



UNITED NATIONS
 GENERAL
 ASSEMBLY



Distr.
 GENERAL
 A/SPC/90
 6 November 1963
 ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Eighteenth session
 SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
 Agenda item 32

REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF
 AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST

Statement by Mr. Ahmed Shukairy, Spokesman of the Group mentioned
 in document A/SPC/89, at the 399th meeting of the Special Political
 Committee on 5 November 1963*

Before addressing myself to this tragic problem - the problem of the Palestine refugees - I crave the Committee's indulgence to preface my statement with a few preliminary remarks which are pertinent to the subject-matter of the item now under consideration.

In the first place I should like to express to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the honourable house, our deep and sincere appreciation for granting us this hearing. The Palestine delegation would like to seize this occasion to put on record our gratification that the people of Palestine have been given this occasion to express their views on such a burning issue, so vital to their national cause. Technically speaking, we know we are here before this august body under a privilege based upon licence, and not in exercise of a right that pertains to a full-fledged Member of the United Nations. We know that ours, here, is a voice and not a vote, but in substance and in effect - and I daresay in the interests of world peace and security - we are here as of right, and in our own right.

In the most telling words of Mr. Davis, reiterated in his noble statement to the Committee yesterday afternoon, "the Palestine refugee problem has a bearing on the stability and peace of the Middle East, and hence on the stability and

* Circulated pursuant to a decision taken by the Special Political Committee at its 400th meeting on 6 November 1963.

peace of the whole world." These are the sober words of Mr. Davis, your accredited servant in the area, your honoured agent in the area, and if they are true - and definitely they are true, without a shred of doubt - then we are here not only in our right but as an absolute necessity to preserve peace and stability not only in the area but also in the whole world at large - to quote the words of Mr. Davis, as they appeared in his statement yesterday. For we are the principal party, we, the Palestine delegation here in the United Nations, who are making our appearance in the United Nations for the first time at this session, and we represent the principal party, the people of Palestine, the legitimate owners of the country and the rightful possessors of their homeland, their ancestors' homeland, for countless generations and since time immemorial. This is the Palestine delegation and these are the people of Palestine who now stand before this august body.

We are the principal party in the matter and it is the ultimate destiny of the people of Palestine which will determine the major issue before you which arises from this problem: war or no war, peace or no peace. This issue will be determined by the ultimate destiny of the people of Palestine, and their future.

On the other hand, let me remind this honourable house of the ringing proclamation of the Charter, addressed to all nations, large and small. In the very first pages of the Charter, in the preamble, Members are pledged as the United Nations to promote "the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples", "respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion". The Charter has further expressed determination "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small". With these fundamental principles and lofty objectives in mind, it would therefore be a flagrant injustice to discuss the problem of the refugees in the absence of the people themselves, or to deny their status. I heard it said yesterday that we do not represent anybody. I make reference to no delegation, but it has been claimed, it has been said, that we represent no one. At most, we represent the refugees. But where are the people of Palestine? Who does represent the people of Palestine? It is my

assertion that the Palestine delegation represents the people of Palestine, and we are here on our right, not by grace, and had the Charter of the United Nations been implemented rightly in 1947, we would have our seat here amongst you, the other representatives, as a full-fledged, fully independent and sovereign Member of the United Nations. But because the Charter was betrayed, we come to you as petitioners; we come to you without a seat amongst you; we come to you here as a grace but in fact because of the interests of international peace and security. We assert our presence here because we are the major factor that can make peace or war in the Middle East, and this depends upon the destiny and future of the refugees in general and the Palestine people as a whole. It is upon them that the whole future of the Middle East will be determined and decided.

The United Nations, we venture to submit, cannot adjudicate by default or in absentia. Even a justice of the peace cannot proceed in the absence of the party aggrieved. The United Nations, let me recall, is the highest international tribunal. It has been rightly described as the "Parliament of Man", and the destiny of man must therefore be decided in his presence, and not in his absence. This is not a rule of prudence, or an attribute of universality, towards which this Organization is heading. It is rather an elemental rule of justice, more so that the item that stands now before the Committee is the outcome of the most flagrant injustice ever known in the annals of history, without precedent and without parallel.

I beg you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee, to take this pronouncement of mine as the whole truth, without any scintilla of exaggeration. Yes, Gentlemen, ours is the most tragic tragedy, without a precedent and with no parallel. Mr. Davis has told you in his report that the lot of the Palestine refugees constitutes a tragic page in human history. These are the words uttered not by an Arab's voice. These are not the indictments which come from Arab origins. This is the indictment of Mr. Davis himself, who speaks of this problem of the refugees as being a tragic page in human history. And what history? Not medieval history, where one expects a tragic page; not ancient history, where one expects a tragic page - and medieval and ancient history are full of tragedies and tragic chapters, not only pages - but this is a tragic page in human history, modern history, within the life of the United Nations, during the age of the United Nations, and to have this tragedy of this nature is a tragedy in itself, against United Nations authority and against the

United Nations Charter - the lofty principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

What is really disastrous, and disastrous indeed, in this regard - and I would say, amounting to an insult to the intelligence of the United Nations - is that the Israeli delegation has contended from the rostrum of the United Nations that the Palestine problem does not exist at all. These are not my words. The Palestine problem as such does not exist at all - these are the sober and calculated words uttered in cold blood by the delegation of Israel in this hall, to this Assembly, from this very rostrum, Mr. Chairman, that the Palestine problem does not exist at all. The truth is that such an Israeli fallacy does not exist at all. Mr. Davis has referred to the Palestine problem as such on more than one occasion.

In the books of the United Nations, ever since 1947, the Palestine problem has figured prominently amongst all international problems. Moreover, should any testimony be needed to refute the Israeli delegation's distortion, the item before you is the testimony. Our meeting here, our assembling in this hall this morning is the very testimony of the existence of the Palestine problem. Were it not existing we would not have met in this hall to discuss the refugee problem, which is part and parcel of the Palestine question. To deny the very existence of the Palestine problem is a travesty to the United Nations and is an international mockery which is intolerable for the civilized world to hear. For a problem that has been in existence for the last fifteen years, with 1,200,000 refugees living in exile in tents and in camps after having been uprooted from their homelands and robbed of their possessions by Israel - to come here and have courage enough to state that there is no problem called "the Palestine question", is in my view fantastic and ridiculous and cannot be tolerated by the General Assembly as it would be much below the intelligence of the United Nations.

The item now deals with the problem - to be exact, let me quote the figures of Mr. Davis - of 1,210,170 refugees of Palestine. This is not the problem of refugees, this is a refugee nation in its totality. But it seems this human tragedy is too insignificant to Israel, too negligible to Israel, too trivial to Israel, to make an item before the United Nations or to prove the very existence of a problem entitled "the Palestine problem". We all recall that the Palestine

question has led to a war in 1948, a tragic war, with all the afflictions and the throes of war, let alone the tripartite war of aggression in 1956; and still in spite of the war of 1948 and the aggression of 1956, Israel finds enough courage to come to the rostrum here to claim from this international forum that the Palestine question does not exist.

The truth, the vibrant truth, is that the Palestine problem exists in the United Nations and outside the United Nations and will continue to exist in the United Nations and outside the United Nations until the people of Palestine are repatriated to their homes and are repatriated to their homeland.

It is no wonder, however, that Israel should deny the very existence of the Palestine problem. Having uprooted the people from their land, robbed their homes, denied them the right of repatriation, it is easy, and quite easy, for Israel to deny the very existence of the Palestine problem.

I must, therefore, categorically state that as long as the Palestine problem exists in any manner and under any title, we shall be present here in the United Nations. United Nations presence, as you know, has become a United Nations practice to deal with the various international problems. We hear it said in the various Committees that for any international problem, the United Nations must assert its presence. United Nations presence has become an international practice. We must assert our presence in the United Nations. We shall come here to the United Nations through the gate of oppressed peoples until we get through the gate of fully sovereign States, with the whole of Palestine fully independent and fully sovereign.

I know that, to this grand mansion of the United Nations, there are two gates: one gate for fully sovereign and fully independent States where you get through with your full rights as a State, and another gate for oppressed peoples and nations through which we have come on this occasion and through which many of you, gentlemen, have come on previous occasions. Many statesmen of this Organization have come through the gate of oppressed peoples until their liberation was achieved and accomplished, until their statehood was recognized, until their full independence was achieved by a liberation movement. They have gone through those gates of oppressed peoples, through which we have come this time. On occasions in the future it is our hope that we will not come through the gates of oppressed nations and

peoples. We will come through your gate, as a full-fledged Member of the United Nations to occupy our worthy seat here in the United Nations and to unseat our oppressor who has robbed our homeland and our homes.

I need hardly remind this Committee that the Palestine delegation does not make its appearance today as ordinary petitioners coming from a self-governing or non-self-governing territory. We have not come to rectify an error in a draft constitution, nor have we come to seek the release of political prisoners or put domestic matters in order. Neither have we come to seek redress against a violation of human rights, pure and simple. In the lifetime of this Organization this august body was seized with various complaints based on a violation of human rights particularly with respect to private individuals - and I stress, private individuals - the case of Mindszenty and the case of the eleven American airmen, just to bring to your memory only a few instances. On these occasions, you will recall, the Assembly went into acrimonious debate, into emotional discussion and into a hair-splitting deliberation. Most recently, on the question of the death of two Israeli farmers, the Security Council, with the exception of Morocco, with the exception of the Soviet Union, with the exception of Venezuela and probably of others whom I do not recollect, the Security Council almost stood up on tip-toe, so excited, it was a vehement excitement on the proceedings of the murder of two Israeli farmers.

But as to the present item, the item before you under consideration, let me warn with all earnestness and solemnity, that the problem does not belong to an individual or individuals. Neither does it disclose an ordinary violation of human rights. What is at stake is a whole people, a whole refugee nation, dispossessed of their ancestral homeland. The issue is not a violation - and I emphasize it is not a violation - it is a negation - of human rights, down to the base, down to the roots, down to the core of negation. The problems with which we are seized in the United Nations were violations of human rights in respect either of one individual or so many individuals. But what is at stake, what is posed here before the General Assembly, is not a violation, but an entire negation, the very absence, the very non-existence of human rights at all in their entirety. This is the gravity and intensity of the problem with which we are dealing at this session of the Assembly.

The issue involves the right inherent in every people to live in their homeland, just as the 110 nations represented in this Assembly live in their homelands. I have said 110 delegations, not out of error, not out of inadvertence, not out of forgetfulness, but I have said 110 delegations, here, represented in this Assembly with wilful intention because we do not recognize Israel, we do not recognize its existence, and as Mr. Davis had explained so ably and so eloquently here yesterday, we do not recognize that Israel is entitled to any rights, even to continue to exist.

These are not the sentiments of the Palestine delegation that are brought forward here, driven home to the minds of the Assembly. I invite your attention to the report of Mr. Davis, where he spoke of the feelings of all the people of the Arab world with regard to the existence of Israel. It was not sugar-coated. There was no coating in this treatment by Mr. Davis. It was so vibrant and so glaring when he said in plain language that the Arab people - not just the politicians, not just the refugees, not just the people of Palestine, but the whole rank and file of the Arab people - in their homelands, from Morocco westward to Kuwait eastward, have this great, deep feeling, resentment and embitterment with regard to the very existence of Israel and the right of Israel to continue to exist. This is the gist of the statement by Mr. Davis. This is a man who does not live, as does the Conciliation Commission, behind closed doors, probably at the 38th or 32nd floor of the General Assembly. This is a man who has lived with the problem, himself, who has talked with the people in their camps. He has lived with this problem in his heart, and he comes here to tell you that this is a problem for all people, not for an official. These are the findings of a noble man, who has an objective outlook; not the findings of the Conciliation Commission, living frozen here, in one of the floors of the United Nations, who has submitted to the General Assembly its "progress" report. It is amazing to read that the title states "progress report". It is really a travesty to the United Nations to have such a title, the "twenty-first progress report", given by the Conciliation Commission. I assume that there are twenty "progress" reports preceding this one, but what progress has the Conciliation Commission effected?

This is simply ridiculous. You sit over the mandate of the Palestine refugees of the resolution adopted in 1948. You issue twenty-one reports,

claiming progress, and I think the title should be corrected. I am not allowed to offer an amendment here; I am not representing a State, but I think that this should be rectified to read: "The twenty-first failure report of the Conciliation Commission", not "progress" report. We would be abusing the word "progress" in its genesis, with all its connotations, with all its meanings, when we claim that this is the twenty-first "progress" report, and for every "progress" report had the Conciliation Commission been able to repatriate one refugee, then I could report before this Committee that twenty-one of our people, twenty-one refugees, have been repatriated through the efforts of the Conciliation Commission.

Paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) has asked the Conciliation Commission since 1948 "to facilitate the repatriation ... of the refugees", whether or not Israel wills it; and here comes the United Nations Conciliation Commission, at the eleventh hour, at the door of the General Assembly, to create a special atmosphere under which the Committee is to work and to function in a frozen atmosphere, to claim to say that it is the twenty-first "progress" report. How can it have this courage, this bravery, here in the United Nations, where people understand words and their connotations? We do not understand this. We have dictionaries in the United Nations library where we can discover what "progress" means.

This is truly regrettable: that a United Nations agency should assume that the work of the Conciliation Commission over the past fifteen years has been one of progress. It could be progress, the progress of failure, of frustration, and a miserable failure, indeed. In this respect, I agree with the Conciliation Commission that it had been a progress, but a progress in deterioration, a progress of failure, in desperation. This is the progress which we can understand. No other meaning is understandable, no other meaning should be receivable by this house.

By the very nature of the problem, we assert our presence in the United Nations as of right, in the very interests of international justice and the dictates of world peace and stability. With the United Nations Charter in mind as the highest international code, it is our sacred right to be heard, and it is your sacred duty to heed.

In the second place, and this is my second representation, I feel it is necessary to tell the Committee what this Palestine delegation is, to which

reference was yesterday made. What is this Palestine delegation? A word or two in this regard will give you a better appraisal of the report of Mr. Davis on the matter, and a better understanding of the statement which Mr. Davis made here yesterday, for in a sense the Palestine delegation, its composition and its membership, are the real living characters of the report of Mr. Davis.

I shall not refer to myself, for I am not a newcomer to the United Nations. I had served as chairman of the Syrian delegation for a number of years, and I had served as chairman of the Saudi Arabian delegation for a number of years, also. These seats are both occupied by my worthy friends and brethren.

I have always disclosed myself as a refugee and I disclose myself again as a refugee. I have never been ashamed to do so, nor am I ashamed to stand up in daylight and disclose myself as a refugee. The shame lies at the doors of the imperialist Powers, which made of myself and of my countrymen a refugee nation. Be that as it may, let me turn to my colleagues on the Palestine delegation.

To begin with, I should like to tell the Committee that all my colleagues are Palestinians, down to their very core, down to the bone, to the nerve. Flesh and blood, they are Palestinians. They were born and raised in the Holy Land, the land of their fathers and forefathers, since time immemorial. The Committee can be sure that they are not emigres, who entered the country under the British bayonets. Likewise, let me assure the Committee that my colleagues are not aliens to the land, strangers to its people, or colonizers from all corners of the globe, who come to the country in an ocean of American financial assistance. No. They are lawful citizens of Palestine, rooted to its soil, and deeply attached to its history. Their homes are their own, and I should like the Committee to understand the connotation of "their own".

Their farms are their possession. Their orchards, they have planted themselves. Their mosques and churches, they have established with their fathers and grandfathers. Their towns and villages are their toil and, I repeat, are the toil and the sweat of their ancestors. They have dispossessed none; we have dispossessed none, and none we have robbed. We are the victims of the most degrading international robbery. I will not name the robber. He is too well known to be named. Neither will I ask his condemnation, for the Great Man Moses has condemned him: Thou shalt not rob thy neighbour - and from thy mouth ye shall be condemned.

As to their domicile, my colleagues come from different parts of Palestine. Some come from Jerusalem, wherein lies the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Mosque of Omar, in living testimony to the national fraternity of the Moslems and Christians of Palestine, a fraternity reflected in the composition of our delegation. Some others come from Galilee, and you know what is Galilee - those of you who had been taught the New Testament in their childhood in school: you know what is Galilee and the holiness of Galilee which has witnessed the miracles of the Great Master, Jesus Christ. Others have come from the south with its ancient pilgrimage routes to the Holy Places in Mecca. Others come from the coast - the historic crossroads to the three continents of the world. We all come from Palestine - we are all Palestinians - now and for all time to come. After 1948, many of us have changed residence, have changed addresses; many acquired different identity cards, different passports and different occupations and ways and walks of life. Amongst my colleagues we have two distinguished ladies quite prominent in women's movements. Two they are, but they are more than two. Amongst my colleagues we have an ex-minister, we have members of Parliament, we have a Head of the Bar Association, we have a farmer, we have a landowner, we have a doctor, we have a mayor, and we have a London barrister who came straight from London. But we remain Palestinians, all in all, refugees first and foremost, except that destiny has decreed that we are not on the rolls of Mr. Davis.

This is what distinguishes the Palestine delegation in its present composition from the 1,200,000 refugees living in camps. We are all refugees that breathe the same national aspirations, that are haunted with nostalgia for our homes and homeland with the one and only difference that we are not being supported by Mr. Davis, not supported by international charity. We still keep our dignity and we are not living on charity. It is only destiny; otherwise we would have been on the rolls of Mr. Davis, living in camps and unable to have our voice heard by the Assembly. Destiny has decreed that we should not be on the roll, but that the Assembly should know and be sure that the aspirations of us all as Palestinians are one and the same: the unshakable determination to go back to our home and to go back to our homeland in dignity and in honour.

The Palestine delegation is drawn from the Palestinians in Jordan, in Gaza, in Syria, in Lebanon, in Libya and also from North and South America. We come

from different countries in the Arab world, but we are one, one in all and all in one, devoted to Palestine until the last breath of our life. So it is with all our fellow countrymen, wherever they may be, whether they live in tents, camps, caves or towns and villages.

We are twenty in number, seemingly large for a delegation. But this is, again, a little phenomenon of the tragedy in which we live. This is another aspect of the tragedy and disaster into which we have fallen. Our people have been dispersed far and wide in the Arab world, and wide representation is in keeping with our wide dispersal.

But scattered as we may be, we come to you in one delegation, representing one people for one Palestine, free and undivided, independent and unpartitioned; and herein lies the solution of the Palestine refugee problem, a solution based on the unity of the Holy Land - and I emphasize the unity of the Holy Land because it cannot be a Holy Land if it is partitioned; holiness is indivisible.

When I speak of home and homeland, I must emphasize that I am not injecting notions alien to the item, nor am I attempting to implant issues foreign to the deliberations. Home and homeland are the very landmarks highlighted by Mr. Davis, the Commissioner-General of the Agency, in his report under the current discussion. Mr. Davis referred to the "grave injustice done to the refugees, through the loss of their homes and homeland". Thus the loss of homes and homeland is the crux of the problem before the Committee. Indeed, relief, shelter, vocational training, medical services and social welfare, although necessary in the daily life of the refugee, should be considered as ancillary to the problem. They are marginal aspects of the problem. But the central, the crucial and the vital is the home for the individual and the homeland for the people. This is the real issue that stands before the Committee. In fact, this is the real issue that stood before the United Nations ever since it was seized of the problem. You can be sure, Mr. Chairman, it will continue to be the outstanding issue before the United Nations for all time to come, until the refugees go back to their homes, go back to their homeland. It was this premise that led Mr. Davis to state in his report:

"... the picture drawn in the annual reports for the past four years of the status and plight of the Palestine refugees, ... their state of mind and emotions, remains generally true." (A/5513, para. 3)

These words by Mr. Davis, couched in general terms, I beg to submit, go to betray impatience. The impatience of Mr. Davis was disclosed by him yesterday when he informed the Assembly of his resignation.

This resignation is not an achievement of the mandate of Mr. Davis. We know that an agency can be terminated when something is achieved, when the work is done and finished. But Mr. Davis' resignation is not the result of an achievement, or an act finished. It is because of impatience. And what is this impatience? What are the reasons for the impatience of Mr. Davis? For so many reasons he cannot disclose them. But we, the people of Palestine, can search the mind and heart of Mr. Davis to find out the reason for his impatience after his noble services for five consecutive years. He comes to the Assembly impatient to declare his resignation. This is not a resignation due to an achievement, but a resignation due to non-achievement; not a resignation due to progress, as the Conciliation Commission claims, but a resignation due to failure - and to progressive failure. I beg to submit that Mr. Davis' impatience has been disclosed in his report. Mr. Davis is fed up, as we must have learned from his statement yesterday. Mr. Davis is sick and tired of the whole question that has been entrusted to him.

That is why he decided to refer you to his four previous reports in toto. On the part of Mr. Davis, we feel that this is a revolting attitude against Israeli defiance and, what is more, against Israeli continued defiance.

In his present report, Mr. Davis, while corroborating his previous reports, makes a most terrifying pronouncement, a pronouncement to this Assembly; it is an ultimatum, a final warning, by Mr. Davis before he quits the job with a clear conscience and independent mind. He has decided to serve an ultimatum, a warning, to the Assembly in a few words, saying that the Palestine refugee problem is as intractable as ever. After fifteen years of relentless effort by Mr. Davis and his predecessors, Mr. Labouisse and Mr. Blandford and a whole list of distinguished directors, Mr. Davis comes to the Assembly to say that the problem is as intractable as ever. This is the final warning and the final ultimatum served to the Assembly, and which makes the statement of the Conciliation Commission most ridiculous when it says that the problem is in the direction of progress and that the talks conducted on the higher level are under way, and that

they are being held in the best of atmospheres. This refuted by the ultimatum of Mr. Davis when he said that the problem remains as intractable as ever. And it would have been more honest for the Conciliation Commission to follow the lines of Mr. Davis' honesty - to come to the Assembly here and say that the problem is as intractable as ever due to the defiance of Israel and the arrogance of Israel by not implementing the resolutions of the General Assembly which have been reiterated and reaffirmed by the General Assembly for the last fifteen years. This would have been more in keeping with the spirit of the United Nations - for the Conciliation Commission to have followed the footsteps of Mr. Davis and to have said that "We have failed, and the failure is conditioned and reasoned by the defiance and the consistent and persistent rebellion of Israel, because they have not even accepted the very principle of the United Nations resolution for repatriation".

You all recall that the Conciliation Commission early in its third report, paragraph 13, stated that Israel had not even accepted the principle of repatriation. And the Conciliation Commission comes here after fifteen years and says that everything is quiet on the Western Front. And we have quiet diplomacy; that is why it is quiet on the Western Front - I do not know what front it is; is it west or east or somewhere out in the stratosphere?

These recitals from the report of Mr. Davis make it abundantly clear that the problem before you is primarily one of home and the homeland. In essence it is not a problem of rations; it is not a problem of sugar, soap and oil, or the refugees. It is a problem of our national existence. First and foremost, to be or not to be is the problem. That is the gist of Mr. Davis' report. And I must declare here and now that Mr. Davis is one of the few public figures in the United States - and I say the United States for the hearing of the delegation of the United States; so loudly I say it - who resists Zionist pressure, with an unshakable determination to think and act and report with an independent mind and objectivity.

I make this remark without any reflection upon the people of the United States - even those who have taken the liberty to laugh in the gallery, who are a section of the people of the United States. I have no complaints at all against the people of the United States. The people of the United States deserve our admiration for their benevolence, for their tolerance and for their fairness. But it is the

policy of the United States which is my point. Watching the television, hearing the radio, reading the Press, listening to the statements of senators, of congressmen, of governors, here in the United States and particularly on the question of the refugees, and more particularly in the course of the debates in the General Assembly, makes us believe that Israel is here and here is Israel, that simply glided across the ocean to be stationed here in New York. That is our impression which we gain when we listen to all this bombastic propaganda, with all its fire-works, statements from all sides, from different parties, from the Senate, from the Congress: defeating the humanitarian aspect of the refugees' problem. It establishes an atmosphere of frustration, makes the people of Palestine believe that we are not in the United States; we are in Israel that has simply glided across the ocean and stationed its headquarters here in New York next to the mansions of the United Nations - and it is with God's blessing that we have a place here with immunities and privileges, even for those who are petitioners and not the accredited delegations of the United Nations. It is God's blessing that we have on the East River here this international mansion where we can speak our minds so freely, although it could be suppressed the next morning by the radio, by the television, by the newspapers, and perhaps also deflected by senators and congressmen, defeating the position of the refugees - for life and death, for their national cause.

This is how it is, and it should be said in the Parliament of man - here in the only place where the refugees can state their case, can speak their conscience, their minds. The refugees have no congressmen to approach. They have no senators to talk to. They do not have Mr. Truman, who once said that he did not have Arabs in his constituency. We have none, except this United Nations, this civilized world, and we have faith in the international community, who, in the long run, will see justice and will undo the "justice" that has befallen our people and made the whole nation a refugee nation - not a section of us, but all the people are refugees. In the age of the United Nations, it is an insult to humanity; it is an insult to humanity to have a whole people uprooted from their homeland clamouring for fifteen years to go back to their home, with the United Nations General Assembly reaffirming one session after the other: repatriation, but with no repatriation; with a perpetuation of a life of exile. This should not take place in the lifetime of the United Nations.

I need not parade before you a lengthy line of precedent or jurisprudence to support our right to live. We are entitled to live as you are entitled to live. There is no distinction in this world of ours, over this planet, between peoples large and small; and no discrimination should be made on the basis of sex, religion or language. Because we Asians, because we are Palestinians, there should be no discrimination against our very existence, against our right to live and to live in our homeland.

I shall not put a lengthy line before you of all jurisprudence and precedents in support of our right to exist, our right to live, our right to be in our homes and our homeland. And let me remind you, gentlemen, that the notion of home is the oldest, the most ancient, of the notions in the world. When man was almost a beast he had a house in the trunk of a tree; he had a house amongst the stones; he had a house in a cave. This is the most ancient notion known in history: before civilization, before the League of Nations and before the United Nations, man had the right to live in a home, whether it be in a cave or the trunk of a tree. This is the most ancient notion, and we invoke our right to live in our homes in our homeland.

We want to enjoy what you enjoy in your homes, to exercise whatever rights you exercise in your homeland. We are people as you are; and as you have asserted national self-determination, we aspire to exercise our right to national self-determination. We aspire to exercise our right, and justice is indivisible. The United Nations cannot preach non-discrimination and then act in a discriminatory manner.

The people of Palestine should be one with the other nations to enjoy the sacred principles enshrined in the Charter. It is this universality to which a great man - a man whom you love, a man whose words are preached as gospel, whose conduct and behaviour in life are taken as a universal guide for human conduct - by the name of John Donne referred when he said: "Any man's death diminishes me because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee". These are the noble words of a noble creature of humanity. Applied to the refugees, these noble words would mean - and it could equally be said: Any man's exile is my exile because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the rations go, the rations go for thee.

This is no rhetoric simile; this is no melancholic inference. It could take place as a reality any time, any place and against any nation - and, God forbid, against any nation represented here in this Assembly. If world order is to be based on caprice, defiance and sheer power, any people can be uprooted, dispossessed and their country obliterated, to use the term of Mr. Davis as literally appearing in his report.

And let me say with due courtesy to each and all that, if the Palestine refugees are not entitled to their homes or to their homeland, no other nation is entitled to anything; and international life would be floating in chaos and disorder. I beg your leave to state the reasons.

Palestine is an ancient land, not a virgin land of a new discovery. All throughout history Palestine has never been vacant; it has been inhabited and populated by its people beyond human memory. We are its people since time immemorial. Even the Book of Books, which is always invoked by the Israeli delegation, refers to our land as the land of Canaan of the Arabian Peninsula - Canaan the Arab, who migrated from the Arabian Peninsula - just as it refers to the ancient Hebrew as a stranger. This is the utterance of the Book of Books, the Holy Scriptures, the Old Testament: "The land wherein thou are a stranger ... the land of Canaan". This is the homeland of the refugees to whom Mr. Davis has often referred with sympathy and human affection.

The people of Palestine, to which the refugees belong, have lived their lives in their ancient land and shared with the rest of the world the joys and afflictions that befell all peoples in ancient, medieval and modern times. Our country was overrun by the Assyrians, by the Babylonians, by the Hebrews, by the Greeks, by the Romans, by the Persians, by the Seljuks and, lastly, by the Ottomans. Thus, the country has changed hands, but we were subjected to invasions and we repelled invasions. That was our history, a history of invasions, a history of repelling invasions, repelling aggressors. We remained the people of the land: we acquired diverse cultures, languages and traditions, until we emerged, at least for the last thirteen centuries, an Arab society, participating with the rest of the world in making Arab civilization and, indeed, Arab history. Such has been the record of Palestine and the people of Palestine.

Thus, when Dr. Davis refers to the embittered feeling of the refugees, the Palestine people and the Arab peoples in general, it is against this background that one should fathom the embitterment and the resentment in the region. Resentment and embitterment, I should say, are very gentle, very soft and very weak words to describe the passions and emotions of the Arab people because of the destruction of the national life of the people of Palestine.

However, it should not be taken as a suppression of fact that I have omitted mention of the Jewish presence in the life of Palestine. The question of a Jew or non-Jew was never an issue in our national life. Native Jews were simply Palestinians, just as the Moslems and Christians in the country. As in all Arab countries, the Jews were never a problem. In Palestine, they lived in amity, peace and prosperity. It is a fact of history that, when Jews were persecuted, massacred, elsewhere, they found a hospitable refuge in the Arab world, and Palestine was included.

Beginning with the Middle Ages, Palestine became a secure haven for many religious Jews; the country received them with open arms. There was no idea of establishing a State, no idea of expelling the indigenous people, seizing their towns and villages and robbing their properties. So it was that a hearty welcome was extended to the Jews in keeping with Arab chivalry and in keeping with Arab hospitality. These are the facts of history which no one can deny and which no one can ignore.

In Jerusalem, for instance, we are told by Obadiah, a distinguished Jew and scholar, that, in the fifteenth century, Jewish families did not exceed seventy in number - no more than seventy families in Jerusalem!

In its report to the British Parliament, the Royal Commission of Enquiry on Palestine stated that, in 1845, in the whole of Palestine there were not more than 12,000 Jews. In 1882, there was only one Jewish colony in Palestine.

Amongst the first refugees that were admitted into Palestine some 1,500 came from Hungary and Holland. They were followed by 400 from Lithuania. The stream of refugees went on until by the end of World War I the Jews numbered 60,000, owning only 2 per cent of the land and enjoying the fraternity, hospitality and chivalry of the Arab people in Palestine. This is the stream of refugees that has been coming into Palestine as the last haven, as a secure shelter, for the persecuted Jews.

In diametrical contradiction to the statement by the delegation of Israel with regard to the Jewish streams of refugees, one from Europe into Palestine, the other from Palestine outside Europe - refugees from the Arab world - these are not refugees, these are citizens, these are worthy inhabitants of the Arab world who lived unmolested, with open arms and open hearts. They were whipped by Zionism, whipped by Israel to migrate - there was no persecution. There was no reason for the Jews in Iraq or for the Jews in Syria - and for that matter in the United Arab Republic or in Tunisia, or in Morocco or anywhere else in the Arab world - to leave. They were treated with chivalry and with benevolence. There was no reason except with the rise and emergence of Israel whipping every Jew, not only in the Middle East, but in the whole world. As Mr. Ben-Gurion once said every Jew who lives outside of Israel has violated the Jewish religion. He who lives outside of Israel is not a Jew. It is this stream doctrine which has brought the Jews from the Arab world into Israel. There was no persecution at all. This is simply ridiculous. It is a distortion. It is a misrepresentation of fact. They still live in our homeland. In various parts of the Arab fatherland. There were Jewish ministers, there were members of Parliament who were Jews, there were Jewish journalists. In every walk of life in the Arab world you find Jews, and we still have them. But Israel has persecuted these Jews, the Arab Jews, in order to get them to migrate into Israel.

There was no reason to have two streams. That stream has been manufactured by Israel itself. But this stream, this tragic stream which was caused by terror and bloodshed is the stream of the Arab refugees' exodus from Palestine, and who live now in exile. This is the only stream of the exodus of refugees.

I say that the Jews have enjoyed our fraternity for even Mr. Ben-Gurion - who was Prime Minister of Israel for a number of years - and Mr. Ben-Zvi, the late President of the Republic of Israel - these two leading figures of Israel, in World War I, expressed to Jemal Pasha, the commander-in-chief of Syria and Palestine - and my distinguished colleague from Turkey will tell you who Jemal Pasha, that prominent figure of World War I of the Arab Middle East was - their gratitude to the Arab countries, which gave their people shelter for hundreds of years, as being unforgettable. Mr. Ben-Gurion and Mr. Ben-Zvi expressed to the commander-in-chief in Syria and Palestine their gratitude for

the hospitality of the Arabs as being unforgettable. It is ironic, tragic and paradoxical, that these two Jewish refugees should cause the exodus of the very same people who afforded them refuge and shelter, when they had been refused shelter and refuge elsewhere. This is the paradox, this is the tragedy, for two leading refugees of the Jews, sheltered in our homeland, to be the very cause and very reason for our people to be refugees.

Even after the Zionist invasion of Palestine in 1948, Jews in the Arab world continued to live free and unmolested. Rabbi Elmer Berger of the United States, in his book entitled, "Those who know better must say so" quoted a letter written to him by a well-known Jew, Mr. Elias Cohen, wherein he said that "Arabs and Jews have always enjoyed in this country complete freedom, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of trade and freedom of commerce ... as a matter of fact, Jews here have never felt anti-semitism or discrimination".

That statement by Rabbi Elmer Berger simply contradicts the fallacy that was made by the Israeli delegation with regard to the stream of Jews from the Arab world into Israel.

I bring these matters to your attention, Mr. Chairman, not to arouse your sympathy or mercy for the refugees, but to explain the sentiments of embitterment and resentment amongst the refugees as reported by the Commissioner-General of the Agency. We have not come here to seek mercy or charity. We seek our inherent right, repatriation to our homes and homeland. And if we cannot regain our homeland within the United Nations, or regain it without, certainly, we do not deserve it, nor do we deserve our being, we the people of Palestine, and the Arab people as a whole.

I speak in these impassioned terms for this is the minimum of human reaction to this gross and flagrant injustice inflicted upon a whole people, an injustice second to none in the annals of history.

Ever since the United Nations was seized with this problem, the General Assembly, session after session, has decreed the repatriation of the refugees. In his report to this session Mr. Davis refers to the 1948 resolution with regard to repatriation as follows:

"... this resolution, which was adopted in December 1948 and has been reaffirmed by the Assembly in each of its fourteen succeeding sessions, still remains unimplemented." (A/5513, p. 1)

This statement, most objective, on the part of Mr. Davis, is tantamount to an indictment against the United Nations, let alone Israel. I dare say, it is already a verdict against the integrity of the United Nations, exposing its authority.

For the last fifteen years, the United Nations has been reiterating its position in support of repatriation, but not a single refugee has been repatriated. The United Nations sought the good offices of the United Nations mediator, Count Bernadotte, but the mediator was killed by the Israelis, in the course of his noble mission, in Jerusalem. Subsequently, the United Nations established the Palestine Conciliation Commission with a specific mandate for the repatriation of the refugees. But the twenty-one progress reports of this organ have shown no progress. All the reports of the Commission have revealed a rebellious attitude on the part of Israel, and declared quite plainly that Israel does not accept the very principle of repatriation. The defiance of Israel does not call for evidence, for Israel is on record here in the United Nations openly denying the Palestine refugees their right to repatriation. Mr. Davis reports this year that "the problem of the Palestine refugees remains as intractable as ever".

The Palestine delegation, and our people, view the matter very seriously. Indeed we cannot wait and sit indefinitely. There is a limit to our patience, and the self-restraint of any nation - any nation - is not without bounds and not without limits. When human patience is exhausted, man is bound to succumb to the counsel of desperation, and we know of United Nations experience where desperation leads. The United Nations is fully aware of the liberation movements that emerged and are still emerging in Asia and in Africa. Palestine could be the scene of a liberation movement and no one should be caught by surprise, for Palestine is our homeland and repatriation is our right - our inherent right.

I must make it quite plain and clear to the United Nations that repatriation is our vested right. It is our God-given right for those who believe in God - and our natural right for those who believe in nature. Repatriation is not the innovation or the making of the General Assembly in its resolutions. The 1948 resolution calling for repatriation has simply declared the right, simply recognized the right, but repatriation existed before the United Nations and our right to our homeland pre-existed the existence of Israel, and repatriation, therefore, should be our inherent right. We were in our homeland for countless generations, long before the existence of Israel. We pre-existed this illegitimate existence of Israel.

But, even without the United Nations resolution we are entitled to repatriation, without qualification - without reservation. We are entitled to go back to our homeland - to live our national life in dignity, human decency, and in larger freedom.

If I speak with embitterment and resentment, this is only human and natural - and Mr. Davis has aptly referred to our embitterment and resentment.

Many of the delegations sitting in this hall have in the past spoken the same language, with the same embitterment, as we speak, with the same resentment as we speak. Many of our African, Asian and Latin American friends have gone through the same ordeal, the same trials, as we are undergoing; they have fought for their country, for their liberty. Many have come to the United Nations as petitioners and observers, as we do. They were granted the same hearing, in spite of the protestations of the colonial Powers. In fact, no less than eighty Members of this Organization have won their freedom from the grip of colonial Powers. Our problem - to boil it down to its genesis - is a colonial issue, but in its most deadly manifestation. Indeed, the problem of the Palestine refugees is the outcome of imperialism and colonialism, with all its evils put together and combined. In Asia and Africa, imperialism was a foreign domination; it was an alien exploitation. But the peoples, the native peoples, remained in their homes, remained on their farms, remained on their land. No doubt all sorts of hardships, acts of repression and displacement were inflicted upon our brethren in Asia and in Africa, but here the native people in Palestine were uprooted, dispossessed and thrown out of their country by aliens, strangers, just like the colons who settled in Asia and in Africa. That is what makes the problem of the Palestine refugees of a unique character, more grievous than all the colonial issues that confronted the United Nations, because the Palestine problem has been beclouded by the highly organized and highly financed Zionist propaganda.

It may sound strange to you, gentlemen, that the Palestine problem is the outcome of imperialism. There can be no better authority than Sir Winston Churchill to prove this imperialistic and colonialistic design which brought about the refugee problem, and Sir Winston Churchill is the last living architect of imperialism and of the British Empire, but he did not live to liquidate the British Empire. He still survives and Great Britain survives. In outlining his dream and his scheme for the establishment of a Jewish State, Sir Winston Churchill stated as follows:

"If, as may well happen, there should be created in our lifetime by the banks of the Jordan" - not only in Palestine but on both sides of the Jordan - "a Jewish State under the protection of the British Crown, which might comprise three or four million Jews, an event will have occurred which would especially be in harmony with the truest interests of the British Empire."

This is the language of the British Empire, the voice of imperialism and colonialism, spoken by Sir Winston Churchill, the last imperialist in our modern world. No better testimony can be afforded to the General Assembly to prove that the refugee problem is an imperialist problem, not a by-product but a main product of the alliance between Zionism and imperialism and colonialism. If this statement means anything - and it is pregnant with meaning - it is imperialism by definition, and a refugee problem must, by necessity, be in store with this abominable goal of importing millions of Jews, not just to Palestine but along the banks of Jordan.

In this regard, it is noteworthy to recall that even the Zionist leaders have never concealed the fact that Zionism is an imperialist movement. We have it on record that a leading Zionist figure, who was lobbying - as many Zionists in the United States do, in the lobbies of the Congress - with the British Cabinet, wrote to David Wolfson, Herzl's successor, the leader of the Zionist movement, saying:

"I did my best to convince Lord Milner that what he called imperialism is identical with Zionism."

This is the admission of a leading Zionist figure, when he says that Zionism and imperialism are identical and he was doing everything to convince Lord Milner that imperialism and Zionism go hand in hand. This is no evidence; this is a confession - an incriminating confession that Zionism and imperialism are two sides of one and the same coin. This theme has been detailed in actual terms by Dr. Weizmann himself and the details, as you will see, Mr. Chairman, constitute the rudiments of the refugee problem - a refugee problem in embryo. In Weizmann's archives the following document has been discovered - a recent document in the archives of Dr. Weizmann, in Israel, has been discovered. The discovery of this document shows us that there was an interview between Dr. Weizmann and Lord Balfour on 4 December 1918. It reads as follows:

"... a community of four or five million Jews in Palestine would be a sufficiently sound economic basis from which the Jews could radiate out into the Near East and so contribute mightily to the reconstruction of countries which were once flourishing ... But all this presupposes free and unfettered

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development of the Jewish National Home in Palestine ... so that we should be able to settle in Palestine about four to five million Jews within a generation and so make Palestine a Jewish country under the British Crown ...".

These notions of radiating out into the Middle East, of the reconstruction of countries, are the notions of colonialism. This is the mission sacrée often invoked to justify imperialism in Asia and in Africa. This is the language of colonialism and imperialism which was addressed to our brethren in Asia and in Africa; and to import four to five million Jews into Palestine constitutes the genesis of the problem of the Palestine refugees. Once one brings millions of Jews to the tiny little country of Palestine, with 10,000 square miles, one is bound to expel the native people from their country, and this is where we are - 2 million Jews in Palestine and 1 million Arab refugees outside Palestine. This is the scheme of Dr. Weizmann, as recently discovered in his archives.

Thus, although the Arab exodus from Palestine actually started in 1948, as a result of Jewish terrorism, the refugee problem was lying in wait long before. It was a potential refugee problem lurking in the wake of Zionism. When the opportune moment for Zionism came in 1948, two events took place: the emergence of Israel and the emergence of the refugee problem. This is rather a geometric equation. Israel means a refugee problem, and no Israel means no refugee problem - and, indeed, no insecurity and no instability for the Middle East, and for the whole world at large.

Hence the problem of the Palestine refugees does not bear any resemblance to any refugee problem in the world, either in number or in nature - to any refugee problem in the world, I again say, either in number or in nature. In number our refugees are over one half of our population. Over one half of our people are exiles. No other refugee problem has come up to this proportion. In other countries they represent a fraction of a fraction, even in World War I and World War II.

Applying the Palestine refugee proportion to a country with 50 million people - and there are many countries in the Assembly here with 50 million people - the refugee problem would mean 25 million refugees. Just imagine the dimensions of the disaster, my dear brethren. I have omitted countries with hundreds of millions of population. Think of it - God forbid - should the tragedy befall your people.

Then you would know why our people are haunted with nostalgia and desperation, with embitterment and resentment and, what is more, with a determination to emancipate their homeland.

Many members of this Committee have come only for the session. Some are Permanent Representatives but others have come for the session only. They know what homesickness means. Just think of their longing for their country, for their home, their children, their friends, and their longing for life at home. Think of it in our case.

Ours is not as short a trip as yours. We have not come for the Assembly alone and we do not go back to our homes after the session. It has been a long journey of fifteen years, away from the country we have loved so dearly, the country we have made so beautiful and fruitful with our sweat and with our labour, the country we have consecrated with our prayers, the country we have treasured with our culture, and lastly, the country wherein we have left the graves of our beloved - our fathers, our mothers, our sisters, and the dearest, who passed away in their tender years of life.

I am not lamenting, I am not bewailing our destiny. I am simply portraying the life of the refugees in all its realities. In our case, emotions and passions are the heart of reality that throb with reality. Your emotions would be fiery, if, God forbid, you were denied the very seat you now occupy, and be seated where we are seated. As to the nature of the refugee problem, let me say outright that it stands on a different plane from any other refugee problem in the whole world. Human history has related various causes for a refugee problem - any refugee problem. War had been one major reason, religious persecution was another and civil strife was still another reason.

But the Palestine refugee problem stands unique. Our question is entirely different. It is not the outcome of religious dissension between Jews on one side and Christians and Moslems on the other side. It is not the result of a social or political conflict. We do not represent the Left and they do not represent the Right. It is not a conflict of ideology on social, economic or doctrinal matters, nor is it the product of a boundary dispute, or even of an armed conflict. It is much more than that and very much deeper than that.

The central factor for our refugee status is our non-existence as a people. I say our non-existence in the eyes of those who held world power in their hands. We do not exist in their eyes as a people. To them we do not exist as a people and our country is the ownership of none. When the Balfour Declaration was issued on 2 November 1917 by the British Government promising the establishment of a Jewish national home, our country was assumed to be a vacant land, and our people were assumed to be non-existent. This is the hotbed where the refugee problem was born and raised. Britain promised a land it did not possess and it did not own, and we who possessed, we who owned were not consulted. We were not asked. And in spite of that we protested and we went into rebellion, into war against the Balfour Declaration. But it was done as though our country was a British overseas possession that could be promised to any people without consultation with the rightful people; as though we were a possession overseas, as one of the gems in the British Crown - which we were not. It was therefore axiomatic that we become refugees when our country was swarmed with aliens and strangers from every creed and race.

Thus, to be fair, we must take the Balfour Declaration as the first report on the Palestine refugees. Count Bernadotte's report on the Palestine refugees is the first to be found in the archives of the United Nations. But it would be more equitable and comprehensive that we extend a request to the British Government, to the authorities of the British Museum wherein is deposited the original text of the Balfour Declaration, that this shameful document be transferred to the United Nations as the first instrument that led to this human drama, this human tragedy.

Again, when the United States subscribed to the Balfour Declaration, it did so on the assumption that we do not exist as a people. It did so - the United States did so - as though Palestine was a no man's island off the shores of the United States. It was also axiomatic that we should become refugees, for an alien, a stranger, can only be settled in any country by displacement, let alone expulsion and extermination.

And both Great Britain and the United States have assumed our non-existence when they endorsed the establishment of a Jewish State and the policy of Jewish immigration into Palestine without paying due regard to the wishes of the inhabitants of the country. In the course of the British mandate, some 700,000

Jews were imported into Palestine under British bayonets and through United States dollars; such a large influx of immigration against the will of the inhabitants is nothing but an invasion quite unique in modern history. It was therefore a necessary corollary that we become refugees, for no account was taken of our existence. We did not exist in the eyes of the United States, neither did we exist in the eyes of the British Empire, although they had plenty of vision and wide eyes to see and to look. But still, we were not visible, we did not exist in the eyes of the United States and Great Britain.

When Uganda - and this is simply for history, and I say that with all due respect and admiration to the delegation, to the people, to the Government of Uganda - was suggested as a Jewish national home by Great Britain, Uganda's High Commissioner and its European residents protested. The project was rejected and Uganda was saved from this catastrophe and in fact spared from a refugee problem. It is with God's blessing that now we have Uganda as a fully independent and sovereign State, well represented by its able delegation, with no refugee problem. Had the High Commissioner not protested, had the European community in Uganda not persisted, there would have been a refugee problem in Uganda. But it is God's blessing that Uganda has been spared this tragedy, this disaster. They come here to occupy their worthy seat, so ably, in the United Nations.

I am labouring this point of non-existence not as a point of history, not for academic research, but because until yesterday we do not seem to be existing in this world. We are still non-existent in the international community. I say until yesterday, because I am now referring to the report of the Conciliation Commission - the twenty-first progress report.

I shall not speak of the inaccuracies contained in the report. As my learned brethren, the representative of the four Arab host Governments made it quite clear, the report is pregnant with inaccuracies so substantive that they go to vitiate the veracity and the integrity of the report. I will not refer to those inaccuracies. I simply say that in the eyes of the Conciliation Commission the people of Palestine do not exist at all. We have it here in the report that the United States Government has started on an approach at a high level with the parties concerned:

"... the parties concerned - Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Republic." (A/5545, p. 1)

What is the question involved in this report? Is it the question of atomic weapons? Is it the question of frontier disputes between these States? Is it the question of hiding from a contractual disagreement with regard to an international agreement? What is the problem involved between these parties: between Israel, on the one side, and the four Arab Governments, on the other. The Palestine question.

But, curiously enough, the people of Palestine are not a party. There is no mention in the report of the Conciliation Commission of the people of Palestine, whereas the Palestine question could not be without a people. It cannot be conceived of without a people. We have witnessed, during the last fifteen years, items in the General Assembly such as the Algerian question. There is an Algerian people. Items such as the Congo question; there is a Congo people. Reference has always been directly made to the people concerned. Curiously enough, surprisingly enough, the people of Palestine do not exist, in the eyes of the Conciliation Commission.

In this age of peoples, you are not, in this Organization, united States; you are united peoples. The name of this Organization is the United Nations, not United Governments, not United States; and we, as a nation, are entirely ignored by the Conciliation Commission, even as being a party concerned. Is Israel a party? I can understand the Arab Governments being parties, either immediate, proximate parties, who come to the support of their brethren, the people of Palestine, parties who are involved because we are their kith and kin, parties who are involved because of the security of their area, whose responsibility it is to have stability and security in the region. I can understand those Arab Governments being considered as parties to the problem, but I cannot understand - and it is quite incomprehensible to me - that Israel should be considered as a party while the people of Palestine, who were at peace, who are the victims of aggression, of armed conflict, of occupation, of illegal expulsion, are considered as non-existent. No mention is made of them.

How can you solve this problem without considering its people? You cannot solve it behind the backs of the people of Palestine. We are told in this report

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that the United States is approaching it on a high level. What is this "high level"? The Committee heard Mr. Davis stating that this is not the problem of politicians; it is not a problem where the Arabs of Palestine are involved. It is the problem of the rank and file of all the people, of the masses, and high level contacts will not solve the problem except when that problem is solved to the satisfaction of the feelings, the sentiments, and the aspirations of the 80 million Arabs. He is not born, nor ever will be, who can solve this problem behind the backs of the people of Palestine, and the Arab peoples.

This is simply a travesty against the United Nations, because we are a nation. It is an international mockery - because we are part of the international community - to go behind our backs and approach Arab Governments. We are certain that the Arab Governments will defend our cause. I do not doubt for a moment that the Arab Governments will do their utmost in espousing our cause. After all, the land is ours, the country is ours, the cause is ours. We are the immediate party, and it is we who accept or reject.

I am truly amazed to see the phrase, "quiet talks", inserted in the report of the Conciliation Commission. What are these quiet talks intended for? What are they envisaged for? What is their objective? We are told in the report, itself, that those talks, "quiet talks", are intended to find "the nature of the eventual solution" to the refugee problem. But, this is a comedy, in a tragedy. I cannot understand how, after fifteen years, the Conciliation Commission can speak in its report of an eventual solution to the refugee problem, of a solution in the future, of searching for a solution for another fifteen years, when the United Nations adopted a solution in 1948. Is the Commission seeking a double solution? Is it deviating from its mandate? Is it betraying the resolution of the General Assembly, and seeking another? This is quite incomprehensible.

I do not think that the people of Palestine are lunatics. They can read the words and between the lines. What is the eventual solution of the refugee problem? We know that a solution to it was put forward by the United Nations in 1948, and this position has been reaffirmed by the General Assembly. Now, the United States is seeking "the eventual solution of the problem", and speaks of no "preconditions as to the nature of the eventual solution" of the refugee problem. Mr. Plimpton told the Committee yesterday that these words in the Conciliation Commission's report does not mean preconditions as to the nature of the problem, but with regard to "methods of carrying out the Commission's mandate".

Well, to me this is a paradox, a riddle, which I cannot truly solve. This is one of the riddles which you find in crossword puzzles in newspapers in the United States. Mr. Plimpton told the Committee that it is with regard to the methods of the eventual solution, but the Conciliation Commission, in its report, speaks of the nature of the eventual solution. Well, there is a great difference between the nature of a solution and ways and means of a solution. I think that Mr. Plimpton represents the United States on the Conciliation Commission. Well, who are we to believe?

Are we to believe Mr. Plimpton speaking as a member of the Conciliation Commission as reproduced in the report, or are we to believe Mr. Plimpton in his statement before this Committee yesterday? This is a paradox which I hope that the United States delegation will be able to solve sometime today, not in the future.

What are these "quiet talks"? It seems to me that when you speak of an "eventual solution of the problem" you are deviating from the solution of the United Nations for repatriation. These are not "quiet talks", but a quiet funeral, led by the Conciliation Commission, to bury what remains of the people of Palestine. This is how we understand it, the Palestine delegation, and, behind us, the people of Palestine, until this question is cleared up, amply and crystal-clear.

Well, the other aspects of the Conciliation Commission's report are amazing, too. The Conciliation Commission was established in 1948. Its members are three: the United States of America, Turkey and France. These are its three members. This is the body constituted by the United Nations with a clear mandate to facilitate the repatriation of the refugees. Now, we find that the Commission has allowed one of its members to slip out of the Commission and go and conduct "quiet talks", and approach "at a high level" four of the Arab Governments.

I say that this is ultra vires the United Nations resolution, ultra vires the practice and jurisprudence of the United Nations. Here is a commission composed of three members. They must act as three, they must go as three, they must speak and think as three. It cannot be allowable, under the jurisprudence of the United Nations for one to slip away and conduct the mandate of the United Nations Conciliation Commission. This is the duty of the Commission as a whole. It cannot delegate it to one of its members, so why should it delegate

it to the United States? Is it because the United States is a major Power? Well, there are other major Powers in the world. Why not delegate it to the Soviet Union, for example? Is it because it is a neutral Power? The United States admittedly has never been a neutral Power in the Palestine question. It is the main cause of the creation and very survival and present existence of Israel. So, what can be the reason for delegating to one; why not to the whole Assembly?

I respectfully submit that the Conciliation Commission has liquidated itself by this procedure. The Conciliation Commission has ceased to exist because it has functioned in this manner against the very instructions of the United Nations General Assembly. It exists no more. Unless things are corrected and brought to order - neat, tidy, open - these "quiet talks" are a synonym for secret diplomacy, which has been destroyed by the age of the United Nations. There is no room now in our world for secret diplomacy. "Quiet talks" is a gentle term, but it is very deceiving and very misleading. Things must be corrected, at least from one aspect. We are the people concerned, and the Palestine question will never be solved without the consent of the very people of Palestine. We are the people, and we are here to defend our cause.

Mr. Chairman, the item is before you, and has been before you for the last fifteen years. The crucial question cries out: What is the end of this human tragedy? Is there no end to the refugee problem? Should Israel be allowed endlessly to defy the wishes of the international community and flout the United Nations resolution? And should the United Nations sleep over this perennial problem - impotent, helpless and paralysed? The people of Palestine are eager to know the answer. We, the Palestine delegation, on behalf of our people, put these questions before this august body. We are eager to know the answer of the United Nations to these staggering questions. We would like to know whether we should have faith in this Organization as an instrument of peace based upon justice. We would like to know whether there is a peaceful way - any peaceful way - to regain our homes and homeland. I put the question straightforwardly to all the delegations assembled here: Is there a peaceful way? Is there any peaceful way to regain our homes and homeland?

Lastly, we would like to know whether there is room for justice in the United Nations without the force of arms. Is there room for justice and equity and self-determination here in the United Nations without the force of arms? Law, national and international, together with your Charter and resolutions, gentlemen, dictates that we are entitled to our property, to our farms, to our orange groves, to our olive plantations, to our vineyards, and, as a whole, to our homes and our homeland. Is law sufficient in itself to restore our rights, or should we take the law in our own hands? Should we rise to arms? Should we have recourse to war as the last resort? These are the questions we earnestly and sincerely put before the Assembly.

By our nature we are not for war. We are not warmongers. We are for peace, and we come from the land of peace, the land of the Messenger of Peace. But peace cannot be a substitute for justice, nor can it be maintained at the expense of justice. We are a people with a history; resisting aggression and repelling aggressors - that has been our history. Our record under the British mandatory regime was one of national struggle for our liberation, and thousands of our brethren have fallen martyrs on the battlefield.

Should the United Nations, and particularly those major Powers that support Israel, continue this policy of inaction, this would be an invitation to the people of Palestine to seek their rights outside the United Nations, to invoke the assistance of all freedom-loving people, and, what is more, to rise to arms. I sincerely say - and it is with a heavy heart that I say it - that this is bound to come if you do not act, gentlemen. When will it come? I cannot tell, but I can tell you it is bound to come. And when it comes the United Nations will not be able to intervene.

This tone of peace, which I put so sincerely before the General Assembly, reminds me of the appeal for peace which was put forward yesterday by the delegation of Israel. The delegation of Israel has appealed for a dialogue, and this is the term which he has used, between the Arabs on one side and Israel on the other side.

We, the people of Palestine, let me say it outright, say that our rights are not negotiable and that our right to our homeland is not negotiable, and will never be negotiable.

/...

What is this dialogue to achieve? Let me speak from within the framework of the United Nations, within the resolutions of the General Assembly, and within the philosophy of the United Nations. What is this dialogue intended to do? What are the goals to be achieved by this dialogue? Two parties take part in the dialogue. What is to be achieved with regard to the refugee problem?

We have it on record that Israel has resisted the repatriation of the refugees, and the Conciliation Commission has reported that not a single refugee has been repatriated. What is this dialogue to achieve if there are no refugees to be repatriated? Is this dialogue supposed to do business, or is it simply a dialogue of mockery? If the refugees are not repatriated, what is the dialogue for?

Let us turn to the problem of the internationalization of Jerusalem. Again I am speaking through the resolutions of the United Nations. I am not speaking my mind with regard to our national aspirations. I am speaking within the halls of the United Nations. The United Nations has decreed the internationalization of Jerusalem, and on many occasions Israel has resisted the international regime with regard to the corpus separatum of Jerusalem. Ben-Gurion's statement is now on record in the archives of the General Assembly and the Trusteeship Council. He declared: "Jerusalem shall be our eternal capital." If Jerusalem is to be the eternal capital of Israel, where is the internationalization of Jerusalem, and what is this dialogue intended to do? If there is no internationalization, what shall we do with Jerusalem? What is the business of this dialogue with regard to Jerusalem?

Let us turn again to the territory -- and again I am not speaking on behalf of my people, nor speaking their aspirations; I am speaking within the mansions of the United Nations. Mr. Ben-Gurion has told the Ambassador of the United States - the first Ambassador, Mr. McDonald - that "what we have gained by war we will not give up on the conference table." Well, if Mr. Ben-Gurion does not give up on the conference table what he gained on the battlefield, what is this dialogue intended to do?

The United Nations should not be an opera house, just a dialogue with no life, no characters, and no real business to do. The dialogue of the Israeli delegation is simply intended to convert the United Nations into an opera house. If it is an opera house, it would be better for us to go to a real opera house, where we shall find a more eloquent dialogue, more amusing, more interesting, more exciting to our minds, and more leisurely for our peace. This is the dialogue of the Israeli delegation.

Well, it also invokes the spirit of Moscow - that we should abide by the spirit of Moscow. I know the spirit of Moscow and I know Moscow itself. I was in Moscow last year, and I have followed the policy of Moscow in the United Nations for the last fifteen years. I do not know that it is in the spirit of Moscow that we should surrender our homes and homeland. This is not the spirit of Moscow. I know that it is the spirit of Moscow that you should cling to your homeland. I know that the Stalingrad battle which is the spirit of Moscow has been fought inch by inch, wall by wall, room by room, for the homeland of the Russians. This is the spirit of Moscow. It is not for us to renounce our rights, our homeland, nor to surrender our rights to repatriation. This is the spirit of Moscow.

Again, the Israeli delegation has invoked the Conference of Addis Ababa. I hail the Conference of Addis Ababa, and I hail the struggle of the people of Africa for their independence and Liberty. They have called for peaceful means to solve the problem. But you know the people of Africa are supporting the people of Angola and their right to liberation in the emancipation movement which they are carrying out in Africa. The spirit of Africa is one of liberation, one of national self-determination. Negotiation is not intended that we should surrender our right. I do not know of any people represented here in this august body who would accept to negotiate their homeland, to surrender their homes, their people. A negotiation could be a peaceful and practical way for the delimitation of boundaries, to discuss conflicts or other things; but not to negotiate your very existence - your existence as a people and your homeland, as the living institution for which you live and for which you die.

The Israeli representative referred to "peace". But peace is not words; peace is deeds. Peace is a state of mind; and this state of mind, we can easily find with regard to Israel. With regard to us, it is quite evident; it is quite obvious. We have waged war against none. We harbour aggression against none. All throughout our history, in Palestine or in the Arab world; we have taken the initiative of war in

in no instance. We have always been on the defensive and never on the offensive. Our land has been the object and victim of aggression, but we have never committed aggression against any people. The question with regard to Israel is quite different. Israel was born in war, raised in aggression, and war is an instrument of its national policy.

In 1948, Count Bernadotte, in his progress report to the United Nations, declared:

"The Jewish State was not born in peace as was hoped for in the resolution of 29 November, but rather ...in violence and bloodshed."
(A/648, Part II, para.5)

So the very existence of Israel, the very birth of Israel, was in bloodshed and in war - as Count Bernadotte testified. Even on 8 January 1948, when the emergence of Israel was at stake, Mr. Ben-Gurion, in addressing the Central Committee of the Israeli Workers Party, said that force of arms and not formal resolutions will determine the issue. So, Israel was established by force of arms and not by the resolutions of the General Assembly. That is what Mr. Ben-Gurion said. So it was born in war; it was raised in war; it is immersed in war. And again, let me remind you - though I think Dr. Bunche is not here at the moment - that in the course of the Security Council proceedings in 1948, when the Security Council was studying the question of a trusteeship, that there should be a trusteeship over Palestine instead of the establishment of two States, because it was not implemented by peace, it was Israel and the Jews themselves who warned the United Nations by war that they would fight against trusteeship, that they would fight in order to allow the emergence of Israel. So the emergence, the existence, the birth, the very existence up till today, is born in war and raised in war.

At that time, the United States put forward a plan for Palestine trusteeship, instead of the establishment of Israel. And the Israeli Command - that is the Commander-in-Chief of Israel - addressed to the United Nations. The United Nations at that time was convened at Lake Success. And this is the warning, the ultimatum, of the Israeli Command: "Our battles" - these are the first words used and employed by the Israeli Command - serve as an additional evidence for Lake Success diplomats; that is, your predecessors, gentlemen - the diplomats who were convened at Lake Success, for Lake Success diplomats who were studying the American plan, that the decisive step would be taken in Palestine in "our battles". So it was war and nothing but war which brought about Israel and its existence.

Again, if we move from 1948, from 1949 to 1950, how do we find the policy of Israel? It is a policy of war. War is the instrument for the national policy of Israel. I have it here on record - and this is from the Israeli Government Yearbook, published in October 1951. This is not a Press report; this is not a Press clipping. This is the Israeli Government Yearbook, an official statement. "Only now have we reached the beginning of independence in a part of our small country". The beginning of independence in a part of our small country. What does that mean? You are only in a part, but the country remains for you to conquer. We know of no peaceful penetration for the Israelis to take the larger part of the country they claim. There is no peaceful penetration in our age. There is an armed penetration. There is an armed occupation. And here in the Israeli Government Yearbook, they speak of the beginning of independence in part of our land. If you are now in part of your land, then you are harbouring aggression; you are harbouring extension; and you are harbouring war as an institution, as an instrument of your national policy, which is to get to all the boundaries of your country. This is the Israeli Government Yearbook. This is not a New York Times report. I want the Israeli delegation to come here to the rostrum of the United Nations to tell us what is the value and authority of the Israeli Government Yearbook when they say that they are now existing only in a part of their homeland.

If Israel as it stands now represents only a fraction of the homeland, I wonder where the other homeland would be, where the frontiers of Israel would be. If there are other frontiers, then it should be done only through war. And if it should be done through war, I cannot understand the gentleman from Israel in speaking yesterday of "peace" and that peace is the heart of the matter.

That was 1951. Well, it could be said that those people were arrogant at that time, were newly independent; they were very joyful about their independence so they could make every possible statement. What about 1952? Well, we read again in the Israeli Government Yearbook, in October 1952, where it says that Israel had been established "in only a portion of the land of Israel" - a portion of the land of Israel. "Some are hesitant as to the restoration of our historical frontiers fixed and set from the beginning of time. But even they will hardly deny the anomaly of the new lines" - the new lines are anomalous: that the land of Israel is only in a portion of the land whose boundaries are set

from immemorial time. Where is this fatherland? Where is this homeland of Israel? And now they speak and utter "peace" here in the United Nations, harbouring extension in order to get to the historic limits of their fatherland.

Well, with such a statement, it is unbelievable that the Israeli representative should come here and speak of peace. Peace is not a symphony to be conducted in an orchestra here in the United Nations. This is the national policy, as could be reproduced from official authorities of Israel. How can you answer that? Before you speak of peace, come and answer this. Come and explain the policy of Israel which speaks of frontiers - historic frontiers, which go far and wide, beyond the present lines which are described as being anomalous. Will you tell us what the lines are that are not anomalous, instead of speaking of peace?

Again, in October 1952, we have in the Israeli Government Yearbook, the following statement - I shall read only a few words: "The State of Israel has been restored in the western part ...". Well, if Israel is now in the "western part", where is the eastern part, where is the northern part, and where is the southern part? This official declaration by Israel, which is an official national policy, speaks of Israel as being established only in the western part, what does it mean? It means that there are portions of land in the east, lands in the north and lands in the south not belonging to Israel; and at any opportune moment they would be able to lift their boundaries over their shoulders and put them where the soldiers can step.

Let us go back to 1954. Again, Mr. Ben-Gurion himself says force of arms, not formal resolutions, will determine the issue. And, again, in 1955 - seven years after the emergence of Israel, when one would expect a little prudence, a little wisdom, after seven years of statehood - the following statement was made:

"The creation of the new State by no means derogates from the scope of historic Erets Israel."

The establishment of Israel by no means derogates from the limits of historic Israel.

Finally, let me remind you of the statement by Mr. Ben-Gurion in the Knesset in 1956 and in the wake of war, in the wake of a seeming victory that the Israeli armies had been able to achieve with regard to the Sinai campaign. It was in the wake of a war that Mr. Ben-Gurion spoke to the Knesset about the war against Egypt, in November 1956, in the following terms:

"One of the three objectives Israel had in the Sinai campaign was to free part of the fatherland which is still in foreign hands."

This is a responsible statement, made at a responsible time, before a responsible body, speaking of the Sinai as being part of Israeli land and in foreign hands. Egypt had been the possessor and owner of the Sinai Peninsula. Now Israel comes to say that it is in the hands of strangers and this is the land of Israel; and the representative of Israel had enough courage and reason and consistency with cogency to come and speak of peace.

But leaving all these authorities aside for a moment, let me quote Mr. Ben-Gurion in response to the British Prime Minister. At that time the British Prime Minister was talking peace; he was suggesting negotiations between the Arabs and Israel; he was suggesting an approach with regard to the territorial limits between both parties. What was the response of Mr. Ben-Gurion when the British Prime Minister suggested certain changes in Israeli limits? Mr. Ben-Gurion burst into war and into a roar of war and declared - I am reading his words:

"I am convinced that Britain's Prime Minister knows very well that the boundaries of Israel could not be altered without a bloody war" - without a bloody war! - "a war of life and death."

Well, if these limits cannot be changed except by a bloody war, a war of death, what is the meaning of the dialogue to discuss where the Israeli limits might lie? And, again, I am speaking the language of the United Nations, not our national aspiration.

But let me quote Mr. Comay himself. Mr. Comay, in November 1960, in a speech on the refugee problem, before this Committee, said:

"There is no other realistic approach short of a war which would destroy Israel and resettle the refugees amongst its ruins."

This is the delegation which speaks of peace and speaks with regard to the solution of the refugee problem saying to the Committee in 1960 that there was nothing short of war and the destruction of Israel where the refugee problem could be settled amongst the ruins of Israel. Is this the dialogue? Is this the peace talk? Are these the negotiations? This is the spirit which underlies the orchestra of peace which is played every once in a while by Israel. They

speaking of the repatriation of the refugees as possible only through war, as possible only through the destruction of Israel, as possible only through the ruins of Israel. But the repatriation of the refugees is a right and has nothing to do with war; it is an inherent right and it should be exercised.

I shall not dwell very long on this matter because the question has been dealt with in greater detail and I would simply like to refer to a statement made by a great Head of State here in the United Nations, here in the General Assembly Hall. It was the Emperor Haile Selassie. Haile Selassie was himself a refugee; Haile Selassie was thrown out of his country; Haile Selassie came to the League of Nations as a man without a country; he was ignored, he was refused, and his right was not recognized. At this session, the United Nations heard the Emperor refugee, but as a sovereign ruler of his country. But after what? After a heavy toll of bloodshed and human misery.

Referring to his statement before the League of Nations, the Emperor spoke at this session from the rostrum of the General Assembly - and Haile Selassie's country was the seat of a recent African conference, the conference which was invoked by the Israeli delegation. The Emperor said the following:

"I spoke then both to and for the conscience of the world. My words were unheeded, but history testifies to the accuracy of the warning that I gave in 1936." (A/FV.1229, page 2).

These solemn words should be an inspiring lesson to the United Nations to redress our refugees not in bloodshed, not in human misery, but in peace and in justice.

Summing up, let it be known that our case boils down to a set of clear-cut fundamentals, absolute fundamentals:

First, the problem of the Palestine refugees is an indivisible part of the Palestine problem, and its solution can be sought only within the general pattern of the Palestine question, on the basis of the right of the indigenous people of Palestine to self-determination.

Secondly, the Palestine problem was the outcome ab initio of a conspiracy between Zionism and the forces of international imperialism. As a colonial issue, the Palestine problem can be solved only in accordance with the general framework of decolonization, as established in this last era of the United Nations.

Thirdly, the exile of the Palestine refugee was the direct outcome, with a relation of cause and effect, of the establishment of Israel. In order to settle an alien people on the land, the native people of Palestine were robbed of their homes and uprooted from their homeland.

Fourthly, the people of Palestine, being the legitimate owners of the country, are determined to exercise - and to the full - all their rights, national and private.

They are determined, with unshakable resourcefulness, to regain their lands, their fields, their towns, their villages, and what is more, to regain their homeland - the patrimony of their ancestors since time immemorial. To this end, we shall struggle relentlessly and we shall not stand alone. The Arab peoples, our kith and kin, will extend every support, for this is in essence an Arab cause. Furthermore, all men and women of honour and dignity will come to our support, for this is a cause of man's honour and man's dignity. And last but not least, all freedom and peace-loving peoples will sponsor our cause by all means, - and I say by all means, loudly and without hesitation - for this is a cause of peace and a cause of freedom.

The question that faces the United Nations now, therefore, is concise and to the point. What is the position of the United Nations? This is the fateful and decisive question that lies before you. It lies with you to answer the question and we urge you to answer the question.

It lies with you to answer the question, the crucial question - peace or no peace, war or no war - and the choice rests with you. I appeal to you to cast your choice in favour of peace and in favour of peace only, based upon justice and nothing but justice. This is our profound hope and it is our fervent prayer.
