



Security Council

S/PV.274
24 March 1948

TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FOURTH MEETING

*Held at Lake Success, New York,
on Wednesday, 24 March 1948, at 10.30 a.m.**President:* Mr. T. F. TSIANG (China).*Present:* The representatives of the following countries : Argentina, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, France, Syria, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom, United States of America.**35. Provisional agenda
(document S/Agenda 274)**

1. Adoption of the agenda,
2. Palestine question:
 - (a) First monthly progress report to the Security Council of the United Nations Palestine Commission (document S/663).
 - (b) First special report to the Security Council: The problem of security in Palestine; submitted by the United Nations Palestine Commission (document S/676).
 - (c) Second monthly progress report to the Security Council of the United Nations Palestine Commission (document S/695).

36. Adoption of the agenda*The agenda was adopted.***37. Continuation of the discussion of the Palestine question***On the invitation of the President, Mr. Lisicky, Chairman of the United Nations Palestine Commission; Mahmoud Fawzi Bey, the representative of Egypt; Mr. Chamoun, the representative of Lebanon; and Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, the representative of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, took their places at the Security Council table.*

Mr. EL-KHOURI (Syria): As no one wishes to speak now, I should like to take this opportunity to touch on the question which was referred to yesterday [273rd meeting] by the representative of Argentina with regard to the religious character of this week, and the events which took place in Palestine about nineteen centuries ago. In view of those events, which have given birth to great changes in world history during the last nineteen centuries, in view of the fact that Christians all over the world have spiritual ties with Palestine and their sympathies and feelings are concentrated on the Holy Land during this week, and in view of the present situation in Palestine, I should like to read a cable which I have received from Palestine:

"The painful and regrettable situation now prevailing in Palestine has prompted representatives of all Christian communities of the various denominations to hold a joint meeting for the purpose of discussing the abnormal position which the country has reached, realizing, as they did, their responsibility towards members of their respective communities, spiritually, morally and materially. The meeting was attended by representatives of: the Orthodox Patriarchate, the Latin Patriarchate, the Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate, the Custodian de Terra Sancta, the Vicar of the Melkite Patriarchate, the Arab Evangelical Episcopal Community, the Coptic Patriarchate, the Vicar of the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate, the Metropolitan of the Syriac Orthodox Community, the Vicar of the Syriac Catholic Patriarchate, the Arab Lutheran Community in Palestine.

"Having given careful consideration to the situation now prevailing in Palestine, they decided to address this statement to all world religious and political bodies, in which they seek to give expression to their deep sorrow and strong indignation at the lamentable situation in which the Holy Land, the cradle of peace, has been placed as a direct result of the erroneous policy which has been imposed on the country and with has culminated in the, partition plan.

"It is our firm conviction that peace will not be restored nor would any endeavours made for the promotion of the 'peace of Jerusalem' be crowned with success, unless those bodies who undertake the determination of the future of Palestine remove the causes which have made a battlefield of the Holy Land; re-establish the principles of justice, and maintain the right of self-determination as envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations.

"The Christian Union wishes to declare, in unequivocal terms, that it denounces the partition plan, being of the strong conviction that this plan involves a violation of the sacredness of the Holy Land which, by its nature and history, is indivisible, and represents an encroachment on the natural rights of the Arabs, the people of the country.

"The Christian Union wishes further to declare that any attempt to enforce the erroneous policy by force will inevitably be doomed to failure, 'for right' is a stronger weapon than 'might'.

"In view of our close contact with the various classes of our communities, we deem it our duty to draw the attention of all responsible authorities to the fact that the Christian community in Palestine, of all denominations, is in complete agreement, in principle and deed, with their Moslem brethren in their endeavour to resist and ward off any violation of their rights or any encroachment on their country.

"We therefore appeal to all those in power and authority to make their best endeavours for the restoration of peace and tranquility to the Holy Land by revoking the partition plan, ensuring the unity of Palestine, and promoting the welfare and prosperity of all its people.

This statement was made by all the communities and organs in Palestine representing world Christendom. Having had experience with the situation in Palestine, their judgment will certainly be sounder and more valuable than the judgment of outsiders who go to Palestine and who are so involved in special principles and special aspirations which are incorrect and fallacious.

General McNAUGHTON (Canada): I think the situation in which we now stand calls for some review.

The plan of partition with economic union, which was recommended by the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine and adopted by the General Assembly on 29 November 1947 in resolution 181 (II), is based on a number of important assumptions which it is very important to remember.

Events which have taken place since that date, and in particular the information which the Security Council received last week concerning consultations which had taken place among the permanent members of the Security Council [270th meeting], have made it clear that the expectations of November last have not been realized. In the first place, it was assumed that the two communities in Palestine would co-operate in putting into effect the solution to the Palestine problem which was recommended by the General Assembly. The manner in which it was proposed to distribute the territory between the two communities was based on the expectation

that common economic policies and common fiscal services would be adopted, with a high degree of integration between the Jewish and the Arab States, and that without this integration and economic union, neither State would be able to organize satisfactorily even such elementary matters as road and rail communications, telephone services and telegraph lines, and the electric power and water supply. The responsibility for making the plan of partition with economic union work was to depend primarily upon the people of Palestine themselves and upon their willingness to work together, particularly in economic matters. It has now become clear, however, that co-operation between the Jews and the Arabs of Palestine to the extent assumed in the plan of partition is not realizable under the conditions which exist at the present time.

In the second place, it was assumed, during the discussions on Palestine at the second session of the General Assembly, that the Mandatory Power would be able to give assistance in bringing the recommendations of the General Assembly into effect; and when the plan of partition was first prepared by the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, it was provided that the Mandatory Power should, over a period of some two years, supervise the transitional arrangements which were necessary for the realization of the partition plan. After the General Assembly had met, however, the Mandatory Power indicated that it would not play a major role in implementing a plan which was against the wishes of either the Arabs or the Jews of Palestine. After the General Assembly rose, the Mandatory Power confirmed the indications it had given during the discussions in the sub-committee stage that it could not permit the delimitations of boundaries and the recruiting of local militia until after the Mandate was terminated, since these activities would increase the problem of maintaining public order. For the same reason, it could not allow the United Nations Palestine Commission to go to Palestine until after 1 May of this year. Preparations essential to the fulfilment of the plan of partition have therefore been impossible to carry out, and it is now clear that the co-operation of the United Kingdom in the execution of the partition plan of the General Assembly cannot be expected to go beyond accepting the recommendation that the Mandate itself be laid down and permitting an advance party of the Secretariat of the United Nations to undertake preparatory work in Jerusalem.

The third assumption made in adopting the plan of partition was that a resolution of the General Assembly on this subject would be accepted even by the Members of the United Nations which voted against it in plenary session. And thus, in spite of the opposition of the Arab States, the General Assembly acted in the belief that a recommendation supported by at least two-thirds of the Members of the United Nations present and voting would have a position close to the law and would not be opposed by any Member States.

An active minority of the Members of the United Nations has refused to accept the recommendation of the General Assembly, and this minority includes all States adjacent to Palestine. The nations in question are now said to be assisting in the organization of regular forces to resist partition, and they have indicated that they are prepared even to use their own armed forces if outside forces come to the aid of the Jews.

It was also assumed, when the plan of partition was adopted by the General Assembly, that it would be possible to transfer authority for the Government of Palestine rapidly and progressively from the Mandatory Power to the provisional councils of government of the new States, and for this reason it was not expected that the Palestine Commission would be required to do more than superintend the acceptance by the provisional councils of government of the administrative and protective responsibilities which the Mandatory Power was surrendering.

In effect, it was expected that the role of the United Nations would be no greater than to assist in the transfer of authority from the Mandatory Power to independent Arab and Jewish States. In practice, however, it has not proved possible to put this procedure into effect. The progressive transfer of authority to the provisional councils of government was not possible because the Mandatory Power did not consider that the situation in Palestine was such that the Palestine Commission could be permitted to enter Palestine until a fortnight before the termination of the Mandate, and it was itself unwilling to take steps towards the establishment of local authorities to take over its administrative responsibilities. The Palestine Commission, therefore, if it were to function at all, would now have to undertake much wider responsibilities for administration, following the termination of the Mandate, than was ever intended by the General Assembly.

Finally, it was assumed in November that the Security Council would be in a position to take the initiative, in maintaining peace in Palestine if difficulties arose there during the period of transition following the surrender of the Mandate. It was recognized, by some States at least, that disorder might break out in Palestine, and it was assumed that agreement could be reached in the Security Council as to the measures necessary to be taken in that event.

The report which we have recently received of discussions among the permanent members of the Security Council indicates quite clearly, however, that agreement cannot be reached, under present arrangements, to take effective military action to keep order in Palestine. What, then, are we to do? It seems clear that if nothing is done, either by the organized community of nations or by the States directly concerned, Palestine will become a scene of ever increasing violence and disorder. Both Jews and Arabs are prepared to fight for control of the country, and a bitter civil war seems likely to break out when the United Kingdom surrenders the Mandate, unless some alternative authority is established.

The peace, not only of Palestine but of the whole Middle East, would be in danger and the interests of all Members of the United Nations — and particularly of the peoples who reside in this area — would be seriously endangered by such a calamity.

A brief but vigorous effort has been made to give effect to the plan of partition. It is now proposed that this effort should be suspended, at least temporarily, and in considering this proposal we should not overlook the conscientious and the intelligent manner in which the Palestine Commission has endeavoured to carry out the task given to it by the General Assembly. I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Palestine Commission and to its advisers.

The experience of the Palestine Commission has demonstrated, I think, that major tasks in the United Nations, involving heavy responsibility, should not be entrusted to commissions consisting entirely of small Powers, especially if the larger Powers are not in agreement that these tasks should be carried out. It is to be hoped, therefore, that if new plans for Palestine are to be considered, the responsibility for them will be assumed more directly by the Powers which have major interests in that area.

There can be no doubt that the United States proposal for establishing a temporary trusteeship in Palestine [271st meeting] presents certain difficulties which would have to be overcome. It is possible that the proposal might be resisted by both elements of the population, despite the fact that a temporary trusteeship would not prejudice in any way an eventual settlement. It was not expected by either community that the period of mandatory power would be replaced by that of some external authority after the termination of the Mandate. Neither may be expected to welcome a decision which would mean that independence cannot now be granted to their people or that they must endure a further period of tutelage.

On the other hand, the cooling-off period which a temporary trusteeship would provide would have the great merit of presenting an opportunity for moderate Jewish and Arab leaders to work out, in a less unfavourable atmosphere, a settlement of their common problems within the framework of the United Nations Charter. This period could be of short duration if these leaders were to address themselves with vigour and a mature sense of responsibility towards the settlement of their own problems by direct negotiation.

Alternative plans should be considered, but there is an obvious danger, in the opinion of the Canadian delegation, that if the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, is to turn from one course of action to another without some assurance that the greatest possible amount of agreement and cooperation will be forthcoming from the countries most directly concerned, we shall again encounter serious difficulties of implementation. Therefore, in the circumstances, the Canadian delegation is not at the present stage prepared to declare itself in favour of one course of action rather than another until we have some evidence that there is a meeting of minds, on the part of the countries most directly concerned, on what the best course of action should be.

Mr. PARODI (France) (*translated from French*) I had not intended to speak this morning and I must confess that I am not fully prepared to do so. If I have decided now to submit the observations I wish to make, it is because no one else appears to wish to speak, because the time at our disposal is short, and because I am aware of the very great responsibilities which rest with us. I must apologize to the President and to my colleagues if what I say is somewhat disconnected and if I sometimes repeat what I have already said.

The general position taken by France in the very difficult question now before us is well known. It was outlined at the beginning of the second reunion of the General Assembly¹ by the Foreign Minister of France himself, and comes to this: we shall be in favour of any solution which will be conducive to conciliation and understanding between the parties.

In a matter which has reached such a degree of tension, it is somewhat misleading to speak of conciliation. It may be charged that we are only trying to avoid the difficulties and that to say we are in favour of a solution resting on conciliation amounts, in reality, to saying nothing at all. But this is not true. It is not true because the very nature of things, the nature of the question, the way in which the two populations of Palestine are intermingled, interlinked, one with the other, render impossible any solution of the Palestine question which is not based on agreement. We cannot imagine that two populations so closely intermingled, so constantly in contact with each other, and so obviously in need of each other for their very existence, can live side by side otherwise than by agreement.

There is, to be sure, another conceivable solution, namely, a general massacre. This if, of course, quite inadmissible and I think that if in addition to the present struggles, which are already so grievous, there were wide-spread massacres, the parties would still finally come to an agreement.

The task before us is therefore to seek a solution which would bring about the maximum agreement between the two parties. It was in this spirit that on the day before the closing of the second session of the General Assembly,² I took upon myself, on the grounds of the more conciliatory statements from certain Arab States, to ask

that the Assembly should postpone its decision until the proposals which had been made were more clearly formulated. I had also pointed out — and I am still of the same opinion — that the partition plan had not been studied by the Commission under proper conditions. I do not wish to repeat now what I said then in that regard, but I still feel that the work done at the last session of the General Assembly in studying the various proposals submitted to us did not afford the necessary guarantees.

The proposal I made on 28 November did, I know, come too late. That was the opinion of the General Assembly. It was late because of the force of circumstances. It was late because it was based on more conciliatory statements made at the last moment and also, I must say, because it is at the last moment in a discussion — such as ours — that possibilities of agreement can exist. When the time comes for a decision, and just before it has been taken, when each of the parties thinks that decision may not be favourable to it, that is the moment when the greatest possibilities exist for negotiation. The opportunity which I thought I detected at that time, and for which I had wished the way to be left clear, has not been used, and on 29 November the General Assembly voted, by a two-thirds majority, in favour of the partition plan, the implementation of which we are now discussing.

Our position has not changed, and tomorrow as yesterday, if we see any possibility of an agreement, we shall work in that direction. That is our general position. What is the situation in which we find ourselves now?

We have before us now a new United States proposal, put forward at the 271st meeting, which considerably changes the ground on which we have been working for the last few weeks. The French delegation is in favour of this new United States proposal in so far as it allows any possibility or time for seeking an agreement such as I spoke of a moment ago. At first glance we see in it this advantage, that it constitutes an effort to institute a regime, an authority, in Palestine within the very short time left at our disposal before the termination of the Mandate.

While recognizing these advantages, I feel that many difficulties lie hidden in the United States proposal, and the Security Council must consider them and weigh them before embarking on such a course.

The proposed provisional trusteeship arrangement would obviously give rise to a great number of questions. If the trusteeship is to be administered by a State, is there at present any State which would be prepared to accept that responsibility? The time allowed to us is too short for us to be able to deliberate in the abstract on a trusteeship system if we did not know which country would be prepared to accept the responsibility of that trusteeship.

If it were a matter, rather, of international trusteeship — the only other solution — then we should be embarking on a course as yet uncharted. The United Nations has had no experience of international trusteeship. It is a difficult apparatus to set up, and would involve many complications.

Whatever the trusteeship arrangement envisaged, we know also that a trusteeship status will raise important juridical and political problems. To cite only one example, let me remind the members of the Council that, according to the Charter, trusteeship agreements are conventions or agreements between the States directly concerned. It is difficult to say which are the “States directly concerned”. If I remember well, we discussed this point a year ago without arriving at any agreement, without finding any interpretation of the text which was accepted by all. On the other hand, we shall probably, in any case, consider as “directly concerned” all the States adjacent to Palestine and this, too, raises a problem.

I call the attention of the members of the Council to these questions because it seems to me that if we embark on the course proposed to us, we shall be taking a very serious initial step. We cannot follow the United States delegation without knowing exactly where we are going.

I shall not be making a very revolutionary statement if I say that the discussions which have been carried on within the last few weeks have not increased the prestige of the United Nations. Of all the United Nations organs, there is only one at the present time which has kept its full prestige. I speak of the General Assembly. It has kept its prestige because of its general composition and because it has succeeded, in many cases, in taking decisions. To convoke a session of the General Assembly at the present time without any clear idea as to what action it would take, would be to run the risk of placing it in a very difficult position and of decreasing the prestige of that body which, of all the United Nations organs, has so far retained the most authority.

What will the Assembly do if we convoke a special session now, in accordance with the proposal before us? This session will find itself in a most difficult position. It will have a knife at its throat. The time at its disposal will be too short to enable it to take a decision. It will be asked, first, to reverse the decision it took three months ago; I do not know if it will agree to do so. Let us suppose however that it will agree: that is a negative action and some substitute must be found for the decision rejected. Is there any chance that the trusteeship basis as now proposed will meet the approval of the majority of such a session of the Assembly? To embark on that course would, in my opinion, be very dangerous even if we know definitely where it would bring us and if we knew we were not leading the General Assembly into an impasse involving a demonstration of powerlessness. Such a situation would be a tragedy for the United Nations.

There are some elements in the United States proposal, however, which seem to me to deserve full consideration. In the first place the proposed provisional trusteeship agreement constitutes an attempt to calm troubled spirits and to allow time to seek that solution based on agreement which in my opinion, will come sooner or later. One of our concerns the other day [271st meeting] — and I think it is also one of the main concerns of the United States delegation — was to bring about a truce, an appeasement of spirits to put an end to the increasing bloodshed in Palestine. In so far as the United States proposal would promote that truce, we are in favour of it. But I repeat, the United States proposal must be considered carefully, for it contains certain psychological dangers: the danger of making one of the parties more exacting and of exasperating the other, for we must confess that, in a way which is not very conducive to appeasement, we have blown hot and cold on a part of the world which is very sensitive.

We must therefore consider and decide not only whether the United States proposal would meet with too many difficulties but also whether it would tend towards appeasement. I think my observations are in agreement with those made earlier by the representative of Canada.

The conclusion at which I arrive, on behalf of my delegation, is that we cannot at the present time pronounce ourselves either in favour of or against the United States proposal. I have tried to point out the elements in it which I consider positive and to indicate the further studies I feel it requires. Apart from a study of possible difficulties involved in the proposed trusteeship basis and the convoking of a special session of the General Assembly, we must decide whether or not the United States proposal could lead to an agreement, that is — as General McNaughton quite rightly said — whether there is any possibility that that proposal would be understood by the two parties as a measure intended to bring a relaxation of the tension. The United States proposal does offer certain possibilities if we amplify it and try to give more concrete form to the more conciliatory ideas expressed by the representative of Lebanon in the General Assembly, and, more recently, here in the Security Council.

If we could imagine a provisional trusteeship set up in such a way as to allow a certain administrative organization of the different parts of Palestine, for example, the organization of Jewish and Arab cantons, each with rather wide autonomy; if we could contemplate the establishment of a provisional immigration scheme which would be well balanced and fair, affording satisfaction to one party and guarantees to the other — and I do not think this impossible — then the United States proposal might be made acceptable to both sides.

This organization of Jewish and Arab cantons might well be possible, provided it in no way prejudiced the final solution. Such an organization would not prejudice or preclude a final solution involving partition; and would even, to some extent lay the foundation for it. It would obviously be very easy later on to change the Israeli and Arab cantons into two separate States if that were the final aim.

On the other hand, if we are to decide on another solution, calling for a single State with sufficient guarantees for minorities, an organization such as the one I suggest would hold all these possibilities.

Perhaps I am going too far just now in outlining matters which might, I think, be discussed in a conversation: but we have so little time in which to find a solution. The position of the French delegation is that we cannot at the present time vote — and on this point, I am wholly in agreement with the representative of Canada — either in favour of or against the United States proposal. It would certainly have to be given further study and clarified. It should be enlarged through conversations such as I have just suggested.

I come now to my last proposal. The time left to us is very short; we have come to a sort of impasse. The best course for us to follow now would perhaps be for this Council to hold one or two private meetings in the course of which we could ask the United States delegation to clarify its views and the intention of the plan it outlined the other day. We would discuss this plan, and then I think we should be in a better position than at present to decide whether we could take the great responsibility of convoking a special session of the General Assembly in the short time left to us.

That is the proposal I wish to make to the Security Council concerning the course it should follow at this juncture.

Mr. CHAMOUN (Lebanon) (*translated from French*): My delegation has listened with great interest to the statements made by the representatives of France and of Canada. Before giving the statement I wish to make, I should like simply to call the attention of the representative of France and of the Security Council to that part of the French representative's speech in which he expressed the desire for further details of the United States plan or suggestions, so that the Council would be able to decide with a full knowledge of the facts. This would mean as, I understand it, that the Security Council would hear a detailed explanation by the representative of the United States and, after discussion, would make its recommendations concerning the possible convoking of a special session of the General Assembly. This would, in my opinion, fail to take into consideration the situation in which the General Assembly would be placed, for the Security Council is not empowered to order the

Assembly to adopt one solution or another. Under the terms of the Charter, the General Assembly shall be free to adopt or reject recommendations of the Security Council, to adopt or reject trusteeship, to reverse its recommendation concerning partition or to maintain it. I feel there is no need just now for the United States representative to submit a detailed study of the plan, which would, in any case, be premature, especially since the General Assembly will itself decide freely on any recommendations to be taken in the future.

I wish now to stress two points.

The Arab countries, including of course Lebanon, are prepared to assist in the maintenance of order and security in Palestine and even to go to the length of asking the Arabs in Palestine to cease fire as soon as the recommendation has been made by the Security Council. But this result can be achieved only if the Zionist population and organizations refrain from any provocative action.

As regards the United States proposal, the position of Lebanon, and of all the other Arab countries, remains unchanged: it is in favour of complete independence for an undivided and democratic Palestine.

If the General Assembly is called into special session, as proposed by the representative of the United States, my delegation is prepared to take part in it wholeheartedly, in so far as these proposals would not tend to postpone indefinitely, or compromise, the achievement of that independence for which we are striving. The PRESIDENT: As no other member wishes to speak, I suggest that we adjourn at this point and meet again on Tuesday, 30 March at 2.30 p.m.

Mr. LÓPEZ (Colombia): I am not prepared to speak on the matter under discussion. However, it appears to me that this is a very queer position to take, that is, that we should adjourn without respectfully requesting the United States representative to circulate, as soon as possible, the draft resolutions which he announced, at the 271st meeting, that he would circulate in order to give effect to his suggestions for the consideration of the Council. As a matter of fact, I think it would have been more in order to wait until we were familiar with the draft resolutions before embarking on any discussion of the suggestions which are to be embodied in them.

There is another point which I should like respectfully to submit to the Security Council. It is that by common agreement this matter has been placed, and should be left, in the hands of the permanent members of the Security Council. We all more or less believe that it is their responsibility, and, when other proposals have been submitted with a view to the participation of the non-permanent members in the discussions, they have been voted down. Therefore we know that it is really up to the permanent members of the Security Council to go ahead with the discussion of these matters and proposals.

Some twenty days ago [263rd meeting] we adopted a resolution which requested "...the permanent members of the Council to consult and to inform the Security Council regarding the situation with respect to Palestine and to make, as the result of such consultations, recommendations to it regarding the guidance and instructions which the Council might usefully give to the Palestine Commission with a view of implementing the resolution of the General Assembly." I do not know whether we could truthfully consider that we have received this report. What we have received is a memorandum from the United States delegation in which the new point of view was expressed that a trusteeship arrange silent or plan should take the place of the plan of partition.

In the that place, it seems to me that it would perhaps be in order to request the permanent members to submit their report on their conversations. In the second place, knowing as we do that this matter should preferably be left in their hands, we should request the permanent members to go on with their conversations and not to delay investigating or ascertaining the possibility of an agreement between the Arabs and the Jews. As a matter of fact, it will be recalled that I made a suggestion to that effect, and it was voted down, notwithstanding which it was decided immediately afterwards to invite the Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency for Palestine to discuss the possibility of such an agreement [262nd meeting].

Why not go on with those consultations and lose no time in getting a report on the possibility of that agreement? Some twenty days ago, before the conclusion of a meeting of the Security Council, I proposed that we adjourn with the understanding that the representatives of the great Powers should carry on those conversations. I do not like to appear obstinate, but, rather than adjourn as it has been suggested, I should like to take the liberty to submit again the same proposal: that we adjourn with the understanding that the representatives of the permanent members of the Security Council will take the matter up and go on with their conversations until they are ready to report to the Security Council. Then we shall have a basis for carrying on discussions.

The PRESIDENT: The resolution of the Security Council adopted on 5 March 1948 [263rd meeting] requested the permanent members of the Security Council, first, to consult and to inform the Council regarding the situation with respect to Palestine; and, secondly, to recommend instructions which the Council might usefully give to the Palestine Commission.

On 19 March 1948 [270th meeting], the permanent members reported to the Security Council with regard to the first part of this resolution. The representative of the United States reported on behalf of his delegation as well as the delegations of France and China. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics reported for himself.

Later the same day, the representative of the United States placed before the Security Council certain broad proposals which were to be followed by resolutions [271st meeting]. Since 19 March the consultations among the permanent members of the Security Council have not taken place.

It seems to me that at the present stage nothing will be gained by a renewal of those consultations. It would be better for the Security Council to await such detailed proposals as the delegation of the United States may place before it, or such proposals as other delegations may place before it.

Mr. LÓPEZ (Colombia): I am very happy that my remarks have elicited from the President the statement that he has just made, namely, that these conversations among the permanent members of the Security Council cannot usefully be renewed. Some of the representatives on the Security Council thought that would come to pass, and that is actually the trouble: the problem was in the hands of the permanent members of the Security Council and we did not get any solution from them. Of course, we have to go ahead with our work. The Security Council has to discharge its responsibilities — and they are not light responsibilities — and it is extremely useful to have the situation clarified, as the President has just done in stating that we cannot proceed on the assumption that the conversations among the permanent members of the Security Council can be usefully carried on in this connexion.

Rabbi SILVER (Jewish Agency for Palestine): The Jewish Agency for Palestine at this moment does not wish to enter into a discussion of the proposals because these proposals have not yet been submitted, as I understand it, to the Security Council. When and if they are submitted, I am sure that we would wish to ask for the privilege of making our observations on them.

At this moment I have the honour to submit to the Security Council a statement which was adopted by the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the National Council or the Jews of Palestine the *Vaad Leumi*, on 23 March 1948

"The Jewish Agency for Palestine and the *Vaad Leumi* have learned with regret and astonishment of the attitude adopted by the United States representative in the Security Council concerning the United Nations decisions on Palestine.

"The Jewish Agency and the *Vaad Leumi* declare:

"1. The Jewish people and the *Yishuv* in Palestine will oppose any proposal designed to prevent or postpone the establishment of the Jewish State.

"2. We categorically reject any plan to set up a trusteeship regime for Palestine, even for a short period of time. A trusteeship would necessarily entail a denial of the Jewish right to national independence. It would leave Palestine under a foreign military regime.

"3. The failure and disintegration of the Mandatory Administration, the continuation of which was unanimously rejected by the United Nations, necessitates the early arrival in Palestine of the United Nations Palestine Commission. The Provisional Council of Government of the Jewish State should be recognized without delay by the United Nations Palestine Commission so that authority may be transferred to it as envisaged in the United Nations decisions.

"4. Upon the termination of the Mandatory Administration and not later than 16 May next, a provisional Jewish Government will commence to function in co-operation with the representatives of the United Nations then in Palestine. In the meantime, we shall do our utmost to minimize the chaos created by the present Government, and we shall maintain, so far as lies in our power, the public services neglected by it.

"5. The Jewish people extends the hand of peace to the Arab people and invites representatives of the Arab population of the Jewish State to take their rightful place in all its organs of government. The Jewish State will be glad to co-operate with the neighbouring Arab States and to enter into permanent treaty relations with them to strengthen world peace and to advance the development of all the countries of the Near East."

Mahmoud FAWZI Bey (Egypt): The hour is late and I have only a few words to say.

I do not need to remind the council that, since partition was first talked about, and more particularly since the General Assembly adopted resolution 181 (II) in favour of partition, we have seen in and around Palestine nothing but strife and trouble.

Nor do I need to remind the Council, or speak at great length, of the position of the Arabs. The Arabs will not swallow partition no matter how much it is sugar-coated. Nor will it make any difference whether partition be administered in one big pill or two small ones.

Partition has brought nothing but trouble from the moment it was first talked about. It was, therefore, only normal to reconsider and to review the whole position.

I am not, at this stage, going to comment upon the proposals or suggestions made at our last meeting by the representative of the United States, but I do wish to say that a decision which will mean suspending the implementation of partition will be a decision in the proper direction. I do not wish to at present to comment in entail on what was circulated and later was said to us by the United States spokesman of the Jewish Agency for Palestine. There is a part of it which concerns the Security

Council itself. The Council is capable of defending itself and its own prerogatives.

As for the rest of what was said by the United States spokesman of the Jewish Agency, I would only say that the road to order points in an entirely different direction.

THE PRESIDENT: I wish to announce that the meeting originally scheduled for tomorrow afternoon, 25 March, to discuss the India-Pakistan question has been postponed to Monday afternoon, 29 March. The discussion of the Palestine question will be resumed Tuesday afternoon, 30 March.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

Endnotes

¹*See Official Records of the second session of the General Assembly, Plenary Meetings, 87th meeting.*

²*See Official Records of the second session of the General Assembly, Plenary Meetings, 127th meeting.*