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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTY-SECOND MEETING (PUBLIC)

Held at the Y.M.C.A. Building
Jerusalem, Palestine
Tuesday, 15 July 1947, at 11:25 a.m.

PRESENT:

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sandstrom

Sweden

Mr. Hood

Australia

Mr. Rand

Canada

Mr. Lisicky

Czechoslovakia

Mr. Garcia Granados

Guatemala

Sir Abdur Rahman

India

Mr. Entezam

Iran

Mr. Blom

Netherlands

Mr. Garcia Salazar

Peru

Mr. Fabregat

Uruguay

Mr. Simic

Yugoslavia

SECRETARIAT: Mr. Hoo

Assistant Secretary-General

Mr. Garcia Robles

Secretary

CHAIRMAN: I call the meeting to order.

The Agenda for this Public Meeting contains three items:

1. Public Hearing of Representatives of the Communist Party of Palestine, Central Committee.
2. Public Hearing of Representatives of the League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement.
3. Public Hearing of Representatives of the Council (Waad Hair) of the Ashkenasic Jewish Community.

Can we adopt this Agenda?

(No objection voiced)

CHAIRMAN: The Agenda is adopted. The first item on the Agenda relates to the questions to be put to the representatives of the Communist Party.

Mr. Mikunis, Dr. Ehrlich, and Mr. Vilner, will you please come up on the platform.

(Mr. Mikunis, Dr. Ehrlich, and Mr. Vilner took their seats at the table)

CHAIRMAN: Do any of the Members of the Committee wish to put some questions.

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia): Mr. Mikunis, you have, in replying to the questions of the gentlemen of the Committee, mentioned my country several times. You did so precisely when referring to that part of the programme of your Party which has aroused the greatest interest, that is, to the question of the equality of rights of peoples. This might give me right, and possibly even make it my duty, to make some reference to the fact that you have, in your replies, in order to substantiate the correctness of your views, pointed to the solution of the national question which has been achieved during and after this war in my country.

I shall not do so, however, for reasons which are easy to understand. But, in connection with this example you have given, I should like you to answer a question, in order to make sure that I have understood you correctly.

My question is: Have I understood you correctly if I take your programme for the solution of the problem which has arisen historically in Palestine to mean that, according to your conceptions, your demand for the abolition of the Mandate, the withdrawal of British forces and the immediate proclamation of Palestine's independence is a result of your conviction, that in such an event the actual conditions (and relationships) in Palestine will undergo such a change that they will constitute new conditions and a completely new objective reality, in which the Arab and Jewish peoples, and their progressive democratic forces, free of all influences from without, will be able to find an answer to all fundamental questions of life in common in a common country? Is it so, or not?

Mr. MIKUNIS: Exactly. Our conviction is that when the United Nations Organization will proclaim the independence of Palestine, after the abolition

of the Mandate and the evacuation of troops in Palestine, there will occur, I would say, revolutionary changes. The peasantry, the working class, and the intellectuals will be free to express their opinion. They will be free to mobilize the masses of the people for the protection of the independence and the democratic state. This is our conviction. This is based on the composition of the social forces in Palestine among the Jews and Arabs. This is based on history, even of the recent years, on examples ^{taken from} different peoples. This is the general rule of freedom of all oppressed peoples. We do not think that Palestine and the Jewish and Arab peoples are an exception in this respect. That is why we gave the example of Yugoslavia. Although our conditions are different, we think that the lines for the future development of our country are similar.

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia): Thank you. Now, this is my second question: You have stressed in your speeches and statements, that the fundamental freedoms, such as the freedom of the press and meeting and assembly, of the public expression of thought and conviction, and so on, are not guaranteed in Palestine. I should like you to give us a more detailed account of your experience in this respect? I should also like to know whether such measures are applied equally to all organizations, political parties and individuals?

Mr. MIKUNIS: We have a rich experience in this respect in Palestine. For instance, the Communist Party of Palestine was illegal until 1942 and was very severely persecuted. We had no legal paper. Hundreds of Communists had been deported from the country, and hundreds imprisoned on the basis of Emergency Regulations, without any court. Even on the 7th of July 1941 the Secretary of the Party was arrested along with several other members, although nothing could have been shown against them except that they are Communists. On the basis of the Defence Regulations we were sentenced to be imprisoned--to be detained until the end of the war. The racing forces of democracy were stronger than these Defence Regulations, and the Government, under the pressure of public opinion here and abroad, was compelled to release us after several

months of detention. Our legal paper, Kol-Haam, was stopped for one month on account of a caricature on local matters. The paper of the Arab Trade Unions, the Al-Ittihad, was also stopped last year for one month. Our daily paper, Kol-Haam, until now has no telephone. We have to use private telephones because the Government does not allow us to have a telephone after four or five months of existence of our daily paper. You have ^{the} striking example of yesterday. Yesterday the Government revealed anew its real ^{position} by applying martial measures in Natanyah and its surroundings. I think I am just in protesting here against this collective punishment. I ask whether such measures would be applied against Manchester and Liverpool if two soldiers were kidnapped there. We are deprived of the elementary civil liberties of this country. Inhabitants of Palestine are deported to other countries. They are detained by hundreds and thousands without any reasons. The King David Hotel was exploded in Jerusalem, but after eight days the Government decided to punish Tel Aviv--to impose a curfew and martial measures on Tel Aviv for four days, causing sufferings to two hundred thousand inhabitants, in the biggest city in Palestine. The censorship is very severe, and especially regarding our daily paper. We gave in our memorandum and in our speeches a long list of discriminations and of the deprivation of the elementary civil liberties, both to Arabs and Jews, for the last thirty years. What I wanted to stress, and to underline it in our reports, ^{is} that the main persecutions of the Communists and other progressive circles in Palestine were on account of our fight for Arab-Jewish cooperation and rapprochement because we estimate, and experience has shown, that the strongest weapons of imperialism in Palestine are not the tanks and the bombers, nor the police, but the strongest weapon is the Arab-Jewish antagonism. In every case where Arabs and Jews unite and fight together they always succeed. This is our experience for the last twenty-five years.

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia): You have stated categorically, among other things, that Palestine has been made into a British military base in the Middle East. Can you give us any further evidence substantiating such an assertion and such an appraisal of the matter?

Mr. MIKUNIS: In my address I indicated that the British troops in Palestine are too numerous, not only to suppress the liberation movement in Palestine, and the liberation movement in the Middle East, but ^{that} the number of troops shows that Britain's ^{intention} / to fortify, to strengthen and to widen its military bases here as a preparation for a Third World War. The argument is that these troops have to protect the Jews against the Arabs, and the Arabs from the Jews. It is very strange that these troops are ^{neither} / stationed among the Arabs nor among the Jews. They are stationed in the Southern part of Palestine near the Egyptian Frontier. They are stationed in the South in huge permanent camps. There are many permanent camps in Palestine. Tens of thousands of workers are still engaged in these military camps, ^{the} in construction of new buildings, and in workshops. There are several military aerodromes which are still maintained, where buildings are still added, and where workshops are erected. All these facts, which are not ^{complete,} / prove that Great Britain, together with the aid and consent of American imperialism, erects here in Palestine a military base. I think that you will be able, I hope so, to obtain further details on this military base from the War Ministry of Great Britain.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): Mr. Chairman, I would like, if I may, to clear up one point arising from the paper read by Mr. Vilner. As I understand the proposal made in general terms by the spokesman who is present with us, there would be two stages: There would first be the stage of proclamation of the principle of independence, and secondly the stage of the actual establishment of an independent administration in Palestine. Might I ask whether any of these gentlemen could give us a statement on the time he would think would be necessary before the second stage was started--let us say the interval between the first and the second stage.

Mr. VILNER: In our proposals there are no stages. We think, we are sure, that the peoples of Palestine are **ripe** for independence. The question is not a question of stages. The question is how to obtain--how to carry out **in practice**, now, in the nearest possible future, the independence of Palestine. Our proposal stressed, and ^{it} / was also obvious from the questioning last Sunday, one side of the

matter. It means the pre-conditions for the independence of Palestine. We have stressed in our statement, in our memorandum, and in our oral statement, that the independence of Palestine can be achieved if some pre-conditions were carried out by the United Nations Organization in participation and cooperation with the peoples of Palestine. What are these pre-conditions? First of all, we propose that in the September Session of the Assembly of the United Nations Organization, the United Nations Organization according to our proposals should decide: 1. That the British Mandate of the League of Nations be abolished. 2. That in the nearest future, in the shortest possible time, that the British Army of Occupation and the British Police should leave Palestine. On these two, let me say, negative proposals, at least we have the full support not only of the Communist Party but of the whole Jewish Community and Arab Community in Palestine. Let me in this connection...

Mr. HOOD (Australia): Mr. Chairman, I asked a reasonably simple question.

Mr. VILNER: I will come to that.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): All I want to know is whether you contemplate an interval, and if so how long?

CHAIRMAN: Yes, we need not go into the support you had for your claims. The question was only the time it would take between the two stages.

Mr. VILNER: Yes, I know, but the time is dependent on the situation in Palestine and on the attitude of both peoples, not on abstract calculations of the Communists or other parties. That is our opinion, at least.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, but I do not think it is necessary to read the statement.

Mr. VILNER: No, not a statement, only two or three lines. It is not a statement.

CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is necessary. Will you answer the question without any reference as to what other communities might think?

Mr. VILNER: Our proposition on stages or against stages depends on this: In our opinion the whole question is what is the attitude of both peoples of Palestine.

The stages are not a question to act out in a room alongside a table with a pen in hand. The question of stages and of the possibility to carry out our program for immediate independence or nearest possible independence of Palestine is dependent on this.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, you said it would be immediately. You have said there would be no stages, that it would follow immediately.

Mr. VILNER: No, it is not so simple. I wanted to explain our attitude. I only want to say in one sentence, not to quote, that all the newspapers, right-wing and left-wing in the Jewish Community have supported our demands against British imperialism, though they have objections to some of our other proposals. Now, how to carry out the independence. After the decision of the UNO in September about the abolition of the Mandate and the evacuation of British troops our proposal has said that the Security Council of the United Nations should appoint a United Nations Commission. This Commission appointed by the Security Council should come to Palestine to organize and carry out elections between Jews and Arabs to a constituent Assembly. This body of Jews and Arabs will be the body which will create the constitution of the future regime of Palestine. According to our proposals, as we have announced, this constitution will be ⁱⁿ ^{with} accordance / the realities of Palestine, taking into account the existence of two peoples--equal rights.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): How long do you think that will take; a matter of months, a year, or what?

Mr. VILNER: I think that if the United Nations Organization would give our peoples a real opportunity and make impossible the interference of the police, of the British Military Forces, and of the British Military and Civil Administration, then we are sure that the people will arrange it in months. But, on one condition: No foreign interference in the matters of Palestine.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): Who will carry on the Government? Who will carry on the administration in that period?

Mr. VILNER: I said it very clearly. This question in our proposal cannot

exist. Why? Because immediately after the United Nations Organization's decision, the commission will come to Palestine.

Mr. HOOD (Australia) Do you mean the commission will administer the country?

Mr. VILNER: Well, the commission, or a provisional institution which will come out of the first elections after the United Nations Commission comes to Palestine. I think this will elect the committee, and I am not interested in details. This is up to the representatives of the Jews and Arabs. They will arrange in the best way they know how to work out the first constitution of the independence of Palestine. These are details which cannot change the proposal. It may be organized in this or that way; it does not matter at all.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): Why do you suggest that the Security Council appoint a commission?

Mr. VILNER: Because we are sure, as my comrade has explained a few minutes ago, that the situation in Palestine (and this we should like to stress before you) is very grave. It must come to an end. The quicker the better.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): You have just told us that as soon as the Mandatory Power goes there will be no difficulties, the people will settle down. You understand that the Security Council is empowered to act in situations which may endanger international peace or security. But would that be a situation to endanger peace and security? I thought you said there would be no danger; there would be only reconciliation?

Mr. VILNER: I think that the situation in Palestine, as in other countries, created by American and British imperialism, is endangering the peace. I am not a lawyer, but as a simple man I understand that the term "endangering the peace" in the United Nations Charter does not mean endangering the peace today, this afternoon, or tomorrow morning; it means a situation which endangers the peace. It may in a week, or it may in a year or more. But, the whole political-military situation in Palestine is endangering the peace in the Middle East.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): What is your reason for wanting the Security Council to act in this matter rather than the Trusteeship Council?

Mr. VILNER: Because of two reasons: First of all because the situation in Palestine is so grave and we have martial law every day, murders and so on. Further, the race to build military camps in Palestine is so intense that the situation is such; and the problem is such, that it must be transferred to this body of the United Nations.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): But you have just said that this body would not be appointed until the ^{Mandatory} had gone; is that right?

Mr. VILNER: This body means the Security Council, the situation in Palestine, in our opinion, endangers the peoples. But now the second half of the question was—oh, I am sorry, but I do not remember the second half of your question.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): The question was why do you prefer action by the Security Council rather than action by the Trusteeship Council?

Mr. VILNER: I am not sure if there exists now a full Trusteeship Council in the United Nations, at all.

CHAIRMAN: It does.

Mr. VILNER: I know, but according to the United Nations Charter, which I have here with me, the Trusteeship Council is a body for transition periods. I think that in our former answer I gave also the answer why we have not proposed the Trusteeship Council, but ^{the} Security Council, because we think that for Palestine the question now is independence and not trusteeship. It means that this is also my answer to the question "Why not ^{the} Trusteeship Council?"

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): The speakers here have referred more than once to equal rights for the Arabs and the Jews in this country. I am not sure^{of} what they mean by that. Do they think of parity? Or what is meant by equal rights?

CHAIRMAN: We debated that at very great length at our previous meeting. If you read the record of the previous meetings, I think you will get the answer to what you ask.

Mr. MIKUNIS: Let me add some words.

CHAIRMAN: It is unnecessary because we debated that at great length at our previous meetings.

Mr. MIKUNIS: I wish to say only a few words to clarify the matter.

CHAIRMAN: I am not sure it can be clarified by explaining it once more.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): On Page 20 of Mr. Mikunis' statement, I read: "The UNO should provide every facility to displaced Jews desirous to return to their countries of origin where democratic regimes have been established". As you know, we have considerable evidence that by far the most of the Jews in D.P. Camps want to emigrate into Palestine and not to return to their countries of origin. What I want to know is: Has Mr. Mikunis any indication that people in the camps who are desirous of returning to their countries of origin are being prevented from doing so now?

Mr. MIKUNIS: In order to answer you properly, I will read two more lines of my statement. "The UNO should provide every facility to displaced Jews desirous to return to the countries of origin where democratic regimes have been established, as well as to those interested in emigration to other countries, including Palestine, taking into consideration the desire to join relatives. This is the way to solve this urgent problem, how to eliminate the "Divide and Rule" speculations of imperialism.

In answer to the first question, we have facts. Many facts have been

published in the press in Palestine and in Europe that the authorities of the camps of displaced Jews have not only prevented some of these Jews desiring to return to Poland or Yugoslavia or Hungary, but they have led a propaganda attack against it, describing the new democratic countries as police countries, as police states endangering the security and the material wealth of the people.

Second, we know that the overwhelming majority of the Jews in these displaced persons camps desire to emigrate because of ^{of} bitter memories and ^{of} the horrors they have survived in the countries of extermination. They do not want to return because of this. They want to join their relatives, their families in different countries. That is why we say it is the duty of the United Nations Organization to assist them in this and to give them every opportunity in order to enable them to emigrate to those countries, including Palestine, and to liquidate all these camps in Western Germany, in Austria, Italy and Cyprus, in order to put an end to this shameful story of keeping the remnants, the victims of Fascism, the remnants of such a slaughter --- keeping them two years after the war in such camps under protection of Nazis or former Nazis and allowing such Nazis to make pogroms and provocations against these victims of Fascism.

I stressed this point in my address. I stressed this point, that this is a sin of Cain on those people who speak so much about Western culture and who find a way --- and I ^{came from England?} only three weeks ago --- and I was there during the last weeks ^{there} ~~there~~ thousands of former Fascists and collaborators with the Nazi armies, Ukrainians and Latvians, entered England freely. They have all accommodations and work, ~~as~~ ^{ever} they like. But the gates of England are closed for the Jewish victims of Fascism. Canada is open for the bandits of the Nazi armies, but Canada is closed for the Jewish victims of Fascism. Palestine is closed for these victims ---

CHAIRMAN: I want you to choose your words carefully.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Dr. Magnes in his statement yesterday,

suggested a bi-national state with parity between Jews and Arabs in spite of their differences in numbers. Just answer my question; I do not want your discourse. Do you, as Communists, support that idea?

Mr. MAKUNIS: Support what idea?

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Dr. Magnes, in his statement yesterday, suggested a bi-national state with parity between Jews and Arabs in spite of their differences in numbers. I do not want a discourse; I only want your reply. Do you, as Communists, support that suggestion of Dr. Magnes?

CHAIRMAN: Yes or no.

Mr. MIKUNIS: No; it is not a question of yes or no.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I only want yes or no.

Mr. MIKUNIS: You speak about parity. I do not know what you mean by parity. There may be parity of the government and Parliament.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): You were present here when Dr. Magnes made his statement.

Mr. MIKUNIS: Yes.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I am referring to that statement. I am only asking you do you support the statement and the suggestion made by Dr. Magnes, as Communists, or do you not?

Mr. MIKUNIS: You ask me a question on which I cannot answer because Dr. Magnes gave a complete conception on the question of parity. If you want to know my conception of parity, I will tell you in a few words, but do not ask me if I sign the statement of Dr. Magnes. Of course, I do not sign it. I object to this conception of Dr. Magnes, although I appreciate his attitude on Arab-Jewish cooperation and his work for it.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): On what points do you object? Tell me that.

Mr. MIKUNIS: We object to the continuation of British rule in Palestine under the name of trusteeship.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, but that was not the question. The question was if you subscribe to the thesis of parity.

Mr. MIKUNIS: What kind of parity? There are different kinds of parity. I want to tell you what we understand it is, under two peoples with equal rights, constitutionally, simply. We understand two Houses. The first is the House of Representatives elected democratically on the basis of proportionate representation. Then we suggest the second House, the House of Peoples, also elected democratically on a regional basis, which is composed of fifty per cent Jewish and fifty per cent Arab representatives. This is the second House of Peoples. It must be based on this principle, in order - in addition to the constitution - to create an additional guarantee for the real equality of rights between the two peoples, Arabs and Jews. This is how we understand constitutionally the question of equal rights for both peoples.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): What would be the respective functions of these two Houses, according to you?

Mr. MIKUNIS: The respective functions of these two Houses -- first of all, they have the same rights. And secondly --

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): The functions. That is what I asked you.

Mr. MIKUNIS: If there are questions of law, for instance, the first House is in conflict and these questions are passed to the second House, in every country where you have two Houses. It is very well known what such two Houses ^{are} for instance ^{Union} doing, as in the Soviet and Yugoslavia, and in different other countries. It is a well known thing.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Is there any difference in principle between the Arab and the Jewish Communists in Palestine in regard to the form of the government in Palestine?

Mr. MIKUNIS: I speak, first of all, for the Communist Party of Palestine --

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I am only asking you if there is a difference or not.

Mr. MIKUNIS: Then, we do not discuss questions of details. We are not entering now into details. We have confidence in the people, and we can assure you that after the granting or the proclamation of independence and evacuation of troops, the people will solve all fundamental, as well as the detailed questions for their future constitution and their future free government.

CHAIRMAN: Any more questions?

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I am not satisfied but I will put no other questions.

CHAIRMAN: Well then, we have ended the hearing of the representatives of the Communist Party. I thank you, gentlemen.

We go on with the next item on the agenda: Hearing of the representatives of the League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement and Cooperation. I understand that Dr. Simon and Mr. Cohen are going to speak.

(Dr. Simon and Mr. Cohen take a seat at the table.)

Dr. SIMON (Representative of the League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement and Cooperation): Mr. Chairman, gentlemen, we appreciate very deeply the privilege you have granted us of appearing before the Special Committee which was sent here by the United Nations, an organization which strives for the unity of the entire human race. Our aim is to achieve one union of two nations in this country. Such an effort, we believe, can be our greatest contribution to the welfare and unity of the world, especially since we dwell on one of its danger spots.

The League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement and Cooperation is not a political party. It is composed of a number of organizations and personalities in the Jewish community. The League does not speak in the name of the Yishuv or the Zionist movement. It wishes to offer you the opinion of a

group which has devoted a great deal of thought and a considerable measure of action for the solution of the Jewish-Arab problem. While a party is built upon an all-inclusive programme relating to most problems of life, a league like ours unites its members through one central aim. We all see in the matter of Jewish-Arab relations the crux of the political situation in this country. We believe that failing the solution of this problem, no satisfactory solution is conceivable for the aims of Zionism or for the development and progress of the inhabitants of this country and its newcomers.

All the members of the League are united in their belief that the solution to the political situation in this country must be based upon the principle of binationalism, namely: full equality of rights for both nations. It is not sufficient to grant equality to the individual Jew or the individual Arab. This equality must be possessed by the Jewish people as a whole, returning to its homeland by right and not by sufferance, and by the Arab people dwelling here in its homeland also by right and not by sufferance. This equality for which we strive must guarantee each nation what it needs most: - to the Jews - the right of immigration and settlement; to the Arabs - economic and social development; and to both - the prospect for peace and joint independence.

This common belief unites all the members of the League. While there may be amongst us differences of emphasis why such political agreement between the two nations has not been reached in the past, all of us agree that all the three political factors involved in Palestine are in one way or another to be blamed for the impasse. We do not indulge merely in casting accusations against others. We are constantly struggling for our ideas within the Jewish community and we do not deter from open criticism on the proper occasion. At this moment when we stand before an international forum, we wish to touch upon the international aspects of this problem, and we believe that our criticism within our community gives us the moral right to assess the responsibility of outside forces.

We do not wish to create the impression that we are anti-British. We know how to appraise the fine traits of the English people, its heroic efforts during the last war, especially when it stood alone against the enemy of mankind. But we are concerned here with the Jewish-Arab problem and ⁱⁿ this matter we cannot exonerate the various British Governments from perilous negligence and at times even from harmful actions.

One more word about the activity of the League within the Jewish community. As we stated in our memorandum, the League was founded in 1939 in the midst of the riots, when it seemed that there was almost no hope for better relations between the two nations. The founding of the League crystallised in an organised way certain trends and activities which existed already for many years.

One of the greatest dangers which lurks for the Jew in the Diaspora as well as in his homeland is the danger of despair. The cause for this despair may be very well understood. When a human being loses a third of his blood, then he becomes mortally ill. Certainly, the Jewish people which has lost a third of its sons and its daughters has cause to be gravely ill - the illness of despair. The first symptoms of this illness were apparent in the very year when the League was founded. They increased in intensity during the terrible slaughters of the war in Europe, during the era of the White Paper in Palestine.

The members of the League still believe in man, in the brotherhood of nations, in the progress of mankind and in the eventual triumph of the progressive forces within it. They feel that they are part of one world front fighting for the victory of certain ideals without which there will be no hope for the liberation of the Jewish people either. Our efforts are devoted to heal the woes of our people by showing the way to a brighter future. We feel that it is not sufficient to preach the brotherhood of nations and international unity abroad without making the first steps here. Charity begins at home.

We began our work at home. It is not an easy task. We are swimming against the current of all the three political forces involved. We may assume that the testimony of the economic experts has proven beyond doubt, that Jewish immigration to Palestine has been benefiting the Arabs economically. However, we know that a nation does not sell its national birthright for a pot of lentils of economic development, just as we, the Jewish community of Palestine, are not ready to give up our right to take in our brothers from overseas for equality within an Arab State promised to us by Arab leaders.

We, as Jews of national consciousness, understand and honour the Arab national movement in Palestine as well as in the neighbouring countries. We believe that there is reciprocal relationship between the two national movements. Any progress made by Zionism strengthens automatically Arab nationalism. The problem is how to direct this additional strength not against the aspirations of the Jewish people, not in destructive warfare, but rather how to direct it into positive channels so that the Arabs become active partners in the constructive upbuilding of the country.

The solution to this problem lies in the setting of a common political goal. As long as the economic benefits which the Jews are bringing to the Arabs are counterweighted by political demands, the situation is almost hopeless. However, if we set as our goal bi-nationalism - the creation of bi-national facts leading to a bi-national regime, then the economic benefits brought by Jewish immigration will assume their full positive value. The Arabs will cease seeing in them political danger.

Meanwhile, Jewish immigration must continue on a large scale. We cannot, gentlemen, you cannot, punish the Jews who are knocking at the gates of this country - those remnants, victims of Fascism, who two years after the close of the war are still rotting in their camps and find the doors of Palestine shut in their faces. It is unforgivable that they should be punished and continue

their suffering because of the political entanglement in this country. Their right as human beings to reach a haven in the land of their desires precedes any political settlement. However, we believe that if bi-nationalism were set as the political aim, it would minimize to no small extent the opposition of our neighbours, the Arabs, especially to Jewish immigration. Of all the solutions offered to you, gentlemen, we think that this solution holds the greatest promise of peace, especially if bi-national self-government is granted as soon as possible to the Jews and Arabs of Palestine, who deserve it as much as any other nation in the East as well as in the West.

Professor Weizmann spoke about the normalisation which Zionism seeks to bring in the life of a sick and wandering people. This normalisation has three aspects:

First, it refers to the attitude of the Jewish nation to itself, to its own cultural heritage. There is no contradiction whatsoever between satisfactory neighbourly relations among peoples in one country and the fostering of their respective languages, cultures and educational systems. Certainly the example of Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Canada, and Soviet Russia proves this fact.

Secondly, normalisation in relationship between the Jewish people and their land.

Thirdly, normalisation in the relationship of the Jewish people to the outside world - a nation among nations. The League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement and Cooperation seeks to promote those aims. The return of the Jewish people to its homeland and its entrenchment within it, should be accompanied by the re-establishment of the proper, healthy relations between the Jewish nation and other nations; above all, with the neighbouring Arab nation to whom it is closest related, racially, territorially, and also in the respective aspirations of the two nations for their national and social liberation and freedom.

Jewish-Arab cooperation is not only desirable but is of ^{the} utmost necessity for the welfare of both peoples. Governments and political regimes may come and go, but these two nations, who are bound forever to this land, will always live side by side. Their true freedom and prosperity depend upon their mutual cooperation. Since this is necessary, it must be made possible. It is the noble task of all statesmen who sincerely seek to contribute a lasting solution to the fate of this country and to the peace of the world to help these two nations to find their mutual way.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dr. Simon.

CHAIRMAN: I thank you, Dr. Simon. Will Mr. Cohen please go on? As we have the address you are going to give in writing before us, you can perhaps shorten it here and there.

193 (Mr. Cohen's remarks were interpreted from Hebrew by his own interpreter)

194 Mr. COHEN: The League regrets it was not in the position to present the material addressed the day before to the Committee, since it was originally notified that it was going to testify Wednesday and not today. We understand that the Members of the Committee are tired and we do not wish to tax their patience unnecessarily. I, therefore, wish to devote my words mainly to factual material, and I hope it will help you ^{to} receive a more correct picture.

CHAIRMAN: How long is it going to be?

Mr. COHEN: About an hour.

CHAIRMAN: Then it has to be translated?

Mr. COHEN: No, it will be read directly in English.

CHAIRMAN: But it is not to be read out of the statement we have here?

Mr. COHEN: These are the facts which I am presenting.

CHAIRMAN: Then please make it as short as possible. Is it to be the same as laid down here?

Mr. COHEN: That is right.

CHAIRMAN: But is it necessary to read it? Could we not read it by ourselves? We can take it into our records as read, and then I suggest that you come tomorrow morning and we can put questions to you on what we have read. It will be put in the record as it is.

Mr. COHEN: This is factual material, and I feel it must be read here. We will be glad, of course, to answer any questions tomorrow or any other time.

CHAIRMAN: Can you take out the most important points?

Mr. COHEN: It is all factual material, and therefore I feel that it has to be read here completely.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): I cannot understand why it must be read here. It is understood that we shall read it for ourselves, and tomorrow will be time reserved for our questions.

Mr. COHEN: I feel that according to the procedure which was followed before, it should be read, since it is all factual material and the same procedure was followed before, therefore I urge that it be heard. It will not be any longer than anything that was delivered here.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) (Spoke in French, of which the following is a translation): Mr. Chairman, I think Mr. Cohen will be satisfied if we decide that his statement will be put on the record. This would meet his wishes, since the fact would be made public. We shall study the document tonight and shall be in a position to ask him our questions tomorrow. I think it is useless to read the document, since it will appear on the record. I might add that it has 29 pages.

Mr. SIMON: I think the situation is this: there are many friends of the idea of bi-nationalism; they think it is a very good idea, but it is unworkable. We bring very much material to prove that it works, even against the political stream, and I think after you have heard from the great auditorium the cause of partition, it will not be said that bi-nationalism does not work. We shall find it is not given equal standing when we are deprived of the opportunity to bring these facts before, not only the honourable members of the Committee, but before this public meeting. We choose to make our statement in the public meeting.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, but it is a question of giving us the facts. We are the Investigation Committee, and it is not for the public that this is made.

Mr. SIMON: For both of them - the public meetings are for the public too.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, but does that mean we are here to give the public a lecture on these things? We will read them at leisure and have the opportunity to put questions tomorrow. It is for our edification that you bring before us the facts, is it not?

Mr. SIMON: Yes, but not for you only.

CHAIRMAN: We can only take this fact into consideration.

Mr. RAND (Canada): Dr. Magnes did the same thing yesterday. He did not read his statement.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay) (Intepretation from Spanish): I think that we should give full liberty to everyone who comes here to speak. We should not limit them in the time, and I think that they should have liberty to speak also. Therefore, I move that we should allow Mr. Cohen to speak.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): It is a long book of 29 pages.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): It is not the first long book.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Let me make a statement. It may not be in accordance with yours, and it is not possible to digest all the facts therein in so short a time. It would be better for all concerned from the point of view of the speaker himself, and therefore the Members of the Committee, if we will be able to give some time to studying it and then come prepared to put questions.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): I propose the suspension of the meeting in order to enable us to discuss this point of procedure among ourselves.

CHAIRMAN: We will lose more time that way.

I suspend the meeting for ten minutes.

(The meeting was suspended for ten minutes.)

CHAIRMAN: I call the meeting to order.

Mr. Cohen, you will have one hour at your disposal for your address, and what is going to be cut out will be recorded in our verbatim record.

Mr. COHEN: I consent to that.

Mr. Aharon COHEN (Secretary of the League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement and Co-operation): Mr. Chairman, Gentlemen, in the concise memorandum which we presented to the Committee, there was expressed the opinion that in spite of everything which happened in the past, there exists today the definite prospect that the situation can change finally and basically for the better if there should be established in this country a regime which sees as one of its main tasks the rapprochement of the two nations. We feel it our duty to explain where, according to our opinion, lay the source of the evil in the past and hence the better prospect for the future.

The memorandum presented by the Palestinian Government to your Committee referred to the matter of Jewish-Arab relations, accusing both Jews and Arabs as having frustrated all its attempts to bring about understanding and co-operation between the two nations. This argument is repeated several times. Also Mr. Bevin expressed it in his declaration on Palestine in Nov. 13, 1945 when he said:- "The British Government made every effort in order to bring about an arrangement which would make it possible for Arabs and Jews to live together in peace and co-operation for the benefit of the entire country." However, the good wishes, H.M. Government were frustrated by the parties affected - namely the Jews and the Arabs themselves.

In the Statement of the League which was attached as Appendix No. III to the Memorandum presented to your Committee, we declared that Mr. Bevin's statement will not find support on the part of either of the two peoples whose destiny is bound up with this country. Among both peoples is current the common opinion that the British policy, both by its acts and by its omissions, bears a good part of the responsibility for the aggravation of the national conflict in this country. Mr. Bevin also said in his declaration that "if Arabs and Jews would approach the problem in the proper spirit ... it would be possible to find a solution which would be just to both sides". It is a fact, however, that in the light of the real policy of the British Government in

Palestine, every announcement of the above nature, such as Mr. Bevin's, was not received by both peoples, as a real invitation to understanding and cooperation between them.

We wish to express frankly our opinion that the political conflict in Palestine is first and foremost a result of the bankrupt policy of entanglement followed during the last 25-30 years. This basic fact of lack of a constructive policy towards Jewish-Arab relationship is not impaired by the matter that it was helped to a greater or smaller extent, consciously or unconsciously, by the official leadership of Jews and Arabs. In our opinion, the main and decisive burden of responsibility falls upon the shoulder of the Mandatory Government. We categorically deny the argument that there exists an unbridgeable gulf between the two obligations undertaken by the Mandatory Government - the obligation to the Arab Community of the country and the obligation to the Jewish people which is rebuilding its national home. The present situation in the country is rather a result of the fact that the Mandatory Government did not see in the common interests of the Jews and Arabs a starting point for its policy.

It is an instructive fact that not in one of its many declarations on its Palestine policy did the British Government find it necessary to state simply and clearly that it would look with favour on the effort of the two nations to reach an understanding between themselves on the only possible basis for a fair agreement - political and national equality, and satisfaction of the real vital needs and just national aspirations of both peoples. If in the memorandum presented by the Government to this Committee, it mentioned something about the "honest recognition of Jews and Arabs of the status, needs, and rights of the other community", - it immediately hastened to add when speaking about the principle of equality between the two nations that "this was anyhow an artificial principle that cannot serve as a healthy basis for representative government". On the other hand, there are instances where the

British Government more than once interfered with attempts of Jewish-Arab negotiations and caused their abrogation. The most striking example is the one of Jewish-Arab negotiations of 1922.

In the beginning of 1922 the Jews and Arabs were faced with a negative balance sheet. The Jews had just experienced the bloody riots of 1920-21; they saw the slow development of their national home. The Arabs had just witnessed the collapse of Feisal's rule in Syria and the postponement of Arab unity for an indefinite future. Under such circumstances there ripened the consciousness on the part of both parties, that common action might facilitate the realisation of their goals. With this as the political background, there took place in March-April 1922 a number of meetings in Cairo between the representatives of the Zionist Organization, among them the late Dr. David Eder, head of the Political Department of the Palestine Zionist Executive and representatives of the Congress of Parties of the Confederation of the Arab Countries; among them its President, Sheikh Rashid Rida and Riad Bey es-Sulh, a well-known Arab national leader, at present Prime Minister of the Lebanese Republic. Emil Khuri, Christian Arab, who was then the foreign editor of "Al-Ahram" served as secretary of the Arab delegation.

In the minutes of the first meeting which took place in March 18, 1922, we read that the aim of this conference is "to reach an understanding which will enable both parties to work together ... on the basis of equal rights and interests. In the convening of this conference, the two parties are imbued with the mutual desire to inaugurate a new era of peace and tranquility and to terminate the quarrels and misunderstandings which divide them; because if they continue they are liable to deteriorate our public and private interests and to retard the realisation of the legitimate aspirations of both parties".

"The Arab delegation declares that the Arab countries, after the centuries of corrupt Turkish administration, find it impossible to carry through their reconstruction, in order to take their rightful place in the world again, without the collaboration with representatives of the more advanced Western

civilization. Such representatives can be either:- 1. a well-established European nation, which means a Colonial power which represents a great danger to the independence and unity of the Arab countries; or 2. the Jewish people whose origin is in the East but who are now dispersed all over the world, and who possess ideal forces upon which modern civilization and progress is based. Because the Arab delegates are aware of the antiquity of the Jewish people which is undoubtedly historically related to the Arabs, and of the fact that Jewish colonisation does not represent the entering wedge of a foreign political power; but rather by settling in Palestine, the Jews become attached to it and make it their homeland, therefore they declare that in order to hasten the process of progressive civilisation in their countries, they give first preference to the Jews and they will be happy to work together with them so that the Jews become the most effective carriers of that civilisation which the Arabs need most."

"In reply to this declaration, the Jewish delegates expressed their appreciation of the confidence shown to them, and after having likewise emphasised the ancient racial relationship between the two peoples, they proclaimed that they welcomed the suggestion of the Arab delegates to work together and to open an era of collaboration and peace, for the progress of the above mentioned countries. On the other hand, they drew attention of the Arab delegates to the specific legal interests and aspirations which the Jews possess in Palestine as their historical and national homeland".

"While recognizing these aspirations, the Arab delegates pointed out that in their view the discussion should not proceed on the bases of any previous political agreements or documents, either the Balfour Declaration or the accord between Britain and King Hussein. Arabs and Jews must discuss today as nation to nation. They must make mutual concessions and must recognize one another's rights". At this point the discussions were interrupted. The representatives of the British Government asked Dr. Weizmann to postpone the

negotiations until after the ratification of the Mandate.

In September of that year, after the ratification of the Mandate, the negotiations were resumed in Geneva. The Jewish representation was Mr. A. Saphir who had previously participated in the above mentioned Cairo meetings. On behalf of the Arabs there participated the Emir Habib Lutfallah as the personal representative of King Hussein, and the Emir Shakib Arslan, and Ihsan Sabri of the Syro-Palestinian Delegation in Geneva. The discussions were again conducted in a very friendly atmosphere. In the minutes entitled "Preliminary Propositions of an Understanding between Arabs and Jews" was included paragraph 4 which reads:-

"The Arabs and Jews will decide upon the modus of declaration to be issued concerning the special attachment of the Jews to Palestine. This declaration will be so formulated as to state clearly the connection of the Jews with Palestine as well as the rights of the Arab inhabitants of the country. It is understood that the basis for this declaration will be complete equality of all the inhabitants without any distinction of race and religion."

The minutes go on to say:- "In order to facilitate the realisation of such an agreement, both parties concerned intend to take immediately the following steps:- 1. Cessation of anti-Jewish agitation in Palestine should be immediately proclaimed and an end put to political antagonism between Arabs and Jews in the neighbouring countries. 2. A Joint Committee should be immediately constituted composed on the one hand of representatives of the Syro-Palestinian delegation and the Palestinian Arabs (Moslems and Christians), and on the other hand of representatives of the Zionist Organization, which if it will deem it necessary, will be entitled to co-opt influential personalities in the Jewish world. This Joint Committee should work out the details of a Draft Agreement on the principles suggested above to form the basis of further action".

As rendered by the testimony of Mr. Saphir before the Palestine Royal Commission of 1937, the negotiations were abrogated before they reached the stage of practical details. They were abrogated after Dr. Weizmann, who was

then staying in Rome, had rendered a full report of the negotiations to the British Ambassador.

The testimony of Mr. Saphir, including the protocols of the sessions and facsimilies of the protocols written in French in the handwriting of Nail Khuri, the secretary of the Arab Delegation, were presented to the Palestine Royal Commission of 1937.

However, it is not always possible to attribute such direct acts of interference. Sometimes it was sufficient to hint to one of the parties that in negotiations with them (the British), it would obtain greater concessions than in negotiations with the representatives of the neighbouring people. Thus, during the last war there began to crystallize a serious change of mind in the Arab community of Palestine. The extremist anti-Jewish leaders were not in the country. Some of them were detained in Rhodesia and others were in the lands of the Fascist Axis. Among the Palestinian Arabs there were signs of sobering up from the tragic results of the riots of 1936-1939 which cost them tremendous losses in life, economic ruin, and bitter internecine strife. Also, politically they were facing a broken manger. On the other hand, it was becoming clear that after the war, Palestine would become part of the general problem of the Near East and the solution of this problem would be sought in a wider framework. The late President of the League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement and Co-operation, Mr. Kalverisky and myself visited Syria and Lebanon in the end of 1942 and met with important Arab statesmen, some of them at present leading members of ^{the} governments of these respective countries. We then received great encouragement from these Arab leaders for the activities of the League.

In the summer of 1943 an attempt was made on the part of important Arab circles to come in contact with Jews concerning an agreement, as similar attempts had been previously made by the Jews to reach an agreement with the Arabs. As a basis for the negotiations the Arab suggestions included agreement to Jewish

immigration of over half a million during the coming few years (up to numerical parity between the two peoples); the transformation of Palestine into a bi-national state, based upon parity, which would join the federation of the neighbouring countries; leaving the question of the future of Jewish immigration (once numerical parity was reached between the two peoples) to be decided. But this time it was the official Jewish leadership which hesitated from entering into negotiations with the Arabs on the basis of their suggestion, because it appeared insufficient in the light of the high promises made at that time by the captain of British policy and by the two large political parties of the U.S.A. The Jewish leaders were encouraged by hints and promises until they were enticed to believe that the Jews had no reason to seek an understanding with the Arabs. These same misleading promises were responsible to no small extent for the formulation of the Zionist demands at the end of the war as it was expressed by the "Biltmore Program". There was current at that time a rumour among the Jewish public that Mr. Churchill, personally, had promised one of the Jewish leaders that after the war he himself would pull out for the Jews 'the plum from the pudding'.

Somewhat later the tables were reversed. Just as advances had been previously made to the Jewish leaders, so now the Arab leadership was encouraged to disregard completely the necessity to come to an understanding with the Jews. The repressions against the Jewish community in Palestine, the attempts to disarm it of its self defence, the mass arrests, the deportations to Cyprus of the victims of Nazi-Fascism who managed to reach the shores of this country, etc. - all these acts have been encouraging the extremists and ^{the} uncompromising among the Arabs. It practically hinted to the Arabs that they need not seek an agreement with the Jews because they could obtain all their desires from the British behind the backs and against the vital interests and just national aspirations of the Jews.

Very soon, the Arabs too will probably discover that they were deceived and that they lost precious time. But come what may, the game continues, and the Jews and Arabs exchange roles in the play written by British policy.

The focal point of British policy in Palestine was to use Arab arguments as a pretext for slowing up the development of the Jewish national home, and Jewish arguments as a pretext against the national demands of the Arabs.

The Government claims in its Memorandum to this Committee that it made efforts to bring about an understanding between the Jews and the Arabs but it did not succeed. The Government would have undoubtedly made a much better point if instead of speaking in general terms about efforts which were frustrated, it had brought into its Memorandum at least five cases of such attempts during its mandatory rule of 25 years. It did not do so. It did not mention even five cases for the sake of example.

Ever since its inception, there was a trend in the Mandatory Government of Palestine to encourage the Arabs to oppose the establishment of the National Home promised the Jews in the Balfour Declaration and in the Mandate. After the first riots in Palestine in 1920, high Government officials were accused of being guilty ^{concerning} their outbreak -- as testified in the Protocols of the Shaw Commission in 1930.

Also during late years, the Government maintained epic calmness and complete indifference to religious and national incitement which culminated in bloody outbreaks. When outbreaks did occur they were allowed to develop; many victims were killed; and the relations between the two nations were thus poisoned. However, when in 1933, the Arabs directed their demonstrations against the Government and consciously refrained from touching Jews, these demonstrations were immediately suppressed with an iron fist.

The culminating and most typical instance of this policy was exemplified by the appointment of Haj Amin Al-Husseini as the Mufti of Jerusalem in April 1921 and as the President of the Supreme Moslem Council in 1922. The anti-

Jewish sentiments of Haj Amin were then very well known -- only a year previously he had been sentenced to ten years of imprisonment for incitement to riots against Jews which did take place at that time, but he was afterwards reprieved. In the elections for the office of Mufti, Haj Amin received 9 votes as against 12, 17, and 18 votes for the other candidates who were older and more learned than he. In spite of the rules enacted by the Government itself by which the Supreme Moslem Council was to be elected every four years, no such elections took place ever since. The Mufti was removed from office only after the murder of the British District Commissioner, Andrews, in 1937.

In his Diary, the late Colonel Kisch, who served as head of the Political Department and Chairman of the Zionist Executive in Palestine from Jan. 1923 - August 1931, one can find many sustaining examples proving this point. We shall quote here some of them. It is to be noted that the late Brigadier Kisch can hardly be suspected of having lacked confidence in the British. When Riad es-Sulh -- now Prime Minister of the Lebanon -- tells him on the basis of his observations that "The Government are not sincere about the elections (to the Legislative Council) which were boycotted by the Mufti and his followers, but were supported by a large section of Arab public opinion) and that the Government do not wish to see a rapprochement between Jews and Arabs", Colonel Kisch notes in his Diary:-- "I cannot believe this to be the case, but undoubtedly the Government have acted, and are acting, as if it were true." According to Raghib Bey Nashashibi, "in all matters concerning Arab participation -- in the Legislative Council -- the High Commissioner is following the advice of Richmond who is opposed to all cooperation with the Jews".

Concerning the same Mr. Ernest T. Richmond, Col. Kisch writes in his Diary (21.9.23) that "the Jews and the moderate Arabs see in Richmond a man who identifies himself fully with the policies of the Mufti". And this is the man who served as the Assistant Secretary, head of the Political Department and adviser to the High Commissioner of Palestine during the years 1920-1924.

It was the British Administration, in cooperation with certain interested Arab circles, which was responsible for the removal of Salch Hassan Shukri, the then mayor of Haifa, who enjoyed the respect and esteem of both Jews and Arabs. Hassan Shukri was punished for having sent a message of greetings to the High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, who had arrived in the country. At the first municipal elections which took place after this incident in 1927, Hassan Shukri was re-elected with the overwhelming majority of both Jews and Arabs and he served as Mayor in Haifa till his death.

During all these years, the Government revealed an encouraging leniency towards various Arab extremists who incited not only against Jews, but who also threatened and terrorized all Arabs who strived for an understanding between the two nations. The Palestine Royal Commission of 1937 testifies to this effect in its report:-

"If one thing stands out clear from the record of the Mandatory Administration, it is the leniency with which Arab political agitation was treated, even when carried to the point of violence and murder." (Chs.5-55, p.140).

The Government not only encouraged the extremists, trouble makers and inciters; there are sufficient examples to prove that it refrained from, and at times actually interfered with attempts to bring about an understanding between the two nations. Thus, when there was formed in 1930 the "Workers' Brotherhood", an organisation of Jewish and Arab workers which called upon workers of both nations to cooperate and to fight together the poison of national hatred, it was shut down by the Government. The excuse given was that "It suspected the members of the organization of destructive acts" and because the aims of the organization "were not in accordance with paragraph 3 of the Ottoman Law of Associations ..."

Among the numerous laws enacted by the Mandatary Government in this country, most of them limiting the freedom and rights of the inhabitants and immigrants to this country, one cannot find even one law which prohibits national incitement of any nature. There is a very large measure of freedom in this country for national incitement and sowing of hatred of one nation against the other. Newspapers or organisations which aim to widen the gulf between the two nations were hardly ever forbidden. In a land of two nations the Government and the censorship reveal unrestrained leniency towards insulting and inciting articles written in the papers of one nation against the other. On the other hand, the censorship is very severe not only with criticism aimed at the Government, but also at times makes it even impossible to refute the chauvinistic incitement and reveal the true nature of reactionary intrigues.

The best example of the typical policy of the Government we can find in the developments in the Arab community during the last year. The anti-Jewish extremists among the Arabs were encouraged by the boycott propaganda, by the return of Jamal Husseini to Palestine, by the return of the Mufti to the Middle East, and by the permission for the founding of aggressive military organisations such as "Wajada" and "Futuwa". When these organisations did not develop according to plan, the Mufti sent here an Egyptian reserve officer to act as a commander; and this foreign officer was not detained from entering the country and from acting as the chief commander of the above mentioned military force. A month before the Arab boycott was pronounced by the Arab League, Ahmed Hussein, the leader of the Egyptian Fascist "Green Shirts" Movement - a man who was under arrest during the war because of his pro-Axis activities - was allowed to tour Palestine and make inciting speeches, preparing the ground for the boycott. The fanatical "Moslem Brotherhood" of Egypt was likewise allowed to open branches in Palestine and was even given time on the Government-owned Palestine Broadcasting Station in Jerusalem.

In the light of the incitement to riots which began with the return of Jamal Husseini, an Arab newspaper, "Al-Minhaz" (12.5.46), wrote: "Those people who speak about a revolt forget that 1946 is not 1936; that there exists at present a United Nations Organisation; and that all matters of Palestine should be directed to it". This was also the stand of the "Arab Front", which included all

opposition forces in the Arab Community who were opposed to the Husseini policy. Contrary to the demands of the Opposition, Jamal Husseini refused at the time to transfer the Palestine problem to the United Nations. He poured his wrath against this united Opposition front because some of its constituent groups openly advocated the principle of Arab-Jewish understanding. It is noteworthy that just at the time when this Arab opposition front was in formation, the High Commissioner saw fit to receive Jamal Husseini as the leader of the Arab Community at the time when even formally he was no longer the sole representative of the entire Arab community. The Arab Opposition front was rapidly disbanded under the pressure of the Mufti's return to the Middle East, perhaps managed for this very aim. The decision to disband the Opposition front and the appointment of the present Arab Higher Committee under the leadership of the Mufti, took place at the notorious secret session of the Arab League Council in Bludan in June of last year in the presence of Brigadier Clayton, one of the Chief British Officers in the Middle East. It is rather obvious then with whose aid the Husseini clan returned to power in the Arab community in Palestine. As an example of the Husseini rule we may cite the boycott against UNSCOP, which is accompanied by the passive attitude of Government. The same authorities who found ways to influence the Arabs to testify before the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry and to participate afterwards in the London Conference on Palestine - those authorities did not find it necessary this time to appeal to the wide Arab public to cooperate with your Committee. All the Arab newspapers except "Al-Iwanda", the organ of the Mufti, urged cooperation with the United Nations Committee. In your tour through the Arab areas of the country you hardly witnessed any special attempts on behalf of Government authorities to counteract that boycott. The aims of the Husseini-sponsored boycott against your Committee may be summed up as follows:

First; to undermine the prestige of the United Nations;

Secondly; to prevent direct and free contact between the Committee and the Arab masses;

Thirdly; to prevent testimony of opposition forces, especially those who stand for Arab-Jewish understanding; who are ready to compromise in order to reach such an understanding; and who are increasing lately the criticism of the

undemocratic character of the present Arab Higher Committee;

Fourthly; to prevent the repetition of the vulgar anti-Jewish appearance made by a spokesman of the Arab ~~Higher~~ Committee at the United Nations Special Session on Palestine - an appearance which aroused a great deal of indignation among wide Arab circles.

The Arab Community is quite aware that the Government practically supports the Husseini Party. There are quite a number of examples which prove that the Government does not look favourably upon Arab-Jewish friendship. There were a number of instances when individuals, especially Arabs, working for cooperation between the two nations, were molested by the police. One must draw his own conclusions. Strange as it may seem, though it is a fact, you can speak openly in Palestine about warfare between the two nations and prepare for it, but joint Arab-Jewish activities aiming at understanding and cooperation have to be conducted many^a/time secretly, "underground", so to speak.

We must state frankly that in our opinion the Government's indifference to political murder is equivalent to tacit consent to the wiping out of all opposition in the Arab community. The same must be said for the Government's indifference to the anti-Jewish boycott which, although from a purely economic point of view, may be not too successful, and is resented and circumvented by many Arabs, nevertheless poisons the day-by-day relations between the two peoples. It is unimaginable that the perpetrators of such activities cannot be discovered at a time when the Government spends 40% of its budget for police and security, and only 11% for education, health and social services combined. If the Government really does not know the culprits, we may ask, what kind of Government is it anyhow? If it does know and keeps silent, what name shall we give such an administration? It is noteworthy that the only trial which took place so far involving political murder was the case against the avengers of the Emir Zeinati of Beisan who had been murdered for the "crime" of maintaining friendship with the Jews. Well, the blood avengers were brought to court, but the murderers of Emir Zeinati himself have not been revealed to this day.

On the basis of numerous facts such as those mentioned above we allow ourselves to assert that the Mandatory Government, by its deeds as well as by its omissions, bears a considerable share of responsibility for the aggravation of the national conflict in Palestine.

Nevertheless, in spite of the severe consequences brought about by the complicated and ruinous policy of the last 25-30 years we are convinced that there is still no place for despair and that the situation can still be saved.

On what do we base our belief?

One of the most important facts which the Committee should note is that the Palestinian reality is not made of one metal. It is composed of various factors and processes, some positive and other negative; and further development may be in either direction. The main question which faces Palestinian policy is -- which one of these processes will be encouraged and given a lifting hand.

The Committee had the opportunity to hear on a number of occasions that the direct day-by-day relations between the two peoples in this country are not at all bad. There were mentioned quite a number of cases of cooperation between orange growers, in the municipality of Haifa, joint strikes of workers, etc. But it was claimed that daily relations were one matter and politics was another matter. In our opinion this distinction is artificial and erroneous for at least two basic reasons:--

First; the instances of Jewish-Arab cooperation even under the existing political circumstances testify to the vitality of such common interests.

Secondly; such cooperation upholds possibilities which, if supported by the proper programme ^{and} encouraged by the right policy, would definitely influence the political situation. It is understood that an improper and inept policy interferes with such development and directs it into undesirable channels.

In the confusing political atmosphere of our country even political matters of such insignificance assume political importance. Under such circumstances, instances of cooperation have to contend many a time with visible or secret stumbling blocks. If in spite of all this, orange growers, workers, government officials and members of other classes overcame all these obstacles and succeeded ⁱⁿ carrying through common activities, it is a sign that there exists not only common vital interests, but also mutual confidence and readiness to go together. It is noteworthy that such instances of cooperation are usually conducted, most naturally, on a basis of parity, regardless of the numerical strength of the two parties and without reaching that "deadlock" with which one is threatened when proposing it as a principle for the political regime of the country.

Indeed, Palestinian reality has two faces:- the official reality as made in declarations, and the reality which is teeming underground, secretly, but with tremendous force and vitality.

On more than one occasion you have heard here of instances where Jews revealed a good will, support, and readiness to cooperate with the Arabs. We have no intention of repeating or adding additional cases. It is quite possible that, were you to hear today the leaders of the Arab community, you would not have been presented with these facts which you are entitled to hear so that you get a full picture of what is going on here. We shall attempt to do it.

Immediately after the Government spokesman had "proved" to the Anglo-American Committee last year the alleged existence of the "unbridgeable gulf" between the Arabs and the Jews, there broke out the mighty and extensive strike of 35 thousand workers in the Government services which included Arabs and Jews. Thanks to their solidarity, they won important concessions. Thousands of Jewish and Arab workers and officials marched together through the streets of Jerusalem and Haifa, carrying slogans proclaiming:- "In our unity lies our strength".

At a time when Arab leaders threaten with "war" if another Jew ~~was~~ allowed to enter the country, it was reported in Haifa that, on the day masses of Jews disregarded the curfew and clashed with Government forces which attempted to deport Jewish immigrants from the shores of the land - on that day there were many instances of Jews retreating to Arab houses and being welcomed with understanding and sympathy.

At a time when Arab leaders pour fire and brimstone against every new Jewish settlement which reclaims the wilderness and fructifies another corner of the land, Arab fellaheen receive their new neighbours with open arms. On the occasion of the settlement of the ex-soldiers' kibbutz called Ma'ayan

Baruh, Arabs from the neighbouring village welcomed them with coffee, and in the afternoon, at a meal according to oriental traditions, there participated tens of Arabs and Jews. Numerous Arabs from the neighbourhood visited the new Kibbutz "Yakum" which had recently settled near Wadi-Falok. At the open air festival arranged by the kibbutz as a get-together with the Arab neighbours, a solid foundation was laid for friendly relations between the new Jewish settlement and its Arab neighbours. Only two weeks ago we witnessed a similar case of a hearty gathering between Arabs and members of the Kibbutz "Eyal" who settled on the eastern shore of the Huleh near the Syrian border.

In spite of the anti-Jewish propaganda, friendly relations are being formed between the new Jewish settlements in the Negeb and the Arab neighbours. The average Arab, even if he is under the influence of the current anti-Jewish slogan, "Defend the South against Jewish invasion", welcomes Jewish settlement in his vicinity because he hopes that it will bring him water, bus transport, medical aid, and modern methods in many other fields. During the spring, when a number of Jewish settlements were cut off from all contacts with the outside world by torrents of rain, neighbouring sheikhs came to their aid and brought them sacks of flour, rice, eggs, and offered the services of their camels gratuitously, absolutely refusing any remuneration for the services they rendered their younger neighbours in a time of tribulation.

In the Nathanya area, Jewish settlers and Arab fellahcen, under the direction of the Government Department of Agriculture, carried through an extensive joint campaign of locust extermination/which threatened their crops, on an area of thousands of dunums, regardless of national barrier.

In spite of absence of diplomatic relations between the official leaders of both communities, good neighbour relations are daily phenomena. Arab neighbours participated in the opening ceremonies of the school at Kfar Atta. A deep impression was left by the fine, fiery speech of one of the Arab guests who called for peaceful and brotherly relations and ended with the words:-

"If some Arabs come to visit you and do not behave as they should, do not hold it against the entire Arab Community." It is noteworthy that all the Arabs who came to this function requested that their names should not be mentioned and that they should not be photographed -- either out of fear of vengeance from Arab extremists, or for lack of desire to be exploited for Jewish propaganda aims. Many such gatherings between Jews and Arabs take place under cover. An Arab who receives an Arabic newspaper which calls for Arab-Jewish cooperation sometimes is liable to get in troubled waters. Jewish and Arab workers recently again revealed their trade union solidarity when 1500 workers struck against the Iraq Petroleum Company in Haifa. There is complete cooperation between the Arab and Jewish Councils in the Haifa Oil Refineries. At the mass meeting of Arab and Jewish workers, the speeches were translated into both languages, Arabic and Hebrew, and one of the Arab workers illustrated the importance of solidarity by pointing to a bundle of reeds and exclaiming:- "Everyone singly can easily be broken; together - never."

It was interesting to note the reaction of the Arabs to the Government repressions against the Jews last summer. It is true that this reaction was not the same at every place but there were typical traits throughout. In numerous conversations with all kinds of people - intellectuals, shopkeepers, workers, and peasants, one could hear the same refrain: "Yesterday it was our turn, today it is yours; and so it goes on..."

During those days, many Arabs called on the Jewish neighbours to comfort them. There were instances when Arab village elders came to beg pardon for acts of vandalism committed by inhabitants of the villages against Jewish vineyards during the Arab searches, and they even revealed the culprits. In some places, even officers and soldiers of the "Arab Legion", who usually are not trained in an atmosphere of exaggerated friendliness to Jews, revealed a fine spirit towards the Jewish settlers during those days of hardship, and warned them beforehand of searches; transferred messages to confined relatives etc. During the siege against Jewish settlements in the Negev, Arab neighbours

watched over the fields and agricultural machinery left out in the open, and even sent food and other gifts to the besieged settlers. In several cases, Arabs expressed their anxiety and deep human interest by bringing candy and also money for the women and children of Jews confined in detention camps. When fire broke out at that time in the water station of Kibbutz Eylon, in Western Galilee, the neighbouring Arabs put it out even before the members of the Kibbutz arrived. Right now the members of Kibbutz Mizra are conducting a course in fire-fighting for their Arab fellaheen neighbours whose threshing-barn recently caught fire and was extinguished by the members of the Kibbutz in the middle of the night in spite of the prevailing road curfew.

It is interesting to note the reaction of the Arab public to the martial law which was declared against certain Jewish areas -- Tel-Aviv and sections of Jerusalem -- during March of this year. These areas were cut off completely for several weeks from other parts of the country, and the Army took over. Postal, telephone, and telegraph services were stopped; all motor communication was prohibited, extensive daily curfews and constant searches took place; all import or export of raw materials etc. was prohibited. While the Arab press which reflects the opinion of the ruling circles mostly published expressions of joy, the wide Arab public was dissatisfied and ill at ease. It was again revealed how closely connected are the two national sectors in the country. In Tel-Aviv one felt during the siege how vital the connection with the Arab wholesalers of Jaffa^{is} and in Jaffa the rise in prices of all linens, clothes and textile and other vital necessities revealed how important the Tel-Aviv sources of supply^{are} for the Jaffa inhabitants, in spite of the boycott. Arab craftsmen in Jaffa eagerly awaited the lifting of the siege of Tel-Aviv so that they would be able to obtain the necessary raw materials for their work; Arab villagers were compelled to sell their produce at half price at considerable distances. The Arab newspaper "Falastin" published -- contrary to its

general line of policy - a leading article which said: "The means employed by the Government harm the innocent and lead to the economic disaster of the country without affecting the terrorists in any way. Terror cannot be fought by barbed wire, fortresses and martial law. One is concerned here with political terror and it must be fought by political means." The leftist Arab weekly "Al-Ittihad" wrote that the Government sanctions harmed the entire country. They caused the termination of constructive activities, the flourishing of the black market, the impoverishment of the population, the strangling of public opinion, the "suppression of freedom of the press, freedom of movement, and all other civil liberties".

We witnessed numerous instances of simple human relations between Jews and Arabs in their daily life. Even a chauvinistic Jewish sheet, which usually does not distinguish itself by special sympathy for the Arabs, wrote during those days of siege: "Many Jews of Tel-Aviv can tell stories of fine acts of sympathy shown by Arabs. Many a time Arabs endangered their life and 'smuggled' Jews out of Tel-Aviv to Jaffa and back refusing any remuneration."

This too is part of the reality of Palestine - pictures which reveal the other side of Palestine life.

Six weeks ago, 40,000 workers in Army public works, two-thirds Arabs and one-third Jews, went out on a warning strike, demonstrating their solidarity against illegal dismissals and poor working conditions. This strike was the largest in scope and in number in the history of the trade-union struggle in Palestine. It encompassed all workers, daily, weekly, or monthly, in all the army enterprises, workshops, Army offices, airways and Navy.

The strike was carried through in complete cooperation between the Histadruth--
The General Federation of Jewish Labour -- and the Arab labour organizations.
The workers' demands were formulated by representatives of workers of both
nations. At the strikers' meetings the importance of Jewish-Arab cooperation
was greatly emphasised. The weekly "Al-Itihad", which speaks for one of
the two Arab labour organizations, wrote the following about the significance
of the strike:-

"The imperialist British and American press is greatly disturbed by the
calling of a strike in the Army camps by Arab workers in cooperation with Jewish
workers. This press misleads the world public opinion by arguing that Arabs
and Jews cannot live together peacefully and that the only solution for
Palestine is partition Besides economic significance, this strike bears
great political significance."

One can also tell of attempts to bring about political cooperation
during the recent period. The most striking example is the agreement drawn
up between our League and the 'Palestine el-Jadide Society, the text of which
is enclosed as Appendix IV in the Memorandum we presented to the Committee.
The founder and living spirit of this Arab Society was Fawzi Darwish el-
Husseini, who was murdered by "anonymous assassins" several days before the
club-rooms of the Society were to be officially opened in Jerusalem.

The deceased, who was forty-eight years old, was a member of the well-
known Husseini family and for many years participated actively in the Arab
national movement. At the time of the disturbances^{of} 1936 - 1939, he was
detained in a concentration camp. However, in recent years, he arrived at
the conviction that the only path to the fulfilment of Arab national aspirations
lay in agreement between the Arabs and the Jews, the solution of the Palestine
problem on the basis of political equality between the two peoples -- and the
realisation of the just, national aspirations of each.

At a meeting in Haifa, exactly a year ago, Fawzi el-Husseini explained
the basic conception of his circle : -

"There is a road to understanding and agreement between the two peoples, although there are many stumbling blocks on the road. Agreement is absolutely necessary for the development of the land and the emancipation of the peoples. The conditions for agreement are: - the principle of non-domination of one people over the other; the establishment of a bi-national state on the basis of political equality; and full-economic, social, and cultural co-operation between the two peoples. Immigration is a political problem. Within the framework of an over-all agreement, it will not be difficult to solve the question of Jewish immigration on the basis of the economic absorptive capacity of the land. The agreement between the two peoples must receive the endorsement of the U.N. It must also assure the Arabs that the independent, bi-national Palestine will join in a union with the neighbouring Arab countries."

On another occasion, at a large meeting of Arabs and Jews in Jerusalem, at the house of Mr. Kalvarisky, the late president of our League, at the end of August, 1946, Fawzi el-Husseini said:

"The political conditions have deteriorated. The political consciousness of the Arab public has greatly increased; at the same time, however, the extremist influence has gained in dominance. Great strength has accrued to the Palestinian Arab Party (of Jamal Husseini and the Mufti) not so much in the moral sense as in the material sense; and it has the support of the Government. Those sections of the Arab people who do not want to follow unreservedly this Party have nowhere to turn for help. Experience has taught us that the official policies of both parties concerned -- Arabs as well as Jews -- have caused injury and suffering to both. It is true that for many years I was a follower of Jamal Husseini, my cousin. My companions and I made him our leader and we participated with him in various political activities. I took part in the disturbances of 1929. However, as the years progressed I came to the conclusion that activity in this direction is worthless. Imperialist politics toy with both of us, both Jews and Arabs. There is no other way except to unite and to work side by side for the good of both of us."

No one can imagine that the Palestine Police knows less about this murder than the man in the street. Yet it is a glaring fact that the investigation of this dastardly murder did not exceed the usual procedure of dealing with ordinary crimes, while issuing strict warnings not to intrude in the political field. The murderers of Fawzi el-Husseini those who sent them have not been discovered till today. The

widespread Egyptian newspaper "Ahbar el-Yom" published an interview with Jamal Hussein, the deputy chairman of the Higher Arab Committee, commenting on this murder: "My cousin stumbled and he received his just punishment."

The Government's attitude to this murder and to similar political murders can have only one meaning: The blood of Arabs who seek an understanding with Jews can be spilled with impunity. Jamal Hussein proclaimed brazenly that he is responsible for what he calls "acts against traitors", and he is recognized by the Government as the legitimate representative of the Palestine Arabs. The Government watches how the ruling clique of the Arab community suppresses every spark of liberty and desire for agreement with the Jews -- watches and keeps silent. This indifference of the Government encourages the extremists and naturally discourages the compromising sectors.

The above-mentioned phenomena are also part of the Palestinian reality --- this wild reality which has developed without any positive guidance. Had the Government desired to use the keys which were placed in its hands, it could have unlocked tremendous possibilities for rapprochement between the two peoples. It could have undertaken large irrigation projects which serve the interests of both Jews and Arabs and convert desolate areas into sectors of intensive cultivation. This was not done. Even when the Government did establish an irrigation project in a mixed area, it established it for one nationality only.

It could have made special grants to those economic enterprises operated jointly by Jews and Arabs, and thus encouraged the establishment of such enterprises in various fields. It could have introduced the study of Hebrew in the Government --

Arab schools and ^{aided} the extension of the study of Arabic in the Jewish schools. It could have trained teachers in both languages; promoted contact between educators of both nations. None of this was attempted. In some of the Government Arab schools there exists an attitude of non-fraternization with Jewish schools.

There was a wide scope of activity for rapprochement in the field of administration. However, except for the Government Law Classes, no attempt was made to train officials of both nations for common activity in the Government administration.

We know that there cannot be education towards independence without granting the opportunity to carry responsibilities. However, in this country the most important positions in the administration have been closed to both Arabs and Jews. Not only have the salaries and pensions of the British officials swallowed the greater part of the sums set aside for local administration, but, as the members of the Committee may recall the answer of the Government witness to a question put by one of the members ^{was:} Only two of the thirty-nine Assistant District Commissioners in the country are Palestinians. Not one Arab or Jew is a District Commissioner or a member of the Government Council. The Chief Secretary stated that it was impossible to appoint a Jew in an Arab District or an Arab in a Jewish District; and in mixed Districts it was impossible to appoint either of them; so the only solution was to appoint British. Apparently, it never occurred to the Government to appoint an Arab in an Arab District and a Jew in a Jewish District. There are officials in this country, Arabs as well as Jews, who enjoy the full confidence of the wide public regardless of nationality. According to the announcement of Mr. Stubbs, Public Information Officer

of the Palestine Government, there were appointed from the beginning of 1946 to March of 1947 the following new officials: 105 Englishmen, 26 Arabs and 15 Jews.

One may rightly ask, in the light of this reality of two national movements facing each other, and opposing each other's demands -- wherein lies ^{the} solution; how can the knot be unravelled?

We believe that the situation is not as desperate as it may appear on the surface. One of the interesting facts in the Palestinian reality is that there exists a gap between the feelings of the wide masses of both peoples and the official proclamation made by their respective leaders. The policy of extremism which was nurtured during the recent years became popular under the misleading assumption that extremism pays. However, wide circles are coming to realize that it is not so; that extremism leads to destruction. If it were demonstrated that co-operation holds greater promise, that the attempt to bridge temporary conflicting interests presents greater hopes, then the mood of the two nations would definitely change. From this point of view, the right decision on the part of the United Nations and its effective realisation may have decisive influence.

In our view there is no conflict between the real interests and just aspirations of the two peoples. The Jews want freedom to develop unhindered their national home through immigration, settlement, ^{The Arabs seek progress, political independence,} and political independence, a rise in their standard of life, freedom from want and ignorance, freedom from economic backwardness and feudal domination. We believe that the Jews can attain their goal in complete co-operation with the Arabs if Palestine is constituted as quickly as possible as the

bi-national state in which they will live as two nations enjoying equal national status in Government regardless of their relative numbers. We believe that the Arabs can attain their goal in complete co-operation with the Jews in the framework of a bi-national state as outlined above.

A political regime based upon these premises, taking into consideration the special needs of the country and the needs of the two nations involved, can stimulate the progressive and compromising forces in the two nations, and make them co-operate for the benefit of all the inhabitants. Such a regime can open the gates of Palestine to the Jews waiting to enter; it can raise the standard of living of the Arabs to that of the Jews through joint development schemes, so that both of them may progress shoulder to shoulder. Such a regime can advance both nations quickly to independence in their common homeland.

A bi-national solution, with international constitutional guarantees, can remove the fear of domination of one nation over the other. The status of each nation and its basic interests will be safeguarded and preserved. A new leaf can be opened in the stormy history of this country and its progress can become a torch for the entire Middle East.

More and more Jews and Arabs are becoming aware that a way must be found for the two nations to come to an understanding along the lines of progress, peace and co-operation for which the best forces in human society are struggling today. However, after what took place in this country during the last

25 - 30 years, one must work with wisdom, decisiveness and courage in order to untangle the painful knot and find a just and workable solution. Such aid should and must come from all the peace-loving and progressive forces of the entire world.

CHAIRMAN: I thank you. I also thank you for having observed the time limit. Now, we might put some questions. I want to ask some questions about the constitution of the League. You represent which bodies here?

Mr. SIMON : In the League are represented co-operatively the Workers' Party of the Hashomer Hatzair, the Ihud, and besides both these organisations we have individual members of different circuits of the Yishuv.

CHAIRMAN: Yesterday, we heard about the constitution of the Ihud. How many members has this Workers' Party of which you spoke?

Mr. SIMON: I am not a member, myself, but I think about 10,000. The voters were up to 25,000 at the last election, if I am right.

CHAIRMAN: And these individual members of the League, how many can they be?

Mr. SIMON: Not many. I think some hundreds.

CHAIRMAN: Are your political aims the same as the Ihud?

Mr. SIMON: Not quite the same.

CHAIRMAN: What is the difference?

Mr. SIMON: The difference is that the Ihud based itself upon the principle of numerical parity. The League does not do that. In the League is incorporated the party of the Hashomer Hatzair, which does not commit itself to numerical parity but only to political parity. The Ihud members of the League are free to hold their own opinion in this specific point.

CHAIRMAN: What does political parity mean?

Mr. SIMON: Political parity means that the Jews and Arabs in Palestine will have the same rights regardless of who is in the majority and who is in the minority at a given moment.

CHAIRMAN: But I have understood that that was the programme of the Ihud?

Mr. SIMON: Yes, but in addition to this political parity the Ihud thinks that Jewish immigration must be continued up to numerical parity, and then its continuation may be dependent on the common institutions of the bi-national state. To this policy the League does not commit itself.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) (Spoke in French, of which the following is a translation) Nobody favours more than I do the idea of rapprochement and collaboration by the Arabs and Jews. But I must admit I do not fully understand the programme of the League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement.

Yesterday we heard Dr. Magnes and the representatives of the Communist Party. In my opinion their programme gave a better answer to the question of rapprochement.

The second statement we heard today can be divided into three parts.

The first is a critique aimed at the Government, in which it is said that the Government of Palestine has done nothing towards a rapprochement between Jews and Arabs. I will not go into this question.

The third part aims at proving that all the statements or actions of the Arab leaders are not supported by the Arab masses.

We personally know of an example which contradicts this statement; I mean the boycott. In spite of all our efforts we have not achieved any success, which proves that the Arab Higher Committee is not as divided as is alleged. But I will not go now into these details.

We are told that the Arab masses do not follow their leaders. I would like to ask: can the same thing be said about the Jews?

Can one state that the Jewish masses do not agree with the extremist ideas of some of their leaders?

The examples you have given us deal more with collaboration on the part of the Arabs. Of course, you say that the Jews are willing to collaborate, but if the word "rapprochement" has the same meaning in English as it has in French - and I notice your Organization is called "League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement" - this means that both sides must take a step forward.

You have mentioned all the claims of the Jews, and you say: "an understanding can easily be reached; the Arabs have only one claim, and that is the raising of their standard of living, we can guarantee to them that this will be achieved". But as far as we know the Arabs have other claims.

I would like to know if, in your desire for a rapprochement, you have attempted to understand the viewpoint of the Arab masses or the Arab leaders, so as to achieve a collaboration which could truly be a rapprochement and an operation.

to ascertain and to understand the real claims of the Arab side.

Mr. COHEN (Interpretation from Hebrew): Concerning the question of the programme of the League, it was presented to you in the memorandum which was given before the hearing. This programme was crystallized after direct contact with certain Arab groups. These negotiations which have taken place between certain groups of Arabs and Jews have proved more than once that this programme has considerable chance of success, if it were supported by the United Nations, because it does take into consideration the vital needs and just aspirations of both peoples.

I am sorry the honourable Member of the Committee has understood my remarks and those of Dr. Simon ^{as meaning} that we considered only the economic needs of the Arabs. This is not the case. We have always emphasized that ^{and} there are national interests which exist here, and just ^{vital} claims on the part of both peoples. Any solution which does not take into consideration the just national claims of both peoples and their aspirations will not be a fair solution and not a solution which will be practicable.

I also wish to add, to the honourable Member who has asked this question, that the boycott which is being practised by the masses of Arabs against the Committee cannot necessarily be proved to be the sentiment of the wide masses of the Arabs, when one takes into consideration the force and the threats which have been used by the leading cliques of the Arab groups to suppress it. But there is another factor which must be taken into consideration, and that is that there exists a great deal of disappointment on the part of the Arab public concerning the many commissions who have visited this country. It should be recalled that of the Anglo-American Committee, which visited here and which came to a unanimous conclusion, that in spite of the fact that promises were made that if its conclusions were unanimous they would be carried out, the conclusions were annulled a day after they were announced. We do not say the Jews did everything in their power in order to realize the programme. Furthermore, I wish to add, about the influence of the League on the wide public: one cannot judge the influence of this League merely by its membership or by its numbers, since it is not organized as a political party. We believe that it represents a considerable section of opinion in this country. Furthermore, as it will be recalled, it is not such a long time ago that the official Zionist movement as a whole believed and pronounced the principles of equality and non-domination.

It is, of course, the great tragedy which has overtaken the Jewish people, the despair which has also followed the result of the

White Paper policy, which has changed the official attitude of the Zionist movement. We understand this despair, but we do not accept it, and we call upon the Jewish leadership not to fall into despair, to continue the constructive policies of immigration, of settlement, but at the same time to call in the Arabs for cooperation and to call to the international forces for aid for such a programme.

Furthermore, not only the Jewish public follows closely our testimony here, but wide groups among the Arab public are following keenly what we have to say and also what we have to say before your Committee here. There were a number of Arabs who desired to present to you a memorandum. We did not encourage them for the simple reason that we did not wish they should meet the same fate that befell Fawzi Darwish El-Husseini because we need such friends for further work and co-operation.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): If there are any other questions, I myself would like to ask one, but in view of the hour I would refrain.

CHAIRMAN: Are there many Members wishing to put questions?

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia): I have only one question.

Mr. SALAZAR (Peru): I have one question.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): I have one, but I do not know how long the reply might be.

CHAIRMAN: We might try to get it through.

Mr. SALAZAR (Peru): To appreciate the development of your movement, I should like to know what is the percentage of Jews and Arabs in your Organization.

Mr. COHEN: Our League has never tried to organize Jews and Arabs within its framework. We are working primarily within the Jewish community and we are trying to encourage the rise of similar groups within the Arab community, so that we both can be cooperating together. In the light of the events which have taken place lately, you can very well appreciate what might happen if a different policy were followed.

Mr. SALAZAR (Peru): I assume, then, that your Organization represents the opinion of a group of Jews, but is not entitled to speak in the name of any Arabs?

CHAIRMAN: Can you answer, Dr. Simon?

Mr. SIMON: I know the language better, but he knows the facts better. I think on this question I may give a short answer. We can speak not in the

name but in the spirit of this Arab group who signed with us this agreement, but we appear here for ourselves as a Jewish organization.

Mr. SALAZAR (Peru): Have you tried to form among the Arabs a similar organization to yours?

Mr. CHEN: As I stated before, this League does not see its task to be to organize among the Arabs, but rather to help and encourage the rise of similar groups among the Arabs. I believe that the best proof of cooperation is the example of the agreement which was signed between our League and this Falesein el-Jadide Society as shown in the memorandum which was rendered to this Committee, and especially as pointed out in Appendix IV in that document. I advise the Members of this Committee to examine carefully this document, which undoubtedly has also answered the question of the honourable Member who asked before about the possibility of agreement between Jews and Arabs, not only from an economic but also from a political basis. We believe that this agreement, signed between us and the Arabs, entertains a wide programme which, if adopted, would give both nations the fulfilment of their just aspirations and rights.

Mr. SMICH (Yugoslavia): I should like to know what are your views on partition.

Mr. COHEN (Interpretation from Hebrew): Our League believes in the programme that the relationship between Jews and Arabs and their problem has to be solved in a non-partitioned Palestine.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): I merely want to ask whether Mr. Cohen would agree with the statements we have heard in other evidence to the effect that the relations between Arabs and Jews in all the Arab countries in the Middle East are bad and are getting worse, and if so, if he agrees, broadly, with that. Does he think it has any bearing on the prospect of a rapprochement in this country?

Mr. COHEN (Interpretation from Hebrew): I believe the question was not put correctly. In order to understand the relations between Jews and Arabs in the entire Near East, one should investigate the situation of Jews and Arabs in Palestine, rather than investigate the relations in the Near East and say that must influence the situation here. It is right that the Jewish situation in a number of countries in the Near East is bad and has deteriorated, but the Jewish situation is bad in many other countries of the world, and we believe that is the main task of the Zionist Movement - to solve this problem basically and normalise the relationships of the Jewish people and the other peoples of the world. This will affect the relations of the Jews in the Near East as well as the relations in other parts.

I have travelled extensively throughout the Near East and the neighbouring countries and I am convinced that if the problem of Jewish and Arab relations were solved here it would help and change for the better the relations ^{between} Jews and Arabs in the neighbouring countries.

CHAIRMAN: Does anyone else wish to ask any questions? (No such wish indicated.) Then we have heard the representatives of the League of Rapprochement and I thank you for the evidence you have given.

The last item on the agenda, the hearing of the representatives of the Ashkenazi Jewish Community, is postponed until tomorrow. The hearing is adjourned until tomorrow at nine o'clock.

(The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.)