

UNITED NATIONS  
Department of Public Information  
Press and Publications Bureau  
Lake Success, New York

MASTER FILE

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE  
18th Meeting

(PM) SUMMARY  
Press Release GA/PAL/21  
18 October 1947

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE HEARS MR. HUSSEINI OF ARAB HIGHER  
COMMITTEE AND DR. WEIZMANN OF JEWISH AGENCY PRESENT THEIR VIEWS

At this afternoon's meeting the Committee heard statements by Mr. Jamal Hussein, vice-president of the Arab Higher Committee, and by Dr. Chaim Weizmann, former President of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

Mr. Hussein quoted various historical works to support his contention that the Jews of Eastern Europe are descended from the Khazars and therefore without any connection with Palestine.

Mr. Hussein denied that Jewish immigration benefits the Arabs economically, and that Jewish colonization has achieved as much as some delegations claim. In any case, said Mr. Hussein, the question for the Arabs is on a much higher level, namely liberty and independence.

Mr. Hussein emphasized the contribution of the Arabs to the war effort and declared that the Arabs, as the indigenous majority population of Palestine, are entitled to self-determination and to all the consequences that this principle entails.

Dr. Chaim Weizmann, former President of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, said that the idea of a Jewish State was no departure from the Mandate. He said that the main justification for a Jewish State arose from the urgencies of life itself, and that partition of Palestine was the only practical solution.

Dr. Weizmann said that as the idea of trusteeship had been discarded, the only alternative to a Jewish State for the Jews would be for them to live as a minority under Arab rule. This, he said, was morally impossible; besides the Jews had not gone to Palestine on the strength of international promise to become Arab citizens.

A Jewish State, said Dr. Weizmann, would seek close cooperation with the neighboring Arab States and, through intensive economic development, provide homes for the displaced Jews of Europe. He asked the Committee to reconsider the

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questions of Western Galilee and of the Jewish District of Jerusalem, and offered Jewish assistance for the implementation of the United Nations' decisions.

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(A chronological account of this meeting is given in Takes #1 through #3, which follow this summary.)

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AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE  
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(PM) TAKE #1  
Press Release GA/PAL/21  
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AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE -- (PM) TAKE #1

The Chairman, Dr. Herbert V. Evatt (Australia), called the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question to order shortly after 4:00 p.m., and gave the floor to Mr. Jamal Husseini, Vice-President of the Arab Higher Committee.

Mr. Husseini began by explaining that the Arabs of Palestine, who have now sent a delegation to testify before the Committee, had not previously flouted the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine. The Arabs, he said, refused to cooperate with the UNSCOP because it had not been instructed to give due consideration to what he called the "interests of the inhabitants of Palestine."

Mr. Husseini then took up the question of the racial relationship of the East European Jews to the Khazars. He quoted at some length from the Jewish Encyclopedia and from other historical works to support his contention that the Jews of Eastern Europe--who, he said, were the creators of the Zionist movement--were descended from the Khazars, a people of Turkish origin, without any connection with Palestine.

Mr. Husseini also stated that the fact whether the present non-Jewish inhabitants of Palestine are of Arab origin is irrelevant. They are there, he said, in actual possession of their country since remote periods of time, and they need have no other association to establish their claim thereto and be entitled to all the benefits of the United Nations Charter.

Mr. Husseini said the Jewish Agency spokesman had misquoted the British High Commissioner for Palestine in his condemnation of Arab acts of violence against Jews. Mr. Husseini added that the condemnations by the Jewish authorities of Jewish terroristic acts were only of lip-service.

Mr. Husseini denied that Jewish immigration benefits the Arabs economically to the extent described by the Royal Commission's Report and by some of the delegates. He also stated that it was not the Jews who reclaimed the big swamps of Palestine. On the whole, he said, Arab agricultural achievements are

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economically sound but Jewish agricultural achievements are not.

But, added, Mr. Hussein, the question for the Arabs, after all, is not one of bread and butter; it is one of much higher issues: the liberties and independence of the Arabs.

Replying to previous statements by the delegate from Guatemala, Mr. Hussein denied that the Grand Mufti had been appointed by Sir Herbert Samuel, first British High Commissioner for Palestine. He added that it was the Mufti who, in 1931 and 1929 put a stop to the anti-Jewish troubles in Palestine. Mr. Hussein declared that the people of Palestine always look to the Grand Mufti with great reverence and turn to him for inspiration.

Mr. Hussein then turned to the question of displaced persons which, he said, has created in the hearts of some of the delegates so much zeal that it has carried them off to harmful limits. Referring to the proposal submitted by the delegate from Uruguay to admit into Palestine 30,000 Jewish children and pregnant mothers, Mr. Hussein declared that with the conditions now prevailing in Palestine, such a step would be tantamount "to take them out of the pen into the fire." He suggested that the care of these children be entrusted to the Jews of New York. Homelessness, said Mr. Hussein, cannot give to the homeless a right to the possession of the homes of others.

Replying to the assertion of the spokesman of the Jewish Agency that the Arabs did not contribute to the war effort during the two world wars, Mr. Hussein quoted tributes to the Arab war contribution by Mr. Winston Churchill, Mr. Ernest Bevin and President Truman.

Continuing, Mr. Hussein named a number of Arab villages of Palestine which, he said, had been erased from the map following Jewish colonization.

Concluding, Mr. Hussein declared that the Arabs, being the indigenous population of Palestine and constituting the overwhelming majority, are entitled to self-determination and to all the consequences that this principle entails. "We shall stick to the right of self-determination," he said, "as long as it is the basis of the United Nations Charter."

END OF TAKE #1)

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AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE  
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(PM) TAKE #2  
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AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE (PM) TAKE #2

Dr. Chaim Weizmann, former President of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, declared that the establishment of the Jews as a nation was the real purpose and motive the Mandate endorsed by the League of Nations. There was nothing new, he said, in the idea of a Jewish State; it was no departure from the Mandate but rather its inevitable and foreseen consummation.

Dr. Weizmann said that for several years he had consistently believed in and advocated the idea of partition as the only practical compromise. But he added, it was not an easy compromise for himself to envisage as the original purpose of the Mandate did not involve the eventual limitation of Jewish immigration and development to one-eighth of the area in which the Jewish National Home was to be established.

Dr. Weizmann said the main justification for a Jewish state arises from the facts and urgencies of life, itself. Here was a community, he said, of 700,000 with its language, its religion, its cultural traditions, its distinctive outlook. Not one, he explained, of the characteristics which mark this Jewish community is shared by its Arab neighbors.

Continuing, Dr. Weizmann said that the question before the Assembly is how and by whom shall the Jewish Community of Palestine be governed. The continuance, he said, of a regime of tutelage had been universally discarded, which left but two other alternatives: either statehood or life as a minority under Arab rule. This latter solution, said Dr. Weizmann, is impossible on moral grounds because one cannot take the only community in the world which expresses the natural identity of the Jewish people and place it under the domination of the Arab Higher Committee. Furthermore, he said, those Jews who on the strength of international promise and under the impulse of their own history made their homes in Palestine did not do so with the object of becoming Arab citizens of Jewish persuasion.

(End of Take #2)

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AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE  
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(PM) TAKE #3  
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AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE - (PM) TAKE #3

Lastly, said Dr. Weizmann, unity cannot be imposed without consent. The Jews, he said, are only claiming in small measure what has been conferred upon the Arabs in abundant degree.

A Jewish State, Dr. Weizmann went on, will in its own interests, seek close cooperation with the Arab States on its borders. He added that the problem of displaced Jews in Europe who may be impelled to seek new homes elsewhere can be solved within the framework of the Jewish State. By intensive agriculture, he explained, and by industrial development, the Jewish State can provide homes for all these displaced persons. Besides, said Dr. Weizmann, the displaced Jews of Europe do not want to throw themselves at the mercy of the world; they wish to be citizens of a Jewish society.

Dr. Weizmann then discussed the boundary of the Jewish State as proposed by the Majority Report, and asked that new consideration be given to the matter of Western Galilee (which the Majority Report includes in the Arab State) and the Jewish district of Jerusalem (which the Majority Report includes in the autonomous territory of Jerusalem.)

Concluding, Dr. Weizmann asked the Committee, when planning for the implementation of its decisions, to make full use of the assistance which the Jews can give in making the Jewish State capable of its own defence. He added that the prospects of peace will, however, be brightened if the Jewish forces maintaining security within the Jewish State are accompanied at the outset by an international force.

(END OF TAKE #3 AND OF PRESS RELEASE GA/PAL/21.)