

United Nations
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION

Official Records

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE, 666th
MEETING

Monday, 17 November 1969,
at 3.25 p.m.



NEW YORK

CONTENTS

Agenda item 36:

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine
Refugees in the Near East (*continued*):

- (a) Report of the Commissioner-General;
(b) Report of the Secretary-General 117

Chairman: Mr. Eugeniusz KULAGA (Poland).

AGENDA ITEM 36

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine
Refugees in the Near East (*continued*) (A/7577, A/7614,
A/7665):

- (a) Report of the Commissioner-General;
(b) Report of the Secretary-General

1. Mr. TARCICI (Yemen) expressed his delegation's appreciation of the humanitarian activities of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Mr. Michelmore, whose report (A/7614) had accurately and honestly set forth the situation of the Palestinian refugees. After quoting paragraphs of the report relating to the problems encountered by UNRWA in its task of feeding and providing for the refugees, he pointed out that the financial difficulties of the Agency had been aggravated by the problems created by the aggressors, who had arrested, detained and imprisoned UNRWA staff members for alleged illegal activities. The questioning and detention of staff members of UNRWA had interfered with the work of the Agency and had raised delicate problems. Furthermore, the uncertainty about their future which had hung over the heads of the refugees for twenty-one years had created frustrations and fears which had a detrimental effect on their morale.

2. Zionism was behind all the evils the Third World was suffering. Both *apartheid* and Zionism were continuations of colonialism, with its obsolete concepts and practices. Indeed, Zionism had been born toward the end of the nineteenth century, under the aegis of colonialism. Those outdated and erroneous concepts had later on given birth to nazism. The concept of racial superiority had also inspired Zionism, many of whose followers had been victims of nazism. Ever since that time, the colonial Powers and certain international financial circles had considered the Third World as regions to be occupied and exploited with no consideration for the rights, interests or feelings of the peoples who lived there.

3. It was that ideology and the actions of Zionism which were responsible for the tragedy of the Palestinian people. As the Jewish writer Ania Francos had explained, the great

Powers saw in the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine a bridgehead for their own penetration in the region. Chaim Weizmann had said the same thing more explicitly in his book *Trial and Error*.¹

4. The present-day leaders of Zionism continued to plan, to think and to act as if the world had not changed in two generations. What was even worse was that they inculcated in their youth the reactionary principles of racism.

5. The modern world refused to accept the anachronistic concepts of Zionism. As President Kennedy had said, peace was basically a matter of human rights. The current session of the General Assembly was considering the report of the Secretary-General on the education of youth in the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.²

6. Militarism had whetted the appetite of Hitler and the arrogance of the Zionist leaders and had only led to war and catastrophe. The lightning war of June 1967 could be compared with Hitler's *blitzkrieg*, particularly in its arrogant defiance of the rights of the peoples of Palestine and the principles of the Charter. Nazism and its militarism had cost the world no less than 30 million victims. How much time and how many victims would be lost and sacrificed before the Third World would be able to rid itself of *apartheid* and Zionism?

7. Zionist aggression against Palestine and its neighbouring countries differed from most of the colonial ideas held by the great Powers during the past centuries. The European colonialists had in most cases been able to coexist with the indigenous population they exploited and ruled; the Zionist settlers, on the other hand, could not envisage coexistence with the inhabitants of Palestine and had hastened to expel the indigenous inhabitants from their land.

8. The Zionists had, since the end of the past century, been supported by the wealthy Jews of Europe, who wished to send the unfortunate Jews from the ghettos of Eastern Europe elsewhere than to Western Europe, in order to use them for purposes of infiltration and exploitation.

9. As for the racist aspect of the colonization, it must be noted that the Zionist concept of the "final solution" to the problem of the non-Jewish Palestinians had been inspired by the "final solution" to the Jewish problem in nazi Germany. Although it must be recognized that the methods used by the Zionists of Palestine on its inhabitants were not so cruel as the nazi methods, the underlying principle was the same: the elimination of the heterogeneous human element.

¹ *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann*, (New York, Harper, 1949).

² A/7662 and Add.1.

10. *The New York Times* of 16 October 1969 made reference to the collective punishments practised by the Zionists against people who were thought to have knowledge about recent incidents. The Nazis had used a similar form of collective punishment.

11. In press release HR/341 of the United Nations Office of Public Information of 20 August 1969, the Special Working Group of Experts set up in March 1969 to investigate allegations concerning violations of human rights in Israel-occupied territories reported the testimony of Bishop Simaan, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Hicrapolis and all the Eastern Bank of Jordan, and Archbishop Diodoros, of the Greek Orthodox Church, regarding the profanation and desecration of Catholic and Orthodox places of worship in Jerusalem by Israel soldiers and civilians. They had committed such acts as indecent dressing, spitting on the sacred articles and drinking whiskey, immoral acts within churches and using church premises for lavatories. There were many testimonies of acts of merciless individual and collective sanctions against innocent people for no apparent reason. The three villages of Yalu, Beit Nuba and Emmaus, where no fighting had taken place during the 1967 war, had been levelled.

12. Most of the international information media were under the influence of the Zionists, but there were still some media which remained independent and they had informed the world of other instances of Israel violations of human rights.

13. He did not wish to revert to the matter of how Zionism and British imperialism had led Lord Balfour to give Palestine, which neither the British nor the Zionists had ever owned, to the Zionists and how the establishment of Zionism near the Suez Canal and in the petroleum-bearing region of the Middle East had been envisaged, as Chaim Weizmann had mentioned in his book *Trial and Error*, in the light of imperial interests. But he did wish to quote a recent revelation, which had been made by the former Secretary of State of the United States of America, Dean Acheson, in his recently published book, *Present at the Creation: My Years at the State Department*,³ *The New York Times Book Review* of 12 October 1969 had stated:

“In 1945, Mr. Acheson recalls, President Truman was determined to open the gates of Palestine without delay to at least 100,000 displaced Jews from Eastern Europe. Although this would cause bloodshed in Palestine and convulsions throughout the Arab lands . . .

“‘I did not share the President’s views on the Palestine solution to the pressing and desperate plight of great numbers of displaced Jews in Eastern Europe’, he writes. ‘The number that could be absorbed by Arab Palestine without creating a grave political problem would be inadequate, and to transform the country into a Jewish state capable of receiving a million or more immigrants would vastly exacerbate the political problem and imperil not only American but all Western interests in the Near East . . .’

“Mr. Acheson tells us that Mr. Truman chose to ignore ‘the totality of American interest’ because he, too, had been converted to Zionism.”

14. Thus, one of the best informed authorities of the United States had revealed how Zionism had influenced the President of the greatest Power of the world by forcing him to act without regard for the totality of the interests of his own country. That fact provided insight into the scope and the dimensions of the threat of Zionism to the entire Middle East. If Zionism had been capable of leading President Truman to act without regard for the totality of American interests, and, as Mr. Acheson had also stated, to imperil not only American but all Western interests in the Near East, what might it not do in the Near East? Israel acted in defiance of the principles of the United Nations because it felt confident that it could control the policy of certain great Powers. President Truman’s policy, which violated the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, had cost the United States more than \$7,000 million. Such encouragement had led Mr. Eban, Foreign Minister of Israel, to say before the United Nations last year that the peace talks must include the consideration of the joint exploitation of certain resources and means of communication of the region.

15. When the British Empire had been at the height of its power, as the United States was now, Chaim Weizmann had said, in connexion with the role the Zionists had entrusted to him, that the Zionist Jews had made every effort to establish a Jewish State in Palestine, had given a mandate to the United Kingdom to govern the country, and had provisionally turned Palestine over to the British. He had added that he was betraying no secret in saying that the Zionists had reached an agreement with the United Kingdom that Palestine should be given over to the Zionists free of Arabs before the end of its mandate. It would be interesting to wait for the memoirs of Mrs. Meir to learn what role had been assigned to another great Power and to what extent it had been docile in playing that role.

16. It was well to note that the betrayal of the Arab people by the United Kingdom, through the Balfour Declaration, had given rise to a profound disappointment and bitterness among the Arabs. The partisan policy of the United States had also transformed the situation in the entire Mediterranean and Middle East. That highly important zone of the world was no longer a preserve as it had been at the time of the introduction of Zionism.

17. One thing was certain and that was that the establishment of Zionism in the Near East had introduced a new and dangerous factor in the struggle between the great Powers, which had made it necessary for the Palestinian people to seek new means and more reliable allies in order to defend themselves.

18. The imposition of the State of Israel involved grave consequences for that sensitive area of the world. The countries of the region, which had only just rid themselves of classical colonialism and wished to reserve their resources and their efforts to fight against under-development, had found it necessary to devote a great part of those resources to defence. The Zionists continued to believe that a small and highly militarized and industrialized country could occupy and control a large human mass and exploit an immense region. Israel had not even finished digesting the newly occupied territories before it had called on the Zionist billionaires of the industrial countries to draft the

³ New York, W. W. Norton, 1969.

plans for the exploitation of the resources and means of communication of the region.

19. It was sufficient to look at the map of Palestine to realize the expansionist intentions of Israel. The different maps that had been drawn up from the time of the partition provided an outline of the entire process of expansion. Mr. Ben-Gurion had stated that the creation of the State of Israel was not the end of their struggle but rather the beginning and that it must be pursued until the State extended from the Nile to the Euphrates.

20. In 1952, *The Jerusalem Post* had published a statement by Mr. Eban, then representing his country at the United Nations, which denied that Israel had designs on the Nile and the Euphrates but confirmed its intentions concerning Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. The leader of the Herouth Party had said that it was Israel's duty to state clearly that its aim was to encourage all the Jews in the world to emigrate to Palestine, in accordance with a well-defined plan to establish new frontiers from Iraq to Suez. In 1955, Mr. Begin, now a Minister, had referred to the need for an immediate preventive war against the Arab States. In July 1968, General Dayan had stated in occupied Syria that the frontiers established after the six days' war were not definite and that the borders of Israel might eventually stretch into Lebanon and the centre of Syria. General de Gaulle had also said at a press conference in 1967 that Israel's encouragement of immigration would soon lead to a desire further to extend its frontiers.

21. The Zionist leaders were basing their plans on the out-dated intention of founding an empire at the expense of the developing countries and peoples of the Middle East. They thought that the greater technical knowledge they had brought with them from their countries of origin and the support they received from certain great Powers gave them the right to control and exploit the whole region. They did not realize that the time of territorial or economic empires was past and that such reactionary ideas were rejected by all freedom-loving countries. The developing countries, including the Arab States, would no longer allow empires to be built at their expense. The new generation had understood that the fight for freedom was inevitable and that the natural attachment of people to true justice and peace would in time act in their favour.

22. The Palestinian people was now supported by all the progressive forces in the world, as well as by the Arab peoples, themselves threatened by the expansionism and economic and imperialistic hegemony of Israel and its partners. Even the information media controlled by the Zionists no longer called the brave Palestinian fighters terrorists.

23. While the occupiers of Palestine maintained their reactionary racist ideas, the Palestine National Liberation Movement had said in its declaration of 1 January 1969 that it was not fighting against the Jews as an ethnic and religious community but against Israel, the expression of a colonialism based on a theocratic racist and expansionist system. The Movement's ultimate goal was the restoration of an independent and democratic Palestinian State in which all citizens, whatever their creed, would have equal rights. Their fight was therefore that of progress against

reaction, of liberalism against imperialism and of right against militarism.

24. Mr. TEKOA (Israel) said that the war against Israel in 1948 had given rise to two waves of refugees—Arab refugees leaving Israel and Jewish refugees entering Israel from the Arab States. Israel remembered the Arab refugees and understood their suffering. It also remembered the Jewish refugees, fleeing from their ancestral homes to find refuge in Israel. They had lost everything, yet there were no deliberations in the United Nations about their plight and the Organization established no relief agencies to help in their rehabilitation. That was left to Israel, with whatever outside help it could muster. Those Jewish refugees from Arab States, with the European survivors of nazi persecution, had been welcomed by their brethren in Israel and were now fully integrated citizens. The Government and people of Israel had seen in them human beings rather than political pawns, and had treated them accordingly.

25. Most of the Arab refugees had been urged by their own leaders to leave Israel, and the great majority, without leaving Palestine, had simply moved across to the Arab side of the armistice line. But the treatment meted out to them had been quite different. They had become wards of the United Nations. UNRWA had been set up to assist in their rehabilitation and Member States had been invited at international Pledging Conferences to contribute to their maintenance. The most striking difference, however, was in the attitude of the Arab Governments toward their fellow-Arabs. Far from encouraging their rehabilitation, the Arab Governments were preventing their rehabilitation in the host countries and denying them permission to resettle abroad.

26. In his statement at the previous meeting, the representative of Jordan had opposed Israel's efforts to find work for the refugees. Their misery was to be perpetuated and exploited in the campaign of unabated political and military hostility against Israel. Every war brought in its wake a flood of refugees. Yet they did not remain refugees; they were integrated in the countries of refuge. The annual reports of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees showed with what relative speed and efficiency such problems could be solved when there was a will to do so. The only exception was the Arab refugees from Palestine.

27. It was generally known that had the Arab States accepted the United Nations resolution affirming the Jewish people's right to independence and not invaded Israel in defiance of the Charter, there would have been no Arab refugee problem. Yet the Arab Governments deluded themselves that that basic fact could be ignored and responsibility for the problem shifted to Israel. They overlooked the fundamental principle of the much-quoted General Assembly resolution 194 (III) which called for a negotiated peace between Israel and the Arab States, and economic co-operation to develop the region. They merely referred to paragraph 11, which concerned refugees, but even that paragraph, while providing for return or resettlement, made it clear that only those ready to live at peace with Israel would be allowed to return.

28. While waging unabated warfare against Israel and indoctrinating all those who live in their countries with the

belief that Israel had no right to exist, the Arab States demanded that the United Nations insist that Israel should receive into its country people taught to destroy it. That dismissal of fact and reason was especially apparent in the Arab attitude to persons displaced by the 1967 hostilities. Instead of seeking peace, the Arab Governments were organizing continued war, both by their regular forces along the cease-fire lines and by irregular forces which attacked innocent Israel civilians within their own country. The Arabs refused to recognize Israel's right to defend itself.

29. The Israelis fully understood the concern of men of goodwill about the plight of the refugees and felt that their hardships must be alleviated. They could not however forget that the struggle imposed on them by the Arab Governments' continued belligerency was not a fight for better food or shelter but for their lives. In those circumstances, views and resolutions which disregarded the total picture and overlooked the right of one side to safety and security could only be harmful. The problems of displacement in 1948 and 1967, which had been caused by wars stemming from Arab belligerence against Israel, could be fully resolved only in the context of peace. The peace efforts of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine from 1949 to 1951 had been based on that assumption. Security Council resolution 242 (1967) has recognized the refugee problem as one element in a comprehensive peace package.

30. The same reasoning applied to the 1967 displacements. It would be unreasonable to believe, as suggested in the UNRWA report and in General Assembly resolution 2452 A (XXIII), that a large-scale repatriation of displaced persons could take place while hostilities were still continuing. As the Israel representative to the Special Political Committee had said the previous year, pending a peace settlement, Israel was doing its best to reconcile the return of displaced persons with its responsibility for the safety, welfare and security of the local population and the security of the State itself. Israel had voted against resolution 2452 A (XXIII) because that resolution dealt with the refugee question in isolation but it had voted in favour of resolution 2452 C (XXIII), as it had done for two previous resolutions reaffirmed by it.

31. It had been suggested that refugees who had crossed the Jordan River during and after the June 1967 hostilities would enjoy better conditions if they were brought back to the camps on the West Bank. The only empty UNRWA camps on the West Bank were those at Jericho, which had often been in the centre of Jordanian artillery attacks. It was hardly reasonable to expect that those camps could be used in such circumstances. Emergency camps established in the eastern Jordan Valley had had to be moved back to the hills because of an increase in the fighting. Moreover, the terrorist organizations were using the refugee camps for recruiting and training and as arms deposits. That had been especially evident in the Gaza Strip and in Lebanon, but it applied also to the West Bank and an unlimited influx of refugees would clearly have security implications.

32. Since the adoption of the latest General Assembly resolutions, the Arab Governments had increased their encouragement of terrorism and violence. The Israel authorities had discovered terrorists and saboteurs attempting to

infiltrate into Israel among the displaced persons permitted to return.

33. Since June 1967, certain Arab Governments in the Middle East had continued ruthlessly to persecute the Jewish minorities in their countries, in flagrant violation of the Security Council and General Assembly resolutions which they invoked when calling for the repatriation of refugees.

34. Despite those difficulties, the Government of Israel had continued to the best of its ability and in full co-operation with the local Arab authorities in the area, to facilitate the return, especially in cases of family reunion and hardship of persons who had left the West Bank in the June 1967 hostilities and had reissued to other applicants entry permits not used by their original recipients. However, the majority of persons who had crossed the Jordan after the June hostilities could not be regarded as displaced persons who had fled the Israel occupied area. They had left of their own will, in an orderly fashion and without being obliged to do so. That was undoubtedly why so many had not availed themselves of permission to return. Only two thirds of the permits granted had been used in 1967 and only half during the twelve months ending 31 October 1969 and half of those had been used in cases of family reunion or hardship. Since the previous year the movement eastward had been negligible. Many temporary permits had however been issued for visits in both directions for business, family and other reasons.

35. During the year ending 30 June 1969, Israel had contributed £1 1 million to the general UNRWA funds, as well as £1 200,000 for the UNRWA vocational training centre in Gaza, £1 10 million for education, social welfare, security, administration and other services for refugees and nearly £1 2 million for port services, transport and storage for UNRWA supplies. It would announce its cash contribution to the Agency in the forthcoming year at the Pledging Conference. It also contributed to the rehabilitation and welfare of the refugees through its efforts to improve general conditions of life in Israel-held areas. The 1969-1970 budget for the maintenance of public services and for economic development in Israel-held territories was £1 160 million, four fifths of which came from Israel taxes. Despite the continuous attempts by the Arab States to generate tension and violence in those areas, the Israel authorities had continued to promote public works, soil reclamation, afforestation and other projects in which thousands of refugees had been employed. Israel labour exchanges had found employment for almost all persons who had sought work on the West Bank and for about 20,000 in Gaza. Refugees were benefiting from Government vocational training courses and expanded health and education services. With the assistance of UNESCO, the Arab schools in the Israel-held territories had been freed from school texts preaching hatred and violence. Students from Gaza and the West Bank travelled abroad to pursue their studies in Arab and other universities and special arrangements had been made to enable 5,000 Gaza students, mostly refugees, to take Egyptian matriculation examinations.

36. Despite political obstacles, there had over the years been substantial economic absorption of refugees. Even including the Gaza Strip, only a third of the refugees lived

in camps, the camps had developed into villages and small townships and refugees had enlarged their original homes from their own resources. Thus behind the smoke screen of political propaganda, the natural absorption of the Arab refugees into the local life economy was quite advanced. The accurate assessment of the degree of absorption was complicated by the fact that even those who became self-supporting remained registered with the Agency as refugees and their refugee status was handed down to their children and to all subsequent generations. An adjustment of UNRWA's role therefore was essential, especially in view of its financial difficulties.

37. Such adjustment must also bear in mind the kind of situation that had developed in the UNRWA camps in Lebanon. The United Nations could not give assistance to persons engaged in warfare against a Member State. When it was clear that a refugee camp had come under the control of terrorist organizations and become a base for the mobilization, training and/or operation of terrorist squads, UNRWA was not entitled to continue the administration of the camp or the supply to it of relief and services. UNRWA could not administer camps which had become barracks of terrorist organizations.

38. His Government wished to be associated with the tribute paid in the Committee to the Commissioner-General and his associates for the devotion, skill and energy with which they pursued their difficult tasks.

39. The persistent warfare waged by the Arab States against Israel had made UNRWA's operation considerably more onerous. Arab terrorist operations had sometimes been directed against the refugees themselves, causing many dead and wounded. On the other hand, the Israel authorities responsible for security and safety in areas under their administration found it necessary from time to time to take measures to prevent acts of violence and punish the perpetrators and their accomplices.

40. The picture of the resulting situation painted by Arab propaganda was grossly exaggerated but the grave problems created by continued aggression against Israel confirmed that the key to the settlement of refugee problems was peace. It was not enough to wait for peace; it should be planned and worked for immediately. The Government of Israel had therefore proposed immediate action. His Government had this year repeated in the General Assembly the proposal made to the Special Political Committee for the past two years that a conference of Middle East States should be convened, together with the Governments contributing to refugee relief and the specialized agencies in order to draw up a five-year plan under regional and national responsibility for the solution of the refugee problem in the framework of a lasting peace and the integration of refugees into productive life. As in preceding years, the Arab Governments had made no response. The Arab refugee problem was born of war but would be solved by peace. Since 1948 it had been exploited as an instrument of continued warfare against Israel. It was time to end that warfare and find a solution.

41. Mr. EL-FARRA (Jordan), exercising his right of reply, cited the statement in a recent issue of the American-Jewish newspaper *American Examiner* that the Israel delegation in

the General Assembly would know exactly what to expect in the discussions on the item before the Committee: the script was the same as in previous years, and so were the players. Thus the Israel delegation apparently looked upon the United Nations as a theatre in which its representative was the main actor. The Committee was, however, discussing a very serious human problem. It was not just putting up a show, and no amount of distortion or fabrication could change the fact that the question under discussion was of great importance to the peace of the area.

42. The Israel representative had deliberately misquoted the statement which he (the Jordanian representative) had made at the previous meeting, when he had referred to an express statement in Israel's semi-official newspaper that 5,000 workers from the Gaza Strip would be given employment in Israel by December 1969 on condition that they were willing to live in labour camps outside Gaza. To take half that statement and quote it out of context, as the Israel representative had done, was an action ill-befitting a member of the Committee.

43. The Israel representative had spoken of development plans to resettle refugees. But most refugees required repatriation rather than resettlement, and Israel was persistently flouting United Nations resolutions on the subject. The Palestine problem, which was the result of the expulsion of a whole population from its country and its replacement by foreigners, was unique in history.

44. From the Israel representative's remarks about the United Nations call for a negotiated peace, it might be supposed that there had never been any agreement between Israel and the Arab States. He wished to recall, however, that the two parties had signed a Protocol on 12 May 1949, which had been revoked by Israel after it had gained admission to the United Nations. The Israel representative had accused the Arab States of waging war on Israel. But it was significant that each of the three conflicts that had taken place had occurred in a United States election year, when the Jewish vote had been at stake. The Israel representative had also spoken of Israel's right to live; but it was Israel which had ordained that the rightful occupants of Palestine should be expelled and dispersed from their homeland. He had also spoken appealingly of the need for peace. To Israel peace meant the acquisition of more and more territory belonging to another people. The Arab States sought a genuine peace based on justice, because peace without justice was a word devoid of meaning.

45. As for the Israel representative's remarks about "terrorism", the Palestinian people, subjected as they were to acts of torture and oppression, were reacting as any human being would react to an aggressor—as the French, for example, had reacted to the Nazi occupation. Resistance was the natural corollary to occupation. Israel claimed that it must defend itself: did self-defence mean occupying the whole of Sinai and Palestine, the West Bank of the Jordan, Gaza and the Golan Heights in Syria and attempting to expand over the rest of Jordan, Syria, Kuwait and south to Cairo? The ambition of the Israelis was to have land without its people for people without land. In his allegation that efforts had been made by the Arab States to deal with paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) in isolation, the Israel representative had conveniently omitted

to mention that the second and third progress reports⁴ of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine had emphasized that the refugee question and the territorial question were closely interconnected: withdrawal from the territory taken by force was necessary if the refugee problem was to be solved. The problem had remained unsolved because Israel was continuing its occupation and was refusing to repatriate the lawful inhabitants of Palestine.

46. As for the contention that the only empty UNRWA camps on the West Bank were those at Jericho, paragraph 12 of the report (A/7614) of the Commissioner-General showed clearly that there were other well-equipped camps which were only partly occupied. The Israel representative had asked how the camps could be filled again "as long as the locality continued to be subject to constant military and terrorist activity". But why should the Israelis expect to be able with impunity to eject people from their homes as they had done?

47. The Israel representative had given a unique interpretation of the words "displaced persons" in stating that persons who had crossed from the West Bank to Jordan after the end of the June 1967 hostilities could not be regarded as such. All delegations which had supported the Security Council resolution on the subject understood that such persons were in that category.

48. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia), exercising his right of reply, said that the Israel representative was trying to defend a bad case. The historical facts spoke for themselves. The Israel Prime Minister's recent statement that the Palestinians did not exist was either a hyperbole or the height of cynicism. It was somewhat contradictory that the Israel representative should make a statement in the Committee purporting to deal with the problems of a non-existent people. There was indeed a Palestine people, and always had been, and there were now no fewer than 1,400,000 Palestine refugees, and the Committee was now dealing with that problem.

49. He would like to remind the Israel representative that the Jews had been dispersed not only because of the few Diasporas in Jewish history but because large numbers had, in their enterprising way, gone to seek their fortune elsewhere. Jews had lived in Arab lands unmolested for centuries and even held high offices until the birth of the Zionist movement, and some of those so-called "uprooted" Jews whom he had met in Geneva had told him that they wished they were back in Iraq or Syria; they were the victims of Zionism, which based itself on terrestrial ambition and not on a spiritual Zion.

50. In 1914, 94 per cent of the inhabitants of the Holy Land had been the indigenous Arab-speaking people, with Arab customs, culture and tradition. Of the 6 per cent of Jews, many could be described as Arab Jews: they had spoken no Hebrew, and their customs, culture and tradition had been Arab. He had had many friends among them in the Fertile Crescent as well as in Palestine. But a new ideology had been introduced by people from Eastern and

Central Europe. They had been persecuted in Europe and he sympathized with their sufferings. But they had chosen a country of refuge which already belonged to the Palestinians, some of whom had themselves been Jews before they had embraced Christianity or Islam. Judaism was a culture, tradition and religion: there was no such thing as an ethnological Jew. Christian, Moslem and Jewish Arabs were still living in peace with their neighbours. How could the Israel representative speak of terrorism when people of many different ethnological groups, with nothing in common except one religion, Judaism, had come from far and wide to oust the Palestinian people from their homes? And what of the activities of the Hagana, the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern Gang, which had blown up the King David Hotel, murdered Count Bernadotte and Lord Moyne and hanged British soldiers?

51. The Palestinian people had been an entity for centuries. Jerusalem had been a province of the Ottoman Empire, but the Palestinians had sent deputies to Istanbul. The Palestinians had never thought of using violence against anybody until an extraneous element had been introduced, and then not because the intruders were Jews: had they been Moslems, Christians or atheists the inhabitants would still have opposed them. The conflict had begun in 1920 when the Western Powers at Versailles had decided to establish a Jewish State in Palestine, and the Palestinians had realized that they had been betrayed by the United Kingdom Government. Lord Balfour had promised the Zionists a national home in Palestine in return for United States support in the First World War, and it was the Palestinian people who had paid the price. President Truman had brought pressure to bear on certain Latin American States to support the partition of Palestine in order to secure the Jewish vote at the expense of the Palestinian people.

52. The problem was specifically a Palestine problem, not an Arab problem. He could assure the Committee that before the Zionists had entered the area no Palestinian had been known to blow up a house or kill a stranger. Indeed Palestine had welcomed people from all over the world who had come to settle in the Holy Land because of religious sentiment. But when the Zionists had succeeded in establishing themselves in Palestine the Arabs had been forced to adopt the same measures as the Zionists themselves had used in the 1920s and 1930s. He dared to hope that one day some Israel liberals would declare to their Government that those who were fighting for their land were entitled to do so and should not be called terrorists. There were of course many Jewish liberals outside Israel.

53. Politicians thousands of miles away from the scene of the problem were trying to tell the people directly concerned what they should do. He had been familiar with the problem for forty-four years and could tell them that there was no solution. In today's issue of *The New York Times* it was reported that the Israel Prime Minister had congratulated President Nixon on his recent Viet-Nam policy speech and had said that it contained much to encourage and strengthen "freedom-loving people". Another part of the same newspaper referred to an intimation by Mrs. Meir that Israel as a small country would still have a staunch friend in the United States. Would the United States and the Israel Prime Minister consider the

⁴ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourth Session, Ad Hoc Political Committee, Annexes*, vol. II, 1949, documents A/838 and A/927.

Palestinians as a freedom-loving people? They were a freedom-loving people who wanted only their liberty and their homes. Mrs. Meir had said that Israel would be in great peril if the United States were defeated in Viet-Nam. Many of the torchbearers in the campaign against the Viet-Nam war had, however, been liberal Jews. The Israel representative had referred to Jews everywhere as his people. Those liberal Jews who were upholding freedom and justice were certainly not his people.

54. There was a Semitic proverb which said that nothing could cut into iron but iron. The iron which had brought success to Israel had been terrorism, and the Palestinian people could not now be blamed for using the same methods to liberate their country. Not only Jews but many gentiles had been misguided by mass information media, but he would endeavour to open their eyes to the truth.

55. Mr. KHALIL (United Arab Republic), exercising his right of reply, observed that the Israel representative had once again tried to disclaim responsibility for the creation of the Palestine refugee problem. The Committee was being asked to forget the brutal conflicts, the systematic massacres committed by the Zionist terrorist organizations and the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homes and land. The Israel Prime Minister had denied the existence of that people as if the alien immigrants had occupied a waste land that belonged to no one. Responsibility for the creation of the Palestine refugee problem fell squarely on the shoulders of the Zionist oppressors who had wanted a land without its people so that they could bring in immigrants from all parts of the world.

56. Arab delegations and Governments had emphasized again and again that they were not the spokesmen of the Arab people of Palestine. They had supported them and would continue to support them by all possible means, but it was the right of the Palestinians to determine their own affairs. Israel's invocation of the Charter and protestations of peace were hardly worthy of comment. How could Israel, which was occupying three Arab countries and refusing to comply with General Assembly and Security Council resolutions calling for the withdrawal of its troops, accuse its very victims of aggression?

57. Israel's attitude to the United Nations, which had been responsible for its creation, was well known. It not only flouted, but publicly denounced, all United Nations resolutions calling for peaceful settlement.

58. Mr. CHAI (Secretary of the Committee), replying to a question raised at the previous meeting, said that television coverage of meetings was undertaken by the Office of Public Information at the request of television organizations and international television news agencies on payment for the service. The Office of Public Information would continue to televise and film meetings as long as those organizations requested it to do so and paid the costs. They had specifically requested coverage of the Committee's meetings that day and all the speakers had been filmed. Constant contact was maintained with television organizations both directly and by correspondence and every effort was made to inform them of current and impending events. Decision on the coverage of further meetings would as usual be made on a day-to-day basis depending on requests received. It could not at present be foreseen what requests would be made.

59. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) said that he assumed that the televised programmes would be seen by viewers in the United States. All countries should be treated on an equal basis in the matter of freedom of information. But some countries could not afford to pay news agency fees for television broadcasts. It was in the hands of the news agencies or television companies to be one-sided if they so desired. He would like to request the Office of Public Information to study the situation with a view to ensuring that a good balance was maintained. The United Nations existed to fight discrimination and not to grant privileges, and should not allow a distorted picture of its proceedings to be presented to the American people.

60. Mr. CHAI (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Saudi Arabian representative's statement would be brought to the attention of the Office of Public Information.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.