

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

Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine
9th Meeting

(AM) SUMMARY
Press Release GA/PIL/9
9 October 1947

COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE HEARS REPRESENTATIVES OF SYRIA AND SWEDEN
AS GENERAL DEBATE CONTINUES

The Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question this morning continued general discussion of the question of Palestine and heard the delegates from Syria and Sweden.

Emir Adel Arslan (Syria) asked that Palestine be allowed freely to decide on its status. He referred to the criticism which, he said, had been directed against the Balfour Declaration, adding that humanitarian considerations alone should not influence decisions on Palestine. Jewish refugees, said Emir Adel Arslan, should be admitted by all countries.

Mr. Rickard Sandler (Sweden) warned that the declaration of the United Kingdom that the British Government was not prepared much longer to assume responsibility for maintaining law and order in Palestine placed a heavier burden on the United Nations. Mr. Sandler stressed the importance of the political and economic aspects of the problem in contrast to the involved historical and legal points. Mr. Sandler indicated support for the partition proposal but with regulated Jewish immigration. The task of implementing the General Assembly's decision, he said, should be entrusted to the Security Council.

Mr. Hector Castro (El Salvador) replying to Emir Adel Arslan (Syria), stated that El Salvador was not refusing refugees although his country was the most densely populated of the whole American mainland.

(A Chronological account of this meeting is given in Takes #1 and #2 which follow this summary).

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(AM) TAKE #1
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(AM) TAKE #1
Palestine

The first speaker at this morning's (ninth) meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee
the
on the Palestinian Question was Emir Adel Arslan of Syria.

The Emir asked that Palestine be allowed freely to fix its status and its
boundaries.

Palestine, he said, was not the land of origin of the Jews, and that when
the Arabs conquered Palestine, no Jews had lived there.

Regarding the Balfour Declaration, Emir Adel Arslan said that it was made to
Dr. Weizmann in acknowledgement of his discovery of a new poison gas during the
First World War. In this respect, the Emir referred to criticism which he said
had been directed against the Balfour Declaration by various British political
leaders.

He then dwelt on the bonds which unite Palestine to the rest of the Arab world.

Humanitarian considerations alone, said the Syrian Representative, should
not influence decisions in the question of Palestine, as, he said, the real
problem was of a political nature--namely Zionism.

The Jewish refugees of Europe, said the Syrian Representative, should be
given shelter in all countries. Palestine should not be the only country re-
quested to relieve their plight.

He then quoted figures showing that only a small number of refugee Jews
were being admitted into countries other than Palestine.

The Emir Adel Arslan also contrasted the lack of man-power from which several
countries are now suffering, and the enforced idleness in which Jewish refu-
gees are living.

(END OF TAKE #1)

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(AM) TAKE #2
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(AM) TAKE #2

Palestine

Concluding, Emir Adel Arslan asked if anything was being done to put a stop to the persecution against Jews which, he said, was still going on in certain countries of Europe.

The second speaker was Mr. Rickard Sandler (Sweden).

Mr. Sandler began by asking what would be the situation if the present session of the General Assembly failed to find a solution for the Palestine problem, as the Mandatory Power had declared it was not prepared ^{such longer} to assume responsibility for maintaining law and order, and the two contending parties, Arab and Jewish, were hinting at force.

Mr. Sandler then asked if the Report of the Special Committee on Palestine contained elements likely to facilitate a reasonable and practical solution.

As far as the historical and legal parts of this Report were concerned, Mr. Sandler said they did not offer any such hope.

Only if the United Nations adopted, as starting point, the present position in Palestine, he said, that a practical result could be attained.

It was, he stressed, the political and economic aspects of the problem that should receive attention.

Mr. Sandler indicated support for the partition proposals of the majority of members of the UNSCOP.

As for Jewish immigration, Mr. Sandler expressed the opinion that it should be regulated in order not to endanger peace.

The creation of a Jewish State, declared Mr. Sandler, would not solve the problem of all the Jews of Europe who no longer had a country.

Mr. Sandler stated that in deciding upon a solution for Palestine, great attention should be given to the means of applying this solution.

MORE

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+2+

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In this respect he expressed the opinion that the Security Council was the most appropriate body to carry out the decisions of the General Assembly as the maintenance of peace and security was involved, and agreement between the Great Powers was essential.

The third speaker this morning on the Palestine question was the Representative of El Salvador, Dr. Hector Castro, who said he wished to refute the statement by the delegate of Syria, that El Salvador had refused refugees.

Dr. Castro said that El Salvador was the most densely populated nation on the American mainland but that despite this, some refugees had already been admitted and when once a plan was approved by the U.N. he was sure that the quota for El Salvador would be gladly absorbed.

No specific numbers, he added, could be given at this time, but he did feel sure that his country would gladly cooperate in any overall plan of the United Nations.

Dr. Evatt then asked the members of the delegations to hand in their specific proposals on the Palestine question by Monday midnight. In addition, Saturday night was fixed as the deadline for speakers to register for the general debate.

The Committee will reconvene at 11:00 a.m. tomorrow, Friday, 10 October.

(END OF TAKE #2

and of PRESS RELEASE GA/PAL/9)