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## SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE

## VERBATIM RECORD OF THE NINETEENTH MEETING (PUBLIC)

Held at the Y.M.C.A. Building  
Jerusalem, Palestine  
Monday, 7 July 1947, at 9:00 a.m.

## PRESENT:

The CHAIRMAN:	Mr. Sandstrom	Sweden
	Mr. Hood	Australia
	Mr. Rand	Canada
	Mr. Lisicky	Czechoslovakia
	Mr. Garcia Granados	Guatemala
	Sir Abdur Rahman	India
	Mr. Entezam	Iran
	Mr. Blom	Netherlands
	Mr. Garcia Salazar	Peru
	Mr. Fabregat	Uruguay
	Mr. Simic	Yugoslavia
SECRETARIAT:	Mr. Hoo	Assistant Secretary General
	Mr. Garcia Robles	Secretary

CHAIRMAN: I call the meeting to order.

The agenda for today contains two points: one, public hearing of representatives of the Jewish Agency, and the other, public hearing of representatives of Vaad Leumi. I think we can adopt this agenda.

It is adopted.

I wish to ask first if we shall consider the evidence of the Jewish Agency as ended so far.

(At this point Mr. Ben-Gurion and Mr. Shertok took seats at the Council table.)

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Shertok, are you going to make an address as your colleagues have done?

Mr. SHERTOK: No, sir.

CHAIRMAN: Then we consider the evidence as ended so far, and we will put our questions. I understand that on the political issues you,

Mr. Ben Gurion and you, Mr. Shertok, are going to answer.

(Assent signified)

CHAIRMAN: Before we begin, I should like to ask my colleagues that, when putting a question, they speak into the microphone so it can be heard in the hall.

If the Committee is able to make recommendations which will contain a remedy for the troubled situation here, I think it is very important that we should determine what is really the root of the evil. Now you had, in your addresses, put rather much in the foreground your conflict with the Mandatory Power, and we have heard at length your grievances against the Mandatory Power and the Administration of Palestine. You have rather put the conflict between the Jews and the Arabs in the background. There are, however, certain indications that at the root of the evil is this conflict between Jews and Arabs.

The first question I want to put to you is this: do you agree with me that if you could find a solution of this conflict between Jews and Arabs, the conflict between you and the Mandatory Power would be relegated to secondary place and perhaps be solved automatically?

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Mr. BEN GURION (Representative of the Jewish Agency): I am afraid, sir I cannot agree with that view, because it implies a few things which we think are not the way you put it, Mr. Chairman. We have no conflict with the Arabs on our side. As far as this country and the Arabs are concerned, what we say is that we were dispossessed from our country, although it was a considerable time ago. But we did not give it up. It is our home. We admit that all those who are living in this country have the same right to it, just as we. We do not say, as in the case of other dispossessed people, that the people who are there ought to be removed.

There was such a view held by the Labour Party, adopted only two years ago by the British Labour Party, just before the election, that in order to make more room for Jews the Arabs should be encouraged to transfer to other countries. We did not accept it even then; we did not approve of it. We do not claim that any Arab ought to be removed. Therefore, we have no conflict, as far as we are concerned, with the Arabs. They deny our right to be in our home. If you call this a conflict, then there is a conflict, but it is not a conflict on our side.

We do not claim anything they have. The Mandatory here, when these countries were liberated, undertook to facilitate our return. This is the conflict. It is true that at the beginning, the representatives of the Arabs agreed to that settlement. They later did not keep it.

So, I would not say there is a conflict between us and the Arabs. If there is a conflict, it is a one-sided conflict. The Arabs try to deny our right to our country here. We do not deny their right to this country here.

CHAIRMAN: Then I must ask, is it not enough to create a conflict that the Arabs deny your right to come here? And as further indication of this conflict, is it not true that the Arabs have not contented themselves with contesting your right in an academic way, that they have shown that contestation of your rights even in acts?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes. In this, it is the same as in private or in any other public law. This question was adjudicated by <sup>the</sup> world tribunal when the question arose. It was some twenty-seven years ago. You have the same question in many countries where Jews as private persons--not as a people--were dispossessed by the Nazis. In the meantime, their goods were given away to others, but the law said--at least in many countries, in Greece, I believe, in Czechoslovakia, and some other countries--that the goods taken away forcibly from the Jews were to be given back. Sometimes the people who had them refused to do it. But there is a law which is superior, and this law ought to be carried out. And the Mandatory undertook to carry out that law. It failed in that.

CHAIRMAN: I only want now to explain why I said that there are indications that there is a conflict between yourselves and <sup>the</sup> Arabs. In the grievances that you make against the Government, you have referred to a pro-Arab attitude of the Government. That presupposes opposition between Jews and Arabs. I further see, in the case you stated before the Anglo-American Committee, that you end your case by saying, among other things: "The issue is not merely one between Jews and Arabs. It concerns the whole world."

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, sir.

By the way, I did not use the term that the Mandatory is pro-Arab. I doubt that very much. Anyhow, I did not say so, that they are pro-Arab. I said they were against the Mandate, but I did not say that they are pro-Arab.

CHAIRMAN: Well, I will go on with my questions.

I suppose that ~~is~~ your conception of the essence of the conflict is influencing your proposals for settlement. Now, it is not altogether clear how you imagine the development of things here. We have seen that you oppose the White Paper, the land regulations. I suppose you want them abolished--the restrictions on immigration and the land regulations. You want them abolished and, I suppose, immediately.

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN: On the other hand, we see that you want the abolition of the Mandate and you do not want the substitution of a trusteeship, or something of that kind, for the Mandate. Then the question must come up: how do you think that immigration could be implemented if the Mandate has ceased? What kind of government do you think should be established in this country instead of the Mandate?

Mr. BEN GURION: Well, that is a very legitimate question, and a very sensible question, and I will try to answer you to the best of my ability. We say that the White Paper policy is illegal, and therefore, it should be removed at once. The Mandate, in fact, does not exist because it was violated by the Mandatory. We are not in favour of renewing it. We do not believe that in the future it will be carried out better than in the past. Therefore, we say that the original intention and the need, and what in our conviction is just, should be decided upon by the United Nations, and a Jewish State should be established.

There are two parts in the establishment of a state: one is the material part, which is the most essential; the other is the legal part, the purely formal one, which is also of great importance.

I will say a word about the material establishment, because the whole difficulty of the problem here is that you have a people, you have a country, and their right to the country was acknowledged, but the people do not happen to be there yet. They were dispossessed, and they have to come back. So, the first thing is the material establishment of the state, which means that plans based on our experience and on achievements, examined and approved by experts--economic, irrigation, agricultural, industrial experts, and so on--should be examined by the Committee and the United Nations to see how and they can be carried out; that a million Jews should be resettled in their country.

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In our view it is not only possible, but it is possible to do so by good will. It is possible to do it in a very short time. This is the material establishment of a national home for the Jewish State. This may take some time. In the meantime, it will be supervised by the highest authority of the United Nations. The fact that the Mandatory itself referred it to the United Nations implies a certain recognition that this is the place where it has to be judged and decided, although the Mandatory did not undertake formally to carry it out. But there is an indication that this is the place where it should be decided.

Assuming that on the recommendations of your Committee the United Nations approves of that plan, the material establishment, it means the settlement of the first million Jews--I say a million, it may be 900,000 or it may be 1,100,000, to state a round figure--in the shortest possible time. Even the shortest possible time may and must take some time. I am unable to say how long it will take. I think no one is able to say that, because there are always in human affairs unforeseen things which may happen. But it should not take longer, as far as we can judge now--it must not take longer than a few years. Not necessarily longer than a few years. Then, in the meantime, a committee, or any instrument which the United Nations will decide on, will supervise.

This plan means two things: bringing in a large number of Jews, and developing the Arab parts of the country. Because we cannot--not only because we are philanthropists--we cannot irrigate the country as a whole--and the basis of our plan is, first of all, irrigation. You cannot irrigate only the Jewish part of the land. You must irrigate all parts of the land. And we must give irrigation to the Arabs. We must give roads to the Arabs. We must give better buildings and better schools. And it implies raising the standard of living of the Arabs to the same level, as possible, as the Jewish.

These are the two essential features of our plan of development: a large Jewish settlement; a considerable raising of Arab standards.

When this plan is approved by you and by the United Nations, then the  
can be  
Jewish Agency / charged to carry it out, not only because it is responsible  
but because it is able to do it. We will be able to do it. It is our baby.  
If the Arabs are willing to take part, we will welcome them to take part in it.  
It will be under the highest supervision of the United Nations.

When a considerable part of the plan is carried out, because you must not  
wait until the end of it--a considerable portion of that large-scale plan of  
immigration, settlement and improvement of conditions of Arabs is carried out,  
then the United Nations will decide there is no more need for supervision and  
the independent state of Palestine can be established. And we can envisage a  
state in Palestine only on absolutely democratic lines, where every citizen in  
the country is an equal citizen. By the way, I want to express what we mean  
by a Jewish state. We mean by a Jewish state simply a state where the majority  
of the people are Jews, not a state where a Jew has, in any way, any privilege  
more than anyone else.

I want to mention on this occasion that during our last talks with the  
Government in London, when certain proposals were made for a settlement--which,  
unfortunately, we could not consider--we were offered that Jews should have more  
rights than others. And certain examples were given us of certain British  
colonies, in Ceylon and other places. And we declared emphatically to the  
Government that we will not accept, we will fight any privilege accorded to  
a Jew because he is a Jew. What we want to have is more Jews in Palestine but  
not more privileges for the Jews. A Jewish state means a state based on  
absolute equality of all her citizens and on democracy. When the United Nations  
will see that the main purpose for which this country is destined, to solve the  
Jewish problem, that the main thing has been done and that the time is ripe to /  
administration of the Government itself,--then the second phase, the legal, the  
formal establishment of a state will be reached. Whether it will take two years

or three years, I cannot say, but in that transition period it will be in charge of the United Nations. That is all we envisage here.

CHAIRMAN: If I sum up correctly what you have said, you mean that it would be an administration of the country under supervision by the United Nations?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, The Jewish Agency--

CHAIRMAN: But is that not a continuation of the Mandate in another form?

Mr. BEN GURION: No, it is not. Because the Mandate means--and you will see the first Article of the Mandate begins: "That the Mandatory shall have full power of legislation and of administration...save as they may be limited by the terms of this Mandate." This had to be done because at the beginning there was only a very small Jewish community of some 60,000 and they could not foresee how long it would take to reach the consummation of the purpose of the Mandate. We are now in a different phase. There is only a very short interval between the decision to have a Jewish state and the material and legal consummation of a state.

CHAIRMAN: Of course, when I asked whether it is not a continuation of the Mandate, that was a contradiction, as there will be no Mandatory. It will be a direct administration by the United Nations. But do you think there is an advantage in such a situation?

Mr. BEN GURION: There is, because, first of all, there will be a clear-cut, unequivocal decision that Palestine is becoming a Jewish state. The fact--and this has been admitted by many--the fact that this was not quite clear in the Mandate has led to contradictions. But the first thing is that there will be a clear-cut decision. Then the interval will be very short. Therefore, although you can say what is the difference if you call it a Mandate or if you call it supervision--the difference is that it is for a very short time, you know exactly where you are going, and you know what is going to happen in a few years.



CHAIRMAN: May I ask who will then take care of the administration? If it is the United Nations, they would have to set up a special administration just as the Mandatory has done hitherto.

Mr. BEN GURION: No, not exactly. There will be, for a certain time, a kind of government that is called a dyarchy, as in India.

There will be the plan of development which will be carried out by the Jewish Agency. They will not undertake here the whole Government of the country, for many reasons which there is no need to enter into. But the development of the country, irrigation, building, bringing in immigrants, settling immigrants, providing for immigration, this will be undertaken by the Jewish Agency. All the rest, safety, security, relations, and all other functions of the Government which have nothing to do with development will be for a time--and we believe a very short time--under the supervision of the United Nations.

CHAIRMAN: In other words, it will be an administration on the lines, more or less, of the one which exists here now, with the difference that the Jewish Agency would assume certain important functions in the administration?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, but this difference is very important.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, of course there is a great difference.

Mr. BEN GURION: A great difference.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): Mr. Chairman, I have a question.

CHAIRMAN: Is it a question referring to this matter?

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): Yes.

May I ask if, in this transitory period, the administration of the country as concerns security, the administration of the law, and so forth, will be administered by the Mandatory Power, by the United Nations, or by any special administration? This point is not quite clear to me from your statement.

Mr. BEN GURION: Well, I think this is a matter for the United Nations to decide. I do not think that the present administration can be left, because you cannot have an administration charged with a thing which they heartily dislike.

But whether they should remain, whether it should be an international administration or a single administration, this should be left to the United Nations. The United Nations will decide.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): It means that you, sir, have no idea of your own about this aspect of the question.

Mr. BEN GURION: We did not discuss it, and I cannot speak on behalf of the movement which I represent.

Sir Abdur RAHMEN (India): Do I understand correctly that you want a Jewish state to be established, to be forced on the country by the arms of the United Nations?

CHAIRMAN: I was just going to put a similar question. I understand this one hundred per cent Jewish solution of the Palestine question and a complete dismissal of the Arab claim to the country. I suppose you agree with me that it is.

Mr. BEN GURION: I will tell you--first of all, I think I ought to answer the question of Sir Abdur Rahman.

CHAIRMAN: I will come to that, but at a later stage.

What do you think will be the Arab reaction to such a solution?

Mr. BEN GURION: Well, I will answer both questions. I will answer first the question I was asked by Sir Abdur Rahman.

CHAIRMAN: I am coming to the same question that Sir Abdur Rahman asked after you answer this one. What do you think will be the Arab reaction?

Mr. BEN GURION: Do you want me to answer your question first and then the question of Sir Abdur Rahman?

CHAIRMAN: Yes, sir.

Mr. BEN GURION: Well, you asked me a question which I am afraid is not for me to answer. I am sorry that you have no Arab representatives here, because this question can be really authoritatively answered by them. I cannot say. I would not presume to tell you what may or may not be the Arab reactions because, as far as I know, there may be different reactions of different people and I know there are different attitudes. I happen to know this.

CHAIRMAN: Now I come to the question of Sir Abdur Rahman.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): In connection with your own question, Mr. Chairman, would it not mean a war between <sup>the Jews</sup> ~~you~~ and the Arabs? Let us put it straight. Would it not mean an absolutely bloody war between you and the Arabs?

Mr. BEN GURION: Do you want me to answer this question now?

CHAIRMAN: Yes, please.

Mr. BEN GURION: I will answer the question as it was put to me first and as it is put to me now.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): They are two different questions.

Mr. BEN GURION: I want to answer both questions. The first question is whether we want the United Nations to force upon the Arabs a Jewish state or Jewish immigration. This was the question.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): The Chairman wants the second question to be answered first.

Mr. BEN GURION: Do you want me to answer the second question?

CHAIRMAN: I do not want to press my question. What I wanted to know was whether one could assume that there will be a violent Arab reaction. Then you have to answer the question which Sir Abdur Rahman put.

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes. The supposition is that no armed forces are loose against anybody. First of all, I want to say that the fact implied in that question that at present armed forces are not being used is not quite correct.

The present position is that armed forces are being used against us. Armed forces are being used against Jews that are coming into the country. But for the armed forces of the British Navy, the Jews who are still suffering in camps would be here. Because it is only the armed forces that have prevented them from coming.

Before I answer the question, I will ask this question: Are you for using forces of the United Nations or of a Mandatory to prevent Jews, by force, from coming back to their country, a thing which is happening now?

CHAIRMAN: Well, we will not answer that question. We have the answer to our question.

Mr. BEN GURION: I am not asking you a question; I am not asking you to answer.

CHAIRMAN: You are answering my question.

Mr. BEN GURION: I have to answer. I said that the facts are that at present force is being used against us for two purposes: for preventing us from coming here--because, without force, I want Sir Abdur Rahman to know these Jews would not have been prevented from coming back; and secondly, force is used to enforce the racial discrimination against Jews.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): That is not the answer to the question. It is going absolutely beyond it. If he would only concentrate on the answer to the question put to him, it would be better, because when he says force is being used, the same force is being used against the Arabs, and the same force is being used against anybody who contravenes the law. If I contravene the law, the same force would be used against me today.

Mr. BEN GURION: I did not finish my answer.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): You are going beyond it. We will not finish for two months if you go on in that way. I do not mind if we take two months or two years. Let me lead the questioning. You say you have not finished your answer?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes. I say that the fact is, first, that force is being used against people exercising their rights. Our right is to come back. To prevent this, force is being used.

If the United Nations will give a decision in justice and equity that the Jews have a right to come back to their country, then I believe it will be their duty, if necessary, to enforce it. I do not know how much force will be necessary, but you have the same problem everywhere in the world. The main question is not whether to use force or not; the main question is whether a thing is right or wrong. That is what the United Nations have to decide: Is it right or is it wrong? If it is wrong, then it is for the United Nations to stop every Jew from coming into the country, and perhaps, as some people here want, to send away those who are here. Such a thing has happened to us. So, this is the question: if the United Nations will say this is right, then they will do everything to enforce that right, the same as they are doing to enforce right everywhere else in the world. It is not a special question applied to us.

CHAIRMAN: The object of this transitory period of administration, in order to get in the immigrants and to enforce that policy, implies, I suppose, the object of coming to a state where you could use afterwards democratic means to govern the country?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes. When the country has reached a stage when the main object for which this country has to serve can be fulfilled, then you do not need any foreign intervention any more.

CHAIRMAN: The object is to create the conditions for a democratic rule of the country?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, sir.

CHAIRMAN: Now, let us return to the Arab claim. You know well the Arab claim and the basis for it?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: It can be expressed very shortly. It is a claim based on the possession of the land for a considerable period of time and the right of self-government of the people on the land. What is your answer to this claim?

Mr. BEN GURION: My answer to that claim is the answer which was given not only by us but by human conscience almost in the whole world. The same claim was made almost twenty-five years ago. The reply was that you cannot judge this country which has a special history and special conditions which cannot be found anywhere else, and the relations of the Jews of this country cannot be judged by a rule applied to other countries not having the same unique conditions. Really, it is a unique case. You have first of all the people who were here a very, very long time ago; you know that. I can give you the Arab case. I understand the Arab case and I fully realize it. It is very simple. They state they do not care what happened, and nobody ought to care what happened fifteen hundred or two thousand years ago. We are here. We are not here from yesterday; we were here for centuries. We are the majority, and we have a right to self-determination. We will decide, just as the people in the United States or the people in Canada, whether to allow or not to allow immigrants. The fact that Jews were here some two thousand years ago is the same as the Roman legions having been in England some two thousand years ago, or when Arabs were in Spain fourteen or so many centuries ago. That is their claim. It is simple.

that claim

Not one but many nations in the world did not accept/because they were faced

with a unique case which is not as simple as that. You cannot compare it with Spain and the Arabs. Can you find a single Arab in the world who cares to go back to Spain? Can you find a single Arab in the world who will spend a penny for Spain? Can you find a single Arab in the world who dreams of Spain? What has he to do with Spain? He has his own country. Many kinds of people come from many countries, but here you have a unique case without any parallel in history. Here is a people who for many centuries were dreaming of this country. They might have found a country anywhere else, but no, and they never gave up their claim. It is unique. Also, the case of Palestine is unique. It is not the same. We did not say it alone, but the entire civilized world said that while the Arabs were liberated in various territories there was room for the Jews in Palestine. The Jews are connected with this country. We recognize their connection. They are coming back. They have a right to come back. They put only one limitation. We, ourselves, would have put this limitation if it had not been put by others: not to displace the population right here. I do not know if I have to go into that again. That was the decision. What happened? Nothing happened. Did it prove the Jews do not need a home? Did it prove that Jews cannot build? Was it proven that we can come in only by displacing Arabs? Everything that happened since that world decision strengthened that decision. The need of the Jews, their ability to come back, and their not displacing (I do not want to bring in the point that we are benefiting anyone--we are, but not because of that), these three things <sup>were</sup> proven even more than they were known twenty-five years ago. Now, I return <sup>to</sup> the question: what reason have you, not you the Commission, but what reason has world conscience to reverse that decision? There is only one reason that the people here say "No, we will not let those Jews come back." The same thing happened in many countries. In certain countries the Government submitted that, and I do not want to mention the names of those countries. There are Jews <sup>were</sup> who ~~/dispossessed~~ by Hitler. I do not speak of Germany, but countries that suffered from Hitler. When the Jews were dispossessed, very few, because the

majority were murdered, came back and claimed their possessions. They did not get <sup>them</sup> / back for the simple reason that the countries were <sup>occupied</sup> / and did not want to give <sup>them</sup> / back. That was the only reason. But this case is not similar to that because then the Jews had three or four rooms and, in the meantime, somebody else occupied all the three rooms. Here we have a case where there is a large building and three rooms are occupied, eleven rooms are not occupied, and we say, "Stay in your three rooms, we are going to occupy the other eight unoccupied rooms." He says, "No, we don't want it. Stay out." The world has said "No", and we say there is no reason why you should reverse that decision, because justice and the necessity the same, if not stronger. There is no reason whatsoever. The only reason is that those who undertook to do it failed to do it.

CHAIRMAN: You think the fact that a claim to a country has not been given up is so essential?

Mr. BEN GURION: Our claim?

CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. BEN GURION: It is very. Of course, if we are invaders, then we have no right.

CHAIRMAN: And you do not think that a thousand year's possession is enough tooust the claim?

Mr. BEN GURION: Sir, I do not lay down general rules. I say on this occasion, under this historic and geographic position, no it is not, for the reasons which I gave in my address. It is not a question of the Arab race; they are fully liberated. It is not a question of the Arab individuals who are here; they are not suffering. Our claim stands; we did not give it up.

CHAIRMAN: Let us go now to this decision that you spoke of. I suppose you mean the Mandate?

Mr. BEN GURION: The Declaration and the Mandate.

CHAIRMAN: Let us return to that act. You mean that that is an absolute



promise to give the country to the Jews as a state?

Mr. BEN GURION: Sir, in human affairs you cannot speak about "absolute."

I would not commit myself to the word "absolute" because it is a term whose meaning nobody understands. But, it was a definite undertaking, a definite promise based on the recognition of these unique facts to which I have referred.

CHAIRMAN: Why I use the word "absolute" there is to come to my further questions which are aiming at seeing whether you admit any reservations in the undertaking. The Mandate is based on the Balfour Declaration, and in the Balfour Declaration the word "State" is not used; the term "National Home" is used. Further, it is said "in Palestine," and it has been so stressed. The phrase used is "in Palestine". You do not think there is any reservation in these terms?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, sir, there are two reservations: one is the reservation that the civil and religious rights of non-Jewish communities should not be prejudiced. That is one reservation. There is another reservation that the equality and political status of Jews in other countries should not be prejudiced. These are the two reservations. Of course, they are clearly defined. Well, I can leave out for the moment the latter reservation because you have no trouble with the Jews. What you have in mind is the first reservation concerning the Arabs. This very reservation is a clear indication as to what they meant by a National Home for the Jewish People. If, as this memorandum or the White Paper claimed, it was meant or even contemplated that the Jews remain a minority, I ask you if in a country the Jews are not a minority why must you have safeguards for the rights of a majority. It is nonsense. The whole question, after all, state or no state, is the question of whether the Jews must remain a minority or may they become a majority. This is the question, because a state follows from that. If this was meant why do you need to safeguard against prejudicing the rights of the non-Jewish communities? Then you ought to have safeguards against prejudicing the rights of the Jewish community. If it was meant that the Jews should be a minority, then you should have to have a

National Home which means a minority, and then to safeguard their rights as against the majority. But you do not need to safeguard the rights of a majority. Therefore the safeguard itself is a clear indication as to what was meant. However, we are not neutral, and I do not claim to be neutral on that question. But, you have a clear explanation why the word "state" was not used then. It was not used for the simple reason because it could not depend on the best will of the British Government to have a state. It was not for the British to take the Jews from Russia, Poland, or from the United States of America and compel them to go to Palestine. They could not say they would do it, and therefore they used this term. They did not say "A Jewish Home." They said "A National Home for the Jewish People." First of all they did not say merely "a home." "National Home" in English has a definite meaning. In English you say "Nationality;" In English they say, "What is your nationality? To what state do you belong?" There is a difference in the question. "Nationality" in Continental Europe, in English, means "state." They said "A National Home." But, they did not say only that, they said "A National Home for the Jewish People." Every word was weighed. It was not simply that somebody got up and wrote a declaration. For months they discussed every word of it. It is true that they did not say "Palestine as a National Home;" they said "in Palestine." But "in Palestine" does not necessarily mean in a part of Palestine, because if they meant in a part of Palestine they would have said so. They adopted the wording of the Zionist Programme. There was a Zionist Programme formulated in 1897 in Basle, Switzerland, where our first World Congress was held. There we formulated our programme. The Balfour Declaration adopted the same wording, and it did not adopt the same wording by chance. The reason why they did not use that term "Palestine as," I think is that it could be easily interpreted as meaning removing the Arabs from Palestine, which they did not want to do; they should not have done it; neither do we like to do it. But, in Palestine, it does not mean a part of Palestine. Suppose you are introducing Socialism in England, when you say Socialism in England it does not mean socialism

in a part of England. But, also, it could not have meant a minority. Further, we have the very simple and clear evidence of the Prime Minister. He said that to attribute to that Declaration an intention or a meaning of a possibility for Jews to remain a minority would have been a fraud on the people to whom this was given. So, the reservation which was made even strengthens our understanding, which is not ours, which was the understanding of the Commission, and of every responsible statesman, that a Jewish minority was not meant. In no state is there a question as to whether the Jews are a minority or not.

CHAIRMAN: When I referred to that term "National Home in Palestine", I had in mind a passage in the statement of British policy in Palestine published by Mr. Churchill, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, in June 1922. I quote here from the Government's memorandum where it is stated as follows: "When it is asked what is meant by the development of the Jewish National Home in Palestine, it may be answered that it is not the imposition of Jewish nationality upon the inhabitants of Palestine as a whole, but the further development of the existing Jewish community with the assistance of Jews in other parts of the world in order that it may become a center in which the Jewish people as a whole may, on the grounds of religion, race, interest and pride ---

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, yes, but you are quoting from the memorandum.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, I am.

Mr. BEN GURION: More, sir, is the White Paper in its entirety.

CHAIRMAN: I have it, too.

Mr. BEN GURION: And I read it from the beginning to the end. I did not only read that section. It is very easy to extract a few sentences from a long and complicated document to lend it another meaning than it was originally meant to be. First of all, what is of very great importance is that that paper, the White Paper, contained several documents. It contains, first of all, and this is perhaps the most important part of the White Paper, letters sent by Mr. Churchill to the Arab Delegation to whom he certainly would not like to exaggerate the obligations which they undertook to the Jews. On the contrary, writing to the Arab Delegations he would like, as far as compatible with the obligations to the

two, to put them in a very right frame. The Arab Delegation claimed then what they claim now. There is a majority and the majority want to rule, and a national government should be set up. He wrote "...We cannot do it because we are responsible for the Declaration made on November 2nd, and a national government in Palestine under the present circumstances would preclude the fulfillment of that undertaking..." I quoted that in my address, and I do not want to quote it again because I know they are only telling you little half-truths even about documents. I gave you the evidence not of the Jewish Inquiry, but of a purely British-Arab Inquiry. They have the evidence of Mr. Churchill, himself. While this phrasing was meant, as far as possible, to consider the Arab, it was not its meaning to preclude the establishment of a Jewish State.

What is the meaning of a Jewish State? As I told you before, a Jewish State does not mean one has to be a Jew. It means merely a state where the Jews are in the majority, otherwise all the citizens have the same status. If the State were called by the name "Palestine," I said if, then all would be Palestinian citizens. If the State would be given another name, --- I think it would be given another name, because Palestine is neither a Jewish nor an Arab name. As far as the Arabs are concerned, and we have the evidence of the Arab historian, Hitti, that there was ~~no~~ such a thing as "Palestine" at all: Palestine is not an Arab name. Palestine is also not a Jewish name. When the Greeks were our enemies, in order not to annoy the Jews, they gave ~~different~~ names to the streets. So, maybe the name of Palestine will be changed. But whatever the name of the country, every citizen of the country will be a citizen. This <sup>is</sup> what we mean. This is what we have to mean. We cannot conceive that in a State where we are not in a minority, where we have the main responsibilities as the majority of the country, there should be the slightest discrimination between a Jew and a non-Jew.

CHILDREN: Well, so far we have treated this term "National Home in Palestine." We come further to the clause in the Balfour Declaration wherein it is spoken about maintaining the civil and religious rights of the other sections of the populations in Palestine. That expression is in the Mandate recorded in Article 6, where there is a slight difference in wording. It is

1 said there "The administration of Palestine while insuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced shall facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions..." Do you think that this clause while showing that the right position of Arab sections of the population are not prejudiced could be considered as placing an obstacle to Jewish immigration?

Mr. BEN GURION: Well, on that, sir, there is an authoritative interpretation. Again, that can be answered by His Majesty's Government, itself. Before this White Paper there was another White Paper. There were many White Papers, such as the Passfield White Paper.<sup>xx</sup> Then two former Chancellors and Lord Hailsham, challenged the Government that this White Paper was curtailing the rights of Jewish immigration as against the international obligation, and they requested the Government to put it to the test before the Hague Court. But the then Government did not see its way clear to go as far as that and they set up a Cabinet Committee, who discussed the question. Then they gave an official explanation which is called the MacDonald Letter,<sup>xxx</sup> which really should be called Henderson's because he was then Labour Foreign Secretary. He elaborated on this letter and gave an attempted explanation as to what was meant by the references to the rights of other sections -- that these were not meant to impair or to worsen the position of the other sections in Palestine, and that as long as the position of other sections were not impaired, it would be worsened. It was the duty of the Government not to allow but to facilitate immigration--this was a positive obligation. Such was the official interpretation undertaken by His Majesty's Government when this question was for the first time raised. I am <sup>sorry I have not got</sup> it with me, but I will send you that official document.

CHAIRMAN: My question is more of an abstract nature. What I am aiming at is the circumstances in which the position of the other Arab sections of the population could be so jeopardized that the clause (in the Mandate) giving protection would operate.

Mr. BEN GURION: If you mean economically, absolutely.  
<sup>xx</sup>Cmd. 3692, 1930.

<sup>xxx</sup>Official letter from Prime Minister MacDonald to Dr. Weizmann, 13 Feb. 1931

CHAIRMAN: Not economy, political conditions.

Mr. BEN GURION: No, that is a different question. First of all, do you mean whether this was meant by the Mandate, or apart from the Mandate on the basis of equity?

CHAIRMAN: I ask on the basis of the Mandate where there is stated the understanding that the rights and position of other sections of the population would not be prejudiced."

Mr. BEN GURION: Then I say quite definitely that I would not use the word "absolute", complete conviction and knowledge that what was meant was the economic conditions and position of the population of Palestine, because it is dealing with economic matters. Article 6 is dealing with two economic matters, immigration and colonization. They asked the Mandatory to facilitate immigration and to encourage close settlement of the Jews on the land on the condition -- or some other phrasing, I do not remember -- while ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced. I want to say that we accept it wholeheartedly, not only because it is there but because it is right. What is meant by the economic interests of the population is that their economic position should not become worse because of Jewish immigration and settlement. This is what the Mandate meant.

CHAIRMAN: But is the immigration wholly an economic matter? Does it not also have political implications?

Mr. BEN GURION: Absolutely. But the political implication was to allow the Jews by immigration to become a Nation and have a National Home, not a minority. That was the political implication.

CHAIRMAN: As I said before the terms of the Balfour Declaration were to a certain extent altered in this clause. The Balfour Declaration spoke about civil and religious rights. You do not think there is any implication in this change of the wording?

Mr. BEN GURION: No, Sir. I do not think there is any alteration at all. Here they lay down the terms of the administration of Palestine. When the Balfour Declaration was given it wasn't even said that England would rule the

country. It had nothing to do with the concrete administration. Here in the Mandate they have to lay down a number of set principles for the administration of the country. For instance, there is nothing about the Holy Places. They do not cover the whole problem of the Holy Places because the Holy Places in Palestine are not merely the concern of the communities in Palestine, but of the world at large. However, there is not a word there because it has nothing to do with that point at all. Here they have to lay down more details about the administration of Palestine. Further, they said while you have to encourage Jewish immigration, you are to see to it that the economic position of other sections should not be impaired or become worse. In the Balfour Declaration there is not a word of Jewish immigration at all, although it is implied. There they lay down only the main general principles. Here they gave the implications of that principle.

CHAIRMAN: I come to another aspect of this absoluteness of the promise of which you spoke. How far do you mean that the Mandatory Power would have to go to enforce the immigration of Jews into Palestine? Was the undertaking to go to war, to go to whatever effort it might mean?

Mr. BEN GURION: Again I have to take exception to the implication which is contained in your question, that they have to enforce. We did not discuss this question, and what I will say now is because you ask me a question and I want to make it clear. I am responsible for it. We can be left alone with the Arabs in Palestine. We do not want England to impose anything. We want her only not to impose a stoppage of immigration. We do not ask England to impose anything; we ask her not to impose a stoppage of Jewish immigration, which she is doing against the Mandate. The Mandate was to facilitate immigration. They are imposing armed forces against immigration. We ask them to take away armed forces and not to impose non-immigration.

Mr. RAND (Canada): What about 1922? Would you make the same answer?

Mr. BEN GURION: The question would not have arisen.

Mr. RAND (Canada): It might have if the Arabs had opposed immigration and the United Kingdom Government had kept its hands off.

Mr. Ben Gurion: In 1922 the Arabs opposed immigration, and when you read the White Paper of Mr. Churchill you will see that he wrote a reply to the Arab delegation when they declared that they were opposing it, and he said: "We cannot accept your position."

Mr. RAND (Canada): What I mean is that in 1922 you were a very small proportion of the population. You were not in a position physically to impose immigration on resisting Arabs.

Mr. BEN GURION: The question has never arisen.

Mr. RAND (Canada): We are dealing with the interpretation of the Declaration and the Mandatory and you must consider it under all conditions. In that case would you have been satisfied just to allow the United Kingdom Government to keep its hands off the opposition to immigration?



Mr. BEN GURION: In 1922--I do not really know why you ask about 1922.

Mr. RAND (Canada): I am trying to find out what the Mandatory means.

Mr. BEN GURION: In 1922 we were a small community in Palestine, and if left alone we could easily have been exterminated.

Mr. RAND (Canada): Therefore, you had to have some protection.

Mr. BEN GURION: We had to have it, and the world gave it to us, and it was the privilege of England to do it.

Mr. RAND (Canada): So it is not merely a question of withholding the hand against Jewish immigration? It is also a question, in some situations, of shielding immigration.

Mr. BEN GURION: I was asked by the Chairman how long we would ask England to impose, and to that I have answered that we do not ask her to impose any more.

Mr. RAND (Canada): It was not for how long; it was how much. How much force do you think the United Kingdom ought to take? You said, we do not want any force except to remove force against immigration. In 1922 it was different, I agree.

CHAIRMAN: You said that you are going to impose immigration?

Mr. BEN GURION: No; "impose" means some hostility. When I am going back to my home I am not imposing; I am going back to my home--unless you deny that it is my home. If you give judgment that the place where I am living does not belong to me, then I have no right to go.

CHAIRMAN: I refer to your own words. You used the words, "we are going to impose".

Mr. BEN GURION: I did not say "impose". I said, we will come back by ourselves--not "impose".

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Would they be content if the Government removed the preventing of immigration and left the thing just now to the fate of the Arabs and the Jews? Would they be content?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes,

CHAIRMAN: You know that the Royal Commission said that in their view the association of the policy of the Balfour Declaration with the Mandatory system implied the belief that the Arab hostility to the Balfour Declaration would sooner or later be overcome.

Mr. BEN GURION: You read from the memorandum.

CHAIRMAN: No, I did not read it from the memorandum; I remember it from the Royal Commission's report. You are not in agreement with the statement implying that the Arab hostility to the Balfour Declaration would sooner or later be overcome?

Mr. BEN GURION: I even now believe it; I believe it may be overcome. If there is any certainty in the future, I am certain that if, allowed to come back to our country, we will live in peace and cooperation with the Arabs. I believe that as I believe in the Jewish State.

CHAIRMAN: Let us assume that there would be violent resistance to enforcing the immigration, would you mean, in any circumstances, to go on and fight down the resistance?

Mr. BEN GURION: I said we do not ask for a Mandate any more, so it is not a question. The question does not arise on the Mandate. But my answer to the question is, you have to decide whether what we ask is right or wrong. If it is right, and force is necessary, you have to apply it. If it is wrong, not only you do not have to apply force, but you do not have to allow it. It is a question of right and wrong, and not whether to apply or not to apply force, as in any other conflict in the world. And this is the reason the United Nations was established.

Mr. RAND (Canada): I suppose that is one case in which you can resort to absolutes.

Mr. BEN GURION: No absolutes. This was the reason why we were ready in 1937—I mean the majority—to consider a compromise. Although we knew we were entitled to an entire country, when the British Government came and told us

the result of that Commission, they said, you are right, but this will require force and we do not want it and we cannot do it, and therefore we tell you here is a compromise. The majority said, that they were willing to consider it.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): Are you still ready to consider a compromise?

Mr. BEN GURION: I told you in my evidence that when we had the talks after our last congress with the Government in London, we told them that if a Jewish State in an adequate area of Palestine were offered, we would consider it.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): Does that mean partition?

Mr. BEN GURION: "To partition", according to the Oxford dictionary, means to divide a thing into two parts. Palestine is divided into three parts, and only in a small part are the Jews allowed to live. We are against that.

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala): Several times I have heard about the possibility of violence if a decision of the United Nations were not accepted by a certain party. Suppose that decision would give absolute freedom to a Jewish State, would the Jewish people be able to resist violence and defend themselves?

Mr. BEN GURION: You mean violence on the part of the Arabs? The first thing we will do if such decision is given will be to make the greatest effort to come to an agreement with the Arabs. First, we will go to them and tell them, here is a decision in our favour. We are right. We want to sit down with you and settle the question amicably. If your answer is no, then we will use force against you. Then we will take care of ourselves.

CHAIRMAN:

There is one argument in the Arab case to which I want an answer. They say, this decision of the League of Nations is all right, but nobody can dispose of our country without our consent. What do you answer to that?

Mr. BEN GURION: The answer is this is our country, including the Arabs who are in it. This country is the country of the Jewish people and of all the other inhabitants. This is our answer.

CHAIRMAN: I think you have already answered the question. If you can

envisage another solution, then this hundred percent Jewish solution that you have,...

Mr. BEN GURION: It is a matter of justice, I am convinced.

CHAIRMAN: I have exhausted the questions I wanted to put. Does some other Member of the Committee wish to ask any questions?

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Are you taking subject by subject, or are you giving the Members the option of putting all their questions? I want to know the procedure.

CHAIRMAN: I think the Members who have additional questions to put ought to do so on this political issue.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I do not think that is fair to the Members. Let the Members exhaust their own questions which they want to ask at any stage. There are a number of other questions which arise out of the answers which it is impossible to put at this stage. Therefore, I am suggesting that the best thing would be to leave the other Members to put their questions, and when they have done with it, if another Member wishes to put another question in regard to another question, it is all right. Otherwise, one Member must be allowed to exhaust his questions before you go on to the next one.

CHAIRMAN: You have interpreted my intention; it was my intention to follow that procedure.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I have no objection.

CHAIRMAN: We adopt the procedure that the questions of one Member will be exhausted before I give the word to another.

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia): You have said in your evidence before the Peel Commission in 1937 that you would ask for a Jewish State if Palestine were an empty country. But you said there are other inhabitants in Palestine and they have a right not to be at the mercy of the Jews. Further you said that a State may imply domination by the Jewish majority of the minority. Is Palestine more empty now, or does the Jewish State imply less domination of the Arab minority than ten years ago?

Mr. BEN GURION: I remember well that evidence, but I am afraid you have got only a small extract from it. I will give ~~the~~<sup>you</sup> the gist of the whole of it and then you will realize more fully what I meant by that extract, which you have read.

I was asked the same question about a National Home and a Jewish State, and I explained that a National Home is more than a Jewish State. Why? Because a State belongs only to the people who are there, and they can say, we will not allow anybody else. Suppose there are a million and a half Jews in Palestine and it is a Jewish State; that State can say to the Jews in Rumania or Germany, we do not want you. This might happen.

I was present at an Imperial Labour Conference in London in 1925, convened to discuss only the question of immigration in the British Empire. There was a discussion between British labour and Australian and Canadian labour. The British asked for a larger immigration--there was a great deal of unemployment in England, about two million unemployed, at that time. They asked for immigration of British labourers to Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The delegates from the Dominions were against it. They had their own reasons; it is not my business to say who was right or who was wrong. They all belonged to the same stock--British stock. Such a position might arise in a Jewish State. The Jews in Palestine might say, you are suffering in Germany; that is your business. Therefore, when they said "a National Home for the Jewish people" I said it was more than merely a Jewish State for those who are there. As long as there is a Jew who can not stay where he is, and as long as there is a place in Palestine, a Jewish State will not have the right to prevent him from coming. Therefore, a National Home for the Jewish people is more than a Jewish State.

I went on to explain why the Zionist Organisation, in its programme, did not use the term "Jewish State", and I gave three reasons. One reason was that it might imply - though it must not - domination, and we did not want the world to have the impression that we want to dominate anybody. The ~~other reasons~~ I do not

remember but you have read it. I stand by those reasons, and we do not want a Jewish State based on domination. I will send you our programme. When we asked for a Jewish State we said the Jewish State must be based on neither domination nor being dominated. We stand by the same principle. There is no change.

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia): Would you agree to have a State with a Jewish majority?

Mr. BEN GURION: I may add that tomorrow you will receive a memorandum and all these things you will find fully explained.

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia): Would you agree to have a State with a Jewish minority or majority - with a parity in the Government?

Mr. BEN GURION: In my statement I gave the reason why parity in a Government can be a good expedient when there is a foreign power ruling the country. We were in favour of parity as long as there was a Mandatory Regime in Palestine. We said it was not right, although there was a deep, historical reason why there should be for a time a Mandate. But even in a transitory period the population should not be excluded from the Government. They should be there on parity - two equal parts. But you cannot have parity in an independent State.

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia): Why?

Mr. BEN GURION: You will have a permanent deadlock. Parity means not that a single Jew and a single Arab have the same right, but that the two communities have the same right. You will have a parity of ten Jews and ten Arabs and a Government of three Jews and three Arabs. You will have a permanent deadlock. The question of development will come up - the development of the Negeb. We are for development for two reasons. We are for development as Jews; we are for development as progressive people. They are not anxious for development. I do not say they are not progressive. They are. But it is their right to be what they are. But they will be against it. They will prevail because you need a

positive decision and positive action. A parity can always prevent any action being taken.

The second question, which for us is just as vital, is the question of immigration. You will have two for, and two against. That is enough to prevent immigration, because you must have a positive decision to have immigration. So you will have a permanent deadlock, which means blocking immigration and blocking development, and I cannot imagine how the Government would exist. There is no such thing in the world.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): You are definitely pessimistic about the prospect of Arab-Jewish agreement?

Mr. BEN GURION: On the contrary; I am definitely optimistic. I am sure that as soon as there is a Jewish State and we are an independent factor, the Arabs will see reason, because they are sensible people and know what is good and what is bad. As long as they believe they can prevent us from being here it is natural. I do not blame them. When the Arabs are against us I do not blame them for some of the means which they use. I can understand their attitude. I blame the Mandate -- not the Arabs. When the Arabs say they prefer a poor country to a rich one I can understand it.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): Did you say, on page 16, that the Racial Land Law still exists? Do you then consider that this Racial Land Law implies violation of the Mandate and of the Charter of the United Nations?

Mr. BEN GURION: I think it is definitely against the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): By its character of racial discrimination?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): I should like to know, in a few words, the process of the practical application of that law in Palestine.

Mr. BEN GURION: What is the scope of your question?

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): You said there were racial laws here. I asked

about the application of the racial laws in Palestine.

Mr. BEN JURION: Here you have a case where certain things can be done only by Jewish-Arab cooperation, because in order to acquire land you must have the consent of the Arab who is the owner, and we acquire land only by Jewish-Arab cooperation. But here comes the Government and says "No". I will tell you the application of the law.

Take the case of the Negev. There are people there who have large tracts of land. The land is desert. They have not got the means nor the ability to develop the land. So they say, we will sell a part of our land to the Jews and this will enable us to develop the rest of our land. This was mainly the process by which we acquired land in other parts. Then comes the Government and says, "No, you cannot do it." The result is that the land remains desolate. We cannot come there, and the Arab who would like to develop the land cannot do it because he is prevented by the Government. This is not an imaginary case. There are tens and hundreds of such cases.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): In another part of your exposition you gave a special concept on the relations between Arabs and Jews. Did you speak of the view cooperation and express that the cooperation can only rest upon equality? I consider it would be worth while to know your opinion especially on this point. Do you think that such cooperation might be possible at this moment under the actual conditions?

Mr. BEN GURION: In another place you will find that I told you that there is cooperation now between Jews and Arabs; just as there is cooperation between English and French, or Czechs and Poles. They represent two distinct things. They are human beings and they are peoples. I spoke about cooperation in both senses. There is cooperation between Jews and Arabs as individuals. As far as it depends on us we are willing to cooperate -- not because we are philanthropic, but because we believe it is for the good of both to cooperate. Jewish workers are cooperating with Arab workers. The Government is not always very happy



about it because it is mostly against the Government.

There was only recently a strike of some fifty thousand employees of the Government--Jews and Arabs. There is cooperation between Jewish villages and Arab villages. This is going on. We would like to go on on a larger scale, as far as we are concerned. There is cooperation between Jews and Arabs as individuals.

You quoted now the cooperation between Jewish people as a people and Arab people as a people. Such cooperation is possible only when we shall have the status which they have -- an independent nation, not when they are able to boycott our goods and we are powerless to do anything. But when there is an independent state, instead of a boycott by Arabs of Jewish goods there will be an exchange of services and goods because it will be for the benefit of both Jews and Arabs. Therefore, in order to have cooperation between these two peoples you must have equality. Only two equals can cooperate.

CHAIRMAN: Are you optimistic about the cooperation between Jews and Arabs in a Palestinian State in political matters.

Mr. BEN GURION: What political matters do you mean?

CHAIRMAN: I mean cooperation in governing the state.

Mr. BEN GURION: The Arabs are just like any other people; they have different views, although publicly it may appear that they have only one view.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): I am asking about the economic and social cooperation.

CHAIRMAN: I added the political matters.

Mr. BEN GURION: As I say, there are even sections among the Arabs here, and in neighbouring countries, where they are willing for political cooperation.

CHAIRMAN: On the whole?

Mr. BEN GURION: On the whole. There are Arabs who are against it.

CHAIRMAN: How will it turn out?

Mr. BEN GURION: If we and the Arabs who want to cooperate are encouraged, those sections here and abroad among the Arabs who want to cooperate would be

strengthened.

CHAIRMAN: I asked whether you were optimistic about political cooperation.

Mr. BEN JURION: Yes, absolutely--as far as it is absolutely known.

I am infected by your language.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): Mr. Ben Gurion, in relation to the immigration problem, you spoke about the fate of the Jews and the Jewish children and the prohibition of their entry into Palestine. May I know, if it is possible, the number of people who are now in the camps at Cyprus, especially the number of Jewish children in the camps at Cyprus.

Mr. BEN GURION: The total number, I believe, is something more than fifteen thousand -- seventeen thousand. I cannot give you the exact number of children.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): May I obtain the number later?

Mr. BEN GURION: My colleague tells me there are two thousand children there.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): I would like to know the number of Jewish people who are now in concentration camps in Europe and the conditions in which those people live at this moment.

Mr. BEN GURION: As far as I know, there are some two hundred twenty thousand Jews in the camps, but this does not comprise --

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): What are the conditions of living in the camps, the social conditions, the health conditions, the cultural conditions for the young people, for the women, for the men.

Mr. BEN GURION: We will send in a memorandum giving you all the details of the conditions, but I can tell you now that I visited the camps soon after the liberation and I visited them recently. There is a very strong deterioration in the conditions, for many reasons: for political reasons, economic reasons. There is also a deterioration in the relations between the Jews and the German population there. There have already been cases where many Jewish D.P.'s have been murdered by Germans and by German police.

CHAIRMAN: These camps are now called Assembly Centers, but I do not suppose that changes the conditions very much.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): Mr. Ben Gurion, you speak<sup>of</sup> about one million children killed in Europe under the Nazi persecution.

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay): These children in the camp at Cyprus, do they have parents?

Mr. BEN GURION: There are many who have not; there are some who have. There were many Polish Jews who escaped to Soviet Russia, and they were saved, with their children. Most of the large families which you will find in the camps, and some of them also in Cyprus, with mothers and fathers and children, are those who escaped to Soviet Russia and have now come back. They went back to Poland and from Poland to Germany, in order to get to Palestine.

Mr. FABREGAT: (Uruguay): Thank you.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): I would like to ask first a question about the form of government Mr. Ben Gurion has in mind for the transitional period.

Mr. Ben Gurion says that Jews are entitled to build up a country here with a Jewish majority, and therefore, they have in mind, they visualize an immigration plan of about one million Jews. Mr. Ben Gurion says that it will take a few years. Then he adds that as soon as a considerable part of that plan is carried out, independence can be established. Now, of course, it is not possible to state exactly how many years it will take before, in the view of Mr. Ben Gurion, that moment has come, that that considerable part has been carried out. But perhaps Mr. Ben Gurion can agree that it will take at least something between, say, five and ten years.

Mr. BEN GURION: Not necessarily.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Have you in mind a shorter period?

Mr. BEN GURION: Not necessarily, sir.

CHAIRMAN: How many people do you think you can take in here per year?

Mr. BEN GURION: I will answer the question, but I do not know whether you will accept the answer. Last year there was a commission of experts, English

and Americans. They discussed the recommendation of the Anglo-American Commission about the 100,000 people. They came to the conclusion -- and this was announced by Mr. Morrison who was the President of the Council -- that you can absorb 100,000 within one year. This was without any special authority given to the Jewish Agency. If the Jewish Agency is given full authority for development and immigration, with the assistance of Jews and certain damages to which we are entitled -- which has already been recognized, we are getting part of that now, as I imagine Mr. Kaplan told you -- then much larger numbers can be brought over and settled. You do not need to wait until you have settled the entire million Jews. We worked out a plan of a million Jews, for two reasons: One, it was approximately the number of Jews whom we know are in dire need -- they cannot stay where they are; and it was also based on certain calculations of land and industry which we know we can develop. But this is not related to the political problem. You can solve the political problem in half the time that will be required for settling the one million Jews in Palestine. In other words, if you need eight years for settling and absorbing a million Jews, then you may need only three or four years until you can establish a complete or a considerable form of self-government of the country on a purely democratic basis.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Well, just to have in mind a certain period, I will think of something between five and ten years. Mr. Ben Gurion is more optimistic about it.

Mr. BEN GURION: I cannot guarantee, sir; nobody can guarantee these things.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Anyway, there will be a transitional period.

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, sir.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): I would like to ask what form of government Mr. Ben Gurion visualizes for that period. For instance, who will provide the judiciary services, the police force, and so forth?

Mr. BEN GURION: As far as possible, judicial and police services will be provided by the people of Palestine, but under the supervision of the United Nations.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): What do you mean by supervision of the United Nations?

Mr. BEN GURION: They should have the final control until independence is established.

Mr. RIAND (Canada): You mean administration rather than supervision.

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, as far as administration will be necessary.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): As you know, in the United Nations there is nothing in existence at the moment in the nature of an international police force, or anything of that kind. So that will have to be provided by one or more countries.

Mr. BEN GURION: We did not discuss all these details. I must be frank about it. We do not really think it is for us to decide. We can only state a certain general principle, a certain line. The details of how to carry that out are not for us to decide. The general lines should be laid down, the principle should be adopted that there should be a Jewish state based on equality, and a large plan of development should be adopted. Then the details will be worked out on the basis of these three main lines. I really cannot answer as to our view on these details, because we did not go as far as that.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Mr. Chairman, I do not see these as details. I think it is a very important question, from a practical international policy, as to what the situation will be in the future.

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, of course it is.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): So the Jewish Agency has no special plan in view as regards this?

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Mr. BEN GURION: No, sir.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): I would like to ask Mr. Ben Gurion what is the opinion of the Jewish Agency on the report of the Anglo-American Committee, last year's report?

Mr. BEN GURION: We will send you the official reply we have given. We said, first of all, that if the two main recommendations were carried out, the abolition of the White Paper and the immediate admission of one hundred thousand Jews, we would be willing to sit down with a committee of the Government to discuss a long-term policy, because we had there two policies: Short-term policy-- what should be done immediately; and long-term policy. But we will send you a copy of that memorandum.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Thank you very much.

Mr. BEN GURION: May I add that you will also receive a supplementary memorandum. You have been presented with the Jewish case, with all the material submitted to the Anglo-American Committee more than a year ago. Tomorrow you will get a memorandum which supplies all the happenings and developments since then up to now. You will find there all the things in which you are interested.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): My next point is this. I remember that the Jewish Agency told the Anglo-American Committee last year that the Agency was not constituted, in its representative bodies, just as it has been laid down in its constitution, because of the war and because several members of the different bodies have died and no new elections have been held. I would like to know how this is now. Are the representative bodies of the Jewish Agency now in accord with the constitution? Especially, I would like to know whether the non-Zionist organizations have an influence now in the executive bodies, and whether they are represented too. Can Mr. Ben Gurion and his colleagues give the views of the non-Zionist organizations

too? What is the position today?

Mr. BEN GURION: I will tell you three things. One, in the Mandate, it was laid down that the Zionist Organization is the Jewish Agency. This is according to the Mandate. There, the Jewish Agency is requested to secure the cooperation of all Jews who want to assist in the building up of a national home. Then, in 1929, on our own initiative, we had a conference to which we invited many Jewish organizations which are officially non-Zionist. But the term non-Zionist does not mean that they are not Zionists. They may be Zionists, but the organization is termed non-Zionist. For instance, the Jewish Community is a non-Zionist organization, but almost every Jew in that organization is a Zionist. The same is true in other countries. The Board of Deputies in England is 90 per cent Zionist, but they are organized in their capacity of a Jewish community in England and not as Zionists. We made our constitution. It was not the Mandate which required us to do it; it was an internal Jewish matter that required that the Jewish Agency should be based of fifty per cent representatives of Zionist organizations, as such, and fifty per cent of other organizations whether they are or are not Zionist. In the meantime, something happened. For instance, there were a number of communities in Europe which should be represented. They do not exist anymore. In America, it was based on a personal basis. A number of Jews in America--there were no democratic elections--a certain number of Jews, Mr. Marshall and Mr. Warburg were designated, taking into account that they enjoyed a large popularity among American Jewry. Many of them died. This, unfortunately, ruined the whole structure as it had been laid down in the Constitution. But either people, as individuals, died, or entire communities were wiped out. However, the Constitution still remained as it was. It is still composed of Zionists and non-Zionists, although some of the non-Zionists are living in America and do not actually take part in the work which is



being done here. We have now decided that the next Zionist Congress will call together a Council. What Zionists call a Congress, non-Zionists call a Council. We will call together a council of those organizations since the old Constitution cannot be carried out because the reality behind it does not exist anymore. When we call together such a council, the enlarged Agency may be reconstituted. For the time being, we have the old Constitution, but the old Constitution does not correspond to the reality.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Are there any non-Zionists in the executive body here?

Mr. BEN GURION: There are in America. There was one here in Palestine, but he resigned because of social differences of view. There are three in America who are officially members.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Will we be in a position to get the views of non-Zionists?

Mr. BEN GURION: Oh yes; I am sure you will be. I can tell you this: that before, in the Anglo-American Committee, and also in our work before the United Nations in America, we cooperated with two large American-Jewish bodies, the American Conference and the American Jewish Committee. The attitude of the American-Jewish Committee on this question differs in one respect from ours. They are in favour of a Jewish state in a part of Palestine; they support a Jewish state in an adequate area of Palestine. They do not associate themselves with our full programme of Palestine as a Jewish state. I believe they sent you a memorandum, while you were still in America, on behalf of the American-Jewish Committee.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): We got several.

Mr. BEN GURION: As far as I know, the Jewish Board of Deputies in England, which has democratically-elected representation of English Jews, also identify themselves with the attitude of the Jewish Agency.

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Lisicky has asked to put some questions. Before I allow him to do so I would like to know whether there are other Members who also want to put questions.

(Several Members signified a desire to ask questions.)

CHAIRMAN: Before we go on, I think we can suspend for ten minutes.

(The hearing was suspended for ten minutes and then resumed.)

CHAIRMAN: I call the meeting to order.

Mr. Lisicky has asked to put some questions.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): My first question is in connection with the quotation mentioned on page 11 of Mr. Ben Gurion's statement. It is a quotation from the Report of The Palestine Royal Commission. The quotation reads as follows:

"The Commission found that though the Arabs have benefited by the development of the country owing to Jewish immigration, this has had no conciliatory effect. On the contrary, improvement in the economic situation in Palestine has meant deterioration of the political situation . . . The Commission thought that the obligations Britain undertook towards the Arabs and the Jews some twenty years ago have not lost their moral and legal right through what has happened since, but the trouble is that these obligations proved to be irreconcilable. The mandate is unworkable."

In another connection, if I remember, Mr. Ben Gurion mentioned that Sir Alexander Cadogan, at the last session of the General Assembly, admitted candidly - whether candidly or not candidly, it is a matter of taste - that the mandate is unworkable. It is a quotation brought forward by Mr. Ben Gurion. It was not refuted in his statement. I should like to know what is his appreciation of the facts mentioned in this quotation.

Mr. BEN GURION: I tell you in that respect we more or less agree with the view expressed by the Permanent Mandates Commission. I would say that there were on that Commission people with very great experience in that matter.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): You mean the Peel Commission?

Mr. BEN-GURION: No, the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations - the International Commission.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): But what I quoted is from the Peel Commission.

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes. They discussed this view of the Commission, and they said, whether the obligations in themselves are reconcilable or not, there may be a different view from the Commission. In their view, the obligations are reconcilable, but as the mandatory said, the mandate is

unworkable, because a mandate must be worked by the mandatory. If the mandatory said the mandate is unworkable, then the mandate became unworkable.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): So you agree on this question?

Mr. BEN GURION: I say they said it, and we saw that the mandate, since then, became, in fact, unworkable. The mandate was not workable, and this was the reason why they accepted the other conclusions of the Committee, that the solution is a compromise, and a large part of the Members also accepted the same and were ready to consider it. But the <sup>is</sup> fact/that the mandate, since then, was not workable because the mandatory said it was not workable, but we do not admit that obligations are unreconcilable. We do not see any conflict in the obligations, but the mandate became unworkable. That is a fact, and one must admit a fact.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): So you admit the fact that the mandate is not workable?

Mr. BEN GURION: It became unworkable. Not that it must be unworkable. We admit the fact that the mandate became unworkable, not that it had to become unworkable. I take a different view. I do not think it had to become unworkable, but the fact is it became unworkable, and you must admit a fact.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): I am satisfied with your answer.

I see on the next page that when discussing the conclusions of the Commission, if I understand rightly what you said there was some hope of accepting the conclusions of the Commission under the condition of some changes, it means if Negro should be included, it was a situation as in 1937. Are you in a position to tell me what the situation is now?

Mr. BEN GURION: The position, I told you, is in writing; there were some incorrect quotations by the press, but what I had added was that

I was ~~against~~ the decision. <sup>That</sup> is nonsense. The view I expressed myself, on the last occasion, regarding the form of government, we stand by the attitude we took last year, that we will be ready to consider the question of a Jewish State in an adequate area of Palestine, and that we are entitled to Palestine as a whole. We would be ready to consider such an offer as a Jewish State in an adequate area of Palestine.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): Am I right in understanding that you <sup>not</sup> are opposed to the idea of partition?

Mr. BEN GURION: That means we are ready to consider it.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): On page 31 of your speech I read this: "The original intention of the Balfour Declaration and the mandate could have been achieved and the Jewish commonwealth would have been an accomplished fact before the Second World War if the mandatory had implemented its mandatory obligations resolutely and consistently."

That is one part of my remarks. The second is that I see in the statistics of immigration that the number of Jewish immigrants in the years 1927 to 1931 was as follows: in 1927, the number of Jewish immigrants was 2,713; in 1928, 2,178; in 1929, 5,249; in 1930, 4,944, and in 1931, 4,075. Does it mean that the low number of immigrants in this year was the result of the prevention by the Palestine Government of a larger immigration?

Mr. BEN GURION: I will tell you. You raised a very relevant question, and it is a very legitimate question.

There are two main factors concerning Jewish immigration into Palestine: one is the position and the need of Jews to immigrate. Before the First World War some 3,000,000 Jews immigrated from European countries. This was one factor. The second factor is the attraction of this country to a Jew. Palestine, as a country, in itself is not a place of immigration, it was a country of emigration. People left the country. Many Arabs -- especially Christian Arabs who had a little higher standard of living -- left the country to go to South America and other countries.

How could Jews immigrate into Palestine? We had to create a new economy. In the existing economy scarcely a single Jew was absorbed. There are some hundreds of Arab villages, and we will find there not one Jew. There are many Jews in agriculture. We had to build a new economy. If we develop a country we make a place for immigrants, so the question of immigration into Palestine is organically tied up with the question of building and development. We made a claim against the mandatory power. It was almost entirely passive and did not assist in the development. The less they could develop and build, the less there was room for immigrants. And we had to do all the development, almost entirely, and had little material means to do it. This is why the mandatory power did not help us more, for our sake and for the sake of the people here.

Here we see that there is no conflict between the two obligations. We do not admit the obligation to the Jews and the Arabs are irreconcilable, so I will leave out the question. We were not assisted in the building up and development of the country. You must build houses, you must develop land by irrigation, you must build factories. You heard yesterday the story of our economic effort and how much that was assisted.

If, from the beginning, the Government had been assisting in the development of the country as we were, the whole history of Palestine would have been changed. Of course, we cannot prove that - you can never prove a supposition. This is our conviction and is not enmity to the Government. We have no enmity. It is not merely guesswork. We say that because we know it. We did the work and we know what can be done. Take the question of the Negev. With our poor means we could not undertake the irrigation of it. We could not make arrangements to bring water from afar, because we must have the authority. The land is not ours. The Government has the authority and they never tried. They could easily bring water to the land, and make it possible for large-scale Jewish settlement. They did not do it. There you see our position.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): So it means that there was no prevention on behalf of the Government for immigration, but you state that they did not encourage it?

Mr. BEN GURION: There was the other thing, too. We made an investigation of the economic requirements of the country every six months, before the White Paper was published. Every six months the Government fixed a schedule quota for immigrants. The quota was based on the examination of the economic needs, mainly, of course, on Jewish economy. We came to the conclusion we needed 25,000 workers.

We received three thousand.

There was a discrepancy.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): There was a restriction of immigration even before the White Paper.

Mr. BEN GURION: Theoretically there was not, but in fact we did not get the number of people we needed, and therefore many Jews could not come. When we asked in 1939 it was for a very modest figure, three thousand, and we only got three hundred. We had to refuse that. We could not manage to supply the needs of the people that wanted to come.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): But <sup>1931</sup> I see in a ~~certain amount~~ you had four thousand.

Mr. BEN GURION: That was general. Before the White Paper there were different categories of immigrants. There were capitalists -- people with means. There were relatives, pupils and there was a labour schedule. The labour schedule was fixed every six months. The figures you have here are a total number of immigrants, but I refer to them as labour schedule. For every six months they were newly estimated and decided.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): And now for your conclusions. You are refuting the international trusteeship of United Nations. You are refuting the bi-national State, and the reason for your refuting of a bi-national State is the submission that a parity in the Government should be necessarily a permanent deadlock. It means you have no confidence in the possibility of cooperation with the Arab part of the Palestine population as far as they are in equal numbers or in majority. But if I understand you well, you have great confidence about the prospect of this cooperation once the Jewish part of this population will be in majority. There is another aspect which does not seem to me to be entirely consistent with your pessimistic views about the possibility of cooperation with the Arabs in Palestine. In your conclusion you are asking the United Nations for help in accomplishing three objectives: the immediate abolition of the White Paper; the establishment of a Jewish State, and the promotion of Jewish-Arab alliance. I am asking would it not be useful to start with the promotion of the Jewish-Arab alliance in the country and not



outside, and if you think that there is no prospect of this alliance in the country, should this prospect for this Jewish-Arab alliance outside the country be greater than in the country?

Mr. BEN GURION: Well, you asked me really a very relevant question. I must apologize to the Chairman for having to repeat one part of the question which I said before. Perhaps you did not hear what I said. You must **distinguish** between Arabs as human beings in their community, as one thing. A Jew is a worker and an Arab is a worker. A Jew who has an orange grove and an Arab who has an orange grove. will have common interests, and they work together as such on many occasions. This does not prevent them, and they do not act as a worker or as an orange grove owner, but as an Arab in these concerns having **different** and conflicting political problems. Now I come to the question of cooperation with Arabs in Palestine, and in cooperation with Arabs outside of Palestine. While there are Arabs who from the beginning were in favour of Jewish immigration, and there are still Arabs who are in favour, not a single Arab will come out publicly for Jewish immigration. I don't blame them. I don't say that the Arab is dishonest; he is under the pressure of his community. There was even an example which I am not going to mention -- a group of Arabs who had not taken the orders of the Mufti. I regard this as more or less the conditions that human beings are living under. Human beings are not angels. It is more or less a normal thing. As long as the Arab community will be able to prevent the growth of Jews in Palestine they will do it, because there will always be a group of people who will be strongly against it and they will prevail, especially when they have behind them also the policy of the Mandate Power.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): By what means will they prevail?

Mr. BEN GURION: Among their own people they will impress their programme because it is easier to raise anti-Jewish feeling and anti-foreign feeling in the country. I say as long as they can prevent it, they will prevent it. However, once it **is** an established fact many who follow now one lead

change their view. I will give you a concrete example based on experience. In 1937 these proposals were made by the Peel Commission to establish a Jewish State, and also an Arab State. It was accepted by the Government. For the first time in recent history the official leader of the Arabs who was all the time our bitterest opponent, who before the Peel Commission even refused to promise that the four-hundred-thousand Jews who were taken into Palestine would be accorded their full rights, submitted to us through intermediaries proposals for a Jewish-Arab agreement. The proposals came to us in London through an Englishman and a Jew. The Jew was Hayman and the Englishman was Colonel Newcombe. He was a friend of the Arabs. In Palestine it came through Dr. Magnes. We ask them who was behind these proposals. In London and here we were told the Mufti. This was the first time in recent history that this happened. We said that while the proposals, themselves, are not satisfactory we are willing to meet the Arabs and discuss them.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): But at the time, if I understand well, there was no question of a Jewish State for the whole of Palestine?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, you are right. We said we were willing to meet the Arabs and discuss proposals. Time passed and receiving no answer we asked where the people were. They said that they went back and that they refused to discuss it. What happened? In the meantime, between which these proposals were submitted to us and their refusal, a new policy was formulated by His Majesty's Government. They scrapped the policy of the <sup>Peel</sup> Appeal Commission. They scrapped the policy of having two states, which means having a Jewish State. Then the people who came to us said, "Why should we come to terms with the Jews? There is no need." So, we think as long as they will be able to prevent us they will. Their wish and policy will prevail among the Arab communities. Since this is in our view a matter of right and wrong it should not be decided only by the Arabs, but it must be decided by a Higher Tribunal. We say you are the Tribunal.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): Now, you are in the absolute. Now, do you

know the definition of politics? Politics is the art of the possible.

Mr. BEN GURION: The only question is what is the possible. We say once this question is decided they cannot prevent any more, neither our being here nor our being equals. It means independence. Then, knowing human nature, knowing especially these people, we know them, we live among Arabs -- my colleague, Mr. Shertok, when his father came and settled in an Arab village was the only case, as far as I know, of a Jewish pioneer settling in an Arab village. My colleague, Mr. Shertok, was brought up in an Arab village, still has friends there, and when he is sick or having a child they come to congratulate him. I worked, myself, with Arab workers in Jewish fields, in Jewish villages. We know these people. We live with them together. We also have certain historic indications from recent history, from the last war, when the question was decided. It was decided by the Allies, by the Associated Powers, as they called themselves, in the League of Nations. The Arab world accepted them. When did the opposition of Arabs begin? It wasn't in 1917, 1918 or 1919. Then all the Arab representatives, Feisal, the Syrian Committee who came to Versailles, the Shadrif of Mecca, all accepted, were in favour of, and wanted an alliance. When they began to see that they did not mean it seriously, I do not think that Mr. Balfour or Mr. Lloyd George did not mean it seriously, but the people here did not, and they had indications that they did not. I do not want to go into this. It is a very sad history. I have only mentioned 1920. It was under military occupation. There were many troops here. I, myself, was still a soldier in the British Army. I happened to be in Jerusalem. It was the Jewish Passover. There was a pogrom which lasted three days in the Old City of Jerusalem. I could not understand why it was. There were sufficient troops. The Arabs being not as sophisticated as Europeans said to themselves "ed Dawla-maana" which means "The Government is with us." Then they said, "If the English are against it why should we not be for it." When they doubted the sincerity, I think they had no reason to doubt the sincerity of the Government in London, but seeing what was going on here they said, "Why should we agree"? But, when they knew that a decision was given, they accepted it. Therefore, I say we

have a reason to believe. It is also when you talk about certain things you cannot be absolutely sure, but as far as you can foresee things, given human nature, given a world decision, given a fact, given a living interest, when a Jewish State will be established that State will be in as good relations with the Arab State as any other State in the world with its neighbours. We have an example in the Middle East, Turkey and Greece. There was perpetual war between Turkey and Greece. Once a decision was made, and Turks were transferred to Greece, back and forth, I mean the last war, they became the best of friends. There is more reason here to become good friends because we are not Greeks or Turks, and they are not Greeks or Turks. We will live here. There is a kinship among us. We need each other. As I said, we have things that they have not and they have things which we have not. We need what they have in abundance. They need what we have in abundance. If we can benefit them and they can benefit us there is no reason in the world why this should not be done, if the fact that we are here free and equal is established. That is as far as human beings can foresee. I say that is the most reasonable thing. There is another factor: we know we will do it with the best intentions in the world. Since we came to Palestine we are trying to do it. I can tell you from my personal experience that when I came to Palestine, as all other Jewish pioneers, I came to work on the land. It was forty-one years ago <sup>Palestine</sup> when ~~was~~ ruled by the ~~Turks~~. I had to go to work on the land with a rifle on my shoulder because there was lawlessness in the country. Arabs were shooting Arabs and especially shooting, if they could, Jews. We had to defend ourselves. We had a special organization which we called "The Watchmen". It was the policy of that organization to create the best relations between us and our Arab neighbours. We succeeded. We taught them to respect us. When they found that the Jews could defend themselves, although they were few, and could use a rifle and take care of themselves as good as or maybe better than they, then we tried to make friends and were successful. The same people who attacked us before became our best friends. We believe this will happen on a larger scale once we are established and independent.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): As a majority?

Mr. BEN GURION: Of course, only as a majority. You cannot have a State with a minority. Then there will be an alliance between the Jews and the Arabs. The world can help us with that if the Arabs know that it is the wish of the world. They are members of the United Nations. There is now a general inter-dependence. Even the greatest powers need each other. It is one world. There is a general inter-dependence, and when we speak about independence it cannot mean absolute independence. There can be no absolute independence. We will be a Member of the United Nations. They are Members of the United Nations. The United Nations can help us to accelerate the process which will come by itself of Jewish-Arab friendship.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): I see your point, <sup>Your case</sup> is based on a strong belief. We are in a land of a strong faith.

Mr. BEN GURION: Sir, you would not survive if you would not have that faith.

CHAIRMAN: Any more questions, Mr. Lisicky?

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): No.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): Mr. Chairman, I would like, if I may, to attempt to secure more of a decision on a point which has already been touched on this morning. In fact, it was touched on most recently by ~~Dr. Blom~~ Dr. Blom in one question, to which Mr. Ben Gurion replied, spoke of the transitional period -- the interim period involved in the proposition which was outlined in general terms by Mr. Ben Gurion. That is to say the creation of a Jewish State looking to the early accomplishment of the Jewish majority. In reply to that earlier question Mr. Ben Gurion stated that in his view the supervisory arrangements connected with that period could be regarded as a detail, and he further indicated that in the planning, which has been carried out by the Agency in this respect, no particular consideration had been given to that aspect. I note, however, that in page

statement which we heard last week there are in fact real indications of an attitude regarding the provisional arrangements for supervision. You stated, for example: "We are against the continuation of a Mandate, whether a British Mandate or a United Nations Mandate."<sup>22</sup> Further down we read: "What a single Mandatory cannot do, a joint trusteeship will be able to do far less."<sup>23</sup> Further, if I may continue to quote: "Intensive development and large-scale immigration require a dynamic administration, constant initiative, quick decisions and continued action." That statement touches on a very vital aspect of the whole issue. I would like Mr. Ben Gurion if he could address himself again to that point, to try to indicate to us exactly what sort of supervision he would envisage for that transitional period. It is a crucial point in our consideration of this question. There is nothing, at present, laid down in the United Nations Charter or any associated document which clearly and specifically foresees that sort of contingency or provides for it in any practical way. There are certain articles of the Charter to which reference could be made, but they are in such general terms that no real help could be obtained from them. To sum up, could Mr. Ben Gurion indicate again what possible proposals for this transitional period he would put forward, if asked to put them forward. I repeat, in a proposition of this nature the onus of proving the feasibility of the whole proposition devolves on those who put it forward, and the feasibility really depends on the nature of the interim arrangement.

Mr. BEN GURION: It is really the same question, and I understand why the same question occurs. It is quite legitimate. I will try to make myself as clear as possible. I will not enter again into why we are against the continuation of the Mandate. It failed. It was admitted. It was said ten years ago. We do not think it will change. Then you ask if it is necessary to have a transitional period. What is the difference between what you call non-Mandate and transitional? Again there will have to be some Mandatory power here. I might say there would be two very important differences

which will change the entire nature of the temporary supervision... One is there will be a clear assumption that what we claim is right and is approved by you. If not, and you do not approve it, the question does not arise. The question that Mr. Blom and you put to me arises only on the assumption that you admit our claim is right and should be approved by the United Nations. Then the first very important difference would be that there would be in existence a clear-cut decision by the highest tribunal in the world for a Jewish State in Palestine. That is one thing which is of great importance. Then the second point, which is of no less importance than that: the Jewish Agency, representing both the Jews who are in Palestine and those who are to come after the United Nations have examined their plan for development and settlement of one million Jews - that is after you have accepted and approved the plan which we must first examine of course - the Jewish Agency would be given authority, under these conditions to carry out the plan of development and settlement which involves bringing over, in the shortest possible time, one million Jews. That is question number two. Then comes the question (and you must envisage the questions only under these two conditions otherwise your question does not arise at all) when you reach such a decision and the Jewish Agency is given this authority to proceed with the approved plan of settlement, immigration and development in the shortest possible time, the question will arise as to what will happen in the meanwhile. The decision is there. The Jewish Agency has the authority, but Palestine can not yet be established as a democratic independent State. We say that for that short time and under those conditions there will be a supervision by the United Nations. I know, sir, there are no provisions in the Charter because when this Charter was formulated it did not have in mind such a unique problem. It had in mind the needs of all the peoples in the world and it did not bother with such a problem. However, I do not see that it is beyond the statesmanship of the big and small nations of the United Nations to lay down definite conditions, in this special case and for a very short period providing for such an international supervision as will ensure,

first the carrying <sup>out of</sup> these two decisions of the United Nations: to have a State and to have the Jewish Agency carry out that plan. Secondly, <sup>provide for</sup> to administering the country until it is able to be a democratic independent country, and to ensure peace and justice for everybody in that country, which will be the problem of the transitional period. The details how to do it I admit we did not work out. When it comes to that, we will take part in it. We will make our proposals. However, I do not think there will be any great difficulty. Once you have decided on these two great principal questions, when this will be admitted, then there will be no difficulty at all and you will be able to devise a special regime for a certain period to fulfil that special function under those conditions.



Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): That would be regarded as the paramount interests of the inhabitants of the territories, as mentioned in Article 73 of the Charter.

Mr. BEN GURION: You are raising another question from the one Mr. Hood raised.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): In your reply you referred to the fact that the United Nations was not concerned with special questions and was laying down general principles. I was trying to draw your attention to the words which apply to the present case also, and as to how you would reconcile your statement in the presence of those words.

Mr. BEN GURION: First of all this applies to trusteeship. I do not propose trusteeship. Secondly, it is not only Article 73; there is also Article 80, and Article 80 was adopted for this very special reason of Palestine. Article 80 speaks also about trusteeship agreements: "...until such agreements have been concluded..." - and they are not yet concluded, and we do not offer to conclude a trusteeship agreement - "nothing in this Chapter shall be construed in or of itself to alter in any manner the rights whatsoever of any states or any peoples or the terms of existing international instruments to which Members of the United Nations may respectively be parties." This is the special Article of the Charter which applies to Palestine. It was introduced only because of Palestine. What you ask me implies another question - whether or not we have a right. I tried to answer that question. Mr. Hood did not raise that question.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): I would like to ask whether or not Mr. Ben Gurion would expect that during this transitional period some means of enforcement would have to be provided or to exist - whether police functions would have to be provided for, and whether that provision would have to be made even if never used for the maintenance of law and order.

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, of course. I would say for peace and justice - it does not matter what you call it.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): Would that be the same authority within Palestine as would exercise those functions referred to in Mr. Ben Gurion's statement?

That is to say, the functions of dynamic administration, initiative, quick decisions, etc. Would it be the same?

Mr. BEN GURION: No. This would be the carrying out of the development scheme. It would be the Jewish Agency. I believe they will have the dynamic quality.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): In that case would the Agency be acting for the whole population of Palestine, or for the Jews only?

Mr. BEN GURION: I said, if the Arabs would accept it. I cannot speak for them really. If they cooperate in that scheme of development they will also, with the Jewish Agency, take part in it.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): I am trying to clear my mind on this. I should like to put one further question. Does Mr. Ben Gurion not see difficulties of a profoundly constitutional nature in having a divergence, as it were, of the real State power - that is to say the enforcement of law and order - from the specific administration, the day to day handling of the policy?

Mr. BEN GURION: Certain difficulties may arise, but not of a nature which cannot be surmounted, having the authority of the United Nations.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): A question on a different point. Would it be contemplated that the Jewish State should be eligible for membership in the United Nations from the initial period, or after the transitional period?

Mr. BEN GURION: As soon as it is established. I do not say as soon as there is a decision to have a Jewish State, but a representative of a State which has been established should be admitted. But on that the United Nations must decide. It should be admitted as soon as possible because I think this is one of the greatest injustices done by the entire world which ought to be remedied.

Mr. RAND (Canada):

I want to clarify in more concrete terms what Mr. Hood was speaking about. As I understand your programme for immigration and expansion of capital, it involves the protection of an outside power, whether it is the United Nations directly or some delegate of the United Nations. That is the sum of what you have told us.

Mr. BEN GURION: That is it. I must add something. If there had been no United Nations there would be no Mandatory now. You asked me whether we could have done it twenty years ago and I told you that we would have been wiped out, as the ~~disputations~~ were in Iran - although not so easily. If there were no United Nations and, assuming for a moment that England says: "I walk out tomorrow", or that the United Nations would say: "I have nothing to do with Palestine", I think we would manage. It would be difficult. We would manage to bring in Jews, and as our work in Palestine is in its nature constructive, we would do it - under difficulties. We would try every day to come to the Arabs and say: "Let us have an agreement and settle the question by ourselves." We would be willing to listen if they would, in a spirit of cooperation, discuss a compromise. But if they said: "No", we ~~would~~ go on by ourselves as far as we could. But there is a United Nations; there is a will in the world - I do not say it is really a fact, but there is an ideal embodied in the world Organisation. This question was referred to that Organisation by the Mandatory Power, which also has a certain meaning. Why did the Mandatory Power go to the United Nations? Last year they tried only to go to America; now they have gone to the United Nations. They also recognise that there may be a higher authority, which may have a higher moral authority. Therefore, we come to you and say, if you admit that we are right, say so; if you admit and say that we are right, and should that right be accomplished, as you are trying to do it in every place in the world - as the Court of Justice is doing - if it decides that Mr. A is right, then although Mr. B said "No", the right of Mr. A is enforced. But if you leave us alone we will do what we can alone by our own means. We will defend ourselves by all means and we will build by our own means. We will bring Jews by our own means. We will not give up.

Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala): We will go back to that discussion later, because before that I would like to ask you a few questions about pages 15 and 16 of your paper. You speak there about the Land Regulation in 1940

and you said the racial law was a breach of international obligations under the Mandate. How was that law enacted?

Mr. BEN GURION: It was enacted in this way. One day we were informed by the High Commissioner - it was, I think, in February 1940 - that at six hours on a certain day, in the afternoon, such an ordinance would be promulgated. I went immediately to see the High Commissioner and asked him if he could postpone the promulgation for a few days and give me the facilities to apply to London, because it would be a disaster. I also know that there was a promise given to the Labour Party by Mr. Chamberlain's Government that no new step would be taken under the White Paper to which they objected so strongly, and I knew they were not consulted. The High Commissioner said: "I cannot do it; I have my orders that at six o'clock today, or tomorrow, it has to be promulgated." Then I received after a few hours a call from the Chief Secretary that they were called through from London to hold it up and he asked me what was the matter. I said: "Do you want me to explain why your Government held it up? I can imagine why it is" - knowing the promise given to the Labour Party in London. I said: "I can imagine that the Labour Party made a very strong protest, and therefore it was held up." He told me if there was any new development he would let me know. He said: "Keep yourself ready the whole night; perhaps there will be a call." In the morning he rang me up and told me he had got a call from London to carry out the White Paper. It was promulgated in the Palestine Gazette that from now on, with retroactive power to May 1939, a Jew could not acquire a tree, water, a piece of land, a building outside five percent of the zone which is called free. That is the story of the land law.

Mr. GARCILLO GRANADOS (Guatemala): On what legal grounds could the High Commissioner enact this law?

Mr. BEN GURION: I prefer this question to be put to our legal adviser; I am not a lawyer.

CHAIRMAN: I think that was explained to you by Sir Henry Gurney at the first meeting we had.

Mr. BEN GURION: I prefer this question to be put to our legal adviser, who will appear before you.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I do not know why we need to call on the opinion of legal advisers. The law is there and every one of us is entitled to form an opinion on the law. Mr. Granados, or I, or Mr. Lisicky can get as many opinions for our benefit as we like, but we have to form our own opinions and declare what, in our opinion, is the law. I do not think the opinions of lawyers would be of any use to the Committee as such.

Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala): I am following my interrogation, and not yours. I hope the Jewish Agency will present their lawyers. We will go back to the other question you were discussing with Mr. Hood. On page 34 you declared that you were against a bi-national State. I must assume that is true. Now, as a last resort there would be partition, or some other way out. At any rate, whether it is partition, or some other way, it would not be a national state, according to your wish. In that case what would be the necessity of a transitional period and of having an administration appointed by the United Nations? Could not the Jewish people, if they are going to form a Jewish State, take up immediately and carry on the administration by themselves and defend themselves with their own resources?

Mr. BEN GURION: I think you put the question in case you decide on partition and a Jewish State.

Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala): Or some other way of creating a Jewish State that would not be bi-national.

Mr. BEN GURION: I will answer each part of the question separately. Assuming that it will be satisfactory, there is no need for any transitional period. This can be established tomorrow.

As far as defence goes, I think the decision of the United Nations, on the one hand, and on the other hand the ability of the Jews to defend themselves will be sufficient.

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala): Regarding the question put by Mr. Hood, or by Mr. Blom, about an international police, do you not think that in hearing the case the United Nations would appoint an administrator here? Would that administrator not find among the Jewish people support enough to defend that administration and carry out its program?

Mr. BEN GURION: Even the Mandatory Power, when it wanted, always found sufficient people among Jews to volunteer to defend the country.

CHAIRMAN: I think, Mr. Garcia Granados, that you overlooked one factor in Mr. Ben Gurion's previous answer. This transition period was aimed at creating a Jewish majority, and that is the reason for the supervision.

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala): That is why I would like to ask you whether it refers to the whole of Palestine or to part of Palestine--the transition period, I mean.

Mr. BEN GURION: I said<sup>that</sup> in a part of Palestine we do not need any transitional period. If it is the whole of Palestine, we may need a short transitional period.

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala): When you say a United Nations Administration, do you mean that that administration would be through any particular country, or <sup>that</sup> / the United Nations would appoint a group of individuals to carry out the administration.

Mr. BEN GURION: I used the word "supervise"--not "administration." I did not go as far as that. I did not lay down whether it should be an administration or not. I said it was a provision to ensure two things--peace and justice for the country. Whether they will entrust one man to do it and to organize his forces--this is, so far as we are concerned, left to the United Nations. We have no definite plan on that.

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala): Do you favour one man, or one country?

Mr. BEN GURION: I think that should be left to the United Nations. I cannot give you the answer to that question on behalf of the body I represent. We did not discuss that question.

CHAIRMAN: The question of Mr. Garcia Granados suggests to me another question. What are the relations between the Jewish Agency and the Hagana?

Mr. BEN GURION: The relations between the Jewish Agency and the Hagana are the relations between the Jewish Agency and the Jewish population in Palestine.

What you call the Hagana is groups of Jews who have been organized for at least the last forty years. When I was younger I was myself a member of it.

CHAIRMAN: It is an independent organization?

Mr. BEN GURION: It is the Jews in Palestine established in an organization for defence.

CHAIRMAN: Is the Hagana armed?

Mr. BEN GURION: I hope they are.

CHAIRMAN: How large is the group?

Mr. BEN GURION: I cannot tell you, but I am sure if you want to see the people of the Hagana they will gladly appear before you, and they will be able to give you the actual information. I am not sure that they will be able to appear publicly because it is not quite under existing Palestine laws. I am not sure that it is a legal organization.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia): So there is not organizational connection between the Hagana and the Jewish Agency?

Mr. BEN GURION: The Hagana is a Palestine Jewish affair.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I would like you to be precise in your answer to the questions I will put. They will be definite questions. I have been hearing your discourse with great interest and attention, and I would like you to confine your answers to my questions. I do not want a discourse. My questions will be such that they will require short answers, and you can give me short answers. I will break the question, for your advantage, into bits.

I find from your statement before the Anglo-American Committee that you did not and do not, base the Jewish right to Palestine on what has come to be known as the Balfour Declaration. Have I understood your answer correctly?

Mr. BEN GURION: I must be given the freedom to answer in the way I believe I can answer.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I think there is only one answer.

Mr. BEN GURION: If I have to answer, I have to answer in my own way. If I cannot, I will not answer.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Have I understood your position?

CHAIRMAN: I think I shall have to decide whether the answer is an answer to the question or not.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): My question is a simple one. I have put to him that his statement before the Anglo-American Committee and the statement which he made here led me to think that he does not base the right of the Jews to Palestine on what has come to be known as the Balfour Declaration. Have I understood his position correctly or not.

Mr. BEN GURION: Not correctly. What I said was that the Jewish right to Palestine was prior to the Balfour Declaration. I do not think that is the same thing. Our right was existing for 3,500 years. The Balfour Declaration was merely a recognition by a Great Power of that right. The right existed before. That is what I said, and I maintain it now.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I will try to find out a little more about that historical association from Rabbi Fishman and any other gentleman you would like to produce. I will not burden you just now with regard to Biblical references. But I will take you into another part of the case for the time being. Is it true before that/the making of what has come to be known as the Balfour Declaration, many different versions of the suggested formula were drafted by various members of the Zionist Political Committee shortly after the interview between Mr. Balfour and two highly respected Jews, Dr. Weizmann and Baron Rothschild?

Mr. BEN GURION: There were several drafts, it is true.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Are two of those drafts correctly printed as pages 163 and 164 of Jeffries? \*



Mr. BEN GURION: There <sup>is</sup> was one person, as far as I know, *who can answer*.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Dr. Weizmann is coming. I only ask you the question. If you are unable to answer the question, say so.

Mr. BEN GURION: I think that as Dr. Weizmann <sup>upon</sup> is taking that part, I would not take it /myself to answer questions of a historical nature of which I have no first-hand knowledge. As the person who knows it will appear, I think it is best to put the question to him. I was not there. I was in the army when the Balfour Declaration was written.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): You have made a large number of statements of facts of which you did not have personal knowledge, but it is up to you to say whether these drafts are wrongly printed. I take it you do not know.

Mr. BEN GURION: I do not know. I have not read it, so I am unable to tell you what draft is there and what is not. I have not seen all the motions and all the drafts of the Balfour Declaration.

CHAIRMAN: Let us ask these questions of Dr. Weizmann.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): That will be my function <sup>to decide</sup>. If I think it necessary, I shall do so. I am only asking him to read them. If he refuses to read them...

Mr. BEN GURION: I am reading them.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) (Interpretation from French): A point of order. I should like to ask the Chair to request the public in this hall not to express their opinions pro or against any side here. We are in the presence of a very difficult problem and it is very disturbing if the public expresses a preference for one or the other side.

Mr. BEN GURION: May I associate myself with the wish expressed by the representative of Iran?

CHAIRMAN: I also associate myself with that opinion and request the public not to give vent to their feelings.

Mr. BEN GURION: I am reading, and I am sorry to say I cannot tell you; I have no reason to say it is not correct, or that it is.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): That is quite enough for me. Could you say that Mr. Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, Sir Philip Magnus, and their associates in British Jewry were opposed to the Balfour Declaration?

Mr. BEN GURION: Very much so.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): They did not want the establishment of even a National Home?

Mr. BEN GURION: No.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Much less a National State.

Mr. BEN GURION: They knew it was a National State and they were against a Jewish State and a Jewish National Home and against Jews being Jews. They are assimilated Jews.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): You have just now seen these drafts. Assuming that these drafts are correctly printed, do you find that the words "National Home in Palestine" were replaced or substituted in the Balfour Declaration as it was printed for the words "Palestine as the National Home of the Jewish people?"

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes, I know that in the White Paper of 1922 it is pointed out that it did not say "Palestine as a National Home", but "A National Home in Palestine."

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I am only trying to draw your attention. Do you find any difference between those two expressions?

Mr. BEN GURION: As far as the draft is concerned I told you I had not read them all.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I am only asking if you see any difference in the fact that formerly the draft was "Palestine being a National Home", while the real Balfour Declaration as it came out in November 1917 said the "National Home being in Palestine". Do you find any difference between the words "Palestine being a National Home" and the "National Home being in Palestine"?

Mr. BEN GURION: As far as the draft is concerned, I have told you, I cannot tell you.

Sir Abdur RAHMEN (India): I am asking the meaning of those words "Palestine being a National Home" and "A National Home being in Palestine."

Mr. BEN GURION: I have told you I cannot say whether there was or was not such a draft. Possibly there was.

Sir Abdur RAHMEN (India): Leave the draft out.

Mr. BEN GURION: The Balfour Declaration says <sup>National Home</sup> "in Palestine"---not "Palestine" <sup>as a</sup>

Sir Abdur RAHMEN (India); Do you find any difference between the words "Palestine being a National Home" and "A National Home being in Palestine?"

Mr. BEN GURION: I do not see any difference except that when you say "Palestine as a National Home" it may be interpreted to mean that the Arabs should be transferred from Palestine, and they did not want this, and rightly so.

Sir Abdur RAHMEN (India): The words "National Home" were not defined and they <sup>were</sup> would not be known to international law until then.

Mr. BEN GURION: As far as I know, they were not. I am not an international lawyer.

Sir Abdur RAHMEN (India): Was Mr. Benwich a Jewish international lawyer?

Mr. BEN GURION: He is still a Jew and, I think, still an international lawyer.

Sir Abdur RAHMEN (India): Did he define "National Home" in his book <sup>302</sup> on the Mandatory System? Would you please read it.

Mr. BEN GURION: Do you want me to read it now? I cannot give you a judgment on what I am going to read now.

302 N. Benwich: The Mandates System (1930).

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): I am only drawing your attention to Mr. Bentwich's definition of a National Home.

Mr. BEN GURION: I think the best thing would be for you to read what he says.

(India)  
Sir Abdur RAHMAN: Is it written there? I am just drawing your attention to that book. <sup>defines National Home as a</sup> It ~~signifies a~~ territory in which a people without receiving rights of political sovereignty has nevertheless a recognized legal position and the opportunity of developing its moral, social and intellectual side. Is that how Mr. Bentwich understands that <sup>term</sup> question?

Mr. BEN GURION: I will tell you what I understand it to mean. If you ask me to say whether these words are here, you do not need to because they are here. If you want to ask me what I understand by them I will tell you. If you do not want me to, I will not.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Since you are not an international lawyer I will not trouble you.

Mr. BEN GURION: If you want to draw my attention, I want to say what is my contention.

CHAIRMAN: I would like to shorten the discussion. We are here to gain information and it is perhaps not necessary to ask the opinion of the Jewish Agency on everything that is written on this subject. We can discuss it.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): No, that is not the case. The answers of Mr. Ben Gurion have been given in a certain strain and <sup>they</sup> assume that the words "National Home" mean a "National State". I am trying to draw his attention to the fact that Jewish international lawyers who have written books <sup>have</sup> meant otherwise: that is all. It is for your benefit, for my benefit, for everybody's benefit.

Mr. BEN GURION: May I again tell you what is my view, because I believe you tried to draw my attention to something which is not there, and because I believe the first part of it says when the Balfour Declaration was given it did not signify that it gave the Jews sovereignty of the country. The Jews until now had no sovereign rights in Palestine, but it gave the Jews who were not here the right to come back and develop it. That is, as far as I gather it, what you mean. Secondly, maybe Mr. Bentwich has views different from the views of others. I do not see why Mr. Bentwich is not entitled to have his own views and why his views need to bind anyone else. I think the people who formulated the Balfour Declaration knew as much about the meaning of it as Mr. Bentwich. The same thing is true for the Royal Commission. There are also lawyers among them.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): According to Mr. Balfour, this Declaration was in the nature of an adventure. He himself said so; is that not right?

Mr. BEN GURION: Maybe. If you have read it. I will take your word that he said so. You asked me whether he said so.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Yes.

Mr. BEN GURION: Well, I will say, if you tell me that Mr. Balfour said so, I trust you, I will take your word for it.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (INDIA): All right. Can you point to any document to show that there is any reference to the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine which was made to Mr. Balfour or to the British Cabinet, before the issue of this Declaration?

Mr. BEN GURION: Before the issue of the Declaration? This is what was proposed to them.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Was any claim in regard to

Palestine becoming a Jewish national state ever brought to the notice of Mr. Balfour or to the notice of the British Cabinet?

Mr. BEN GURION: Again I must tell you that, if you mean the British Cabinet at the time of Mr. Balfour, or before that, that I am not really the person who can give you the historical evidence. I was quite young then. I was not elected to the Cabinet. I was simply a private in the army.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Have you seen any documents up until now?

Mr. BEN GURION: No, I have not seen any.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): In the statement which Mr. Shertok made to the Committee, it was pointed out that any notion of the Jews in Palestine being as Jewish as the England is English was wholly wrong. Is that correct?

Mr. BEN GURION: That is correct.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Do you know that Lord Balfour made the following speech in the House of Lords on the twenty-third of March 1922: "I cannot imagine any political interests exercised under greater safeguards than the political interests of the established population of Palestine. Every act of government will be jealously watched. The Zionist organization has no attribution of political powers. If it uses or usurps political powers, it is an act of usurpation. Whatever else may happen in Palestine, of this I am confident, that under the British Government, no form of tyranny, racial or religious, will be permitted."

Mr. BEN GURION: That is a fact, of course. They had no political power in 1922. They have none now.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Was the First World War still going on when the Declaration of 1917 was made?

Mr. BEN GURION: It was still going on, yes.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): And there was more than one reason for making this Declaration?

Mr. BEN GURION: Really, I cannot answer as to their reasons.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Is it not a fact that Jewish soldiers were in those days fighting for Germany and the Axis powers?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Mr. Shertok being one of them.

Mr. BEN GURION: Jews in Germany?

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Yes.

Mr. BEN GURION: You asked me; let me answer. Jews in Germany fought for Germany. There were no Axis powers in 1917. The Axis powers arose long after the First World War, and your question does not apply. Jews in Germany, as German subjects, fought, and I think bravely, for Germany. And rightly so.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): I agree that the Axis powers came into being later, in the next World War, but I meant Germany and Turkey. Were Jews fighting for Germany in those days or not, in that war?

Mr. BEN GURION: Yes. It is a matter of fact. There is no need for those questions here. Jews in Palestine, who were in the Turkish Army, fought in the Turkish Army. My colleague was an officer in the army, my colleague Mr. Shertok. I was expelled by the Turks, although I protested against it. I wanted to stay in there and I was expelled by Jemal Pasha. I told them I would come back as soon as possible. They said we know you will try but you will not come back. I was expelled with my colleague who is now the President of the Jewish Community in Palestine, Mr. Ben-Zvi. We were expelled together. We both came back as volunteers to fight against Jemal Pasha. We did not find him here anymore.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Since you came to Palestine some forty-two years ago, you must have come to know that Arab nationalism had begun and was actually growing very much in 1914 and 1915.

Mr. BEN GURION: Well, I know a little differently. I came to Palestine, to be exact, forty-one years ago. I lived with Arabs. I must say that I lived mostly with the common man, with workers and peasants, because I was an agricultural worker. I did not find anywhere, among those Arabs with whom I had any contact, any political opposition or any political movement against Jews. But to tell you the whole truth, I must tell you that even then there was published a paper in Haifa, "Carmel", published by a Christian Arab who tried to stir up anti-semitic feelings against Jews. But among the Arabs I knew there was no political feeling, although there were quarrels and there were shootings between Arab villages and Jewish villages. But the feeling naturally grew because the Arabs are the same as any other people in the world, and the national movement arose among the Arabs. And I was watching its rise and growth among the Arabs.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Did they decide to break away from the Ottoman Empire in 1915 on account of that rising nationalism?

Mr. BEN GURION: No, not the Arabs in Palestine. At least, not those I knew. The Arabs in Palestine fought with the Turks. And I do not blame them; it was natural that they should fight with the Turks.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): In Arabia, Syria, in Trans-Jordan, was the nationalism growing among the Arabs in those places?

Mr. BEN GURION: Well, I happen to know the story of the First World War in these countries. I happen to know it from personal experience; I was living here. There were only a small number of Bedouins who, from time to time, attacked Turks when the opportunity offered itself. I have not seen any Arabs fighting against the Turks, neither here, nor in Trans-Jordan, nor in Syria, nor anywhere else. I do not want to imply by that that the Arabs in Syria did not want to become independent of the Turks. But the fact is they did not fight against them.



Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Was a Jehad declared by Turkey, by the Ottoman ruler since he was the Caliph, and was it not resisted by the Arabs in Arabia, in Palestine, in Lebanon, in Syria and in other places, and was a declaration made by King Hussein?

Mr. BEN GURION: Sir, you are far from the reality in these countries when you think that a Jehad was needed to bring a Palestinian Arab to fight in the Turkish Army. He had to go into the army, and he had to fight. He was not asked whether he liked it or not. It was not necessary to ask him, nor did he have any view. He never heard of Jehad. He knew he had to serve in the army, and he served in the army, as he had served for centuries. The Arabs have been serving in the Ottoman armies for centuries without a Jehad. There was no need for a Jehad.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Not only the Arabs. When the war was declared, every Moslem was bound to fight.

Mr. BEN GURION: No Moslem fought, except those who served in the army.

CHAIRMAN: Do you think you will finish with your questions by two o'clock?

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): No.

CHAIRMAN: Then, I think we shall have to adjourn the hearing and continue the discussion of certain matters we discussed yesterday in the private meeting.

The hearing is adjourned until tomorrow morning at nine o'clock.

(The hearing adjourned at 1:15 o'clock.)

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