestine, Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden, former head of the Red Cross, who had been appointed Mediator by the Security Council, built up a team of observers from Swedish officers he had brought with him and a contingent from the Truce Commission countries. Of these, America was very slow at providing its quota. It has been suggested that this was due to fear of casualties which would have led to a demand, in America, for direct intervention.

It would have been particularly embarrassing if the casualties had been caused by Jews, as an anti-Zionist feeling might have arisen in America which would make it difficult to please Jewish voters without losing votes elsewhere. It was also going to be difficult for the American Government to ignore reports of Israeli violations of the truce, if the reports were written by Americans. The observers were, of course, helpless to stop Czechoslovakian arms being unloaded in the docks, before their eyes. Similarly, Irgun arms, siezed by the Haganah, were not handed over to the U.N.

Since the U.N. Mediator had not been explicitly bound to follow the November 29 partition plan, Bernadotte considered himself free to make other suggestions. Following consultations with both Arabs and Jews, he announced a series of proposals on June 27, 1948.(1) He presented these, in person, to the Security Council, on July 3. He emphasised that he did not consider himself appointed to decide Palestine's future, but was only trying to make practical suggestions to solve a difficult problem. The Jewish state, he considered, was an established fact, and capable of looking after itself, but the rest of Palestine would be better united with Transjordan. Since the Jews were firmly established in two of the areas allocated to them (the central coastal and eastern Galilee) and were in a strong position to attack western Galilee, he suggested regularising the situation by an exchange of Arab territory. Jews should have western Galilee, and Arabs the Negev. This would give Israel a compact, defensible, area, which they already occupied, and would do a minimum of injustice, since the vast majority of Jews in Palestine lived in those areas. Jerusalem, he considered, could only be given to the Arabs, because of its isolation in Arab territory. He also suggested that the new Arab and Jewish states should form a union for economic purposes. Although Bernadotte does not admit to British and American influence in his recommendations, his ideas were certainly welcome to them. Probably it

1.S/863

was because Bernadotte's solution actually seemed viable, and Britain and America, by this time, would have been happy to see any solution which brought peace in Palestine. Bernadotte's solution, in fact, must have been particularly welcome to Britain, as it was similar to British thinking on the subject since the Peel Commission.

The First Truce failed because Arab states, particularly Egypt and Syria, and Iraq, were forced by the public opinion they had themselves created, to continue the war, and also because a truce at this time left Abdullah in too dominant a position for the other Arab states. Bernadotte's proposal for an enlarged Transjordan were particularly unwelcome. During the last week of June, Abdullah explained, in person, his plans to King Farouk of Egypt, King Saud of Saudi Arabia, and the Mufti, but failed to win them over. In fact, the Arab League, on July 9, 1948, announce the formation of an administrative council for Palestine, which was dominated by the Mufti's supporters. Since a solution had not been reached as the end of the truce approached, Bernadotte appealed to Arabs and Jews to continue the truce, on July 3 and 5, and, on July 6, requested the Security Council to take further action. The Council approved a British resolution, on this subject, on July 7, and Britain put pressure on the Arab states to continue the truce. Abdullah was, of course, happy to agree, since, if the Jewish state was restricted to the territory it held on June 11, and the rest of Palestine had gone to Abdullah, he would have made a very considerable gain. Britain probably got Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and the Lebanon to agree also, but war was forced on the others by Syria and Egypt, for it was impossible for one Arab country to stand aside while another engaged the enemy. Israel, at this point, was also ready to continue the truce. Considering Israeli gains after this truce, Egypt and Syria's attack was a very great mistake. The end of the truce must also have been a disappointment to Bevin, for, at that point, he believed, "the Palestine question is settling itself."(1)

1. Nicholson p.145 (conversation with Bevin, June 17, 1948)

iv) The Ten Days Campaign, July 8 to 18, 1948

Although Israel had been prepared to continue the First Truce, when Egypt and Syria reopened hostilities, the Israelis were prepared to counter-attack. Egypt had no success in the south. On the norther front, Israel occupied almost all the remainder of western Galilee. In the east, Transjordan, now very short of ammunition, because of the arms embargo and the siezure of some of her supplies by Egyptians, withdrew from exposed positions at Lydda and Ramla, and concentrated their forces in Jerusalem.

Bernadotte, on July 9, appealed to both sides for a cease-fire, and presented a report to the Security Council. America intröduced a resolution on July 13, again to declare the situation a threat to peace under Article 39 of the U.N. Charter. This time, only Argentina and China abstained, and only Syria vote against. The resolution, (1) therefore, was accepted. It called for a permanent truce, was approved by the Council on July 15, accepted by Jews and Arabs, and came into operation on July 18. The acceptance of the truce illustrated that, when the Security Council worked together, as it did on this occasion, states were reluctant to go against it. Of course, with Russia voting for the truce, the Israelis could not be sure of Russian intentions, and Russian approval was needed for the arms from Czechoslovakia. Also, the Israelis were not quite ready to take over further large areas of Palestine, apart from western Galilee. The Arabsstates were ready to accept a truce when Jewish resistance to their attacks and Jewish gains forced them to realise they had not at that time, the strength necessary to eliminate Israel.

1.S/P.V.338

v) The Second Truce and the Third Regular Session

The Second Truce lasted officially from July 18, 1948, to the signing of armistices by each Arab state in 1949. However, the truce was broken by a series of Israeli attacks, which by the end of 1948, had vastly increased their territory. During the Second Truce, U.N. activity continued in the Security Council, but Palestine also appeared on the agenda of the Third Regular Session, but with even less effect than during the Second Special Session.

Following the establishment of the Second Truce, Syria tried to get Security Council approval for a request to the International Court for an opinion on the status of Palestine arising out of the end of the Mandate.(1) It failed, due to the opposition of Russia and America, although supported by 6 votes, including Britain. On August 2, 13, 18,,and 19, the Council discussed the Palestine situation, in light of a series of reports from Bernadotte that the truce was increasingly being violated. Britain introduced a resolution supporting Bernadotte's demand that five British subjects, kidnapped from a U.N. building in Jerusalem by the Irgun, should be returned.(2) Britain also raised the question of the future of Arab refugees from Israel, whose numbers were estimated at 250,000 to 500,000. Israel protested at the destruction of a pumping station at Latrun, by Arab irregulars, which cut off Jewish water supplies in Jerusalem. The Arabs had already refused to operate the station during the truce, despite Bernadotte's pleas. Russia and Israel complained that Britain had not released Jewish refugees from Cyprus. Britain replied that they would contribute to Jewish fighting strength, thus making it clear Britain did not consider that the provision in the truce that immigrants were not to be trained was enforceable. On August 18, the Council received a report from Bernadotte, declaring that both sides were beginning "deliberately to ignore" the truce , and he requested the Council to issue a warning.(3)

- 1.S/P.V.340
- 2.S/898 and S/905
- 3.S/977

The Council granted Bernadotte's request with a joint resolution of America, Britain, France, and Canada. The first two paragraphs declared that each side was responsible for its irregular forces and had a duty to prevent truce violations, and were supported by Russia.(1) However, on September 17, 1948, Bernadotte was assassinated by members of the Stern Gang, probably because both Stern Gang and Irgun particularly resented his suggestion that Jerusalem be handed over to the Arabs. The Secretary-General (Lie) appointed Ralph Bunche as Acting Mediator in his place, and the appointment was confirmed by the Security Council. Bunche continued Bernadotte's work without a break. He reported that the Jewish authorities were negligent, and had to assume full responsibility for the murder. On truce observance, he confirmed Bernadotte's earlier reports. Observers were being refused access to some ports and strategic areas, movement of U.N. personnel was being deliberately hindered, there was a reluctance to allow observers to investigate violations of the truce until too long after the event to obtain accurate information, and agreements reached between the Commission and the authorities were not being observed by commanders in the field. Finally, neither side was willing to give any special protection to U.N. staff. The Truce Commission supported Bunche in a separate report, declaring that there had been a propaganda campaign against Bunche and the Commission in Jerusalem, directed by the Jewish military governor. Bunche, therefore, asked for a Council resolution defining the rights and duties of all parties, to enable the U.N. authorities in Palestine to work effectively. Britain and China proposed a resolution embodying Bunche's requests. Britain urged that there was "a threat to the foundation of the truce and to the authority of the Security Council." However, debate was interrupted by news of an Israeli offensive in southern Palestine.

At the beginning of the Second Truce, on July 18, Egypt still held the main road between El Majdal and El Faluja, cutting off the

1.S/983

Israeli settlements in the Negev, which Israel began to supply by air. On September 14, Bernadotte approved a scheme by which Israel could have used the road at certain times, under U.N. supervision, while air supplies were to be restricted to more remote settlements, again under U.N. supervision. Lack of co-operation by both sides prevented the plan from coming into effect. Then, on October 15, the Israelis launched an attack on the road, occupied a large area of the Negev, including Beersheba, and isolated a large Egyptian force at El Faluja. The Israeli success was partly due to the lack of co-operation between Egypt and Transjordan. Abdullah would not risk his forces to help Farouk. Despite this flagrant violation of the truce, it appeared, for a time, that the Security Council would not so much as pass a resolution. Then Syria proposed that that the Council adopt a series of recommendations that had been made by Bunche in an oral report. Bunche had declared that both parties should withdraw to positions held before the outbreak, they should accept U.N. proposal for administering the truce, and should negotiate with each other, either directly or via the U.N., over Truce arrangements in the Negev. This resolution was accepted by Israel, subject to each part being open to separate negotiation, which gave Israel the the opportunity to stand firm on any gains, and was approved by the Council. Israeli attacks, however, continued until October 25, and Israel then refused to give up any conquered territory. Israel also violated the truce by attacking Fawz al-Kawukji on October 22, who, probably because he had got himself into a dangerous position, obeyed the U.N. call to give up gains he had made during the Israeli offensive in the south, but, after his withdrawal, was attacked by Israel, and driven into the Lebanon, where, by October 31, Israel had occupied 15 villages in the south-east.

While trouble continued in Palestine, despite the Security Council, the Third Regular Session met in Paris. Unlike the previous three sessions, Palestine was not the most important item on the agenda. Instead, it had to compete with 72 other items, particularly the control of atomic energy, the reports of the U.N. Special Commission on the Balkans, and the report of the Temporary Commission on Korea.

So great was the work load that, on November 15, 1948, an ad hoc committee was established to share work with the First Committee. Even this did not enable the U.N. to complete its business, therefore it was decided to hold a second part of the Third Regular Session in April, 1949, which lasted April 5 to May 18.

On Palestine, the main item on the agenda was the Mediator, Bernadotte's, progress report,(1) and the Acting Mediator, Bunche's, special report, which was presented later in the session.(2) In his report, Bernadotte further developed his ideas. He considered it essential to restore peace in Palestine, that there could be no question of altering the status of Israel as an independent country, but its boundaries needed careful consideration. Boundaries had to be fixed, either by agreement between Jews and Arabs, or if this were not possible, by the U.N. In any case, boundaries should not result in the fragmentation of Palestine. This meant that the boundaries prescribed by the November 29, 1947, partition resolution were unsuitable. Refugees should be allowed to return home or receive compensation, and Jerusalem needed special treatment. International guarantees were required on boundaries and human rights. Bernadotte suggested that the 1947 partition plan be altered by the exchange of western Galilee for the Negev. Arab Palestine should then be merged with Transjordan. Haifa should be a free port and Lydda a free airport. Jerusalem should be international, as in the partition plan. U.N. help should be given to the refugees, either to return home or settle elsewhere, and a conciliation committee should be set up to supervise boundaries and report threats to peace.

Britain introduced a resolution supporting the transfer of the Negev to the Arabs, western Galilee to Israel, and Arab Palestine to Transjordan.(3) MacNeil (U.K.) asserted that the failure of Jews

- 1.A/648
- 2.A/649
- 3.A/C.1/394

and Arabs to agree made the 1947 plan for partition with economic union impractical, and therefore it was essential to produce two states which could exist independently. This required boundary adjustment. Britain rejected completely the Israeli claim that she should retain western Galilee by right of conquest but have the Negev given to her in accordance with the 1947 U.N. resolution. America, however, did not endorse the Mediator's report, but emphasised that territory awarded to Israel in 1947 should not be taken away without her consent.(1) This made it obvious America supported Israel's position that what she had conquered, but which had not been awarded to her by the U.N. she could keep, but that which the Arabs had conquered, which had been awarded to Israel, should be handed over to Israel. Soviet proposal were unconstructive, but indicated support for Israel, e.g. Poland emphasised Israel's right to existence, but wanted the Mediator's conciliation committee to attempt to enforce the original partition resolution.(2) Russia called for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Palestine.(3) Australia supported the Polish proposal.(4) Russia considered the Mediator's plan calculated to increase British and American power in the Middle East. Probably, Russia considered that the plan might result in a settlement, and any settlement was bound to reduce British and American unpopularity in the area. In opposition to all this, Syria proposed a plan for a federal state in Palestine.(5)

The final product of the debate was based on a British proposal, none of the other having survived. However, the British proposal was diluted by the deletion of references to Bernadotte's suggestions on boundaries, leaving little more than a proposal for a conciliation committee and aid for refugees.(6) This was approved on December 4, 1948. Following detailed amendments in the General Assembly, designed to remove phrases offensive to various delegations, a resolution was approved on December 11, 1948.(7)

- 1.A/C.1/397 Rev.1
- 2.A/C.1/400
- 3.A/C.1/396 and A/C.1/396 Add.1
- 4.A/C.1/SR.206
- 5.A/C.1/402
- 6.A/776
- 7.A/P.V.186

The main provisions of the resolution were the establishment of a Palestine Conciliation Committee, which was to take over the duties of the Acting Mediator, and was to start work immediately, refugees wishing to return home were to be allowed to do so, those who did not were to receive compensation, and the Commission was to aid them in both cases. The Commission was to consist of America, France, and Turkey. Russia attempted to weaken the Commission and exclude America, by proposing a commission of small powers, including Poland, but this was rejected.(1)

On October 20, 1948, the Social Committee heard Ralph Bunche explain the Palestine refugee situation. In debate, many members expressed the opinion that the refugees were the result of the U.N. partition resolution, and therefore U.N. members had a responsibility to provide aid. The result was a recommendation, approved by the General Assembly, to provide 29,500,000 dollars aid to refugees, in the next 9 months.

During the Third Regular Session, the rift between Transjordan and the other Arab states, particularly Egypt, continued to widen. On September 20, 1948, the Arab League announced an Arab government for all Palestine, based on the administrative council established on July 9. Abdullah immediately rejected it, and it never exerted any authority outside Egyptian controlled southern Palestine. Abdullah followed his rejection of the Arab League's government by encouraging a national Palestine congress. A meeting of 5,000 "notables" at Amman, on October 1, called on Abdullah to take Palestine under his protection, and, on November 28, a meeting at Jericho proclaimed him King of all Palestine. This was accepted officially by Abdullah, on December 7, 1948. The Israelis, therefore, could rely on Jordan not going to the aid of either the Arab armies in the north or the south, unless it was particularly to Abdullah's advantage. On December 22, Israel again attacked Egypt, pinning down

the main body of Egyptian troops in the Gaza area, while further inland an Israeli attack from the Beersheba area drove the Egyptians out of Palestine, and Israeli troops invaded Egypt.

In the Security Council, a British resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire, was approved on December 29, but was ignored. Britain, therefore, on December 31, declared that she would intervene against the Israeli forces in Egypt if they were not withdrawn, America, now that the Presidential election was over, was prepared to act more firmly towards Israel, threatened that if Israel troops were not withdrawn, American policy towards Israel might have to be reviewed. Israel, therefore, withdrew, claiming to have no forces within Egypt after January 2, although, probably, some small Israeli forces remained until about January 7, 1949. The tension between Britain and Israel was made worse by the shooting down of several British aircraft on reconnaissance, by Israel. British support, and the reduction in the American commitment to Israel should have been to Egypt's advantage, but was not exploited because, on December 28, 1948, the Egyptian Prime Minister was murdered during disorders resulting from discontent at Egypt's failure in the war. The new Prime Minister informed the Acting Mediator that he was willing to negotiate an armistice after a cease-fire. Fighting ended, therefore, in the south, on January 7.

On January 12, 1949, delegations from Israel and Egypt arrived at the Acting Mediator's headquarters at Rhodes, Bunche having been invited by the Conciliation Committee to stay at his post. It was agreed to prolong the cease-fire. On January 24, Israel agreed to relief medical and food supplies being sent to the garrison at Faluja. On January 30, Bunche invited the other Arab states to participate in the negotiations, and, on January 30, an armistice agreement was signed between Israel and Egypt. This agreement allowed Egypt to evacuate the Faluja garrison and retain a coastal strip of Palestine, 25 miles long and $3\frac{1}{2}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide, including Gaza. Lebanon had never taken much part in the fighting, and quickly followed Egypt's

example. Israel withdrew from 4 of the villages occupied in Lebanon, in October, 1948, and negotiations began on January 16, 1949. The signing of an armistice was, however, delayed until Syria indicated willingness to negotiate, because the remaining villages in Lebanon were regarded as essential defence against Syria. The armistice with Lebanon was, therefore, delayed until March 23, 1949, the demarcation line being agreed as the old border between Lebanon and Mandatory Palestine. Negotiations between Israel and Jordan began on March 2, 1949. Iraq refused to negotiate, but agreed to accept terms agreed between Jordan and Israel. However, negotiations were delayed because of a dispute over the Negev. Israel still claimed the area, and, on March 7, 1949, sent an invasion force towards Aqaba. Since Iraq had already begun to withdraw her forces from central Palestine, Jordan forces were inadequate to oppose Israel, therefore the Arab Legion withdrew from Palestinian territory into Aqaba. Israeli troops reached the Gulf of Aqaba on March 10, Bunche arranged an end to the fighting on March 11, and, on March 13, British forces in Aqaba, under treaty with Transjordan, were increased to brigade strength. This prevented any possibility of Israel invading Jordan. In Central Palestine, however, Israel, at a secret meeting with Abdullah, gave an ultimatum that Jordan should withdraw several miles along the front previously held by Iraq, or war would begin again. This was to relieve the constriction in Israel's centre. Abdullah agreed, and an armistice was signed on April 3. Negotiations with Syria were delayed by a coup d'etat in Syria, on March 30, 1949. Negotiations began on April 12, and, after an agreement to demilitarise Lake Hula, an armistice was signed on July 20, 1949.

vi) The Admission of Israel to the United Nations.

Israel's application for admission to the U.N. first came before the Security Council on December 2, 1948. Britain proposed that consideration of the application be postponed, because Israel had not yet implemented Security Council resolutions on Palestine. However, Britain was defeated, only being supported by Belgium, China, and Syria. Then France proposed a postponement of one month. This was rejected, only being supported by Britain, Belgium, China, Syria, and Canada. Next, Syria proposed that the application should not be considered until the whole Palestine Question had been examined by the International Court. However, Syria was only supported by Belgium. Israel's application was, therefore, considered by the Council, and received strong support in debate from America and Russia. However, when it was voted it received only the votes of Argentina, Colombia, Ukraine, Russia, and America; Syria voted against; Belgium, China, France, and Britain abstained.(1) On March 3, 1949, the Council again considered the application. Britain declared that she would abstain, unless Israel promised not to oppose the return of refugees and the internationalisation of Jerusalem. Since Israel refused, Britain did abstain. However, at the vote on March 4, there was no other abstention, and only Egypt voted against. The Council, therefore, recommended Israel's admission to the U.N.

In the second part of the Third Regular Session, in April and May, 1949, Israel's application was referred to the Ad Hoc Political Committee, in which it was debated from May 3 to May 9. After a bitter debate, in which accusations and counter accusations were hurled, concerning refugees, the internationalisation of Jerusalem, Bernadotte's murder, and the atrocities of both sides in the Arab-Israeli war, a joint resolution of Australia, Canada, Guatemala, Haiti, Panama, America, and Uruguay was passed, by 33 votes to 11, with 13 abstentions, recommending to the General Assembly that Israel be admitted. Following a similar debate in the General Assembly, Israel was, finally, admitted to the U.N. by 37 votes to 12, with 9 abstentions.(2)

1.S/P.V.386
2.A/P.V.207

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

The object of this thesis has been to estimate the effect the existence of the U.N. had upon the events in Palestine, 1947-9. To make conclusions on this, it is necessary, by examining the direction of events early in 1947, to make some estimate of how the situation was evolving, how it might have developed without the U.N., and to compare it with what in fact happened after the U.N. became involved.

In early 1947, it was becoming obvious to all statesmen interested in the Palestine problem, that the only peaceful solution would be by partition. Peel had suggested this in 1937. Gradually, the Jewish Agency leaders, led by Weizmann, had come to accept it. In Transjordan, Abdullah was willing to accept that some special provision would have to be made for the Jews. Although in their public declarations, other Arab statesmen had been adamant in rejecting partition, it is not unreasonable to assume that they might have accepted partition eventually, provided that the partition plan was not too obviously unjust and was backed by a force sufficiently overwhelming for them to be able to explain to their people that, although they were just as firm as ever against partition, it was impossible to do anything about it. Overwhelming force was an essential proviso. After so many affirmations of opposition to partition, no Arab ruler or government, except Abdullah, could compromise with partition and survive. The real question, therefore, was what should be the boundaries of the Arab and Jewish states, and who should provide the necessary force.

In 1947 and 1948, events demonstrate that the implementing authority would have had to be Britain, for America was steadfast against involving American troops, neither America nor Britain would have allowed Russia to interfere, and other countries repeatedly demonstrated they were determined not to get involved in Palestine.

Britain, however, had a particular interest in maintaining good relations with the Arab states, therefore any plan which Britain would be willing to enforce would have to be as acceptable as possible to the Arab states. Any plan, therefore, would have been largely a product of Britain with this in mind. Certainly, other countries would have attempted to apply pressure on Britain, and certainly the effective diplomacy of the Zionists during the Second Regular Session would also have been applied here. However, in this case, it would have been very difficult for Truman to apply pressure to Britain to produce a settlement very favourable to the Jews. Britain would simply have had to ask America for help and Truman would have found it necessary to explain either why the problem was too difficult for America, which would have completely justified the British position, or why America did not sort out the whole thing for the British, which was what Truman's military advisers would have been completely against. Truman, with the presidential election in mind, would certainly not have put himself in a position of having to refuse a Jewish backed demand for intervention in Palestine.

Assuming, therefore, that, in the absence of the U.N., Britain would have been left almost alone to produce a solution, it is also reasonable to assume that Britain would have made an attempt to produce a viable solution. The alternative of withdrawal without a solution would have never been contemplated by British statesmen, as the example of India, in 1947, demonstrates. This is not to say British statesmen would have been happy with the solution, but they would have had to produce the best possible in the circumstances and make it work. However, it seems quite likely that British statesmen had in mind a not too unsatisfactory solution, although, as Cunningham pointed out to Unscop, they could not satisfy everybody. A Jewish state would have been established most easily in those areas where the Jews were a majority. This, of course, would not have produced a viable state, but it is inconceivable that Britain would have made Unscop's mistake of assuming an economic union of Arab and Jewish states would work. Therefore, Britain would have had to add to the Jewish state sufficient territory to make it viable and defensible.

In these circumstances the choice of boundaries is limited. Taking the Unscop division of Palestine as a starting point, only the central Jewish area had a Jewish majority, and Jews only in eastern Galilee were they even a large minority. Eastern Galilee would have had to be included in the Jewish state, however, to make it economically viable. This Jewish state would have been too fragmented to be defensible, therefore the obvious course would have been to include western Galilee, which had only a very small Jewish minority, thus producing a solution which was proposed by Bernadotte in 1948. It cannot be denied that this plan would have produced a Jewish state with initially an Arab majority (516,760 to 501,040) but in the Unscop plan the Jews only had a majority if 105,000 Bedouin were neglected. Also, in a Bernadotte's solution, a greater number of Jews would be in the Jewish state than in Unscop's plan (501,040 instead of 499,020). Jewish immigration would quickly have provided a Jewish majority, and this could have been permitted before the state was established.(1)

A partition plan like this would have had certain special advantages for Britain. It was not necessary to provide a viable Arab state from the rest of Palestine, because Transjordan had once been part of Palestine and could be reunited with the Arab area. This would probably have suited Britain very well, for Abdullah was the only Arab leader both to place a real value on association with Britain and to take a realistic attitude towards the Jews. Abdullah might well have accepted a Jewish state in part of Palestine and a continued British presence in the rest if the rest were given to him as a great extension to his Kingdom. Jerusalem alone might have been enough to decide him. Britain would, therefore, no longer have had to rely on bases in Egypt which were considered, rightly, insecure in the long term, and the Mufti, who was no friend of Britain, would have had no influence in Palestine.

1.App.III contains Unscop's figures for the populations of the areas in the Unscop plan.

This should have produced a peaceful solution. Arab states would have denounced the new state of Israel, but would have done nothing because it would be obvious to their people that they could do nothing. There would certainly not have been the sense of shame felt by the Arabs after their defeat in the Arab-Israeli War in 1948, which has made settlement of the problem very difficult. Israel would, in fact have been quite safe. Egypt could not have harmed Israel without passing through the enlarged Transjordan, which Abdullah certainly would not have allowed. With Egypt therefore, there could not even have been frontier incidents. Egypt would not even have been able to put pressure on Abdullah as long as Britain was his ally and British bases were maintained in Arab Palestine. Lebanon never was enthusiastic about the use of armed force against Israel, even in 1948, therefore little trouble would have been expected there. Syria, with the only other frontier to Israel would not have acted alone. Also, in these circumstances, there would have been less pressure within the Arab states for an attack on Israel, for there would have been no refugee problem. In 1948, Jewish atrocities against Arabs, which resulted in the Arab exodus, were excused by Arab atrocities against Jews. However, a settlement imposed peacefully by Britain would have given the Jews no excuse for putting direct pressure on the Arabs to leave. Any terrorist action, or racialist laws even, would have lost Israel World sympathy and could have given Britain an excuse for punitive measures, like reducing Israel's territory, which might have redeemed Britain a little in Arab eyes.

Such a solution would still have undermined Britain's position in the Middle East, although secure bases in Palestine would have been some compensation. However, it is reasonable to suppose that, to British statesmen, a solution like this was the best to be hoped for. It is unlikely that they expected the U.N. to find a different solution, but the existence of the U.N. gave Britain the opportunity to try to spread responsibility for the settlement in Palestine, and to divert some Arab wrath and also most likely some Jewish wrath onto others. Britain probably hoped for the U.N. to endorse a British solution. Doubtless, events in 1947-48 did not follow the course predicted in London.

Once the Palestine Question was in the hands of the U.N., it was removed from British control, and given over to countries which had little knowledge or interest in Palestine. ~~The Arab states.~~ The Arab states gained nothing, because they could not avoid in the public debates in the U.N. pressing for the complete rejection of partition and refusal to make any concession whatever, in conformity with the policy they had declared to their peoples. The only Arab state which might have taken a more reasonable attitude was Jordan, but she was not a U.N. member. This made it obvious to U.N. members that it was no use trying to produce a solution to satisfy the Arabs, therefore, in the U.N., less effort was put into trying to modify U.N. plans in Arab favour than would have been the case if the Arabs had given even a hint of willingness to compromise. Also, it made the Arab states appear unreasonable to the World at large, and therefore made Zionist pressure more effective. Once the Arabs were forced to realise that the U.N. was going to recommend a solution completely contrary to Arab wishes, the Arabs were so far committed to oppose partition, even by force, that they could not avoid going to war as soon as Britain declared the Mandate ended, and forced them to continue the war to their own disadvantage when the First Truce and Bernadotte's plans were about to give them the best possible terms they could have hoped for. The Arab states only stopped fighting when their failure against Israel could no longer be concealed from their public. Governments fell and armistices were signed, but only after the Arabs had lost far more than they could have gained months before by negotiation.

For the Jews, reference to the U.N. was a great opportunity. Jewish representatives at the U.N. could pose as national representatives. Jewish pressure could sway the votes of those disinterested in Palestine. Particularly important was the Jewish pressure on the American President as the presidential election began to dominate American politics. In this case, the Jews had a special advantage in the great personal influence Weizmann was able to exert over Truman. Jews did not suffer in the U.N. from the Arab weakness of

having committed themselves so far they could not compromise. Also, the average Zionist was willing to trust his leadership to a far greater extent than the Arab public. This made it possible for the Jews to accept the Unscop plan although the instinctive reaction of Jews in general was, at first, complete rejection. Further, since most western statesmen, who formed a majority in the U.N., believed partition was the only possible solution, once the Jewish Agency had accepted partition in principle, while the Arabs rejected it completely, the Jews became the only party in the dispute with whom agreement was possible. This gave U.N. members the choice of recommending a solution acceptable to the Jews or acceptable to nobody. Naturally, the Jewish Agency exploited this situation by going to the limit of what the U.N. would give to the Jews. In fact, a solution which gave the Jews a state in the richest part of Palestine, with a population 50% Arab, and which dominated strategically and economically an Arab state almost 100% Arab, could hardly have been more to the Jewish advantage if dictated by the Agency itself, for it gave a minority an effective control over a majority, while preserving a superficial impression of democracy. It can be argued, in fact, that the Jews went too far in exploiting their advantages in the U.N., for the adoption of the Unscop plan, on November 29 1947, led to a war which the Jewish Agency did not want, and, if the Arab-Israeli War of 1948 is regarded as a tragedy for the Jews, then the Agency went too far in exploiting their advantage.

The Unscop plan put Britain in a very difficult position. It could not be enforced, except at very great cost in both the material sense and in Britain's standing with the Arab states. Under these circumstances it was perfectly reasonable for Britain to warn the U.N. she might not enforce a U.N. plan. Of course, Britain's declaration that she was leaving Palestine and that she would not enforce any plan to which both the Arabs and Jews did not agree was not to be taken 100% seriously, but the common mistake in the U.N. was to ignore the British declaration altogether. What should have been realised was that no co-operation whatsoever could be expected in a

plan which ignored Arab interests, but there might have been some co-operation with a plan to which both sides did not agree, i.e. a modification of Unscop in the Arab interest. As already described, such a modification might have preserved peace, and this was apparent to disinterested observers like Bernadotte in 1948. However, in the U.N., great issues in Palestine were far less important to most U.N. delegates than the least issues concerning their own countries, therefore Jewish votes and influence throughout the World counted for more than the merits of Unscop's plan, and once Jewish influence in America had put the U.S.A. firmly behind partition and Russia had followed suit, to go against the partition plan was to risk the disfavour of the World's two greatest powers. In these circumstances it is surprising so many delegations abstained. Once the U.N. had adopted the Unscop plan, almost unmodified, Britain had no choice but to refuse complete co-operation and to withdraw as threatened. By November 29, 1947, the decision to leave Palestine could not have been reversed, for financial and political reasons, unless the U.N. had produced a practical solution, enforceable at little cost, which the partition plan was neither. If Britain had co-operated in any way then there would have been a considerable risk that Britain would become so involved that the withdrawal would have to be halted, e.g. to protect U.N. staff. The attitude of many delegations in the U.N. during the Second Regular Session suggests that some at least assumed this would happen. Another important consideration was, if Britain expected to be taken seriously in the World councils in the future, she had to carry out her threat.

While it is possible to suggest that the Agency might have been too successful, it is impossible to find any success at the U.N. for the Arabs. An examination of their record there illustrates how disastrous the reference to the U.N. was for them. Being completely unable to move from total opposition to partition made them throw away very many opportunities to destroy the Agency's hopes. In fact, it reasonably can be concluded that Arab disadvantages were at least as important as Jewish diplomatic skill in ensuring Jewish success at the U.N. and eventually in securing a much larger state of Israel than they would otherwise. It was certainly a

tactical mistake to oppose the establishment of Unscop. Once a majority had agreed to a special session it should have been obvious that a majority agreed with the purpose of the session, i.e. to establish a special committee on Palestine. The Arab states should, therefore, have concentrated on improving Unscop's terms of reference. In this they might have had some success, for America was several times put in embarrassing positions, but only by Asaf Ali (India) who proved the Arabs' best friend, and not by the Arabs themselves. At the very best, the Arab failure at the First Special Session made the Arabs appear to be people who ^upersued lost causes and whose words, therefore, could be disregarded. The Arab Higher Committee boycott was a mistake. With the best will in the World, it would be very difficult for any committee, opposed with open hostility on one hand and welcomed with open arms on the other, to remain completely impartial. Even if the Higher Committee persisted in rejecting partition, it should have welcomed Unscop as warmly as the Jews, and prevented the Jews presenting a misleading picture of Arab backwardness and the Jews' supreme contribution ~~to~~ economically and culturally in Palestine. The Arab states appreciated the Higher Committee's mistake, but their meeting with Unscop in Beirut, entirely unconstructive, and in some ways insulting, was not calculated to change Unscop's minds. In the Second Regular Session, the Arabs wasted time producing a plan for a unitary state, based neither on Unscop's majority or minority plans, and therefore doomed to failure. If the Arabs had been able to concentrate on suggesting reasonable modifications to the Unscop plan, which would have been quite easy, they could have rendered it unacceptable to the Jewish Agency, and therefore made the Agency appear unreasonable, while the Arabs were making enormous concessions. A rival Arab plan, based on the majority plan, but modified in Arab favour, could easily have drawn enough votes from the partition plan to ensure its failure. An amendment even, proposed about November 27, that the Negev should be subtracted from the Jewish state, with a hint, however, insincere at possible Arab co-operation in return, would certainly have succeeded. If the Arabs had freely offered co-operation on these terms the Jewish Agency would hardly have been able to object, and Britain could not

have avoided keeping her word to implement a plan to which both sides agreed. Certainly Jewish objections to losing the Negev would have been difficult to sustain, since the Negev contained a population less than 1% Jewish. On a purely practical level, the Agency would probably have calculated that, while their supporters might have mustered enough votes to defeat the Arab amendment, the plan might then have become unacceptable to the very few members whose votes were needed for a 2/3 majority. However, the Arabs were too firmly committed against partition to contemplate, in the public arena of the U.N, any such action. They therefore continued their course to war, defeat, and the loss of most of Palestine.

The American and Russian part deserved special mention. Since the Russians considered their interest would be served by a British withdrawal from Palestine, the Russians were ready to support any plan which seemed likely to ensure this. They therefore were careful not to commit themselves until they were absolutely sure of their ground. The Americans, however, were too much influenced by internal politics. Since the State Department was continually against the Unscop partition plan, it is only fair to conclude that America supported the partition plan to suit internal politics and either were ignorant or chose to ignore the probable consequences in Palestine and throughout the Middle East. This makes due allowance for Truman's personal concern for his election prospects and for Weizmann's influence. Once America was committed to the partition plan, the Russian course was obvious. The British declaration that she would withdraw if the plan were adopted must have at first indicated to the Russians that Britain's ally, America, would not support the partition plan. Once America supported it, there was a real possibility of success given Russian help, therefore Russia supported partition after America had declared her support. The Russians must have been most pleased at America playing into their hands. The existence of the U.N., therefore, made it possible for American internal politics to play a much larger part in Palestine than otherwise, and allowed Russia to exploit the situation.

In conclusion, therefore, the existence of the U.N. resulted in the introduction into the Palestine Problem of a large number of irresponsible parties, or parties with other interests in Palestine than a solution of the Problem in the best interests of Palestine's inhabitants. To produce a viable solution would have been possible though not easy in early 1947, and it would have been implemented by Britain. The U.N., however, produced a solution which Britain could not implement except at intolerable cost, and which no other state, not even those who had voted for the U.N. solution, were willing to implement themselves. In the end, therefore, the solution, such as it was, was supplied by war, and even that left a host of problems for the future.

APPENDIX I

The Terms of Reference of the United Nations Special Committee
on Palestine.(1)

WHEREAS the General Assembly of the United Nations has been called into special session for the purpose of constituting and instructing a Special Committee to prepare for the consideration at the next regular session of the Assembly a report on the question of Palestine,

The General Assembly

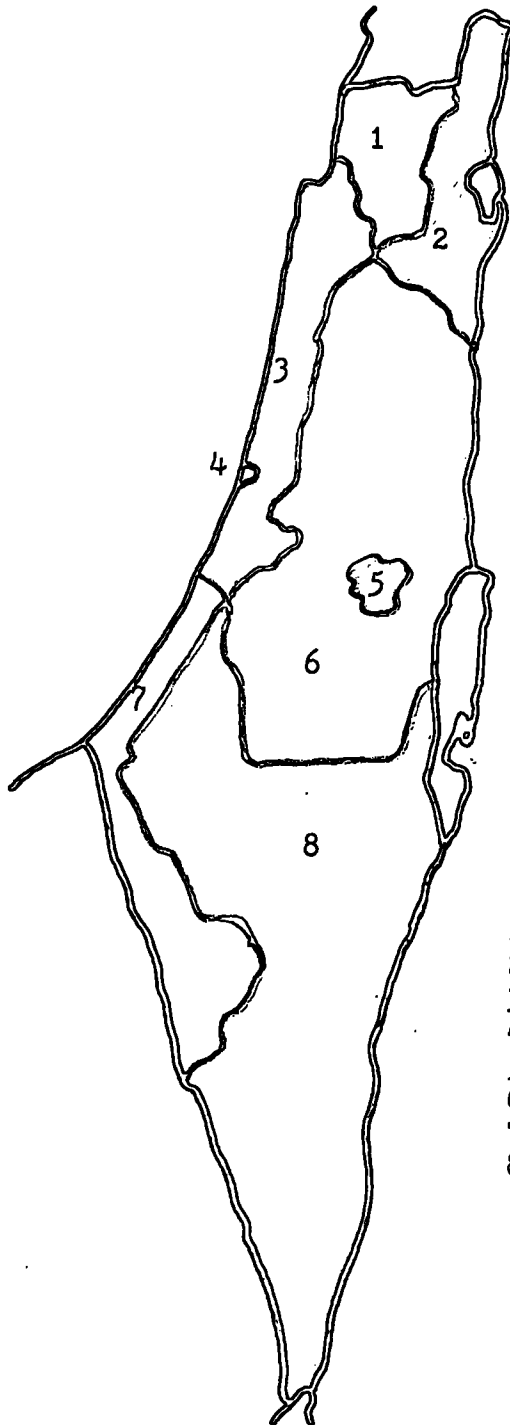
RESOLVES that:

1. A Special Committee be created for the above mentioned purpose consisting of the representatives of Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay and Yugoslavia;
2. The Special Committee shall have the widest powers to ascertain and record facts, and to investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine;
3. The Special Committee shall determine its own procedure;
4. The Special Committee shall conduct investigations in Palestine and wherever it may deem useful, receive and examine written or oral testimony, whichever it may consider appropriate in each case, from the mandatory Power, from representatives of the population of Palestine, from Governments and from such organisations and individuals as it may deem necessary;
5. The Special Committee shall give most careful consideration to the religious interests in Palestine of Islam, Judaism and Christianity;
6. The Special Committee shall prepare a report to the General Assembly and shall submit such proposals as it may consider appropriate for the solution of the problem of Palestine;
7. The Special Committee's report shall be communicated to the Secretary-General not later than 1 September 1947, in order that it may be circulated to the Members of the United Nations in time for consideration by the Second Regular Session of the General Assembly;







1.A/309 (Resolution of the General Assembly, May 23, 1947. Paragraphs 8 and 9 authorised the Secretary-General to make appropriate arrangements)

APPENDIX II

The Unscop Plan for Partition with Economic Union, as Amended
in the Second Regular Session.



1. W. Galilee
2. E. Galilee
3. Plains of Sharon and Esdraelon
4. Jaffa
5. Jerusalem
6. Samaria and Judea
7. Gaza
8. Negev

-  Mediterranean and Red Sea Coast
-  Land frontiers of Mandatory Palestine and the coasts of Lake Tiberias and the Dead Sea
-  U.N. partition boundaries
-  Arab state
-  Jewish state
-  Jerusalem

APPENDIX III

Populations of the Individual Sectors of the Unscop Partition Plan
as Amended in Subcommittee 1 of the Ad Hoc Committee on the
Palestinian Question, but without Later Amendments Transferring
Jaffa and Beersheba to the Arab State.

	<u>Arab State</u>	
	<u>Arabs(1)</u>	<u>Jews</u>
W. Galilee	123,800	3,040
Samaria and Judea	485,350	5,020
Gaza	117,860	1,460
	<u>+ 22,000 Bedouin (approx.)</u>	<u> </u>
Total	749,010	9,520
	<u>Jewish State</u>	
E. Galilee	86,200	28,750
Plains of Sharon and Esdraelon	306,760	469,250
Negev	103,820	1,020
	<u>+105,000 Bedouin (approx.)</u>	<u> </u>
Total	601,780	499,020
	<u>Jerusalem</u>	
	105,540	99,690

1. Included under Arab are all those inhabitants of Palestine who were not Jews. There were about 1,076,780 Moslem Arabs, 145,060 Christian Arabs, and about 15,490 of other sects.

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The main source for this thesis is the official records of the U.N. However, by themselves, they often present a very misleading picture, declarations often being made purely for propaganda value. David Horowitz and Jorge Garcia Granados were active participants in the U.N. from First to Second Special Sessions. Horowitz's account, although it contributes much detail, is often reticent on the aims of Jewish policy. Granados writes very freely, but was distrusted for his fanaticism, and even the Jews whom he supported thought he indulged in wild ideas. The most detailed accounts are of Weizmann's activities, by himself, his wife Vera, and by his colleagues Weisgal and Eban (Eban's diary is quoted in Weisgal and Carmichael). These can be supplemented by Truman. American policy appears clearly in Forrestal's Diaries (his biographer, Rogow, is most useful) and Welles. There are no really useful books from Britain, and nothing useful in English from the Arabs (Henry Cattán, who represented the Arab Higher Committee during the First Special Session, confines himself to legal points), and nothing from Russia. The general works I have found most useful have been by Hurewitz, Kirk, Monroe, and Sykes.

Documents

U.N. documents can be found in the United Nations Guide to Official Records, 1948-1962 (U.N. 1963) This includes documents before 1948. Bound volumes have been published of verbatim or summary records of all the General Assembly and Main Committee meetings, plus important documents (reports of committees, proposals, resolutions etc.) in annexes or supplements.

Other useful documents can be found in "The Arab States and the Arab League, a Documentary Record," by Muhammad Khálil

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