

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

RECENT BRITISH EDITORIAL COMMENT

on the

PALESTINE QUESTION

1. THE DAILY EXPRESS of 24 February 1948, in an editorial entitled "The Lie that Killed", accuses not only the Irgun Zvai Leumi but also Haganah and the Jewish Agency of spreading "the lie" that blamed the British for the Ben Yehuda Street explosion. The editorial then asks how much longer and for what reason the British are to endure such outrages, and asserts that although "there is still a hope among the diplomats that the United Nations will save face by a successful appeal to Britain to delay her departure, Britain has no moral or other obligation to stay". Britain must reassert her policy unequivocally and leave Palestine at once, "bag and baggage".

2. An editorial in THE EVENING NEWS of 23 February 1948 entitled "It's Their Turn Now", describes the British soldiers and police who were killed following the Ben Yehuda Street explosion as "victims of the unreality of the General Assembly" which thought it could solve the problem "with a wave of the hand".

Asserting that the partition plan was passed largely through the influence of the United States, the editorial says that the time is arriving when "the Americans must see this thing through -- and it begins to wear a very different look from the good old days when all they had to do was to blame the British".

The task of raising an international force is "UNO's worry, not ours... we must get out of Palestine as soon as we can".

3. An editorial in THE DAILY TELEGRAPH of 24 February 1948 describes as "an outrage within an outrage" the allegation that British troops were responsible for the Ben Yehuda Street explosion. Terming the bombing as

"only another consequence of delay and folly", the editorial holds that the British Government has "fumbled about in search of a policy for two vital years", and that the United States is also "far from guiltless, since a firm line...untinged by political considerations of domestic politics, might have produced some practical Anglo-American action long ago". The Zionists, particularly in the United States, have been "completely irresponsible" and are "only now beginning to perceive the frightful danger into which they have plunged their own ideals".

The United Nations, the editorial continues, must now "plumb the depths of irresponsibility" and face "the baffling consequences of unconsidered action". The United Nations has provided only "an illogical map and an impotent commission" to support its partition policy and the proposal to raise an international force has become as impracticable as it was once logical.

The suggestion that the program of fulfilment of partition might be retarded and the great Powers charged with the task of mediation could, according to the editorial, be attempted, since mediation by a "wider authority" than the Mandatory might be worth while.

Meanwhile, concludes the editorial, "the policy of the United Nations in its present form is bankrupt."

4. THE ECONOMIST of 28 February 1948 says that Austin's statement before the Security Council was "as carefully -- and precariously -- balanced as a card house", and that events both in Palestine and at the United Nations "look as if they were conspiring to kill the partition plan", and meanwhile the recent violence in Ben Yehuda Street has made it "almost impossible for Britain now to offer any forces to help in preserving the city as an international sanctuary". The article then states that although the accusation of British involvement in the explosion has been categorically denied by the Government, "much more clarification is necessary...the circumstantial allegations made by the Jewish Agency must be investigated one by one and a full account published".