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PALESTINE PROGRESS REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS MEDIATOR

Financial implications of the draft resolution proposed by

the First Committee ( [A/776](#) )

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. O.P. MACHADO (Brazil)

1. In accordance with rule 142 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and with the request of the President in his letter dated 7 December 1948 (A/C.5/277/Rev.1), the Fifth Committee, at its 174th meeting, considered the effect on the budget estimates in 1949 of the draft resolution adopted by the First Committee concerning the proposed United Nations Conciliation Commission in Palestine (A/C.1/424).\*

2. As a basis for its discussion the Committee had before it estimates submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/284) and a report thereon by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (seventeenth report of 1948 - A/779), recommending, subject to certain reservations, approval of estimates providing for expenditure of \$3,000,000 for a period of nine months. The view was expressed by the Advisory Committee that the estimates might well be submitted on the basis of a nine months period since the fourth regular session of the General Assembly will be held in September 1949.

3. In the course of its discussion of the Advisory Committee's recommendation the Fifth Committee heard a statement by the Acting Mediator, who endorsed the observation expressed by the Advisory Committee that, in the present changing circumstances of the Palestine situation, the estimated expenditure which would be incurred by the United Nations in giving effect to the draft resolution was necessarily of an imprecise and speculative character. A proposal was made by the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that the amount recommended by the Advisory Committee should be reduced to \$2,000,000, which amount, he believed, would permit sufficient flexibility to ensure the essential decisions of the United Nations being fulfilled, and that, in any event, the Secretary-General had authority to draw from the Working Capital Fund should the estimate prove insufficient. Furthermore, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and other delegations stated that they could not vote for any amount beyond \$2,000,000 for the implementation of the resolution submitted by the First Committee.

4. A further proposal that the amount to be appropriated should be reduced to \$2,500,000 was submitted by the representative of France, also with the understanding that the Secretary-General would be empowered to draw from the Working Capital Fund should this prove necessary.

5. Considerable discussion developed as to the period during 1949 for which budgetary provision should be made, having regard to the fact that the third regular session of the General Assembly will reconvene in April. It was the opinion of the majority of the representatives, however, that since it was clear that expenditure would be incurred in connexion with Palestine for a considerable part of 1949, provision should be made in estimates accordingly, and that the period of nine months was a minimum period, consistent with sound budgetary procedure, on which to base estimates. Furthermore, it was doubtful whether, in view of heavy inroads already made into the Working Capital Fund, it was desirable to use the Fund for this purpose

6. The representatives of several delegations, including Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Syria, expressed their opposition to the appropriation of any funds for the purposes of the resolution in question which, in their opinion, was unconstitutional.

7. The proposal of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, on being put to the vote, was rejected by 17 votes to 6, with 10 abstentions. The proposal of France was then rejected by 23 votes to 6, with 7 abstentions following which the Committee adopted, by 19 votes to 12, with 6 abstentions, the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the estimate be approved in the amount of \$3,000,000.

8. The Fifth Committee therefore decided to recommend to the General Assembly that note should be taken of its decision as to the effect on the budget estimates of the United Nations for 1949 of the draft resolution of the First Committee concerning the proposed United Nations Conciliation Commission in Palestine, namely, that adoption of this resolution by the General Assembly will involve additional net expenditure for nine months in 1949 in the amount of \$3,000,000.

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\* The text of this resolution is now reproduced in document A/776.

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