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Chairman: Mr. Leopoldo BENITES (Ecuador).

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Fukushima (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 31

Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (A/5136, A/5214, A/5337; A/SPC/74, A/SPC/L.89 and Add.1, A/SPC/L.90) (continued)

1. Mr. JANTUAH (Ghana) expressed his satisfaction with the detailed and frank report (A/5214) of the Commissioner-General for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and with the extent of humanitarian and technical assistance that the Agency was giving to the Palestine Arabs who had been forced into exile fourteen years previously. He warmly congratulated the Commissioner-General and his staff on the efficient way in which they were carrying out their task.

2. It was to be hoped that aid to the refugees would be continued, by an extension of the Agency's mandate. However, the final and just solution of that lamentable problem did not lie with UNRWA, which was merely a palliative and could not remove the cause of the suffering and the humiliation to which the refugees were subjected. The responsibility for finding the solution lay squarely with the United Nations. The Organization had recognized its responsibility and had recommended an appropriate solution as long ago as December 1948, as could be seen from General Assembly resolution 194 (III). Until operative paragraph 11 of that resolution was fully applied, the lot of the Palestine refugees would continue to deteriorate.

3. Unfortunately, there were persistent suggestions that the Arab refugees should be integrated or absorbed into the regions where they were temporarily camped. Quite apart from humanitarian and legal considerations, the proposal was far from reasonable; the Commissioner-General himself had stated that the absorptive capacity of the host countries was limited. He had also perspicaciously analysed the feelings of all Arabs, refugees and non-refugees alike. It was obvious that any resolution which did not take into account the deep sense of injustice felt by all the Arab States could not serve as a sound basis even for negotiations.

4. The Ghanaian delegation considered that the operative part of draft resolution A/SPC/L.89 and Add.1 was too vague and left the door open for the introduction of extraneous considerations which would protract and hamper negotiations. The problem of the Palestine refugees was a unique one; it should not be dealt with concurrently with regional disputes which might have been engendered by it, but which did not directly concern the three parties involved, namely the Palestine refugees, the United Nations and Israel. Moreover, the draft resolution ignored the fact that the Palestine refugees were one of the principal parties to the dispute and that they must participate in any worthwhile negotiations on the question. As the Arab delegations had pointed out time and time again, the refugee problem was not one between the Arab Governments on the one hand and the Israel Government on the other. The Arab Governments were naturally intimately involved in the issue and had rightly championed the cause of the refugees; but it was the Palestine refugees who were the principal party. Any proposal for a solution which did not take that fact into consideration was unrealistic.

5. Draft resolution A/SPC/L.90 also did not aim at a final and just solution of the problem. The sponsors themselves admitted that its sole purpose was to protect and administer Arab property pending an enduring and just solution. Despite that limitation, the Ghanaian delegation agreed in principle with that draft resolution, since it accorded with the intention of resolution 194 (III) under which the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine had been set up. It was one of the functions of the Conciliation Commission to take measures to protect Arab property in Israel; to that end, the Commission had undertaken a valuation of Arab property, as could be seen from the report circulated as document A/5337. Since the Conciliation Commission had established the existence of that property, the United Nations had the right to appoint one or more persons as custodians, provided, of course, that such persons were not considered undesirable by Israel. Draft resolution A/SPC/L.90 seemed to be reasonable and could not be regarded as violating the principle of sovereignty. Fears had been expressed that the task of the custodian would be impossible, because one person could not easily administer property scattered all over the territory of Israel. It was true that the responsibility and functions of the custodian would be heavy and difficult, but such difficulties would not be unsurmountable. The resolution wisely laid down no procedure for the selection of the custodian, but left the matter to the Secretary-General. Moreover, the draft conferred on the Secretary-General, after consultation with all the parties concerned, powers to vest the functions of custodian in a reconstituted Conciliation Commission.

6. The Ghanaian delegation considered that any resolution which was not directly aimed at the solu-

tion of the problem would be fruitless. The best means that the United Nations had for reaching a just and permanent solution lay in securing the application of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III). As Mr. Rayess, the spokesman for the Palestine Arabs, had stressed at the 366th meeting, the Arab refugees would never forgo their rights. The very existence of Israel as a State after so many years of exile and persecution bore witness to the irresistible will of the Semitic peoples. The Jewish people, who had been victims of persecutions culminating in the savagery of Nazi Germany and had been exiled for nearly twenty centuries, had finally been able to return to the land from which they claimed to have been driven. The same would no doubt apply to the Arabs exiled from Palestine.

7. So long as a single Palestine Arab remained in exile and considered himself to be deprived of the right to choose between returning to his home and accepting compensation, there could be no lasting peace and security in the Middle East. Refugees were always a disturbing element, and if they believed that they had been unjustly treated, they spent the rest of their lives inciting the country of their adoption to aggression and war. Such refugees were to be found everywhere, and they were a danger to the peace of the world.

8. In conclusion, his delegation wished to recommend the extension of the mandate of the Conciliation Commission in a form acceptable to all the parties concerned, with a view to ensuring the application of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III). In the meantime, the Ghanaian delegation fervently hoped that both sides would endeavour to restore the good neighbourly relations which had formerly existed between the Arabs and the Jews.

9. Mrs. MEIR (Israel) pointed out that, although the title of the item under discussion was "Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East", very little had been said by Arab representatives on the actual work of the Agency, and no suggestions had been made by them for improving its methods of work to enable more refugees to find means of self-support in their new surroundings.

10. Faithful to their slogan "Israel must not exist", proclaimed at the outset of the debate, the Arab delegations asserted that Israel was not a nation, that the Jews were not a people and had no real connexion with the Holy Land, that Zionism was a sinister imperialist conspiracy, that the United Nations had had no right to take the decision it did in 1947 and that it had not been the Arabs who had attacked Israel after that decision. They had even gone so far as to try to rewrite the Bible.

11. Although she did not intend to reply to the Arab allegations point by point, she thought it might not be out of place to recall that the first expression of Zionism had occurred when the Children of Israel had been led by Moses out of Egypt into the Promised Land. The Jewish State had several times been conquered by mighty empires, and the Jews had been driven into exile and, more recently, completely dispersed. But, as had been pointed out in 1937 in a report of the Palestine Royal Commission,^{1/} set up

by the Mandatory Power after the disturbances of 1936 in an attempt to solve the problem, the Jewish communities scattered throughout the world had never severed their historical and spiritual links with the land of their fathers. Moreover, throughout the ages Jews had continued to live in Palestine and had constantly returned there from various parts of the world. The faith of the Jewish people in eventual return to the land of their ancestors had thus always been kept alive.

12. It was therefore quite natural that the Jewish people, persecuted in many countries simply because they were Jews, should view the return to their country of origin as the sole means of regaining their national dignity, and that a movement to achieve that end should have been organized. That fundamental truth had been recognized in the Balfour Declaration^{2/} and the League of Nations Mandate,^{3/} and had been enshrined in General Assembly resolution 181 (II) establishing a Jewish State in part of Palestine.

13. Those who sought by oratory and vituperation to change those historical facts obviously failed to comprehend the tragedy of the uprooting of the Jewish people. They also forgot that parallel with the Jewish national movement, and as a result of the very decisions which they termed "imperialist machinations", there had developed an Arab national movement thanks to which, in a region where before the First World War there had been only vilayets or provinces of the Ottoman Empire, there now were independent Arab States with a total area of over 3 million square miles. By contrast, the territory reserved for the Jewish people—a territory which had several times been whittled down—covered only 8,000 square miles. In this connexion, the statement of the representative of Liberia in the Committee was relevant: he had stated that it would be a sad spectacle if his African brethren, occupying the 11,454,000 square miles which comprised Africa, had refused to yield Liberia 45,000 square miles as an asylum from persecution.

14. The Jewish people had accepted as a compromise the 1947 resolution, although it had far from satisfied them. Had the Arabs done likewise, the Jewish State and Arab State of Palestine would have developed in peace and co-operation; there would have been no bloodshed and no question of refugees.

15. The refugee problem being faced today was the direct result of the war which the Arab States had launched against Israel in 1947 and 1948. Many millions of other refugees displaced as a result of wars and upheavals had found a new life among fraternal peoples, in some instances by means of an exchange of populations. Israel itself had, since 1948, received over 500,000 Jewish refugees from the Arab countries—practically the same number as that of Arabs who had left the area which was now Israel. As a result of Israel's constructive and brotherly attitude towards the Jewish refugees from Arab countries, they had been rapidly transformed into productive and self-supporting citizens. The Arab refugees from Palestine were the only people compelled to remain refugees. Their own kinsmen, while publicly lamenting the fate of the refugees, refused to accept them in their countries. The Arab countries fiercely opposed any constructive plan of

^{1/} *Palestine Royal Commission: Report*, Command Paper 5479 (London, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1937).

^{2/} See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Second Session, Supplement No. 11*, vol. II, annex 19.

^{3/} *Ibid.*, annex 20.

resettlement or integration, being only too happy to use the refugees as an instrument of a destructive policy, which was diametrically opposed to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter. Such a spirit bred not peace, but war; far from solving the refugee problem, it would only create additional misery in the entire area.

16. Turning to the report (A/5214) of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Mr. John H. Davis, the representative of Israel noted that Mr. Davis, going beyond the immediate scope of his mandate, had seen fit to tell of the feelings of the whole Arab Middle East. Mr. Davis had not referred at all to the feelings of the people of Israel, nor had he told of the spirit and intent with which the Arabs claimed repatriation. In that connexion, a Lebanese newspaper, *Al Hayad*, had reported on 28 July 1962 that Mr. Tannous, whom the Committee had heard at the 369th meeting, proposed the recruitment of an army of 150,000 men from amongst the refugees, to be directed by a supreme military committee subordinate to the Arab League. That contingent would be used to reconquer Palestine with the support of armies from the Arab States. According to Radio Cairo, the Palestinians of Gaza—while no doubt continuing to receive UNRWA assistance—were being given thorough military training by the Government of the United Arab Republic. Persistent efforts were at the same time being made to instil hatred in the young. According to a statement made on 16 November 1957 by the Director-General of UNESCO, Arab children in refugee schools were being taught, with UNESCO funds, that some day they would push the Israelis into the sea. The representative of Israel wondered how many Member States would think of admitting into their territory people brought up in that spirit.

17. Regarding the economic aspects of the UNRWA report, she noted that, whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was able to report each year on the progress being made towards a constructive solution of similar problems in the rest of the world, the latest report of Mr. Davis recommended the exclusion of all economic and development projects for the future of the refugees.

18. In support of his negative position he asserted, *inter alia*, that the refugees were for the most part unemployable since they had not been able to learn a trade by the traditional methods of family apprenticeship. That was an argument which ignored the fundamental changes now taking place in the economy of the Middle East, indeed in the economy of all developing countries. As the Secretary-General's report entitled *United Nations Development Decade*^{4/} had pointed out, recent developments had opened up new approaches through education, training, community development, use of idle manpower and eradication of disease to use the vast latent human resources of the developing countries. In the report submitted to the Assembly in 1959,^{5/} the late Secretary-General had not regarded the Palestine refugees as being doomed to perpetual unemployment, but had viewed their reintegration as entirely practicable as part of a programme for the economic development of the area.

19. The Commissioner-General had asserted that the host countries had very limited possibilities for absorbing the refugees and that a major proportion of them must cross an international boundary if they were to find suitable employment without resort on the part of the host countries to uneconomic investment of considerable magnitude (A/5214, para. 11). That was not only a contradiction—for if the refugees were unemployable, across which boundary would they find employment?—but also indicated unfounded skepticism about the region's capacity for economic development. It sufficed in that regard to mention the Jewish refugees from Arab States, who on arriving in Israel had been in large part illiterate and unprepared for employment in agriculture or the building trades. The State of Israel, regarding those refugees as kinsmen, had immediately set about teaching them new trades, educating their children and, in general, helping them to become citizens who could live in dignity and support themselves for the greater good of the community. From that supposedly uneconomic investment Israel had drawn the greatest asset that any society could wish for or possess; human beings who were able to realize their capacities and contribute to the economic development of their country. Nor was Israel's experience unique in that respect, as was apparent from the statement made by the Greek representative at the 368th meeting.

20. In 1953, the Acting Director of UNRWA had estimated that, given the co-operation of the host countries on the basis of agreements already concluded with their Governments, 445,000 refugees could be made self-supporting by 1958.^{6/} That had not come to pass, not because of any lack of absorptive capacity in the Arab countries, but because of political obstacles. In the meantime, substantial spontaneous integration into the economic life of the host countries was nevertheless taking place.

21. The refugee problem was, moreover, far from being of the magnitude indicated by the UNRWA figures. Based on the total number of Arabs in Palestine before the partition, as calculated by the Administration of the mandated territory, the number of those who had remained in or returned to Israel, and the number of those who had been and were still resident in the part annexed by Jordan or in the Gaza Strip annexed by the United Arab Republic, her delegation estimated that the total number of Arabs who had left the area which was today Israel could not have exceeded 540,000 to 550,000. From that figure must be subtracted 20 per cent, representing persons immediately absorbed. However, as the 1949 report of the Secretary-General to the Assembly indicated,^{7/} the relief agencies had found extreme difficulty in distinguishing between *bona fide* refugees, indigent or unemployed local residents, and nomadic and semi-nomadic Bedouin who would naturally gather at places where food was being distributed. The compilation of the relief rolls had, of necessity, been haphazard and the report of the United Nations Survey Mission for the Middle East (Clapp Mission)^{8/} had estimated that at least 160,000 non-refugees had managed to get on to the rolls. The report of the Commissioner-General of the Agency also made it clear that the actual figure was lower than the official

^{4/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: 62.II.B.2.

^{5/} See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourteenth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 27, document A/4121.

^{6/} *Ibid.*, Eighth Session, Supplement No. 12, para. 22, table 1.

^{7/} *Ibid.*, Fourth Session, Ad Hoc Political Committee, Annex, vol. II, document A/1060.

^{8/} *Ibid.*, vol. I, document A/1106.

statistics, owing to factors such as the high rate of unreported deaths and undetected false registrations. Moreover, the spontaneous absorption of refugees was not adequately reflected in UNRWA statistics. A census would have made it possible to rectify the rolls, but it had not been carried out because of the opposition of the Arab countries.

22. The Arab Governments must not be allowed to turn the refugees into an instrument of war against Israel. The Israel delegation had always voted in favour of appropriations for UNRWA, but, like other delegations, it considered that those funds should be used not only for the immediate welfare of the refugees but also for constructive endeavours which would enable them to become productive members of their communities.

23. As to draft resolution A/SPC/L.90, which proposed the appointment of a United Nations custodian for the administration and protection of Arab property within Israel, it should be remembered that the General Assembly had repeatedly rejected such a proposal. Despite the strange legal doctrines expounded by the Arab States, the right of every sovereign State to apply its own laws to property situated in its territory was beyond question, and the United Nations had no competence to interfere with Israel property law, for Israel was a sovereign State. The situation was not altered by the fact that the claimants happened to be refugees. The Arab proposal was therefore without foundation in international law. Furthermore the draft resolution contained a paraphrase—doubtless deliberately incorrect—of General Assembly resolution 394 (V); in that resolution the Assembly had directed the Conciliation Commission not to take measures for the protection of the rights, property and interests of the refugees, but to continue consultations with the parties concerned regarding measures for such protection.

24. The Israel Government had already co-operated with the Conciliation Commission on a number of questions concerning refugee property, such as the identification and evaluation of Arab immovable property, the release of refugees' blocked accounts in Israel banks, amounting to over \$9 million, and the transfer of the contents of many safe-deposit lockers left behind by Arab refugees. Israel's actions in those matters had been based on the voluntary exercise of its sovereign prerogatives.

25. The representative of Israel recalled the legislative measures taken by the Israel Government with regard to refugee property, and the fact that the property had been taken over by the State for integration into the national economy. The figures given by Arab spokesmen about the extent of the Arab land holdings in what had become Israel territories were completely incorrect and the property had certainly not brought her Government the alleged vast revenues.

26. The Israel Government had from the outset offered to pay compensation, but any negotiations on the subject must, of course, take into account claims relating to the property which half a million Israel citizens had left behind in various Arab countries and which those countries had confiscated, as well as the assets of Israel taken over or destroyed during the war in areas under Arab control.

27. Draft resolution A/SPC/L.89 and Add.1 called for the settlement of disputes by peaceful negotiations, in conformity with the purposes and principles

of the Charter of the United Nations. The Israel delegation welcomed that initiative, which went to the very root of the problem. As several delegations, including those of Iceland (368th meeting), the Central African Republic (365th meeting) and the Ivory Coast (368th meeting), had pointed out, negotiation was a necessity, and it was infinitely preferable to the status quo or to war. It represented the only hope for the future of the Middle East.

28. The representative of the United Arab Republic had only recently, at a meeting of the Security Council,^{9/} affirmed his adherence to the following principles: non-intervention in the internal affairs of any State; freedom for each State to choose its own political system of government; the right of each State to bring its defences up to the standard which would secure its political independence and territorial integrity; and the obligation of all Members of the United Nations to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and to settle disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security were not endangered. If the Government of the United Arab Republic were to apply those principles to the Arab-Israel conflict, the refugee problem would soon be on its way to a constructive settlement.

29. If the problem had simply been one of refugees as such, it would have been solved long ago. The obstacle to its solution was the belligerent attitude and the policy of the Arab States. Despite the venomous attacks made upon it, the Israel Government maintained its position and its offers of compensation. A solution could be brought about rapidly and effectively if the Arab Governments would accept Israel's existence. It was entirely up to them.

30. Mr. SIDKY (United Arab Republic), exercising his right of reply, said he wished to refute some of the Israel representative's allegations. It was completely untrue that the Gaza Strip had been annexed by the United Arab Republic. The Palestine refugee population of that area had retained their separate personality and had their own institutions. The United Arab Republic was indeed in favour of peace, but it must be a peace based on justice. It could not accept a peace obtained by denying the right of the refugees to repatriation. The Israel representative had tried to create the impression that the number of refugees was much lower than the figures given in the UNRWA report, but she had omitted to mention the fact that, according to that same report, various registered categories were not included in the lists.

31. Mr. DIMECHKIE (Lebanon), exercising his right of reply, recalled that the Danish representative (364th meeting), supported by the New Zealand representative (368th meeting), had protested against the comparisons that had been drawn between Zionism and nazism. Within the context of the discussion, however, it was much more relevant to mention the great wrongs done to the Palestine Arabs than the sufferings of the Jews under the Nazi régime. Despite the smokescreen laid by the representatives of Israel in an attempt to conceal the acts of genocide committed against the Palestine Arabs, the fact remained that genocide had been committed in both cases; the

^{9/} See Official Records of the Security Council, Seventeenth Year, 1024th meeting.

number of victims in no way changed the situation. The Arab States would continue to point out the striking analogies between the Nazi régime and Zionism, and considered that they would be doing mankind a great service thereby.

32. The entire statement just made by the representative of Israel, who had in any case merely repeated what had been said before by her delegation, confirmed his conviction that Israel intended to go on flouting Assembly resolutions 181 (II) of 1947 and 194 (III) of 1948 and all those adopted since. He wondered how much longer the United Nations would tolerate such insolence.

33. Mr. SAHNOUN (Algeria) warmly congratulated Mr. Davis and his staff on the sustained efforts that they devoted to their noble mission. The Commissioner-General's report drew attention to the increasingly alarming conditions in which over a million Palestine Arab refugees were living, and to the clearly inadequate assistance which they were receiving. They lived in poverty and despair. Every year 40,000 children were born in exile and 30,000 young refugees came of age without any improvement in their future prospects. He had not had an opportunity to visit the camps in the Middle East, but he had witnessed similar psychological and physical distress among the Algerian refugees in Tunisia and Morocco during the unhappy years of war through which his country had passed. Today the hopes of the Algerian refugees had been realized; they had returned to their own country where, despite certain understandable difficulties, they were settling down and enjoying the freedom that had at last been restored to them. The Palestine refugees, unfortunately, were in a different situation. Their misery knew no bounds. Deprived of their income and their rights and, above all, injured in their dignity as the report made clear, they were hopeless, depressed and bitter. For them UNRWA was merely an inadequate palliative; indeed it was obvious that gestures of charity, whether motivated by a sense of guilt or by a feeling of human solidarity, could not solve the problem completely. Yet, at the current session the Assembly would perhaps extend the mandate of UNRWA and most of the representatives who had attended it would go off with a clear conscience to spend yet another holiday in the warmth of their homes, while the fate of the Arabs of Palestine remained unchanged.

34. The United Nations would fail in its duty by keeping its eyes closed to the glaring injustice inflicted on a people and by ignoring the existence of the Palestinian power-keg, which threatened to blow up at any moment not only the Middle East, but the whole world; for the Palestinian people, and especially the young people, who could see all the peoples of Africa, Asia and other parts of the world gradually regaining their freedom, would demand and seek by every means in their power the recovery of the property and land of which they had been too long deprived. The Algerian delegation now wished to assure the brother Arab people of Palestine that they could count on the active solidarity of the Algerian people at all times. It urged members of the Committee to ponder the consequences of a decision for which some of them would bear the entire responsibility. As the Pakistan representative had rightly pointed out at the 368th meeting, those who had voted for the partition of Palestine had created an injustice which

was the source of all the misfortunes of today. A land which had been united had suddenly been split up, and two communities which had lived in peace for thousands of years had become bitter enemies.

35. In 1947, the United Nations had been a tool of the forces of imperialism; Africa and Asia had been virtually unrepresented. Disregarding those who had protested against such fragmentation, the Organization had created with its own hands what had ever since been called the problem of Palestine, and had thus committed the gravest error in its history.

36. To illustrate the role which one of the great Powers of the day had played in that decision, he cited the testimony of Mr. Sumner Welles, former Assistant Secretary of State of the United States. In his book We Need Not Fail,^{10/} Mr. Welles had written that, on instructions from the White House, United States leaders had applied direct and indirect pressure of every kind the non-Arab countries which they knew to be opposed to partition or irresolute. Mr. James Forrestal,^{11/} for his part, had revealed that the methods of coercion which the United States had used on other countries in the Assembly at that time had been little short of scandalous. The adoption of that decision, which was unworthy of the Charter and its ideals and which his delegation vehemently denounced, was also ascribable in large measure to the sinister and Machiavellian influence of international Zionism. Other representatives had described, with irrefutable evidence in support, the many plots which Zionism had hatched to bring about the creation of Israel. The representative of Israel had replied to their arguments with generalities which had certainly deceived no one.

37. Mr. Ben-Gurion's Government had been born of injustice and could feed only on injustice. The Arab minority which had remained in Israel was the victim of a veritable policy of apartheid. The areas where Arabs were in the majority had been declared military zones. The movements of those Arabs were strictly regulated. Since 1953 Israel had passed a number of laws to legalize the seizure of Arab lands. Mr. Derek Tozer, a British correspondent, had written in an article called "How Israel treats her Arabs" appearing in the American Mercury in August 1957 that the Arabs in Israel were treated as second-class citizens, just like the Jews in Nazi times. Mr. Weizmann himself had said, in his autobiography Trial and Error,^{12/} that he was certain the world would judge the Jewish State on its attitude to the Arabs; according to his intimates, he had criticized Mr. Ben-Gurion in the severest terms. Mr. Cyrus Sulzberger, the well-known New York Times writer of leading articles, had reported that Mr. Chaim Weizmann, first President of Israel, had on occasion called Ben-Gurion a "damned fascist". Moreover, as the Tunisian representative had pointed out at the 366th meeting, the Jews themselves were suffering the consequences of that racist policy. It was increasingly recognized that the notion of "two Israels" corresponded to a sociological fact. In an article entitled "The Two Israels" which had appeared in the magazine Commentary,^{13/} in April 1962, Mr. Alex

^{10/} Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1948.

^{11/} The Forrestal Diaries, Edited by Walter Millis (New York, The Viking Press, 1951), p. 363.

^{12/} New York, Harper and Brothers, 1949.

^{13/} Published by the American Jewish Committee.

Weingrod depicted the plight of the non-European Jews, who now formed a sort of lower caste, and the newspaper Yedi'oth Ahranoth reported that those who were now disdainfully described as coloured Jews were virtually unrepresented in the Israel Parliament and Government. Some Jewish pioneers' splendid dreams of social emancipation were being dispelled one after another, and large United States Jewish financial interests, supported by the Ben-Gurion fascist régime, laid down the law in Israel. The foreign policy of that régime, which was ready for anything in the line of expansionist adventures, was characterized by a blind chauvinism. Israel had voted against self-determination for the Algerian people every time the Algerian question had come before the United Nations. Jews, whether in Israel or elsewhere, ought to be revolted to see all their liberal and peaceful traditions flouted in that way by a Government which presumed to speak for all the world's Jews.

38. In face of an ever-worsening situation, it was the duty of the United Nations to arrive quickly at a peaceful solution of the Palestine problem. In the first place, the legitimate claims of the Palestinian people must be satisfied. In addition the Conciliation Commission must discharge its task. It would be unable to do so, however, without a radical change in its composition to give it the vitality which had hitherto been lacking. Lastly, paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) must be put into effect. The appointment of a custodian of Arab property in Palestine would show the refugees that a step had been taken towards redressing an injustice too cruel to be borne.

39. Mr. CHAKRAVARTY (India) said that he wished first of all to pay a tribute to the competence and devotion of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA and his staff. The Indian delegation had studied with keen interest the Commissioner-General's annual report and his statement before the Committee at its 358th meeting.

40. Almost fifteen years previously, nearly a million Arabs—the majority of the then population of Palestine—had been forced to leave their homes and seek shelter in neighbouring countries, while people from other countries had settled in Palestine and become the dominant element in the population. It was impossible to remain indifferent to the tragedy of those refugees, who all through the years had remained unreconciled to their plight and longed only to return to their native land. Their sentiments and inclinations must be taken into account in any solution of the problem.

41. He did not propose to go into the history of that problem but wished to point out that, from the very beginning, the United Nations had recognized its responsibility for the rehabilitation of the Palestine refugees, as witness General Assembly resolution 194 (III), especially paragraph 11, in which the refugees had been offered a choice between repatriation and compensation. Up to now, however, it had not been possible for them to exercise that right. Moreover, by resolution 302 (IV), the General Assembly had recognized that, without prejudice to the provisions of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), continued assistance for the relief of the Palestine refugees was necessary, and that constructive measures should be undertaken at an early date with a view to the termination of international assistance for relief. If it had simply been a question of resettling a million refugees in other areas, the task, though costly, would

have been less difficult. India, for its part, had succeeded in resettling and reintegrating nearly nine million refugees after the partition of the country. In ordinary circumstances, the problem could have been settled by purely economic methods, but that seemed impossible in the case of the Palestine refugees.

42. As was borne out by the successive reports of the Commissioner-General and of all observers, the refugees continued to express their perfectly natural longing to return to their homeland. Mr. Davis had stated the crux of the problem in paragraph 5 of his report; what made that problem so complicated was the deep feeling, throughout the Arab world, that a great injustice had been committed against the Palestine Arabs. Perhaps the greatest damage was being done to the children, who made up half the refugee population. In addition, charity was offensive to that proud people's self-respect. In paragraph 12 of his report, the Commissioner-General had expressed the view that at least for as long as there was no substantial progress towards the implementation of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III), the Agency should not again attempt works projects designed to settle the refugees.

43. The problem of the Palestine refugees was not merely a human problem; it affected the entire complex of political relations in the Middle East. It could not, therefore, be treated in isolation purely in terms of economic rehabilitation. The Committee, however, could not go into the political aspects of the problem in detail; it must confine itself to considering what was to be done after 30 June 1963, when the Agency's mandate would expire. The Agency obviously had to be kept in being, for the United Nations, having once assumed certain responsibilities, could not disclaim, after 30 June 1963, all interest in the welfare of the refugees, when the conditions laid down in paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) had not yet been fulfilled. In deciding to partition Palestine against the wishes of the Arab population, the United Nations had automatically assumed the responsibility for the future of the people affected. Every effort must be made to implement resolution 194 (III), which offered the only possible solution. India felt profound sympathy for the Palestine refugees and fervently hoped that peace and harmony would soon be restored in the Middle East. Meanwhile the Agency's activities must continue.

44. His delegation wished to express its deep appreciation to the countries which had made generous contributions to the Agency. It paid a tribute to the Arab States, which had been rendering assistance to the refugees since 1947-1948, especially in the fields of health, education and general welfare. India would have liked to increase its contribution but unfortunately had had to face a serious refugee problem of its own, which had left it short of funds. Its modest contribution to the Agency would, however, continue as before.

45. Mr. ATAULLAH (Pakistan), exercising his right of reply, denied the Israel representative's assertion that the text of draft resolution A/SPC/L.90 contained an incorrect paraphrase of General Assembly resolution 394 (V). The purpose of the text before the Committee was the same as that of that resolution and of the previous resolutions which had remained without effect.

46. Mr. DAVIS (Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refu-

gees in the Near East) announced for the Committee's information that a pledging conference would be held on 19 December 1962.

47. Passages from the Agency's report had been quoted often, and sometimes incorrectly. Holding the office he did, he knew full well that he could not please everybody. He took full responsibility for the

report, whose terms had been carefully considered at every point. In conclusion, he thanked the members of the Committee on his own behalf, and on that of his colleagues, for the words of praise which had been addressed to them.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.