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TITLE OF THESIS/TITRE DE LA THÈSE

Canadian Policy on the Partition of
Palestine, 1947

UNIVERSITY/UNIVERSITÉ

Carleton University

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED/
GRADE POUR LEQUEL CETTE THÈSE FUT PRÉSENTÉE

M.A.

YEAR THIS DEGREE CONFERRED/ANNÉE D'OBTENTION DE CE DEGRÉ

1981

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LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
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CANADIAN POLICY ON THE PARTITION
OF PALESTINE
1947

by

ANNE TROWELL HILLMER, B.A.

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in International Affairs

The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs
Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada
1981

The undersigned recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies acceptance of the thesis "Canadian Policy on the Partition of Palestine, 1947" submitted by Anne Trowell Hillmer, B.A., in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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On 2 April 1947, the United Kingdom placed the question of the future of its Mandate in Palestine before the United Nations. This thesis is the first systematic examination, discussion and analysis based on primary sources of Canada's Palestine policy in 1947, from April through November, when the General Assembly recommended the division of the area into Jewish and Arab states.

Canada's role was central. At the United Nations, Assistant Under-Secretary of State L.B. Pearson and his colleagues sought pragmatic and realistic solutions, always emphasizing legality and practicality. Justice Ivan C. Rand, the Canadian member of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, was prominent in bringing the committee to its difficult decision. Many of the provisions of the committee's majority report, which recommended partition, were drafted by Rand, and his interventions at key moments were crucial.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface	V
Abbreviations	VI
Introduction	1
Chapter I Preparing for the Special Session	26
Chapter II The Special Session	42
Chapter III Mr. Justice Rand and UNSCOP	67
Chapter IV The Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine	91
Chapter V Towards the Partition of Palestine	118
Epilogue	160
Conclusion	166
Appendices	178
Bibliography	183

PREFACE

The history of Canadian diplomacy has consistently attracted the attention of some of the country's best scholars. Among recent examples are impressive case studies in Canadian cold war diplomacy, made possible by the release of the files of major government departments and the papers of leading policy-makers under the thirty-year rule. This thesis, however, represents the first systematic study based on primary sources of Canada's policy on the Palestine question in 1947, from the time the problem was placed before the United Nations through to the General Assembly's partition resolution, recommending the division of the area into Jewish and Arab states. The thesis is based mainly on documents in the files of the Department of External Affairs, British Cabinet and Foreign Office sources and published United States State Department and United Nations material.

I take full responsibility for what follows, but any credit which this project might bring must be shared. This subject was first suggested to me by Elizabeth MacCallum, a former foreign service officer of great distinction. Her support sustained me throughout. The courtesy and experience of my supervisor, David Farr, are well known. I thank him warmly, as I do my adviser, Peyton V. Lyon. David N. Dilks, Professor of International Relations at Leeds University, spent many hours reviewing an earlier draft of this thesis. David Bercuson, Robert Bothwell and John English, all gave advice, encouragement and friendship. My parents and my husband provided all these things, and much more.

ABBREVIATIONS

AUSSEA	Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs
CAB	Cabinet Office Records, Public Record Office, Kew
DEA	Department of External Affairs*
<u>DCER</u>	<u>Documents on Canadian External Relations</u>
FO	Foreign Office Records, Public Record Office, Kew
<u>FRUS</u>	<u>Foreign Relations of the United States</u>
GA	General Assembly
PAC	Public Archives of Canada
PRO	Public Record Office
SSCR	Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations
SSFA	Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
SSDA	Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs
SSEA	Secretary of State for External Affairs
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSCOP	United Nations Special Committee on Palestine
US	United States
USSEA	Under Secretary of State for External Affairs
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

* Where there is no reference to location in the footnotes, DEA will be understood.

INTRODUCTION

It was not until 1945 that the horror of Hitler's death camps was fully revealed. No Western leader could forget, or would be allowed to forget, the ordeal that the Jewish people had been forced to undergo. Millions had died; thousands more remained in displaced persons centres throughout Europe. Where could they go? Were they to be allowed to "return" to Palestine, the land they identified as their spiritual homeland? If so, how were the powerful antagonisms between the indigenous Arab population and the increasing numbers of often-desperate Jewish immigrants to be reconciled? Indeed, could they?

It was a war-weary Great Britain, charged under the terms of the League of Nations mandate with responsibility for the political development of Palestine, which was faced with the difficult task of balancing and reconciling Jewish and Arab demands and aspirations. The United States, with its politically and economically well-organized Jewish population and its now undisputed position as the most powerful of the Western democracies, was inevitably much more than a spectator. Canada, connected by ties of history and sentiment to Great Britain and respected by its American neighbour and ally, would also find it difficult to stand aloof from this major international problem, whatever the predilections of its aging Prime Minister, W.L. Mackenzie King. And the problem, despite the early optimism of Ernest Bevin, the new British Labour Foreign Secretary, would find no easy solution.

By early 1947 Bevin's optimism had turned to despair. On 14 February the British Government informed the Canadian Department of

External Affairs that "it is impossible for us alone to arrive at peaceful settlement in Palestine on any basis. We had therefore come to conclusion that best course is to submit whole problem of Palestine to United Nations Organization Assembly, putting before them all the various solutions which have been proposed but ourselves making no recommendations."¹ The United Kingdom's decision was prompted, inter alia, by the Jewish and Arab rejection in January of the latest in a long series of British proposals for the future government of Palestine. The British, as Ernest Bevin indicated, were no longer willing or able to accept full responsibility for the situation in the Middle East: "The discussions of the last month have clearly shown that there is no prospect of resolving this conflict by any settlement negotiated between the parties. But if the conflict has to be resolved by an arbitrary decision....His Majesty's Government have of themselves no power, under the terms of the mandate, to award the country either to the Arabs or to the Jews, or even to partition it between them."²

Longstanding administrative and psychological problems had brought the British to their difficult decision. Under the terms of the Balfour

1. SSDA to SSEA, D146, 14 February 1947, 47B(s).

2. Great Britain, House of Commons, Parliamentary Debates, fifth series, vol 433, cols 985-994, 18 February 1947.

Declaration of 1917¹ and the Palestine mandate, which incorporated the spirit of that declaration and which was formally approved by the League of Nations in 1922, the British Government undertook to facilitate "the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish People." It was, at the same time, clearly understood that this should be accomplished without prejudice to "the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish Communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country." George Kirk has rightly written of "the psychological inevitability that these formulae would arouse, in both Zionist and Arab minds and hearts, expectations which certainly could not be reconciled."²

Even before the outbreak of the war, it had become evident that the mandate was unworkable in practice and that the promises made to the Jewish and Arab communities could not be kept. In 1937 the Peel Commission declared in its report that "Neither Arab nor Jew has any sense of service to a single State....The conflict is primarily political, though the fear of economic subjection to the Jews, is also in Arab minds.... Every intelligent Arab and Jew is forced to ask the question, 'who in the end will govern Palestine?...'for internal and external reasons it seems probable that the situation, bad as it now is, will grow worse.. The conflict will go on, the gulf between Arabs and Jews will widen."³ And widen it did.

1. See Appendix I.

2. George Kirk, Survey of International Affairs: The Middle East 1945-1950 (London, 1954), 187.

3. Great Britain, Palestine Royal Commission: Report, 1937 (British Blue Book, Cmd. 5479).

The 1937 Commission had proposed that independent Arab and Jewish states be created, with Britain retaining a permanent mandate over Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth and a corridor to the sea. This proposal was dropped the following year when the Woodhead Commission reported that political, financial and administrative problems made such a partition impracticable.¹ The British Government turned once more to the two protagonists, asking them to assist in working out a solution. If a joint policy could not be arrived at, the Government warned that it would be obliged to draw up and put into effect a policy of its own.

Agreement was not forthcoming. In May 1939 Britain brought out its White Paper on Palestine.² The chief aim of the new policy was to establish by 1949 a single democratic state in Palestine in which Jews and Arabs would share authority in a manner which would protect the essential interests of both parties. It was reasoned that if Arabs and Jews were to live successfully side by side, they must begin to practice mutual tolerance, good-will and co-operation. The plan set a five year quota of 75,000 on Jewish immigration; after 31 March 1944, the rate of immigration was to be established by mutual consent. The transfer of land from the Arabs to the Jews was also to be restricted. The plan was approved by the British, but by the British alone.

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1. Great Britain, Palestine Partition Commission: Report, October 1938 (British Blue Book, Cmd. 5854).
 2. Great Britain, Palestine: Statement of Policy, May 1939 (British White Paper, Cmd. 6019).

During the war the positions of both Arabs and Jews became more rigid. In May 1942, an international meeting of Zionists in New York called for the repeal of the 1939 White Paper, unlimited immigration into Palestine and its transformation into a Jewish Commonwealth. The "Biltmore Programme" formed the basis of a number of subsequent Zionist demands regarding Palestine. Within the mandate, a radical Arab nationalism took root. The concept of a Jewish National Home was viewed as the main obstacle to constitutional development and eventual independence. The war also saw the growth of the pan-Arab movement in the Middle East, leading to the formation of the League of Arab States in March 1945. The League enthusiastically took up the cause of Palestinian Arabs.

Jews and Arabs alike were repeatedly assured by British and American leaders, who had other things on their minds, that the problem would be resolved after the war. But the Cabinet Committee on Palestine, reconstituted by the new British Labour Government of Clement Attlee in September 1945 to consider future policy on the mandate, could discover no solution to the problem. A "pro-Arab" course of action would alienate the United States, on whom Britain was dependent for financial assistance. The adoption of a "pro-Zionist" policy in Palestine would be almost certain to trigger "widespread disturbances in the Arab countries [and]...the withdrawal of the co-operation on which our Imperial interests so largely depend." The Soviet Union, it was remembered, had already demonstrated a facility for capitalizing on such "disturbances" in Turkey and Iran. "We were

in the unfortunate position," concluded the Committee, "that whatever action we took we were likely to find ourselves exposed to sharp criticism from one side or the other. It was important in this connection, so far as practicable, to take the United States with us."¹

In October 1945 Britain invited the United States to participate in a joint investigation into conditions among Jewish refugees in Europe and the situation in Palestine. The United States accepted, albeit reluctantly, and the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry was established. In agreeing to participate in the Committee, noted one member of the British Cabinet, the United States is "placed in a position of sharing the responsibility for the policy which she advocates. She will no longer be able to play the part of irresponsible critic,"² President Truman, many felt, was such a critic. On 26 July, the day that he had come into office, Attlee had been handed a memorandum from the American President expressing his hope that Britain would lift the immigration and other restrictions of the 1939 White Paper without delay.³ One month later, Truman followed up this suggestion with a secret communication to the British Prime Minister urging that 100,000 certificates of immigration to Palestine be immediately granted to Jewish refugees.⁴

1. Cabinet Meeting(45) 30th, conclusions, minute 7, confidential annex, 11 September 1945, CAB 128/3.

2. "Palestine: Report by the Lord President of the Council", Cabinet Paper (45) 216, 10 October 1945, CAB 129/3.

3. FRUS, 1945, VIII, 716-17.

4. Ibid., 737-39.

In a meeting with representatives of Middle Eastern Arab states in October 1945, Truman was quite candid: "I'm sorry gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of Zionism; I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents."¹

The report of the Anglo-American Committee, released in April 1946, recommended that Palestine should be constituted as neither an Arab nor a Jewish entity, but as a single state in which Jews, Arabs and all citizens of Palestine would participate. Until a trusteeship agreement under the auspices of the United Nations could be executed, the country should remain a British mandate. The report also called for the immediate admission of 100,000 Jewish immigrants into Palestine.²

The British and American Governments reacted predictably. In Washington, President Truman welcomed the recommendation for the immediate admission of Jewish refugees, but merely promised to take the remaining provisions under advisement. The British, charged with turning words into actions, argued that before any such massive influx of refugees could take place, there must be some guarantee of American assistance and Jewish terrorist groups in Palestine would have to be disarmed. A group of American and British experts, known as the Morrison-Grady Committee, was appointed by the two governments to

1. William A. Eddy, FDR Meets Ibn Saud (New York, 1954), 37.

2. Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, Report to the United States Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom (Lausanne, 1946).

consider the implications of the report, particularly the military and financial liabilities likely to be incurred in its implementation. After two months of discussion, the Committee announced in July of 1946 a scheme of implementation known as the "Provincial Autonomy Plan for Palestine." Ratification by the United States and the United Kingdom was expected within days.

At the eleventh hour, however, Truman refused to support the Anglo-American Committee Report. Great Britain decided to go ahead with plans for bringing Jews and Arabs together to discuss the recommendations. Congressional elections on his mind, Truman again involved himself in the debate, not only calling for the immediate admission of 100,000 Jews into Palestine but also declaring his Government's intention to support the creation of a Jewish State in Palestine. British officials, struggling to resolve the conflict between Arabs and Jews, were embittered by the President's announcement, Bevin not the least. In a speech before the British House of Commons, the Foreign Secretary took aim at Truman's remarks: "In international affairs I cannot settle things if my problem is made the subject of local elections.... I was dealing with Jewish representatives at the time and I had to call it off because the whole thing was spoilt."¹ The Canadian Ambassador in Washington observed that Bevin's point, although provoking, was a good one: "If to possess responsibility without power is an unhappy state of affairs, to assume the reverse position,

1. Great Britain, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, fifth series, vol 433, col 1908, 25 February 1947.

of possessing power to affect the issue without undertaking responsibility almost always leads to trouble. That is what has been done with regard to Palestine by the Administration on too many occasions."¹

Great Britain's last hopes for a solution to the problem rode on the London Conference, which opened in late January 1947 with Jewish and Arab delegations in attendance. Within a few days it was apparent that efforts to break the impasse were fruitless. "It looks as though the London Conference has blown up", observed Dean Acheson, American Under Secretary of State, "and that we have come to the end of the period begun in 1945 of trying to find a solution by inquiry and negotiation."² On 14 February the British Government announced its intention to put the Palestine question before the United Nations.

It was not until 1947, when the matter came before the UN, that Canadian policy-makers considered involving themselves in the problems of Palestine in a sustained fashion. Before that time, Prime Minister Mackenzie King and senior officials of the Department of External Affairs, while acknowledging that Canada with other members of the

1. H.H. Wrong to L.B. Pearson, letter, 3 March 1947, DEA 47B(s).

2. Acheson to Director of Near Eastern and African Affairs, 15 February 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1048.

League of Nations shared "a remote and tenuous responsibility" for mandated territories, viewed Palestine as "a purely British problem."¹ Legally there were no ties to Palestine: Canada had "had no occasion to indicate formal approval of the mandate", nor had it ever ratified the Treaty of Sèvres in which the Balfour Declaration was incorporated.² Canada maintained its air of detachment from the issue even in the face of the gradual disclosure of Hitler's policy of mass extermination of the Jews and despite pressure from well-organized and persistent pro-Zionist groups. The Liberal Government, noted one official in 1944, was "habitually in receipt of telegrams from Zionist organizations in Canada, the United States and elsewhere." A pro-Arab missive "was something of a novelty."³

Most active among such interest groups were the Canadian Jewish Congress, which was predominantly Zionist, the Zionist Organization

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1. J.E. Read to P. Renaud, 20 June 1944, PAC, RG 25, vol 1839, file 583-37C, part 1. Dr. O.D. Skelton described the Canadian position in 1937: the Palestine question was "entirely in the hands of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the decision as to the future administration of Palestine must rest with that Government." O.D. Skelton to A. Abrahams, 2 June 1937, ibid. This position was confirmed by Norman Robertson, Skelton's successor as Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, and by senior official Hume Wrong. See USSEA to High Commissioner for Canada in South Africa, 170, 29 November 1944, ibid. and H.H. Wrong, "Memorandum for Mr. Glazebrook", 1 May 1944, ibid., part 2.
 2. E.B. Rogers, "Memorandum to Dr. Skelton", 11 May 1939, ibid., part 1.
 3. J. Holmes to SSEA, A438, 26 September 1945, ibid. Hume Wrong noted that the mandate was a "matter [which] has frequently been brought to the attention of the Canadian Government by interested parties". Hume Wrong to Rev. T.F. Summerhayes, 9 March 1944, ibid., part 2.

of Canada, Labour Zionists and the Religious Zionist group, Mizrachi. In 1940 the last three of these groups had set up an umbrella organization, the United Zionist Council. In January 1944, the Zionist Organization of Canada fostered two non-Jewish organizations sympathetic to Zionism: the Christian Council of Clergyman and the Canadian Palestine Committee, which boasted among its members leading figures from business, politics, journalism, the arts and education. Zionists attempted, Kay points out, to gain the support of politicians, parties and public men, and to win their endorsement in representations to the Government. An office was set up in Ottawa to keep in close touch with Government officials and lobby for favourable legislation. The Zionists had two goals: to liberalize immigration practices so that substantial numbers of Jewish refugees could be brought to Canada and to have the Canadian Government bring pressure on Great Britain to repeal the 1939 White Paper.¹

Jewish immigration into Canada had always been proportionately small, never reaching more than five per cent of all immigrants during one year.² During the 1930's, as Hitler's expansionist and racist policies were implemented, and the number of refugees -- Jewish and

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1. See Stuart Rosenberg, The Jewish Community in Canada, II: In the Midst of Freedom (Toronto, 1971), 25-26; Zachariah Kay, Canada and Palestine: The Politics of Non-Commitment (Jerusalem, 1978), 82-88.
 2. Gerald E. Dirks, Canada's Refugee Policy: Indifference or Opportunism? (Montreal, 1977), 93.

non-Jewish alike -- swelled, immigration into Canada almost came to a halt. European immigrants were not wanted or welcomed in a difficult period of economic insecurity and instability. Politicians, responding particularly to anti-Jewish sentiments in Quebec, and bureaucrats agreed. In a 1938 report, written by the Department of External Affairs and the Immigration Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources, and approved by the Cabinet, it was noted that "We do not want to take too many Jews but in the present circumstances we do not want to say so."¹

Jewish pressure on the Canadian Government mounted with the outbreak of war. Immigration authorities in Ottawa, however, continued to operate on the principle that Canada's current ethnic proportions should be maintained. Jewish representations were greeted unsympathetically by senior officials in the Immigration Branch, notably the Director, F.C. Blair, who warned that "anyone who tries to rush the Immigration Act will find out it does not work."²

The end of World War II did not immediately bring about liberalization of Canada's immigration policy. The King Government proceeded with its usual caution, adopting the position that the refugee problem should be handled on a broad international basis. On 26

1. Quoted in *ibid.*, 57-58. See also Irving Abella and Harold Troper, "The Line Must Be Drawn Somewhere: Canada and Jewish Refugees, 1933-9," *Canadian Historical Review*, LX, 2 (June 1979), 178-209 and John A. Munro (ed.), *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, VI: 1936-1939 (Ottawa, 1972), chapter V.

2. Quoted in Dirks, 93-94.

July 1946, Hume Wrong, then Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, received a top secret aide-memoire from the British High Commissioner in Ottawa requesting that the Canadian Government give public support to the Anglo-American Committee's recommendation on the admission of Jewish refugees to countries other than Palestine. If Arab opposition to the report was to be overcome, the memorandum argued, it was essential that the Palestine question be viewed not in isolation but as part of the main problem of dealing with displaced persons and refugees in Europe: "it should be made clear that other contributions are being made towards the solution of that problem." Of particular assistance would be an offer from Canada to accept a specific number of displaced persons, including Jews.¹ The High Commissioner reported that "Hume Wrong was clearly interested, but said at once that there was little prospect in his view, of the Canadian Government finding it possible to make a public declaration at the present time." A declaration containing an explicit offer to accept a certain number of displaced persons was, he thought, out of the question. This was not because Canada did not want to assist. On the contrary, Canada was "out to help all she could," but experience had shown that, in Canadian conditions at least, such offers only led to difficulty and embarrassment and were not the best form of approach.²

1. H.H. Wrong, "Memorandum for Mr. St. Laurent", 26 July 1946, 47B(s).

2. High Commissioner in Canada to Dominions Office, 1189, 26 July 1946, DO 35/1591/WF 303/85. See also D.M. Page (ed.), Documents on Canadian External Relations, XII: 1946 (Ottawa, 1977), 362-374.

But the plight of the refugees and displaced persons, including some 200,000 Jews, captured the attention and the sympathy of many Canadians, and it was clear that the expanding economy could now absorb and benefit from the immigrants. Most of the Jewish refugees, when given a choice, wished to go to Palestine, but Canadian business and financial leaders joined Jewish and other religious organizations and ethnic groups in urging a change in their Government's immigration policy. In early 1947 the King Government drew up an amended policy which was to serve as the basis of a Canadian immigration policy for the next decade. Under the broadened provisions, 16,000 Jews entered Canada from 1947 to 1952, large numbers by comparison with the previous decade's figures.¹

Jewish lobbying for the admittance of refugees into Canada was periodically quite intense. A more important goal, however, was to secure the repeal of the British White Paper of 1939. As early as May of that year, acting on a request from Zionist headquarters in London, the Zionist Organization of Canada launched its attack on the White Paper's provisions.² Agitation -- in Canada and elsewhere -- against British policy in Palestine gained momentum as 1 April 1944 drew nearer, the date on which restrictions on the rate of Jewish immigration into Palestine were scheduled to come into effect.

1. See Dirks, 148-50, 272-273.

2. See E.P. MacCallum, "Postwar Policy and the 1939 White Paper", 8 May 1944, PAC, King Papers, MG 26 J4, vol 310.

Despite meetings with the Prime Minister and his officials, and the thousands of briefs, letters and telegrams urging the Canadian Government to use its influence in Whitehall to secure the repeal of the White Paper, Zionist organizations met with little success. Mackenzie King, who combined the positions of Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs, sympathized with a hard-pressed mother country. He was by no means convinced, despite persuasive appeals, that the White Paper should be repealed. He gave his approval to a draft statement that would perhaps have surprised critics -- then and after -- who dismissed him as anti-British:

There has been a great deal of criticism of the plan, but in such criticism sight must not be lost of the fact that the problem is an extremely complicated and difficult one. So long as antipathy continues between the two groups in Palestine, the problem will remain complex, and so long as the Mandate continues, the United Kingdom will have the ungrateful task of dealing with it. Of this one thing, however, I think we can be sure - that the British, long the friends of the Arabs and for centuries the most just and humane in their treatment of the Jews, will do their utmost in a sincere endeavour to reach the best settlement possible.¹

Gradually the Prime Minister appeared more reluctant to receive Zionist delegations, believing that such contacts, with their inevitable publicity, might be construed as Government endorsement of Zionist goals. Now it largely fell to senior officials in External Affairs to meet with and respond to Zionist representatives. Policy, however, did not

1. R.G. Riddell, "The British White Paper on Palestine", 23 June 1944, King Papers, MG 26 J4, vol 310.

change. In January 1945, Norman Robertson, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs from 1941-1946, responded to a brief presented by members of the Zionist Organization of Canada and the Canadian Palestine Committee: "I did not think that the Canadian Government would wish to press a particular policy for meeting one specific problem upon the United Kingdom Government, which had a broad and direct responsibility for the conduct of affairs in the Middle East." Robertson nevertheless promised to bring the brief to the attention of the British Government.¹ Instructions from External Affairs to its High Commissioner in South Africa described Canadian thinking in more detail:

The issues involved in the Palestine question are ... highly controversial and we have been careful to refrain from any action or statement which might be regarded as committing this country to support any policy that has not received the agreement of those it primarily affects. An attitude of reserve appears to be all the more necessary because the interests of the three groups to which guarantees were given in the Balfour Declaration are still in sharp conflict.²

R.A. MacKay, Robertson's Executive Assistant, explained to the head of the United Zionist Council and the Canadian Palestine Committee that the Department's involvement in the Palestine problem would undermine two of the cardinal rules of Canadian foreign policy.³ As a general rule, Canada followed a policy of non-intervention

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1. N.A. Robertson, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister", 1 February 1945, King Papers, MG 26 J4, vol 310.
 2. USSEA to High Commissioner in South Africa, 170, 29 November 1944, ibid.

in a matter which was primarily the concern of another member state of the British Commonwealth. The Canadian Government, moreover, "rarely expressed publicly views with respect to policies being followed by another government, whether within or without the Commonwealth, unless Canadian interests were at stake or unless it felt that the Government were prepared to take some action on the matter if need should arise." MacKay concluded in time-honoured fashion: he "personally doubted whether the Government would feel it desirable to take any action at the present time."¹

Elizabeth P. MacCallum was the only member of the Department of External Affairs with a thorough knowledge of the Middle East, and her views and influence deserve some attention. The daughter of missionaries, she was born and spent her first years in Turkey.

The experience left her fluent in Turkish and Arabic and knowledgeable about the area. Prior to joining External Affairs in 1942 as a Principal Clerk and research assistant, she spent several years with the League of Nations Society in Ottawa and the Foreign Policy Association in New York, where she interested herself in the views of Zionist and Arab leaders alike and published extensively on Middle Eastern Affairs.

Zachariah Kay has argued that Miss MacCallum "had considerable influence on the government's thinking on Palestine," and "was an

1. R.A. MacKay, "Memorandum to Mr. Robertson", 5 July 1946, King Papers, MG 26 J4, vol 310.

effective element in preventing any positive attitude towards the Jewish homeland in Palestine." He goes so far as to suggest that her memoranda "ensured that the government would not embark on any course out of line with Britain's position in Palestine and led King into effective agreement with the 1939 White Paper."¹

This surely is overstating MacCallum's influence and doing less than justice to her views. Eliahu Elath, who led the Zionist delegation at the San Francisco Conference and later became Israel's first Ambassador to the United States, first met Elizabeth MacCallum in 1945 at the Conference: "I do not feel she has much to say in the framing of her government's policy in our part of the world. Her views are basically pro-Arab, but she is ready to listen to our point of view and even to agree with some of the arguments I advanced as a basis for a Jewish-Arab settlement."² Another prominent Zionist recorded a similar impression: "she was conversant with every small detail of political and economic life in Palestine. She had read all the literature in European languages which had been published on Palestine and the Middle East. She knew the names of officials and the functions they performed and was personally acquainted with many Arab leaders.

1. Kay, 68, 168.

2. Eliahu Elath, Zionism at the UN (Philadelphia 1976), 116.

I found no hostility in her attitude towards ~~us~~. She differed from our standpoint and views but had no rooted prejudices....and showed every desire to study the problem impartially."¹ Norman Robertson, her superior, expressed every confidence in her judgement: "Miss MacCallum has a quite expert knowledge of the politics of the Near East, and though her sympathies rather obviously incline towards the Arabs, I think her statement of the difficulties of the position is objective and realistic."²

The expertise which E.P. MacCallum brought to bear on Middle Eastern questions before 1947 served to reinforce rather than to alter the policy which the King Government had long been pursuing. In arguing that Canada ought not to interfere in the politics of the White Paper, she emphasized the complexities of the problem and the difficulties facing the British. For every persuasive, well-written brief the Zionists presented to officials in External Affairs, she prepared a detailed, convincing counter-balancing memorandum on the subject. This doubtless provided useful ammunition for her colleagues and minister, but it is hard to imagine that policy would have been different if she had not been there. When the question came before the United Nations, and the predominant issue

1. David Horowitz, State in the Making (New York, 1953), 280.

2. N.A. Robertson, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister", 24 December 1944, PAC, RG 25, vol 1839, file 583-37C.

became a national home for the Jews, the departmental sympathy shifted perceptibly towards the Zionist position. MacCallum's influence, if anything, now lessened, and it must sometimes have been a struggle simply to appeal for a balanced view.

The Prime Minister was on record as supporting, in theory, the idea of national Jewish home.¹ In the Department of External Affairs, R.G. Riddell, a senior adviser on United Nations questions, had worked on refugee problems and felt sympathy with the Jewish predicament;² L.B. Pearson remembered his becoming "emotionally involved in a very special way because we were dealing with the Holy Land -- the land of my Sunday School lessons."

At one stage of my life [he continued] I knew far more about the geography of Palestine than I did about the geography of Canada. I could tell you all the towns from Dan to Beer-sheba but certainly not all from Victoria to Halifax. I think that in the back of my mind I felt I was concerning myself with something close to my early life and religious background. Although this was only an ancillary factor, it made the dispute much more real in my mind than, for instance, Korea. I do not recall ever getting very worked up about Korea when I went to Sunday School.³

Pearson was sympathetic to the Zionist longing to return to the land of their forefathers, a sympathy apparently widespread at the time.

1. John A. Munro and Alex Inglis (eds.), Mike: the Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Lester B. Pearson, volume II: 1948-57 (Toronto, 1973), 212.

2. Interview, D.M. Page - George Ignatieff, 1978.

3. Mike, II, 213.

"As a minister's son," General E.L.M. Burns has commented, "Mr. Pearson doubtless had more than the average Canadian's share of Bible instruction, but certainly in the 1940's most Canadians thought it only right and reasonable that the Jews should go back to their homeland, promised to Abraham by God. The average Canadian and even the average politician were oblivious to the rights of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine."¹ Pearson was also deeply affected by the revelation of the Nazi death camps and some years later pointed to the "malevolence of Hitler's racial policies, which spread like a sudden blight over the whole of Nazi-occupied Europe" as an important, if not the most important, reason for the subsequent UN recommendation that a Jewish state be created in Palestine.²

In October 1946, Pearson realized his dream of becoming Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs.³ The month before Mackenzie King, while remaining Prime Minister, had "temporarily" passed the External Affairs portfolio to his ~~capable~~ French-Canadian lieutenant, Louis St. Laurent. St. Laurent was a lawyer of quick intelligence and solid ability -- and of remarkable character. He was trusted, and in turn he gave his trust, and considerable freedom of action, to his new deputy. Pearson's first great crisis in his new job was Palestine,

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1. General E.L.M. Burns, "Pearson and the Gaza Strip, 1957", in M.G. Fry (ed.), Freedom and Change: Essays in Honour of Lester B. Pearson (Toronto, 1975), 33-34.
 2. L.B. Pearson, "Statement by the President of the United Nations General Assembly, April 19, 1953", PAC, L.B. Pearson Papers, MG 26 N9, volume 7.
 3. Norman Robertson went to London as High Commissioner; Hume Wrong became Ambassador in Washington.

and he made it his own. He was a UN man, by talents and conviction. His strength lay in cool, cautious and cheery negotiation, and a quiet belief in the importance of what he was doing. Pearson now moved onto the world stage, beginning at once to acquire an international reputation as the "'honest broker,' an eternal seeker of the middle ground, testing all the infinite contingencies that might lead to a way out."¹ Hume Wrong said that "to understand Pearson, you have to think of him as a sort of Houdini: you tie him up, stick him in a mess, and without telling you why or when, he'll get himself out and in the process help all the others who are involved."²

Pearson had his weaknesses. He was not to prove a strong administrator: He was aware, however, that Canada's international commitments and responsibilities were increasing much more rapidly than the resources to carry them out.

The figures are revealing and somewhat frightening [Pearson said in 1947]....In 1928 we had to send representatives to 10 conferences, in 1939 to 18 and in 1946 to 95. In this last year 128 External Affairs officers were absent from their normal posts attending international conferences as delegates, alternates, advisers and observers. We are in fact, of necessity developing in our service a group of international civil servants; a sort of permanent force of experts who are ready, at the drop of an Order-in-Council, to fly to any part of the world and represent Canada either at a conference to make peace with Germany or one to suppress the traffic in obscene publications.³

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1. Peter Newman, review of Mike, II, The Globe and Mail (Toronto), 10 November 1973.
 2. Peter Stursberg, Lester Pearson and the American Dilemma (Toronto, 1980) 72.
 3. L.B. Pearson, "Canadian Diplomacy", 11 January 1947, Statements and Speeches, 47/1.

An increased participation in international diplomacy was part of the changing face of Canadian foreign policy. The very sense of a broad international commitment and responsibility was new. "Historical accident and the good luck to have avoided the material destruction of the war combined," wrote ~~one~~ commentator, "to give this small power an influence disproportionate to its real weight. Canada had wealth, technical expertise, able men, and for the first time the desire to play a part in the world. The first two attributes were unquestionably the most important ones for a world that desperately needed them, but without the men and the desire Canada would probably have returned to somnolence."¹

Two of Canada's main foreign policy aims in the immediate post-war years will be examined here. First of all, the traditional desire to maintain harmony in the North Atlantic Triangle remained fundamental and deep-seated. "The one great nightmare of pre-war Canadian governments," noted Pearson, "was a clash, or even a divergence of policy between the two governments -- American and British -- with both of which Canada wished to keep in step....[these] postulates of policy still, if almost unconsciously apply, though possibly with less force as Canada grows in confidence and strength. It shows that, almost automatically, we stop playing the triangle in the international symphony when the British and American instruments are out of harmony."² When

1. J.L. Granatstein, manuscript review of Mike, II.

2. L.B. Pearson, "Some Principles of Canadian Foreign Policy", speech of January 1948, reproduced in his Words and Occasions (Toronto, 1970), 70-71.

Samuel J. Zacks, President of the Zionist Organization of Canada, met with Pearson in mid-November 1946, the former pointed to a "growing tension" between the United States and the United Kingdom over British policy on Palestine, and suggested "that Canada, acting in the traditional role of interpreter between the two countries, might properly use its influence to secure fuller sympathy in the United Kingdom" for the early transfer of 100,000 Jewish refugees to Palestine and for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. Pearson forwarded his account of the meeting to the Prime Minister, adding that he expressed to Zacks, "my own personal sympathy and told him I thought Canada could be counted on to support any plan for Palestine on which the Governments of the United Kingdom and United States could agree."¹ The British and American instruments would seldom be in harmony on the Palestine crisis. Canada could not play the triangle, but her -- and Pearson's -- role became a more independent, more vital, even more central one in the wider international environment. This was one issue when Canada would not have to be content with "effectiveness at the margins."²

The second major aim of Canadian foreign policy was new: a wish to see a great international organization, such as the UN succeed, and a willingness to involve the country in that work.

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1. L.B. Pearson to Mackenzie King, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister: Statement by Mr. Samuel J. Zacks, President of the Zionist Organization of Canada", 15 November 1946, King Papers, MG 26 J4, vol 310, F3308.
 2. Peyton V. Lyon and Bruce Thordarson, "Professor Pearson: A Sketch" in Fry, 3-4.

With Canada's active role as a 'middle power', her contribution to the founding of the UN in 1945 and her close relationship with the two leading Western members, Pearson thought it "quite natural that we should have had a position of importance at the United Nations, and that we should so often be asked to become members of committees, even to take on their chairmanship, and to supply personnel for UN operations of all kinds." And, he added, perhaps disingenuously, "We did not seek any prominent or special role at the UN in those early years. But the role often sought us."¹ Such involvements were in Canada's interest, all the more so as the cold war set in: "We now know that there is no security in distance; that incapacity to harm does not mean immunity from attack; that indifference does not mean isolation. There are no fire-proof houses in the atomic age, or little countries far away, like Czechoslovakia in 1938, whose fate meant nothing to us."² Less than six months after Pearson became Under-Secretary, developments in just such "a little country" would put the UN's ability to resolve fundamental international conflict to the test.

1. Mike, II, 123.

2. L.B. Pearson, "Some Principles of Canadian Foreign Policy", Words and Occasions, 71-72.

PREPARING FOR THE SPECIAL SESSIONMarch - April, 1947

On 2 April 1947, the British Government submitted a formal request to the Secretary-General of the United Nations that the Palestine issue be placed on the agenda of the General Assembly at the next regular session. At that time Britain would submit an account of the administration of the mandate and ask the Assembly to make recommendations concerning the future government of Palestine. To that end the British Government asked that a Special Session of the General Assembly be called as soon as possible to establish and instruct a committee to prepare for the consideration of the Palestine question at the September 1947 session. Just ten days later, a majority of the United Nations members indicated that they concurred in the British request.

Canada was one of the majority. Louis St. Laurent judged the British decision "an occasion of great importance." Speaking before the House of Commons he declared that for "the first time in history a great modern state, confronted with a difficult international problem, has turned voluntarily to an assembly representative of the nations of the world and asked for guidance and assistance towards settlement. It seems to me that we have achieved a very great measure of success in our efforts to establish a world organization if, within two years, we have created a body which can be looked upon as capable of dealing in a practical manner with a problem

of that kind."¹ L.B. Pearson, his deputy, was less sanguine; Britain's reference of the Palestine question to the UN "threw everybody into a tailspin.... There could have been no more complicated or difficult political and diplomatic problem or a problem where passions between the contending parties could have been deeper or more bitter. To hold the balance between them risked incurring the enmity of both."² Pearson questioned the appropriateness of the British action, fearing that the effectiveness of the fledgling organization might be damaged or destroyed by such a complicated, divisive problem.

On 14 April 1947, Cabinet approval was given to the naming of Lester B. Pearson, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, as Canadian delegate to the United Nations. R.G. Riddell, head of the Department's First Political Division and responsible for matters relating to international organization, George Ignatieff,

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1. House of Commons, Debates, 4 July 1947, VI, 5078-9.
 2. John A. Munro and Alex Inglis (eds.), Mike: the Memoirs of the Rt. Hon. Lester B. Pearson, volume II: 1948-57 (Toronto, 1973), 212. Pearson was probably thinking of Palestine when he commented two months after the UN decision on partition that "There have been occasions recently when the services of the United Nations should not, I think, have been involved because the parties mainly concerned with the situation had not exhausted other, and direct means of settlement; or because the problem was beyond the present capacity of a new and uncertain organization.... It may eventually be fatal to the United Nations if it is asked to accept commitments which it cannot fulfill, because, in the absence of military agreements under the charter to enforce its decisions those decisions have behind them only moral force and the weight of world opinion." L.B. Pearson, "Peace through the United Nations", 26 January 1948, Statements and Speeches, 48/2.

Permanent Delegate to the United Nations, and E.P. MacCallum, whose particular expertise was the Middle East, would act as advisors.

In the two weeks before the opening of the special session in New York, the Canadian delegation concentrated on delineating departmental policy on issues likely to arise at the forthcoming meetings. There were important and delicate questions to resolve: whether, for example, business at the session should be limited to the creation of a committee of inquiry or be extended to embrace a broad debate on policy; whether the Jewish Agency was to be permitted to participate in the discussions¹; where the meeting was to be held. And, more important, the Canadian delegation would also have to address itself to the Assembly's central task -- a decision on the composition and terms of reference of the preparatory committee on Palestine.

The Department of External Affairs shared the conviction of the British Government and the UN Secretariat that time was short. In a conversation with Julius Harrington, a senior member of the American Embassy staff in Ottawa, Riddell stressed the Department's view that discussion at the special session should be confined as much as possible to the composition and terms of reference of the preparatory committee, thus avoiding a divisive and time-consuming debate on the substance of

1. The Assembly's rules of procedure did not provide for the representation of non-governmental organizations, but the rules could be amended.

the problem.¹ On 16 April, George Ignatieff was asked to sound out the Secretariat and to suggest administrative shortcuts which could be approved in advance by UN members; in this way it was hoped to forestall a procedural wrangle later on. The Special Committee must begin its work as soon as possible. The substance of the Palestine problem, after all, could be discussed more fruitfully by the Assembly after the Special Committee had reported.²

The Secretariat, however, believed that matters were well in hand. A prolonged session seemed unlikely, in the view of Andrew Cordier, Executive Assistant to the Secretary-General, because of the precision of the United Kingdom's request, a precision which would give an alert Assembly President a focus for discussion.³

Pearson, for one, was not convinced. In a memorandum of April 19 to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, he speculated that the Secretariat's plan to defer debate on the substance of the Palestine problem until the fall session might fail. In such an event, the contribution of the Canadian delegation to the discussion should be brief and perfunctory, consisting at most of "uncontroversial general

1. R.G. Riddell to H.H. Wrong, 951, 14 April 1947, DEA 5475-CD-40C.

2. SSEA to Consulate General, New York, 365, 16 April 1947, 47B(s).

3. George Ignatieff to SSEA, 464, 17 April 1947, 47B(s).

observations."¹ Pearson's concern proved well-founded. Ottawa soon learned of Egypt's intention to place "the termination of the mandate over Palestine and the declaration of its independence" on the agenda of the special session. The Under-Secretary suggested that the Canadian delegation be instructed to vote against the Egyptian motion; it remained to be seen what else might be done. St. Laurent agreed.² At a meeting between the delegation and the Minister, Pearson again underlined the importance of the issue: the Canadian delegate should, if possible, avoid speaking at all on the substance of the case. If continued silence became difficult, Canada might make a very brief statement, pointing out the importance for the United Nations of facing this difficult issue and, what is more, "really doing something towards its settlement." The UN's effectiveness in the future would to some extent depend on its effectiveness in the present.³

The questions of the composition and terms of reference of the preparatory committee were given careful consideration before the session opened. On 16 April, the Dominions Office forwarded two proposals to Ottawa

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1. L.B. Pearson, "Memorandum for Mr. St. Laurent", 19 April 1947, 5475-CD-40C.
 2. L.B. Pearson, "Memorandum for Mr. St. Laurent", 22 April 1947, 5475-CD-40C.
 3. E.P. MacCallum, "Memorandum for file", 25 April 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

which were then under consideration at the United States State Department.¹ The first plan suggested that the UN Assembly appoint a committee made up of the 26 countries represented on the Security, Trusteeship and Economic and Social Councils. This committee could then appoint a small sub-committee made up of "neutral" countries to examine the Palestine problem and report back to the parent committee. The second scheme, and the one then favoured by State Department officials, involved the direct appointment of about eleven "neutral" states to serve on the preparatory committee, bypassing the parent committee stage.²

The British foresaw difficulties in the adoption of either scheme. Whitehall had indicated early on that the British favoured a committee which would include the members of the Security Council. The British Government, however, had put the Palestine question before the

1. As early as 4 April the State Department notified the British Ambassador in Washington that a small, unbiased working sub-committee, made up of eleven "Neutral States" from which the Big Five and the Arab states would be excluded, was to be preferred to a larger committee. The smaller committee might include Canada, New Zealand, India or Denmark, Turkey or Persia, Sweden or Norway, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Brazil, Mexico, Belgium and the Phillipines or Siam. This would give a fair geographical distribution. The State Department saw several advantages in this scheme: "(1) The states concerned would not be actuated by self-interest (2) the Committee's recommendations would be more likely to be acceptable to the General Assembly since the Assembly decision on this question is likely to be a small power rather than a great power one (3) the difficulty of Jewish representatives being heard by a body on which Arab League States are represented would be avoided (4) it would be impossible for the larger committee, which the State Department had originally suggested, to go abroad and carry on its deliberations in peace and quiet. The smaller committee now, could, if necessary, go to Geneva...." Lord Inverchapel to Foreign Office, 2037, FO 371/37586/UN2727.

2. SSDA to SSEA, D381, 16 April 1947, 47B(s).

United Nations in the first place, and thought it "inappropriate" to take the initiative in suggesting how the matter should be handled. The Dominions Secretary accordingly asked the British Ambassador in Washington to assure the Americans of British support should either scheme be placed before the special session.¹

On 18 April Pearson asked the Canadian Ambassador in Washington, Hume Wrong, for an outline of the two schemes.² Wrong met with knowledgeable Americans and with Under-Secretary of State Dean Acheson, and on 22 April was given an opportunity to discuss the question more informally when he played host at a small dinner party attended by Acheson and visiting Prime Minister Mackenzie King. Conversation soon touched on the special session, scheduled to convene in less than a week. Acheson said that the United States Government was determined to stay away from the preparatory committee. It would not be in the interest of the United Nations, he argued, to have a country represented on the committee which had already publicly committed itself on the issue of Jewish immigration into Palestine and which had a large and active Zionist community within its borders. Acheson stressed that having an American on the committee was potentially embarrassing to the Truman administration. The American Under Secretary also revealed that the State Department was now strongly in favour of a preparatory committee made up of seven or nine

1. Ibid.

2. L.B. Pearson to H.H. Wrong, 1010, 18 April 1947, 47B(s).

representatives of "neutral" small powers. It was evidently Acheson's hope that a small committee made up of capable representatives of countries with no previous involvement in the question might be able to produce a dispassionate report with recommendations which could then be supported at the regular session by most of the influential members of the United Nations. Canada and the Scandinavian countries, Acheson added, were excellent examples of UN countries ideally suited to have representatives on the committee.¹ This was the Department of External Affairs' first hint that the State Department sought Canadian membership on the preparatory committee.

Commenting on the American scheme in a telephone conversation with Pearson on 24 April, Wrong noted that the proposal had much to recommend it, provided that it was put forward with "great vigour": "A majority of the delegations would probably have no firm instructions from their governments and would be glad to accept a solution reasonable in itself if it were strongly urged by the United States with the support of the United Kingdom and other responsible governments."²

Wrong's enthusiasm was not shared by Pearson. Without British and American participation, Pearson argued, the report of the preparatory committee might be very difficult to implement. Rather than facilitating

1. H.H. Wrong to L.B. Pearson, 1245, 23 April 1947, 47B(s). King described the dinner conversation in his diary but did not refer to the discussion on Palestine.

2. H.H. Wrong, "Minute", 24 April 1947, WA15.

discussion in the General Assembly, the report might require so much revision that it would ultimately obstruct proceedings. In a "neutral" Palestine committee whose composition excluded the great powers, representation would inevitably include one of the Soviet republics or satellite states (such as Yugoslavia) which would reflect the view of the Kremlin. The British and Americans, however, would have no such advantage.¹ It was Pearson's conviction, moreover, and one shared by Riddell, that "the Big Powers should not be permitted to evade their responsibility in [the] Palestine question by staying off the special committee."² Pearson believed that one of the main weaknesses in the operation of the UN was

a growing tendency to appoint to United Nations political Commissions of investigation and enquiry, middle and small powers only.... Additional responsibility is, therefore, thrown on smaller states. This creates a situation of some difficulty and, at times, embarrassment, especially for countries like Canada.... Smaller powers should not be asked to undertake United Nations duties which their more powerful associates find to be irksome, dangerous or embarrassing. They should not be asked to play roles in the international drama which should be performed by the stars. There are times when, if it is impossible for the stars to act together, a particular play should not be staged at all.³

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1. L.B. Pearson to H.H. Wrong, 1010, 18 April 1947, 47B(s).
 2. Ibid.
 3. L.B. Pearson, "Peace through the United Nations", 26 January 1948, Statements and Speeches, 48/2.

The Department of External Affairs had its own ideas about the composition of the preparatory committee. "It seems to us," Pearson suggested to Wrong, "that a committee of fourteen might be appropriate, there being precedents for this number in the Executive Committee... [of the] Preparatory Commission." Membership should include the United States, France, the Soviet Union and possibly China but exclude Arab States and representatives from Jewish organizations. The United Kingdom might also participate in an advisory capacity.¹ The involvement of these five powers in the preparation of the committee's report would, in Pearson's view, give the report more weight in the Assembly than a report from which the views of the members of the Security Council had been excluded.²

A few hours after Wrong's account of his conversations with Dean Acheson reached the Department of External Affairs, Ignatieff met with MacCallum and Riddell to discuss developments likely to take place at the special session. Ignatieff, too, had seen signs that pressure would be applied to force Canadian appointment to the preparatory committee. It also seemed likely that Pearson would be asked to serve on the General Committee, either through election as chairman of one of

1. L.B. Pearson to H.H. Wrong, 1010, 18 April 1947, 47B(s).

2. L.B. Pearson, "Memorandum for Mr. St. Laurent", 19 April 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

the main committees or as a vice-president.¹ Canvassing for the appointments would, as usual, be done before the actual voting in the Assembly.²

Thus the composition of the preparatory committee had suddenly become a matter of direct importance to Canada, and to the Department of External Affairs. Hume Wrong, as we have seen, believed that the American plan was a sound one, but he preferred what he termed an "elaboration" of the scheme which would avoid the necessity of member nations having governmental representatives on the committee. Wrong proposed that the committee be made up of outstanding men and women of international reputation.³ The Canadian Ambassador told Acheson about his idea, arguing that such a group, drawn from many countries, would be more independent than a committee of government representatives. Acheson was unenthusiastic. The proposal, he felt, might be kept in reserve, to be used only if it was clear that there was a widespread reluctance among UN members to serve on the committee.⁴

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1. Pearson was also considered for the presidency of the special session. In a Foreign Office telegram to the UK delegation in New York, he was described as an admirable choice "if we could get him." Geographical and political considerations weighed heavily, however, and British and American support was given to a Latin American candidate, Oswaldo Aranha. Foreign Office to New York 1167, 24 April 1947, FO 371/67585/UN2649.
 2. E.P. MacCallum, "Memorandum: Likely procedures at special session of the United Nations Assembly", 24 April 1947, 5475-CD-40C.
 3. H.H. Wrong, "Minute", 24 April 1947, WA 15, 5475-CD-40C.
 4. H.H. Wrong to L.B. Pearson, 1245, 23 April 1947, 47B(s).

In Ottawa there was a mixed reaction to Wrong's suggestion. Escott Reid believed that a non-governmental committee would not secure the approval of the Soviet Union.¹ Pearson, however, felt that a committee of world citizens was preferable in several ways to a committee made up of the representatives of small powers. The report of a governmental committee, he pointed out, might not command as much respect or attention, and it was unlikely that it could work as effectively because of the necessity of transmitting information and instructions back and forth across the world.²

The real question remained: should Canada accept nomination to a preparatory committee made up of representatives of small neutral powers. In her notes of a meeting with Ignatieff and Riddell, Elizabeth MacCallum commented:

No member, except the Arab States, is likely to desire representation on the Preparatory Committee. It is, however, a duty which cannot and ought not to be evaded. The situation in Palestine has reached a deadlock and without United States intervention there seems no way of settling the issues without continued resort to force. It was agreed that if other Members of the United Nations strongly desire to have Canada serve on the Preparatory Committee this country ought to be prepared to appoint to the Committee a representative possessing outstanding qualifications for the work, preferably someone having a thorough training in history and international law.³

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1. E.P. MacCallum, "Memorandum for file", 25 April 1947, 5475-CD-40C.
 2. Ibid.
 3. E.P. MacCallum, "Memorandum: Likely procedures at special session of United Nations Assembly", 24 April 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

Like Pearson, Riddell was convinced that the permanent members of the Security Council, apart from the United Kingdom, must be represented on the Palestine Committee. "It might prove very difficult," he pointed out, "to secure Great Power assent for any recommendations brought in by a Preparatory Committee on which the United States, U.S.S.R., France, and China were not represented."¹

When the Canadian delegation met on 24 April just before leaving for New York, St. Laurent suggested that Canada might perhaps be eliminated because of her close connection to one of the interested parties, Great Britain. After all, the Arab states would have to be excluded because of their special interest in the question.² When Riddell added that this was yet another reason why the Great Powers should be represented and pointed out that this would make Canada's position on the committee less delicate, Pearson argued that the opposite might be true. If neither the United States nor Great Britain were represented on the committee, the Canadian delegate would be spared an

1. Ibid.

2. A Foreign Office telegram from Washington on 24 April commented on attitudes of the Dominion Governments towards serving on the special committee. The New Zealand and South African delegations were strongly opposed to participating; the Australian delegation had "received instructions to press strongly for Australian representation" and the Canadian delegation would not be instructed until the Prime Minister returned to Ottawa. Washington to Foreign Office, 2445, 24 April 1947, FO 371/37586/UN2718. King, who was visiting the United States, returned to Ottawa on 26 April.

unenviable choice in case of a split vote. Although it could be said that Canada was indirectly involved in the Palestine situation through its membership in the British Commonwealth, "it is quite possible that Canada may be pressed to serve on the committee on the opposite assumption that our connection with the United Kingdom is not considered to be a matter of weight." Canada should stay off the investigating committee if it could, the Under-Secretary concluded. If the issue of Canadian membership was forced, however, it would be difficult to justify a continued refusal to serve.¹

The Canadian delegation also gave preliminary consideration to the terms of reference of the preparatory committee. In a set of guidelines approved by St. Laurent, Pearson suggested that the investigating committee should be empowered to make recommendations to the Second Assembly as well as to organize the relevant factual data. It should also be "instructed to hear any representations which the Palestinian Arabs and the Jewish Agency might wish to make." The committee itself could decide what other interested groups it would hear.²

Ottawa suggested informally to the Secretariat that careful attention be paid to the site of the special session. It would be preferable, the Canadians argued, to conduct the meetings at Lake Success,

1. E.P. MacCallum, "Memorandum for file", 25 April 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

2. L.B. Pearson, "Memorandum for Mr. St. Laurent", 19 April 1947 5475-CD-40C.

New York, "where the atmosphere is favourable to a business session and where apparatus is available for simultaneous translation."

Flushing Meadow, where the public galleries would likely be used to accommodate the many representatives of Jewish organizations in New York, would create a setting which, in MacCallum's view, "might impede the business of the special session because speakers would inevitably address themselves to the gallery and it would prove harder for delegates, in the interest of reasonable compromise, to 'retreat from positions once taken.'" ¹ The Secretariat, however, had already ruled in favour of Flushing Meadow, precisely "in order to give adequate opportunity for attendance of the press and of the public, specially in view of interest of the Jewish community in the New York area."²

Interest was indeed great. Some 20,000 requests for seats were received but had to be refused. Only twenty-five places had been set aside for the general public, the vast majority being reserved for delegations, interested organizations and the press. As Abba Eban of the Jewish Agency, remarked in his autobiography, there was great interest in the UN in the post-war world: "The United Nations seemed to matter very much to the world in those days. It was still regarded as the central arena in which the destiny of mankind would be determined. A vast press corps, strengthened by radio and television teams, followed all its committees. Many of the

1. E.P. MacCallum, "Note for Mr. Pearson", 21 April 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

2. George Ignatieff to SSEA, 464, 17 April 1947, 47B(s).

utterances made from its rostrum were reported verbatim or at length in the New York Times and the Herald Tribune."¹ The Palestine issue had become a great public question -- in the United States, in the Middle East, and elsewhere -- and it was clear that public opinion and lobbies would play an important role. The problems which had come before the United Nations would not be resolved with reference to governments alone.

1. Abba Eban, An Autobiography (New York, 1977), 90.

THE SPECIAL SESSION28 April - 15 May, 1947

The Special Session on Palestine opened on the morning of 28 April with a minimum of fanfare and amid a general realization that it had been called to deal with an extremely contentious, complex problem. On the first day the atmosphere was businesslike: many of the representatives were permanent delegates in New York, familiar with UN proceedings and well-known to one another. Work went quickly and smoothly, being confined to organizational matters. "Palestine" was hardly mentioned. One agenda item was of great importance to Canada. As George Ignatieff had predicted during his visit to Ottawa, Pearson was nominated and elected unanimously as chairman of the crucial First Committee, which dealt with political and security matters.¹

The Assembly moved the next day to take up three important points of procedure: the provisional agenda (the United Kingdom request); the supplementary list which consisted of the proposal submitted by Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Syria that the mandate over Palestine be terminated and the area be granted its independence; and the question of Jewish Agency participation in plenary sessions.

1. See United Nations, Official Records of the First Special Session of the General Assembly (UNGA Records), volume 1, Plenary Meetings of the General Assembly, Verbatim Record, II.

Debate on the agenda took place in the General Committee, and in the General Assembly from 29 April to 1 May.¹ Consistent with decisions taken in Ottawa, the Canadian delegate voted against the Arab motion to discuss the substance of the Palestine problem in the Assembly. Pearson carefully explained that Canada was not bowing to outside influences. The delegation was convinced that the crucial question of independence and the termination of the mandate could be more fruitfully considered at the fall session when the report of the special committee would be presented.² The majority seemed to agree. The Arab motion was voted down, 15 in favour (including the Soviet bloc), 24 against and 10 abstentions.³

Canada, the United States and most of the other members approved the United Kingdom proposal for the establishment of a special committee of inquiry which would prepare recommendations on the future of the mandate for the next regular session of the Assembly. Despite any reservations he might have had about the UN's ability to resolve such a difficult situation, Pearson supported the British request. As he told a meeting of the General Committee:

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1. The General Committee was composed of the President of the General Assembly, the seven Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly and the six chairmen of the Main Committees. Its function was to consider the Provisional Agenda, the Supplementary List and applications for the inclusion of additional items on the agenda. It assisted the President in drawing up the agenda for each plenary meeting, in determining the priority of items and in co-ordinating the proceedings of all committees.
 2. UNGA Record, II, General Committee, Verbatim Records, 25-27.
 3. UNGA Record, I, 59-60.

First, it provided a way for seizing the United Nations of a problem, the solution of which seems to have defied the best and most sincere efforts made in the past over many years by one State, or by two, three or four States working together. We thought -- I hope not optimistically -- that in putting this problem before the United Nations a solution might be found possibly with less difficulty than had been encountered in the past. That seemed to us to be very important. Secondly, the proposal made by the United Kingdom in order to achieve the end desired seemed a very practical one.¹

One procedural matter remained: the Jewish Agency's request to be granted a hearing in the General Assembly.² Before leaving for New York, the Canadian delegation had considered the issue and decided that it would be more appropriate for the Jewish Agency to put its case before the First Committee rather than the General Assembly, particularly if the main debate on the Palestine problem could be deferred until the fall session.³

1. UNGA Record, II, 25-27

2. Under Article 4 of the mandate, the Jewish Agency was the only public body recognized as having the right to advise and co-operate with the Administration in such economic, social and other matters as might affect the establishment of the Jewish National Home. In practice, as the Anglo-American Committee noted, the Agency's influence was far more pervasive: "The Jews have developed, under the aegis of the Jewish Agency and [its executive] the Vaad Leumi, a strong and tightly-woven community. There thus exists a virtual Jewish non-territorial State with its own executive and legislative organs, parallel in many respects to the Mandatory Administration, and serving as the concrete symbol of the Jewish National Home. This Jewish shadow Government has ceased to co-operate with the Administration in the maintenance of law and order, and in the suppression of terrorism." Anglo-American Committee, Report, 54.

3. E.P. MacCallum, "Memorandum for file", 25 April 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

On 2 May, the General Committee met to consider communications from several Jewish organizations, including the Jewish Agency for Palestine. The Soviet bloc advocated a full hearing for the Agency.¹ The attitude of the Soviet countries, noted Pearson, "was consistent with their support given previously to the Arab States for a full discussion at this Special Session of the substance of the Palestine question. It was no doubt also influenced by the desire to establish a precedent for the participation of selected non-Governmental organizations in the Assembly."² Pearson argued that granting an Assembly hearing to a non-governmental organization would be outside the session's terms of reference and would set a precedent "which might rise to plague us in the future."³ "If we were to be involved in the substance of the question," Pearson warned, "the report of the Special Committee might have to be postponed until the third regular session of 1948."⁴ There was no time to spare if the investigating committee was to meet its September deadline. Canada accordingly voted against the Soviet motion,

1. The resolution was tabled by Poland, amended by Czechoslovakia and supported by the USSR. Pearson to SSEA, 521, 3 May 1947, King Papers, PAC, MG 26 J1, vol 428.

2. UNGA Record, II, 118-120.

3. Ibid.

4. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 521, 3 May 1947, King Papers, PAC, MG 26 J1, vol 428.

which was overwhelmingly defeated. An American resolution calling for the question of communications from organizations to be referred to the First Committee was then tabled and approved with British and Canadian support.¹

The First Committee was thus assigned the central task of drafting the terms of reference and determining the constitution of the Special Committee on Palestine for the consideration of the General Assembly. The Committee was also asked to approve the Jewish Agency's request for a hearing. "Other communications of a similar character" were to be judged on their merits.²

Pearson indicated his view in a despatch to Ottawa: "I understand informally from the United States delegation that they intend tabling a resolution at the outset, proposing that the Jewish Agency be admitted to state its views on... constituting and instruction of the special committee. I intend giving this proposal my support. At the same time communications from other Jewish organizations and also possibly the Arab Higher Committee might be referred to a Special sub-committee to consider and report."³

The first meeting of the Committee opened on 6 May with an address from the Chairman. Pearson characteristically stressed the

1. Ibid.

2. UNGA Record, III, Main Committees, Verbatim Records, 2-3.

3. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 524, 5 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

necessity for speedy and effective action. "Not only does the situation in Palestine demand it, but the prestige and the reputation of the United Nations itself demand it. This is the first time a problem of this magnitude and complexity has ever been submitted by the General Assembly to one of its Committees. If we do not deal with it quickly and effectively, the reputation and prestige of the United Nations will suffer." To that end, Pearson had arranged for the First Committee's meetings to take place at the more private and well-equipped facilities at Lake Success, where the Canadians had wished to hold the Special Session.¹

One of the "other communications" was a letter of 5 May 1947 from the Arab Higher Committee to the General Assembly requesting a hearing. The request was withdrawn almost immediately, however, in protest against the hearing -- and the legitimacy -- accorded to the Jewish Agency in the General Assembly resolution. The Arab Higher Committee received no mention, despite its claims to speak

1. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 524, 5 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

for the majority of the inhabitants of Palestine.¹ Pearson reported

Apparently the sense of injustice felt by the Arab States had been communicated to those Latin American States that had sponsored the [Assembly] Resolution... and I was faced with a strong feeling expressed by the Latin American delegations that the Arab Higher Committee be invited to a hearing in the First Committee in spite of the withdrawal of its application.... In view of the feeling of some of the Latin American delegations and the Arab States, the debate had become both heated and confused when I adjourned the discussion at lunchtime. During the recess I had a talk with Senator Warren Austin, the American Ambassador at the UN and José Arce, the Argentinian delegate, with the result that when the Committee resumed its discussion a composite Resolution was available as a basis of discussion.²

This resolution, granting a hearing to the Jewish Agency and to the Arab Higher Committee, was adopted late the same day. Pearson was not sure, however, whether his "lunchtime diplomacy" had had the desired effect; although the Arab spokesmen on the Committee were appreciative that the appearance of discrimination had been removed, "they wished that this action had been taken by the General Assembly rather than in Committee

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1. Representatives of the Arab Higher Committee who came to the session had no special status under the mandate (and were in fact referred to as "non-Zionist elements"). They had, however, the active support of certain Arab nationalist groups and the silent acquiescence of the others. In 1936 a coalition of Arab parties within Palestine appointed an executive, called the "Arab Higher Committee", which undertook to lead the resistance of Palestinian Arabs to the mandate and the Jewish National Home. Arab political parties had not been consulted regarding the Committee's composition since 1945, the members carrying on by virtue of their appointment nine years before, a fact which aroused a certain amount of discontent within Palestine Arab circles. For the period of the special session, however, Arab ranks had closed.
 2. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 538, 7 May 1947, ~~1947~~ Papers, PAC, MG 26 J1, vol 428.

in order to remove the unfavourable impression left by the Resolution previously adopted in plenary meeting." "I still do not know," Pearson concluded, "whether the Arab Higher Committee will respond to the message informing it that the First Committee had decided to grant a hearing. I hope that as a result of today's decision... a less tense atmosphere will prevail."¹

Further conciliatory action was soon required. It appeared likely that the Arabs would boycott the Special Session unless the Assembly gave recognition to the Arab Higher Committee as representative of the Arab population of Palestine.² The Indian delegate moved that the President of the Assembly be asked to call a plenary meeting to pass a resolution granting a hearing to the Arab Higher Committee. Those who supported the proposal, wrote Pearson, "were moved by the desire that every effort should be made to bring all parties directly concerned in the Palestine problem together at the outset under the auspices of the United Nations."³ The Indian motion carried, the Assembly convened, and the resolution passed.

The First Committee duly heard the Jewish Agency and the Arab Higher Committee on the questions of the composition and scope of the investigating committee. At the Chairman's invitation, a spokesman for the Jewish Agency, Rabbi Silver, opened the proceedings on 8 May. Pearson was impressed: "His statement... is a model of temperance

1. Ibid.

2. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 547, 9 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C. See also UNGA Record, III, 8.

3. UNGA Record III, 77-78 and UNGA Record I, 115-122.

and objective argument." Silver argued that the enquiry should provide for the continuance of the Jewish National Home and that the Committee's objectives should "include (a) the consideration of an international home, (b) consideration of the potentialities of a country to receive further immigration, (c) consideration of the Problem of displaced persons in Europe in connection with immigration to Palestine, (d) as an interim measure, immediate relaxation on the immigration ban by the mandatory."¹

Late the following afternoon, a representative of the Arab Higher Committee, Henry Cattán, appeared before the Committee. Cattán stated that the terms of reference of the Palestine Committee should include an examination of British pledges to Arab states before 1917, and indeed the legality of the mandate itself. The Arabs, unlike the Zionists, "were not claiming their country on the strength of pledges made to them by foreign powers since it belonged to them and they were entitled to independence as their natural and inalienable right." As for the Zionist contention that Jewish immigration into Palestine was justified because the Jews could develop the area better than its Arab inhabitants, such reasoning would justify any aggression by advanced nations against those less advanced. Finally, Cattán said that the

1. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 549, 9 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

problem of the refugees and displaced persons was the general responsibility of all UN members and should not be thrust onto a single tiny state. Pearson was pleased that on the whole the argument was phrased in moderate terms.¹ He undoubtedly reacted less favourably to subsequent Arab spokesmen who lapsed into anti-Zionist diatribes and stressed again and again that the only just solution was a unitary Arab state. Any other proposal, they said, would have to be enforced against the will of the Palestinian Arabs and their neighbouring states.

The First Committee opened debate on the composition of the Special Committee on 8 May. At issue was the inclusion of the Great Powers. The American representative argued that differences between the Big Five would inevitably intrude into the Committee's work and delay proceedings. It would therefore be better for the Great Powers to reserve judgment until an impartial committee had reported. Andrei Gromyko, for the Soviet Union, pointed out that the United Nations had accepted responsibility for the solution of the Palestine problem, and it was natural for the five permanent members to assume the main burden from the beginning. It was unreasonable, he added, to exclude the Big Powers; their claim to membership should be no less than any other member of the United Nations. Participation of the five permanent members, moreover, would increase the chances of agreement on the Palestine problem at the regular session.

1. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 555, 12 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

Lined up with the United States against Great Power participation were the United Kingdom, China, Ecuador, Bolivia, Venezuela, Haiti, Brazil, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Australia, Costa Rica, India, Cuba and South Africa; those in favour were the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Poland, Argentina, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic. In view of the evident lack of agreement, Pearson proposed that the First Committee turn its attention to the drafting of terms of reference.¹ A sub-committee was set up, also under his chairmanship, to draft these terms or, if agreement proved impossible, to propose alternative texts.

Debate in the sub-committee focussed on two issues. The USSR, with Arab backing, sought to include among the proposals to be submitted by the Special Committee a recommendation that Palestine be immediately transformed into a unitary Arab state. There was also a move initiated by the Polish delegation to have the Special Committee visit the displaced person camps in Europe and the detention camps for illegal Jewish immigrants set up by the British in Cyprus.² The First Committee's final discussion of the terms of reference drawn up by the sub-committee took place on 12 and 13 May. The Jewish Agency delivered its final arguments and was followed by the Arab Higher Committee; which again insisted, as it had throughout, that the problem of the homeless European Jews be divorced from that of the future of Palestine, and that the

1. Ibid.

2. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 556, 12 May 1947, King Papers, PAC, MG 26 J1, vol 428.

investigating committee confine itself to the latter question. When the sub-committee's report was then submitted to a vote, the Russian motion was defeated; the amended Polish resolution was accepted. The next day the remaining terms of reference were approved.¹

The investigating committee was given a wide discretion. Its terms of reference encompassed "all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine," except for the question of independence. The committee of investigation was authorized to visit Palestine and other places as it saw fit -- including, if it wished, the displaced persons camps in Europe. Attention was also to be given to the safeguarding of religious interests in Palestine.² The Jewish Agency had won the day on each point, partly through persuasive argument but also because of the poor showing by the Arabs. "The tactics of the Arab delegations during the special session were exceedingly inept," reported a member of the British delegation. "It was their insistence on entering into the substance of the problem, thus using the Assembly as a sounding-board for the Arab case, which made it impossible to resist the Jewish Agency's application for a formal hearing. The same privilege had then to be granted to the Arab Higher Committee, whose unwise use of it caused a further setback to the Arab cause."³

1. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 14 May 1947, King Papers, PAC; MG 26 J1, vol 428.

2. See L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 576, 14 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

3. Sir A. Cadogan to SSEA, "Palestine, Report on the Special Session of the United Nations Assembly", 7 June 1947, FO 371/61780/E5047.

Unquestionably the most difficult question now confronting the Department of External Affairs was the composition of the Palestine Committee, and the question of possible Canadian participation. Canadian reluctance to serve on the Committee, as outlined at the delegation's last meetings in Ottawa on 23 and 24 April, was more than matched by the State Department's eagerness to nominate Canada for membership. In a memorandum of 17 April from the Secretary of State to President Truman, two schemes favoured by the State Department were described.¹ The first was a "small committee of comparatively disinterested states excluding the Big Five and the Arab States" -- disinterested states, that is, such as Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Norway and Siam. The second State Department plan envisaged a committee of eleven: the Big Five as well as six neutral states -- Canada, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Mexico and Siam. Clearly, however, the United States favoured the first plan; indeed, this was President Truman's own preference. The British Ambassador observed that the "United States delegation committed themselves at an early stage to the exclusion of the permanent members of the Security Council. Shortly afterwards they began to canvass support for a list of seven States -- Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Peru, Uruguay and Persia."²

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1. This memorandum was drafted by Dean Rusk, then Director of the Office of Special Political Affairs in the State Department. See FRUS, 1947, V, 1070-1072.
 2. Sir A. Cadogan to SSFA, "Palestine, Report on the Special Session of the United Nations Assembly", 7 June 1947, FO 371/61780/E5047.

The Canadians received their first definite indication of American intentions on May 1. That afternoon Pearson notified External Affairs that the Americans had told him informally that they planned to nominate Canada to the Palestine Committee along with nine other neutral states. In his message to Ottawa, Pearson emphasized that Canada was by no means committed. A last minute change in the list seemed likely; Australia was "most anxious" to serve. When talking the matter over with the American delegation, Pearson objected to the scheme on two grounds: that the committee was too large and that it contained too many representatives from similar groupings of states (for example, two countries from the Commonwealth). "In discussing this objection", Pearson stated, "the United States delegation have said that they would like to have Canada on the Committee even if the composition is adjusted to meet these objections. The United States delegation have indicated most informally that they would prefer to have Canada rather than Australia on the Committee; in effect they intimated that they are anxious to nominate Canada whether the Committee be large or small." Pearson asked for Ottawa's views "as soon as possible. I think you will agree that if it is felt that it is better that we should not serve on the Committee, it would be advisable to let it be known informally that we prefer not to be nominated before proposals are made for the composition of the Committee and to try to have Australia substituted for ourselves as a Commonwealth representative."¹

1. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 514, 1 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C. -

It was obviously going to be difficult to say "no". But "no" it was. On the Minister's instructions, Riddell telephoned Pearson on 3 May, repeating that it would be preferable to avoid appointment to the committee "if it were possible decently and honourably to do." Should Canada accept membership, "we should have it clearly understood both with United Kingdom and United States that we would appoint a prominent Canadian whom we would expect to act in an independent capacity. In other words we would not endeavour either to direct or instruct any Canadian who sat on this Committee."¹ Pearson replied that the question of membership would not come up for two or three days. Later the same day, Riddell explained the Department's tactics to Hume Wrong: "By establishing the principle that the Canadian representative on the Committee was acting in an independent capacity, we would relieve the Government of pressure directed towards influencing Canadian policy."² North American pro-Zionist groups had stepped up their lobbying activities in a well-organized campaign which flooded Canadian Government offices in Ottawa, Washington and New York with information pamphlets, letters and telegrams in support of the Zionist cause.

Shortly thereafter the U.S. delegation showed Pearson the draft resolution which it planned to put forward. The Americans were now thinking of a smaller committee of seven. They still advocated a neutral committee, and they still wanted Canada as a member. "As agreed," Pearson said, "I have not asked for the withdrawal of Canada as

1. R.G. Riddell, "Memorandum to Mr. Reid", 3 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

2. R.G. Riddell to H.H. Wrong, 1172, 3 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

a United States nomination. However if Australia is nominated, as is likely to happen, we might consider withdrawal of our nomination at an appropriate moment."¹

On 6 May Riddell and Pearson again discussed the question of the American nomination over the telephone. They concluded that two reasons might be put forward for a Canadian withdrawal from the American list. First of all, Canada would prefer not to serve on a committee composed exclusively of middle and small powers; secondly, the delegation had already played a considerable part in the Palestine question at the Special Session. Other UN members should shoulder responsibility too. Riddell and Pearson admitted, however, that should there be "an insistent demand for Canada to accept membership it might be necessary to do so."²

Canadian reluctance to serve on the Palestine Committee was again in evidence in a message from St. Laurent to Pearson on 7 May. The Minister commented that "while we did not wish to shirk responsibility for things which had to be done, it should nevertheless be more convenient for us if we were left off the Special Committee. If the Great Powers were members of the committee, the responsibility would not then be quite so heavy. In any case, however, it would be a considerable strain on the Department. That said, St. Laurent concluded that he was "quite prepared to accept your [Pearson's] judgment formed in the light of the situation."³

The State Department was not so easy to convince. Pearson recalled that throughout the Special Session, the United States delegation was

1. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 524, 5 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

2. R.G. Riddell to L.B. Pearson, 443, 7 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

3. Ibid.

"seriously concerned" by the Canadian threat to withdraw from the American list of nominees to the Special Committee. "They kept pressing me to reconsider this position and at one point [Senator Warren] Austin [head of the American delegation to the UN] had me to lunch for the specific purpose of asking me not to withdraw our name from the list, I told him that my instructions were quite clear and said that if he felt strongly about it he should get in touch with Mr. St. Laurent in Ottawa."¹

Austin wasted little time. That afternoon Julius Harrington of the U.S. Embassy staff in Ottawa called on the Secretary of State for External Affairs to ask him to reconsider the Canadian decision. Harrington said that Ambassador Austin was "very anxious" to have Canada's support. St. Laurent was firm: "we had already played a useful role through the activities of our representative at the special session, ...it would be difficult for Canada, if it were a member, to convince the other nations that it was not merely acting as a spokesman for the United Kingdom and the United States.... If however, it were inevitable for Canada to accept membership on this Committee we would appoint a prominent Canadian whom we would expect to act in an independent capacity."²

Harrington's account of his conversation with St. Laurent was relayed to the American delegation in New York through the State Department. St. Laurent's account of the conversation was sent directly to Pearson. But confusion set in. The Americans in New York now believed that Harrington's mission had been successful. "I was somewhat surprised," Pearson later recounted, "to be told by the United States delegation in New York that, as a result of Harrington's conversation in Ottawa, everything had been arranged and my instructions were to be changed."³ A breakdown in communications had obviously taken place in Washington or New York. "Harrington was at a loss to know," Riddell

1. L.B. Pearson to H.H. Wrong, letter, 26 May 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

reported, "what happened to his report of his conversation with Mr. St. Laurent after it had reached Washington. At one time he said with some emphasis, 'I was doublecrossed.'"¹ Pearson commented that "The matter was, perhaps not one of great importance, since it was not possible for us to withdraw from the delegation in any case. It is a little surprising, however that it should have been possible for the report of a conversation to be distorted so completely."² A British commentary on the Special Session mentions but fails to clarify the incident: "Ottawa actually instructed the Canadian delegate not to accept nomination to the Committee of Investigation. This 'refusal to serve' was reversed by Mr. Mackenzie King only upon receipt of a special message from the United States Government, which did not wish to see Australia elected in Canada's place."³ Unfortunately this version of events is unsubstantiated. There is no reference to any American approach to the Prime Minister in his voluminous diaries, his personal papers or in Department of External Affairs files. Mackenzie King, ever sensitive to British and American attempts to press Canada into international commitments, would surely have viewed such an approach from Washington worthy of note. It seems likely therefore that, as the External Affairs files indicate, it

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1. R.G. Riddell, "Note for Mr. Beaudry", 9 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C, and L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 549, 9 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.
 2. L.B. Pearson to H.H. Wrong, 26 May 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.
 3. R.H. Hadow, "United Nations Palestine Assembly: Latin America", 17 May 1947, FO 371/67587/UN 3164.

was St. Laurent, not King who was involved. The British account then goes on, in a somewhat self-contradictory fashion, to point out that in the event, circumstances did not favour a refusal to serve: "once Canada had publicly been put forward by name in the United States list, Mr. Pearson found it difficult to withdraw in favour of Australia, as he wished."¹

The First Committee's final consideration of the composition of the Palestine Committee took place on 13 and 14 May. Discussion centred on two main questions: the size of the inquiry committee and whether the Big Five should be members. Four draft resolutions were tabled: the USSR proposed that the Special Committee be made up of the five members of the Security Council; the Polish representative suggested a committee of eleven -- the Big Five plus six UN members selected on a geographical basis; Australia recommended an eleven member committee which would not include the states on the Security Council; the United States called for a seven member committee of "neutrals."

Pearson wanted to vote first on the USSR resolution, then the Australian amendment, the Polish resolution and finally the United States proposal. Gromyko, however, "insisted that his main proposal be voted on first, then an alternative proposal which he put forward to the effect that 'the composition of the Special Committee be based on the same principle of the Security Council', then the Polish Resolution, then the Australian Resolution and finally the United States Resolution -- providing, of course, that none had been accepted prior to reaching the ~

1. Ibid. Such confusion was not uncommon. See DCER, XII, xxiii.

United States Resolution."¹ There was no opposition to Gromyko's plan. The vote progressed as he had suggested. Both of the Soviet proposals were defeated as was the Polish draft. The Australian proposal was then put to a vote and approved thirteen in favour, eleven against and with twenty-nine abstentions. The American representative supported the Australian motion, thereby defeating his own plan. "When the vote was taken on the Australian proposal," commented one surprised British observer, "we stood by our agreement with the United States and voted against it. Senator Austin, however, voted in favour, with the curious result that, since the Australian motion was carried by thirteen votes to eleven and would have been lost if the American vote had been cast the other way, he prevented the Assembly from considering his own proposal."²

1. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 579, 15 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

2. Austin had told the British representative shortly before the vote that "he intended to stand by his own resolution and oppose any alteration of it." One possible explanation of his change of mind was that he "had not really understood the position and that, in his anxiety lest the United States might find themselves forced to accept membership on the Palestine committee he had been willing to accept the Australian resolution in toto rather than risk the failure of his own resolution." Another, more likely, explanation was that the neutral committee of eleven was a Soviet-American compromise in which the USSR agreed to a neutral committee; the US agreed to several Soviet additions to the committee's membership - Guatemala, Yugoslavia and India. See United Kingdom Delegation to the United Nations to the Foreign Office, letter, 3 June 1947, FO 371/67587/UN3246, and R.H. Hadow "United Nations Palestine Assembly: Latin America", 17 May 1947, FO 371/67587/UN 3164.

With the acceptance of the Australian resolution the only remaining question was to decide on the eleven members which would make up the Committee. Pearson, thinking perhaps of a discreet Canadian withdrawal from the U.S. list, suggested establishing a sub-committee to draw up a slate and report back to the First Committee, but this idea was not acted upon. The United States delegate argued successfully that his original proposal naming seven states should be used as the basis of the Committee's membership. Chile advocated that Guatemala and Yugoslavia fill two of the remaining four seats; Australia and India were then also selected. Finally the composition as a whole was approved: 39 in favour, 3 against and 10 abstentions. The "appropriate moment" for refusing nomination had never come. Canada found itself on the Palestine Committee.¹

Pearson explained to Ottawa that withdrawal had been impossible: "In the discussion on the composition of the Committee there was no suitable opportunity for me to deal with our nomination in the United States proposal. The discussion was at times confused. In my opinion to have withdrawn our candidature at this moment might have been misinterpreted and have had an adverse effect on the discussion. For this reason I did not intervene."²

1. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 579, 15 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

2. Ibid.

The United States had succeeded in having its list of seven nominees appointed to the Palestine inquiry. From the British point of view, however, the price was high:

United States of America 'surrender without consulting us to Soviet insistence upon enlarging Committee of investigation, has added Yugoslavia, Guatemala, India and Australia to original seven on United States list. Except for Australia all these additions were Gromyko's favoured candidates. Their election was adroitly rushed through in full committee to fill the vacuum created by Australian insistence upon a committee of eleven; without any apparent thought on the part of Australia as to who, other than Australia, was to be added to the previously well balanced list.

The British were also critical of American tactics at the Special Session: "Although the list was well-chosen and to some extent canvassed behind the scenes before the event, this method of forcing favoured candidates upon a thus stymied Assembly aroused a good deal of backstair resentment among some Latin American delegates, who felt themselves 'trapped' but could not refuse to vote by open show of hands for their colleagues.... The result of these United States manoeuvres was, unfortunately, to 'railroad' through the Assembly two countries which are unlikely to contribute to the solution to the problem."² In the future, concluded the British delegation, there would have to be "long-term advance planning in order to forestall 'rush' tactics by which the ordered election of candidates can be rendered impossible." There was also a "necessity of clearing with the Dominion Governments what they favour and

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1. U.K. Delegation to United Nations to Foreign Office, letter, 3 June 1947, FO 371/67587/UN3246.
 2. R.H. Hadow, "United Nations Palestine Assembly: Latin America", 17 May 1947, FO 371/67587/UN3164.

what instructions they are sending their delegation; so as, if possible, to co-ordinate our common policy in sufficient time to forestall 'railroading'." ¹

The outcome of the session was favourably received in most quarters. The United States and the Soviet Union appeared to be "reasonably satisfied," while the Jews seemed to be "very pleased," reported a member of the British delegation. ² The Zionist reaction was partly based on a statement made by the Soviet representative on 14 May. Gromyko had surprised everyone by announcing that although a bi-national Palestinian state was the solution most deserving of attention, "it might be found that this plan was impracticable in the face of Arab-Jewish hostility. Partition into an Arab State and a Jewish State might be necessary." ³

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1. A. Cadogan, "Palestine: Report on the Special Session of the United Nations Assembly", 7 June 1947, FO 371/61780/E5047. Australia's actions at the Special Session, for example, were "far from helpful." Despite a warning from the British delegation that the election of an additional four candidates "might have unpleasant consequences for us", Australia's eagerness to be a member of the Palestine Committee was undiminished, with unfortunate results for the mother country: "However agreeable it may be for us to have Australia as well as Canada on the Palestine Committee," wrote a U.K. delegate, "no one could think that this could make up for the distaste with which we must regard the addition of Guatemala and Yugoslavia (and also, though I suppose we had better not say so, our misgivings about the inclusion of India)." United Kingdom Delegation to United Nations to Foreign Office, 3 June 1947, FO 371/67587/UN 3246.
 2. A. Cadogan, "Palestine: Report on the Special Session of the United Nations Assembly", 7 June 1947, FO 371/61780/E5047.
 3. L.B. Pearson to SSEA, 583, 15 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

Abba Eban described the Soviet statement as a "windfall":

"At one stroke we had to revise all our predictions about the possible outcome of a United Nations discussion. If we could obtain American consent to the partition idea, we would be celebrating the first American-Soviet agreement of the post-war era. Since partition had, after all, been a British invention, it did not seem hopeless to imagine the United Kingdom co-operating in a policy with which two Great Powers were willing to be associated. For the first time in many months the political darkness was lit up by a pale gleam of hope. It was no longer necessary to be romantic in order to foresee a Zionist success."¹ The Arabs were understandably "despondent" about the results of the UN session, and there was already talk among the delegates of advising their Governments to boycott the Palestine Committee.²

"It was an interesting and instructive Assembly;" reported a British delegate, "out of which Mike Pearson came out top, in my humble estimation."³ A statement by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the House of Commons suggested a similar 'estimation': "I do not think that in the opinion of the world there has been a man who has handled

1. Eban, An Autobiography, 76.

2. P. Garrahan to Sir Orme Sargent, "Palestine and the United Nations Special Assembly", 23 May 1947, FO 371/61777/E4051.

3. R.H. Hadow to P. Gore-Booth, letter, 17 May 1947, FO 371/67587/UN3164. Hadow added that Pearson "might be acceptable to the Latins as Chairman of the September Assembly, if he can serve."

himself better in these international meetings than did the head of our Canadian delegation at Lake Success in May last."¹ The United Nations was an ideal forum for Pearson's talents as negotiator and conciliator. A resolution of the Palestine problem would tax all those skills.

1. Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 4 July 1947, VI, 5078-5079.

MR. JUSTICE RAND AND UNSCOPMay-August, 1947

On 15 May, Canadian membership on the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) was confirmed in the General Assembly. The Governments concerned were called upon "to appoint persons of high moral character and of recognized competence in international affairs."¹ St. Laurent contacted the Prime Minister's Office early the next day to arrange an appointment with Mackenzie King to discuss the selection of UNSCOP's Canadian delegate. He reiterated that "the representative should be regarded as acting in a judicial capacity and not subject to direction from the Government." The Department's list of suitable candidates was impressive: a Supreme Court Judge, two provincial Chief Justices, two Senators, an Ambassador and a University Chancellor.² The selection was regarded in the Department as a matter of some urgency because the Palestine Committee was soon to begin discussion in New York.

King and St. Laurent discussed the appointment on the 16th and again on 19 May. The Prime Minister noted in his diary that St. Laurent had suggested Mr. Justice Ivan Rand of the Supreme Court of Canada and other names. "I said that Rand was easily the best and I felt the case was so important to the world and to the future success of the United

1. United Nations Secretary-General to SSEA, 15 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

2. J.W.P. Pickersgill, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister", 16 May 1947, King Papers, PAC, MG 26 J4, vol 310.

Nations that we should give the best possible person we could. He said the Chief Justice was prepared to let Rand come, and Rand, while not anxious to come, and sorry to miss this summer in Canada, would come if the gov't wished him to do so.... It is important, I think, we get someone of outstanding ability and position."¹ On Thursday, 22 May, Cabinet approval was given to Rand and to his alternate, Léon Mayrand, a foreign service officer, to represent Canada on the Palestine Committee.² Public announcement of the appointment came later the same day in the House of Commons.

Norman Robertson, then Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, commented in 1943 that Rand was a man "of whom all men speak well."³ He was known as the successful arbitrator of a difficult and drawn-out industrial dispute in Windsor, Ontario, in 1946 -- an experience, and an expertise, which undoubtedly recommended itself to Mackenzie King. Elizabeth MacCallum recalls that Rand began with a Zionist bias.⁴ He was an admirer of the eminent American jurist and Zionist leader, Louis Brandeis,⁵ but Rand was not connected with any pro-Zionist groups. William Hull, a Canadian clergyman who met Rand in Jerusalem two months later, found it "difficult to assess his feelings either for

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1. King Diary, May 19 1947, PAC, MG 26 J13.
 2. Minute, "United Nations Palestine Committee, Canadian Representation", 22 May 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.
 3. Robertson was suggesting that a review of External Affairs' present establishment and post-war requirements be undertaken by "an outside authority who would be able to see the wood through the trees.... The problem is important and difficult and requires a good deal of study and concentration." He recommended Rand for the job. N. Robertson to W.L. Mackenzie King, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister", 29 May 1943, King Papers, PAC, MG 26 J4, vol 250.
 4. Interview with E.P. MacCallum.
 5. See I.C. Rand, "Louis D. Brandeis", The Canadian Bar Review, XXV (1947).

or against the Jews. As a matter of fact in the beginning of the inquiry he probably had no feelings either way, for like many other committee members, both of this and other inquiry groups, he was more or less ignorant of the various factors involved and he had no political axe to grind."¹

While Rand made final preparations for his arrival in New York on 2 June, Mayrand was sent ahead to New York on 26 May to attend UNSCOP's opening sessions. The Committee's preliminary discussions focussed on questions of organization and rules of procedure, and it was decided that both the Jewish Agency and the Arab Higher Committee should be invited to attach "liaison officers" to UNSCOP. The Zionist leadership selected Aubrey [Abba] Eban and David Horowitz. In his autobiography Eban described their role: "Between tours, conversation and hearings, the liaison officers were required to fill the minds of Committee members with some ideas on a future solution.... the Palestinian Arabs contemptuously refused to nominate their liaison officers. We benefited greatly from Arab errors in those day [sic]"²

While in New York, Mayrand began to familiarize himself with the complicated issues and with the "voluminous documents" which the

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1. William L. Hull, The Fall and Rise of Israel (Grand Rapids, 1954) 268.
 2. Abba Eban, An Autobiography (New York, 1977), 76,78.

delegates and alternates were receiving from the UN Secretariat, the Jewish Agency and the Arabs. "I am beginning to find the problem quite fascinating," he wrote to Riddell, "and feel more and more grateful to the Department for having sent me on this mission."¹

During the ten-day interval between his appointment and his departure for New York, Rand also concentrated on improving his understanding of the situation in Palestine. Various aspects of the problem were discussed with members of the Department, and reading material was accumulated for future reference. External Affairs, however, issued no instructions to the Canadian delegate and took care to ensure that he was left free to exercise his own judgment on the questions under consideration.

The first and only direct communication from Rand to the Department was in the form of a brief letter to St. Laurent on 8 June. The past week, he wrote, had been spent "on unimportant procedures." Arrival in Palestine was scheduled for 11 June: "Everybody realizes the urgency and the need for expedition and I don't think there will be any waste of time. We may be a month in Palestine and then on to Geneva with possible inspection of D.P. Camps."²

On 1 June the eleven committee members and their alternates, a mixture of professional diplomats and private citizens, boarded an ancient York aircraft flying from New York to Jerusalem.³ Accompanying

1. L. Mayrand to R.G. Biddell, letter, 30 May 1947, 5475-CD-40C.

2. I.C. Rand to L. St. Laurent, letter, 8 June 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

3. The UN contingent was headed by Victor Hoo, Ralph Bunche and Garcia Robles.

them were UN Secretariat representatives, and the two Jewish Agency liaison officers. Eban and Horowitz condescendingly sized up the Committee: "As we analysed the eleven members on whose vote so much would depend, we reached the conclusion that none of the governments had sent first-rank representatives. They were men of competence rather than inspiration.... Not one of them had been involved in any decisions as momentous as that in which he would now have to participate." There was, moreover, "little evidence that any of them had studied Jewish history or the Palestine problem.... It was a strange assortment."¹

UNSCOP's arrival in Palestine was marred almost immediately. On 3 June, the Arab Higher Committee announced in a telegram to the United Nations Secretary-General that the Palestinian Arabs would neither collaborate with nor appear before the investigating committee.² Three days later it organized a general strike in the Arab community to protest UNSCOP's activities.

Another problem arose on 16 June when the Committee received a plea for mercy from the relatives of three condemned Jewish terrorists.³ The delegates quickly found themselves deadlocked over whether they should pressure the Palestine Government to reconsider the death sentences. After several long sessions, a majority, including Justice Rand, approved a communication from the Chairman of the Committee⁴ to the relatives of

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1. Eban, Autobiography, 76-77. Eban incorrectly dated the flight as "early in May."
 2. United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), Report, II, Annex 5, 8-9.
 3. Ibid., Annex 10, 19-20.
 4. Emil Sandstrom of Sweden.

convicted men informing them that "the matter is being brought to the attention of the proper authorities."¹ On 22 June the UN Secretary-General was informed that "the majority of the members of the committee have expressed concern as to the possible unfavourable repercussions" which might follow execution of the sentences. The Secretary-General was asked to forward the committee's opinion to the Mandatory Power with a copy of the letter from the parents of the condemned men.²

According to Donald MacGillivray, a British official assisting the inquiry, it was Rand who had drafted the final version of the communication to the United Nations; if the original draft had gone before the full Committee and been voted on "there would have been no resolution at all."³ The next day UNSCOP received a note from the Chief Secretary of the Palestine Government, H.L.G. Gurney, indicating that the death sentences were still under judicial review, and it was necessary to avoid public comment.⁴ The Mandatory Power was similarly unreceptive, replying on 30 June that it would not interfere with the High Commissioner's discretion.⁵ It was not an auspicious beginning for the Committee's visit.

1. Ibid., Annex 14, 22.

2. Ibid., Annex 13, 22. The vote on this resolution was nine to one (the Australian delegate) with one abstention (the Yugoslav delegate). See FRUS, 1947, V, 1113-1114, and SSDA to SSEA, D652, 28 June 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

3. D.C. MacGillivray to J.M. Martin (Colonial Office), letter, 7 July 1947, FO 371/61782/E6243.

4. UNSCOP Report, II, Annex 15, 23.

5. Ibid., Annex 16, 23-24.

Contact with the Palestinian Arabs was negligible; relations with the British administration were already strained.

While in Jerusalem Rand dined with William Hull, who had been living in the city for a number of years. Their conversation had considerable impact on the jurist:

when, in June of 1947, as a member of UNSCOP, I first set foot in Palestine, [recalled Rand] I was indeed a stranger in a strange land. It was a relief, then, when shortly after my arrival I had the good fortune to meet [William Hull].... I listened to words of high admiration for the Jewish people, their standards of life and the tremendous work they had done since returning to their ancient homeland.

This sympathetic attitude released in me a vague constraint of doubt, uncertainty and puzzlement which, I see now, the limited and one-sided acquaintance I had had to that time with the Palestine situation had generated. The controversy at once appeared unclouded by irrelevancies and shadowy prejudices and became one for decision....

On 19 June UNSCOP began its tour of Palestine. Rand and Mayrand invited Horowitz to join them in the Canadian limousine. "A frank and intimate conversation started from the first moments of the journey", proudly recalled the Jewish liaison officer, "and I gave the distinguished Canadian jurist a broad review of the various facets of our case -- our aspirations, the tragic submergence of our people in the last few years, the perplexities of the current situation, our inability to become reconciled to a minority status after all that had happened in Europe, and the unavoidable cleavage from British policy." Discussion soon turned to the various solutions to the Palestine problem:

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1. Ivan C. Rand, "Foreword", in Hull, The Fall and Rise of Israel.

I sensed [recalled Horowitz] that the idea of Partition was coalescing in his mind as the only means to an objective solution. We went on talking of the historical aspects of the Jewish problem, with which his mind was actively occupied. It was evident that the reservations concerning our movement which he had brought to the country were rapidly disappearing and being replaced by a deep understanding that was inspired by his humanity and human conscience, joined to a vigorous political philosophy of far-sighted perception.¹

That evening, en route back to Jerusalem, Horowitz again turned the conversation to the issue at hand, pointing out in the distance some detention camps where Jewish leaders had been interned by the British: "I... again sensed his swift reaction. It was the crowning impression of an eventful day.... He had listened to my explanations and recital for eleven hours, with short intervals, and had been able to grasp the full scope and significance of our position. These impressions, scenes, ideas, and personal experiences had combined into a vivid picture, and I knew that the sympathy which had been engendered within him was bound to become more pronounced as UNSCOP's work proceeded."² The Jewish Agency officer was clearly pleased with his efforts to influence the Canadian jurist. According to Eban, Rand became Horowitz's "special preoccupation."³

During the next two weeks UNSCOP visited settlements throughout Palestine, but because of the Arab boycott, concentrated on Jewish areas.

1. David Horowitz, 167-168.

2. Ibid.

3. Eban, 83.

When the delegation did venture into Arab regions, the welcome accorded then was in sharp contrast to the warm reception they were given by the Jewish population. For example, in Ramle, an Arab town outside Jaffa, the Committee members were informed that only the mayor of the town would be there to greet them and that he would be unable to accompany them on their tour. The following day, at Tel Aviv, Jewish "crowds clapped and sang for the delegation and pressed round their cars to shake their hands. Hebrew newspapers extolled the individual members...."¹ According to Horowitz, the contrast between Arab and Jewish attitudes to the Committee "did not pass unnoticed."²

In a letter addressed to L.B. Pearson, Mayrand wrote: "Our touring of Palestine ended only on July 3. It was certainly strenuous. Yet, notwithstanding the army of journalists, photographers and other parasites who swelled our caravan, notwithstanding the amazing inefficiency of our administrative officers, we certainly thereby secured a good general picture of the country. We may now hear and read testimony with a sense of objectivity which we did not have before." Also transmitted was Rand's appreciation of a letter from Pearson of 19 June enclosing information on Canada's recent decision to admit 5,000 displaced European refugees. "The problem of displaced persons is, of course," Mayrand added, "intimately linked with that of Palestine...."³

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1. U.S. Consul General at Jerusalem to the Secretary of State, 113, 30 June 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1115.
 2. Horowitz, 171.
 3. L. Mayrand to L.B. Pearson, letter, 7 July 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

On 4 July the public hearings scheduled by UNSCOP got underway in the YMCA auditorium in Jerusalem.¹ David Ben-Gurion, Chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive, opened the proceedings with persuasive arguments for the establishment of a Jewish State. During the next two weeks the Committee heard statements of the Jewish viewpoint on virtually every aspect of the problem.² In her autobiography, Golda Meir remembered that "I spent a lot of time with the eleven members of the committee and was horrified to discover how little they knew of the history of Palestine, or of Zionism for that matter. But since it was essential that they learn-- and as quickly as possible -- we began to explain and expound as we had done so often before, and eventually they started to grasp what all the fuss was about and why we were not prepared to give up our right to bring the survivors of the Holocaust to Palestine."³

The preferences of the Committee members were already becoming apparent. MacGillivray reported on 7 July that they were studying forms of partition and there were indications that a pro-partition group was forming, led by the UNSCOP Chairman, Sandstrom, and Blom of the Netherlands. Rand was not part of this group, and clearly favoured a solution which would place the central authority in the hands of a trusteeship. MacGillivray was quite critical of the Canadian delegate: "I had thought at first

1. For a record of these hearings see UNSCOP, Report, III and IV.
2. United States Consul General at Jerusalem to Secretary of State, 7, 14 and 21 July, FRUS, 1947, V, 1117-1131.
3. Golda Meir, My Life (London, 1975), 169.

that he [Rand] would be a stronger member of the Committee but find him disappointing; ... he wishes all the time that he were 'back home' and is personally unhappy here; he is, I think, too impulsive in his decisions, too downright and with little diplomatic sense. I doubt if he will be very much help to Sandstrom when it comes to arguing the lines of the report."¹ MacGillivray was mistaken.

Just before their scheduled departure for Beirut where they were due to hear the views of neighbouring Arab governments, UNSCOP members received news that the "SS Exodus 1947" was nearing Palestinian waters with 4,500 illegal Jewish immigrants aboard.² It seemed that the unhappy beginning of their visit was to be matched by the conclusion. "As UNSCOP prepared to leave," the American Consul General at Jerusalem reported, "the British were transshipping the illegals. Terrorist elements were also getting into action, and the toll for Friday, 18 July, was two dead and eighteen injured -- all British military. The sirens were sounding with monotonous regularity in Jerusalem and elsewhere in Palestine and prospects for the near future were somewhat grimmer than usual."³

1. D.C. MacGillivray to J.M. Martin, 7 July 1947, FO 371/61782/E6243.

2. U.S. Consul General at Jerusalem to Secretary of State, 21 July 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1130.

3. Ibid. Referring the Palestine question to the United Nations had not, as the British hoped, led to a reduced flow of illegal Jewish immigrants. Following the successful conclusion of the Special Session, the British Government called on UN members to do all in their power to discourage illegal immigration into Palestine, pointing out that approximately 15,000 illegal Jewish immigrants had been intercepted in Palestine waters and diverted to camps in Cyprus during the six months from October 1946 to March 1947. The figure can be better appreciated when it is noted that the current legal immigration rate was 18,000 a year. Since 1939, 96,000 Jewish immigrants had been admitted to Palestine.

UNSCOP's deliberations resumed in Geneva on July 30. The eleven Committee members were faced with the formidable task of drawing up a report and set of recommendations in the short span of a month. The atmosphere was tense, and as one observer noted, "Geneva is crowded with partisans, and UNSCOP is under constant pressure." The pressure came at least partly from the two Jewish liaison officers, for whom it was also a time of feverish activity:

Horowitz and I [Eban wrote] went on explaining the virtues of partition, the viability of Jewish statehood, the necessity for firm international decision, the catastrophe involved in procrastination, the humane values that would be vindicated by Jewish statehood, and the moral potentiality of an imaginative act by the United Nations. We could hardly catch our breath. On and on we went, expounding, arguing, persuading, in every corridor, restaurant and hotel suite to which we could gain admission by charm or persistence or stealth. It was as much as I could do not to take the waiter aside when he brought my breakfast to get in an extra few 'arguments' on behalf of our Zionist theme.¹

Shortly after arriving in Geneva, Mayrand re-established communications with his Department: "I assume you followed press accounts of our movements in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Transjordan. This was the receptive phase of our mission and we felt reports covering that period would have proved of little value to you.... we now enter the constructive phase of our work...."²

1. Eban, 82.

2. L. Mayrand to SSEA, 162, 31 July 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

The first main issue to arise was whether UNSCOP should receive oral evidence from a representative of the Mandatory Power. Sandstrom and Blom, who felt that it would be helpful to consult the British, were vigorously opposed by Rand, who argued that such a procedure was inappropriate. David Horowitz described the incident:

The committeemen were overcome with surprise when the Canadian member, Justice Rand, threw his full weight against the proposal. "The Mandatory Government," he declared, "is a party in this dispute, and any invitation issued to it for official consultation at this stage of the proceedings will impair the Committee's independence and neutrality." His statement exercised a major influence over the other members when the time came....¹

Rand won his point.

The Committee now began to examine the nature and history of the problem; alternative solutions; implementation; the transition period; the status of holy places and the relationship between the Jews in displaced persons camps and Jewish immigration into Palestine.² Here too the Canadian had strong views. Discussing, for example, Great Britain's handling of its imperial responsibilities, past and present,

the Canadian jurist voiced sharp criticism of the British administration in Palestine and regarded its discharge of the mandate as well-nigh an abandonment of the fundamental obligations. "England always delays doing the right thing, and when it finally gets around to it, far too late, finds that the opportunity has been lost", the Judge affirmed. "It was late in South Africa and was saddled with the Boer War; it was late in Ireland, and now we're losing the chance in Palestine."³

1. Horowitz, 187.

2. L. Mayrand to SSEA, 165; 1 August 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

3. Horowitz, 199-200.

One week later a consensus was reached on several issues. The present mandate should be terminated and independence granted as soon as possible. Appropriate guarantees should be given to minorities and holy places. (A sub-committee which included Mayrand was established to study this latter question.) Finally, neither a unitary Arab nor a unitary Jewish state would be considered.

On the central question -- the future government of the mandated territory -- there was very little agreement among the delegates. The Yugoslavian representative favoured a bi-national system of government with equal rights and representation for Arabs and Jews alike. Guatemala was willing to consider this solution (its own scheme having been deemed impracticable), on the condition that it provide for a high volume of Jewish immigration. Iran also had some sympathy for this system "because it was not final and would prevent partition being effected while passions are too high."¹ The delegates from Australia, India, Iran and the Netherlands advocated a further period of trusteeship during which there would be limited Jewish immigration and provincial autonomy. After ten years Palestine would be granted its independence as a democratic, unitary state.²

Sandstrom was still "unwaveringly" a partitionist, but was supported by only the Peruvian alternate delegate, Garcia Salazar.

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1. L. Mayrand to SSEA, 182, 9 August 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.
 2. D.C. MacGillivray to Colonial Office, 11 August 1947, FO 371/61784/E7453.

"Rand comes nearest to them," wrote MacGillivray, "with a scheme under which the authority of the Arab and Jewish States would be curtailed in the interests of maintaining the economic and social unity of Palestine." Each state, the Canadian reasoned, would control its immigration and disposition of land, but there would be free passage of goods and services across boundaries. A central government, composed of representatives of both Arabs and Jews as well as the Great Powers, would administer railways and ports, airports, currency and communications, and would be responsible for the maintenance of law and order, defence and protection of religious interests. It would also govern the State of Jerusalem.¹

Rand's scheme called for Britain to continue in authority during the transitional period and to be responsible for implementation.²

To Rand, the situation in Palestine was a "special case". "It is the uniqueness of this land as well as that of the Jewish people and their relation to it," he wrote, "that in large measure justifies the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate of 1922.... The question of its future government is primarily that of the manner in which the interest of the Jews arising under the mandate is to be accomplished in its essential elements with the least impact upon the Arab position."³ In a region of the world Rand once described as "sunk in squalor and degradation," the Jewish people should be given an opportunity, "on

1. D.C. MacGillivray to Colonial Office, 11 August 1947, FO 371/61784/E7453.

2. "Memorandum by Mr. Rand", August, 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

3. Ibid.

land they may call their own, to give an example of a dynamic economic and cultural life deeply rooted in the soil" and to build "an anchorage of all the best qualities of our Western Civilization."¹

An admiring David Horowitz described the Canadian jurist's general approach to the Palestine question:

He was not disposed to regard administrative problems as the essence of the matter. This obstinate, fiery and explosive liberal, of broad outlook and deep intellectual and moral caliber, sought truth, morality, justice, and humanity in the tangled skein of the problem. He showed little patience with ephemeral political considerations; he was animated by a warm humanitarianism, unassailable moral principles, and a deep perception.²

Other members of UNSCOP also had strong views on the problem and another week of discussion failed to bring the Committee any closer to a single set of recommendations. "The arguments over the merits of partition, federation and confederation," reported MacGillivray, "are proceeding unabated and Bunche told me yesterday that it was an understatement to say that the Committee was 'bogged down.' They have not even yet decided to agree to disagree...."³

With the likelihood of a unanimous report diminishing rapidly, three working groups were constituted on August 20. These reflected the main divisions within the Committee. The first group, composed of the delegates of Canada, Guatemala, the Netherlands and Sweden, were to draft a plan for a "loose confederation," termed "partition with

1. I.C. Rand, address, "The New State of Israel: Canadians and the New Israel" and address at the Tenth Anniversary of the Founding of the State of Israel, Rand Papers, PAC, MG 30 E77.

2. Horowitz, 162.

3. D.C. MacGillivray to Colonial Office, 20 August 1947, FO 371/61786/E4806.

economic union"; India, Iran and Yugoslavia prepared to draft a federal scheme; while Australia, Czechoslovakia, Peru and Uruguay were asked to report on the questions of boundaries, free circulation of population and immigration.¹

A difference of opinion was soon evident within the partition group over the future of an Arab State. Most Committee members wished the Jews to support the Arab State financially, but what of the questions of area and authority? These remained the major difficulties. Justice Rand demanded the maximum area for a Jewish State and maximum economic ties between Jews and Arabs. Salazar argued for an independent and entirely separate Jewish State, but of token size. Blom worried about implementation: "Whatever the solution, who will supervise its execution?"² MacGillivray reported to the Colonial Office that the Mandatory Power appeared to be the favoured candidate: "the line recently taken by Rand and others in scraps of conversation I have had with them has been that it is Great Britain's duty to carry on because, after all, she did get herself into the mess by issuing the Balfour Declaration and that it would be immoral for her to withdraw now without seeing the thing through." Other members of the Committee doubted whether the British Government would be willing to enforce a plan with which it fundamentally disagreed.³

1. L. Mayrand to SSEA, 215, 28 August 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

2. Horowitz, 215.

3. D.C. MacGillivray to Colonial Office, 20 August 1947, FO 371/61786/E4806.

To the Jewish Agency observers, the situation was critical: "all our efforts were being frittered away uselessly. The majority of UNSCOP faced utter disintegration. The moot point of frontiers would lead to a series of valueless and ineffectual separate reports, or an inconclusive report that would be no better than an academic thesis."¹ On hearing that several of the members of the partition working group were going to withdraw their support, David Horowitz approached the Canadian delegate as "the only man who could help in alleviating the gravity of our problem." Horowitz argued forcefully against the token Jewish State advocated by Salazar. Rand responded, "I won't allow you to be placed in a territorial ghetto."² The Supreme Court Justice was true to his word. At the meeting of the partition group, later that afternoon Rand's "firmness and percipience won the day. The plan of a truncated State fell through. The crisis had been overcome."³

On August 31 the Committee finished its work and that evening the report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine was signed at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. Eleven unanimous recommendations on general principles were put forward, the most important of which called for the termination of the mandate and the granting of independence at the earliest practicable date.⁴

1. Horowitz, 216-217.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., 219-220.

4. See Appendix III.

Unanimity ended here. A twelfth recommendation, adopted with two dissenting votes, stated that any solution of the Palestine situation could not be regarded as a solution of the Jewish problem in general. A seven member majority of the Committee -- Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden and Uruguay -- called for Palestine to be partitioned into three jurisdictions: an Arab State, a Jewish State and the City of Jerusalem, the three to be linked in economic union. The Jewish State would have a population of approximately 498,000 Jews and 497,000 Arabs, including Bedouins. The Arab territory, made up largely of the poorer areas of Palestine, was to comprise some 725,000 Arabs and 10,000 Jews. Jerusalem was to have a population of 100,000 Jews and 105,000 non-Jews. Following a transitional period of two years beginning on September 1 1947, the two States were to adopt their constitutions, provide for the appointment of provisional governments which would be succeeded by elected constituent assemblies, and sign a treaty establishing a system of economic collaboration and ensuring the economic union of Palestine. The objectives of this union were to promote joint economic development and provide for a customs union, shared currency, operation in the common interest of the ports of Haifa and Jaffa, railways, interstate highways, and postal, telegraph and telephone communication. Jerusalem was to be placed under international trusteeship following the end of the transitional period with the United Nations as administering authority.

Three members of UNSCOP, representing India, Iran and Yugoslavia, put forward a minority plan which advocated the establishment of an

independent federal state in Palestine. The country would be subdivided into Jewish and Arab provinces enjoying local self-government with Jerusalem as the national capital. A federal government, elected on the basis of proportional representation of the population as a whole, was to have full authority over national defence, foreign relations, immigration, currency, foreign and interstate waterways, transportation and communication and copyrights and patents. During a transitional period of not more than three years, responsibility for administering Palestine and preparing it for independence was to be entrusted to an authority to be determined by the General Assembly. Immigration into the Jewish province during this period was to be permitted as long as the "economic absorptive capacity" was not exceeded.¹ Only the Australian representative felt unable to endorse either plan.

Rand's role in UNSCOP was obviously central. Many of the features of his scheme were incorporated in the majority report. Indeed, according to Mayrand, he was "by far the main contributor," while another member of External Affairs later revealed that Rand had drafted "a considerable part" of the plan for partition.² Zionists shared this view of the Canadian jurist's influence. David Horowitz described him as "the Committee's conscience,"

1. See UNSCOP, Report, I, and L. Mayrand to SSEA, 220, 1 September 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

2. L. Mayrand to SSEA, 220, 1 September 1947, 5475-1-40C; R.G. Riddell "Palestine", 31 January 1948, 5475-CD-40C.

a man of "indomitable rectitude, wisdom and courage."¹ George Ignatieff reported from New York that an executive member of the World Committee for Palestine had singled out Rand for special praise: "all those who had been in touch with UNSCOP realized that he was the outstanding member of the Committee, especially in view of the impartiality and judgement which he showed in handling the evidence.... the reputation of Canada was very high in the comments which he had heard in regard to UNSCOP."² The United Zionist Council of Canada also believed the jurist had served his country well: "Mr. Justice Rand has gained eminence internationally, which is in keeping with the importance of Canada among the nations of the world. This is a source of gratification to all Canadians and the Prime Minister, who personally gave careful attention to the selection of the Canadian members of the Committee must also feel a special sense of pride."³

The Zionist Council now called on the Canadian Government to endorse the majority report. There was, however, little prospect of immediate support. Ever-cautious, the King Government would wait until the British and American positions were announced. There were already indications that the Palestine issue might develop into "a cause for embarrassment" in Anglo-American

1. Horowitz, 187.

2. G. Ignatieff to L.B. Pearson, 3 September 1947, 5475-CD-40C. Pearson passed the comments to Mackenzie King. L.B. Pearson to King, "Memorandum", 8 September 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

3. Statement issued by the United Zionist Council of Canada, 5 September 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

relations,¹ and the Government felt it essential that Canada appear impartial and uncommitted. This concern was evident on 11 September when the instructions to the Canadian delegation to the fall session of the UN were presented to Cabinet for approval. A decision on UNSCOP's recommendations was not taken, since Cabinet had "not yet had the opportunity to examine this report, nor to ascertain the views of other governments most directly involved." The instructions to the delegation were thus broad, bland and characteristically realistic: the Canadian representatives were authorized to "give support to any proposals which appear to them likely to bring about a solution to the Palestine problem, provided that there is reasonable evidence they can be put into effect." Nothing would be gained "by the adoption of recommendations, no matter how great their merit, which are resisted by either Jews or Arabs unless provision is made to overcome this opposition."²

The composition of the Canadian delegation was also approved by Cabinet. Although officially headed by the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Louis St. Laurent's commitments in Ottawa would permit only a brief appearance at the opening of the UN Second Session.

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1. J. Holmes to L.B. Pearson, 27 August 1947, 5475-CD-40C.
 2. Circular B140, "Statement Approved by Cabinet on 11 September 1947 for the Guidance of the Canadian Delegation to the United Nations Second Session", 17 September 1947, 9770-B-40.

Mackenzie King had scheduled a two month trip to Britain and Europe to attend the wedding of Princess Elizabeth and the Paris Peace Conference: St. Laurent would act in King's absence as Prime Minister. Ministerial responsibility for the United Nations fell to J.L. Ilsley, Minister of Justice. L.B. Pearson was designated as alternate representative; the Department of External Affairs also sent R.G. Riddell as principal adviser, along with E.P. MacCallum and Léon Mayrand. It was a strong team. All its members were acquainted with the problem of Palestine; each was committed to a point of view. Legitimate disagreement seemed inevitable.

Lester Pearson, certainly, had a passionately held point of view, and he now hoped again to make his -- and Canada's -- presence felt. On 30 August 1947 Ottawa informed George Ignatieff that should an ad hoc committee be constituted to deal with the Palestine issue, Pearson would be available to preside over its deliberations.¹ External Affairs, however, had already let it be known that Canada would seek one of the seats on the Security Council,² and there was evidence that election to the Council might be imperilled if Canadians ran for high offices elsewhere.³

1. R.G. Riddell to G. Ignatieff, 814, 30 August 1947, 5475-CG-40C.

2. SSEA to High Commissioner for Canada in Australia, 150, 2 September 1947, 5475-CG-40C.

3. High Commissioner for Canada in Great Britain to SSEA, 1430, 6 September 1947, 5475-CG-40C and R.G. Riddell to H.H. Wrong, 2430, 8 September 1947, 5475-CG-40C.

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Another stumbling block was the Prime Minister. Pearson told King about the pressures that were being brought to bear on him and his minister to have a Canadian act as Chairman of the Palestine Committee: "I thought I could detect a readiness on his part to meet Mr. St. Laurent's wishes and mine should they be the same." The Prime Minister "strongly advised" Pearson not to serve as chairman if he could avoid it. It would mean an absence of six weeks from the Department during a period when St. Laurent would be preoccupied with his duties as acting-Prime Minister. King felt privately that "the Department was like a group of sheep without a shepherd with Pearson away."¹ Pearson's argument that the appointment might go to Herbert Evatt, Australia's controversial and often unpopular Minister for Foreign Relations, did not weigh with King. Evatt, at least, "was a Minister who could defend himself in Parlt. [Parliament].... our people were beginning to feel too many Ministers were away and it was time we began to look after our own affairs and let some others have to do with the saving of the world."² Pearson subsequently withdrew his name from consideration. King was "immensely relieved": "For him to have taken on this task with what it would involve of embarrassment to St. Laurent and the government and little likelihood [sic] of success on his part would have been a very grave mistake in his career."³

1. King Diary, 8 May 1947, PAC, M626 J13.

2. Ibid., 19 September 1947.

3. Ibid., 25 September 1947.

THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE25 September - 25 November 1947

The second session of the General Assembly was left to consider the merits of UNSCOP's reports and recommendations. Debate on the Palestine question would normally take place in the First Committee, but the number and importance of the items to be covered led the Secretary-General, Trygve Lie, to suggest to the General Committee that Palestine be considered separately by an ad hoc committee consisting of representatives of all 57 UN members. Despite a Syrian demand that Palestine be dealt with by the principal delegates in the First Committee, the Secretary-General's recommendation was approved and adopted by the General Assembly.

On 25 September 1947 the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian question met for the first time. Evatt was elected chairman. The Australian was, Abba Eban has written, "a complex personality": "His self-confidence was absolute. Behind his abrasive exterior lurked an abrasive interior. He never allowed his resolution to be blunted by a confession of fallibility.... On the other hand, Evatt was a contentious man. He did not suffer fools -- or for that matter wise men -- gladly."¹ Evatt had recently run unsuccessfully for the Presidency of the General Assembly, and the Palestine chairmanship no doubt provided a consolation.

1. Eban, 91.

When general debate opened on September 26, the Ad Hoc Committee had before it UNSCOP's unanimous general recommendations, majority and minority reports, and a request submitted by Saudi Arabia and Iraq for the termination of the mandate and recognition of Palestine's independence as a unitary state. With the exception of the Arab States, which had rejected both majority and minority plans, there had been no official reaction to UNSCOP's proposals from the parties directly concerned. To open the proceedings, Evatt suggested that delegations from the Jewish Agency and the Arab Higher Committee, groups not normally represented at such meetings, be invited to make a formal statement.¹ The third party to be invited and the first to speak, was the representative of the Mandatory Power, Arthur Creech-Jones, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Public reaction in Britain to UNSCOP's finding had been negative. The majority plan in particular was criticized for an alleged pro-Jewish bias and for having assigned the duties of implementation and enforcement to Great Britain.² Critics felt that the British could not afford to carry out the recommendations -- in terms of money, men, or good will in their relations with the Arab gulf states. The Economist argued that "The British should say of Justice Sandstrom what Andrew Jackson said of another Chief Justice: 'John Marshall has given his

1. United Nations, Official Records of the Second Session of the General Assembly, Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestine Question, Summary Record of Meetings, 25 September- 25 November 1947, Lake Success, New York (henceforth referred to as GA, II, Ad Hoc Committee), 1-2.

2. J. Holmes to L. B. Pearson, 1412, 3 September 1947, 5475-CD-1-40C.

judgement, now let him enforce it."¹ In debates in the House of Commons and House of Lords on 12 and 13 August, many advocated Britain's withdrawal from the mandate. "The debates have made a great impression on Ministers," a member of the Colonial Office reported, "and there is a strong feeling in the country and in Parliament that we should get out of Palestine."²

There were other pressures as well on the Labour Government. Britain had turned the question of Palestine's future over to the UN, but Jewish terrorism had continued, climaxing in the murder of two British sergeants by the terrorist group known as the Stern Gang. Illegal immigration increased. Cooperation between the Mandatory administration and the Jewish Agency was breaking down. Great Britain's economic position had worsened, making defence expenditures all the more difficult and questionable.³ There was pressure from within the Labour Party to reduce military strength overseas and get out of Greece and Palestine.⁴ At a meeting of the American Cabinet on 8 August 1947, Secretary of State Marshall gave notice of the change in British attitudes: "Aside from the normal British doggedness in sticking out an unpleasant

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1. The Economist, 6 September 1947.
 2. W. Mathieson to D.C. MacGillivray, 22 August 1947, F0371/61786.
 3. Arthur Creech-Jones, "Efforts to find solution by Negotiation within the Mandate", n.d., Creech-Jones Papers, Rhodes House Library, Oxford, box 31, file 3, number 1.
 4. Labour Party Backbenchers (including R.H. Crossman, James Callaghan and Michael Foot) to C.R. Attlee, 23 July 1947, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Attlee Papers, box 9.

situation, ...there was no particularly strong British desire to retain the mandate over Palestine."¹

The British Cabinet met on 20 September to consider the UNSCOP report. The first and second unanimous recommendations, calling for the termination of the mandate and British withdrawal, were well received. There was less enthusiasm for the rest of the Committee's findings. Bevin labelled the majority proposal "so manifestly unjust to the Arabs that it is difficult to see how, in Sir Alexander Cadogan's words, 'we could reconcile it with our conscience.' There are also strong reasons of expediency for declining the responsibility for giving effect to this proposal." Implementing partition would lead, he argued, to Arab revolt. British reinforcements would have to be called in, "thus antagonizing the independent Arab States at a time when our whole political and strategic system in the Middle East must be founded on co-operation with those States." British prospects of establishing a firm strategic hold on the Middle East, "an indispensable part of Commonwealth defence policy," would be shattered.²

The Cabinet agreed with Bevin that the Government should announce its intention to surrender the mandate and, failing a satisfactory settlement, "to plan for an early withdrawal of the British forces and the British Administration from Palestine." "Nothing short of an announcement of our determination to withdraw rather than to carry out an unacceptable policy will induce a sense of realism and offer a prospect of settlement....it should be made clear at an early stage

1. Millis, Forrestal Diary, 303.

2. Cabinet Meeting 76 (47), Conclusions, 20 September 1947, CAB 128/10, and Cabinet Paper (47) 259, "Palestine: Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs", 18 September 1947, CAB 129/21.

in the Assembly that our minds are made up." Should there be no prospect of a fair and practicable solution by the time the Assembly adjourned, a further statement would be made announcing the date on which the British would be withdrawn from Palestine.¹

Creech-Jones' speech in the United Nations on 26 September closely followed the lines of the Cabinet recommendations.² British policy, he revealed, was neither to endorse nor to criticize the majority and minority reports, but to remain "neutral." Whatever solution was finally adopted, however, it must include provisions for implementation. The delegates should not assume that Britain would enforce the UN recommendations; it would not. Should the Assembly recommend a policy which was not acceptable to both Jews and Arabs, Creech-Jones warned that the British Government "would not feel able to implement it.... His Majesty's Government are not themselves prepared to undertake the task of imposing a policy in Palestine by force of arms." In the event of a settlement which lacked the support of one or other of the Palestinian communities, it would be necessary for the United Nations to provide for an "alternative authority" to implement the recommendations.

The United Kingdom delegate then surprised the Committee by announcing his Government's decision to "plan for an early withdrawal of the British forces and of administration from Palestine." The situation confronting the second session was thus dramatically different from that which was faced by the spring Assembly and sketched out by

1. Ibid.

2. GA, II, Ad Hoc Committee, 11-13.

UNSCOP. They had proceeded on the basis that the Mandatory Power would remain in Palestine until the situation was resolved and arrangements were completed for a transition of power.

The position of the Jewish Agency on the UNSCOP report was outlined by Abba Hillel Silver in his statement before the Ad Hoc Committee on 2 October. As might have been expected, the plan advocated by the UNSCOP majority had been well received by the Agency. In Palestine, a Zionist correspondent of a large American newspaper observed that "to say Jews are pleased with the report is understatement, they are elated."¹ "It was the first political Jewish victory for three tragic decades," wrote Abba Eban, "and I was almost exhausted by the emotion of it."² The Agency approved the eleven general recommendations but pronounced the twelfth "unintelligible."

The UNSCOP minority report was considered unacceptable, even as a basis of discussion. The Agency, not surprisingly, supported the main provisions of the majority report, although Silver pointed to the need for a further look at the constitutional provisions and at the proposed boundaries, which were thought to be only a minor part of the territory originally promised to the Jews. Silver emphasized the Agency's determination to see partition carried through. The Jews were not frightened by Arab threats of violence; they were quite capable of defending themselves. Indeed, if necessary, they would fight alone to establish a Jewish state should the UN prove unwilling or unable to help.³

1. American Consul General at Jerusalem to Secretary of State, 2 September 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1143-1144.

2. Eban, 84.

3. GA, II, Ad Hoc Committee, 15-17.

The Jewish Agency's satisfaction with UNSCOP's findings was not shared by the Arab States. After meeting in Beirut to consider the situation, the Political Committee of the Arab League issued a communiqué on 19 September rejecting both majority and minority reports and stating its intention "to resist with all practical and effective means execution of these proposals and of any other measures which do not ensure independence of Palestine as an Arab State."¹ The Arab Higher Committee mobilized opposition in Palestine. On 3 October a general strike was announced "in protest against the schemes and recommendations of the UNSCOP and in support of their [Arab] national demands."²

Representatives of the Arab States and the Arab Higher Committee appeared before the Ad Hoc Committee during the first days of general debate. The Arabs rejected UNSCOP's findings, contending that the United Nations had neither the moral nor legal right to partition a country against the wishes of two-thirds of its inhabitants. Moreover, since the power of the General Assembly was limited to making recommendations, the Arabs could not be legally bound to observe a UN settlement. They insisted that the only just and and juridically sound solution would be the immediate establishment of an independent unitary Arab state in Palestine in which Arab and Jewish communities would be represented according to population. The Chairman

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1. SSCR to SSEA, D469, 26 September 1947, 47B(s). The Political Committee of the Arab League was made up of the Foreign Ministers of the Arab League countries.
 2. Arab Higher Committee to the United States Consul General at Jerusalem, 20 September 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1170.

of the Arab Higher Committee's delegation closed his address by noting that the Palestinian Arabs were aware that the big powers could crush their opposition to partition "by brute force." "But this realization," he warned, "will not deter us from drenching the soil of our beloved country with the last drop of our blood in the lawful defense of all and every inch of it."¹ Peaceful implementation of the UNSCOP majority recommendations now seemed unlikely.

After two weeks of discussion, the position of the American Government on the Palestine question still remained unclear. The Truman Administration had decided early in September to support partition, and Secretary of State Marshall commented in his opening address at the UN that the United States gave "great weight" to the unanimous UNSCOP recommendations and the majority report. The Americans, however, did not wish to lead the way or to appear committed. It was imperative, as a State Department memorandum put it, to avoid having the recommendations of the General Assembly labelled the "American Plan." At stake was Arab good-will and that of the Moslem world, a factor of some significance in view of the strategic and economic importance of the Middle East in American foreign policy. Furthermore, if there was to be Arab co-operation in the implementation of partition, it was essential that the UN be seen to have acted impartially. Should Arab co-operation not be forthcoming, the Americans could foresee the possibility that they would have to help enforce the

1. GA, II, Ad Hoc Committee, 5-11.

will of the United Nations, by force of arms if need be.¹ Despite "tremendous pressure" from the American Zionist lobby and its long-standing encouragement of large scale Jewish immigration into Palestine and a Jewish National Home, President Truman and his Government kept their counsel.² The approach of the American delegation was aptly summarized in a State Department memorandum:

During the debates regarding the merits of the various plans, we should not play too active a role. We should create the respect of all fair-minded persons by being, so far as possible, strictly impartial. We should concentrate our efforts primarily on working out agreements with all parties with regard to as many points as possible.

These tactics, it was readily admitted, "are not likely to appeal to those of us who prefer to approach all problems with energy and decisiveness. There are times, however, when energy and decisiveness are not appropriate."³ One British delegate commented that "the attitude of the U.S. delegation is still shrouded in obscurity. There is at least artistic truth in the rumour that they received from Washington a draft of a statement to be made in the Committee, and rejected it as having no ascertainable meaning."⁴

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1. "United States Position with Respect to the Question of Palestine", Memorandum Prepared by the Department of State, 30 September 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1166-1170.
 2. Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs to the Secretary of State, 22 September 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1153-1158; Millis, Forrestal Diary, 323.
 3. Loy Henderson to George Marshall, 22 September 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1153-58. The memorandum expressed the views of "nearly every member of the Foreign Service or of the Department who has worked to any appreciable extent on Near Eastern problems."
 4. Harold Beeley to Peter Garran, 4 October 1947, FO 371/61883/E9727.

The British and Americans had therefore decided on similar positions. Both sought to avoid having the UN recommendations associated with their government; both wished to avoid being directly involved in the implementation and enforcement of a partition solution; both hoped that others -- excepting the Soviet Union -- would take the lead and carry partition into being. It was a cautious approach that would have commended itself to the Canadian Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs, if not to all their subordinates.

The American statement, when it finally came on 11 October, was non-committal. Herschel Johnson, Washington's representative on the Ad Hoc Committee, pledged American support for the general UNSCOP recommendations and for the majority plan of partition with economic union. However, "certain amendments and modifications" would have to be made in the partition plan "to give effect more accurately to the principles on which the plan was based." Territorial adjustments of a pro-Arab nature were mentioned, but Johnson suggested that such details could be left to a sub-committee to work out.

The American statement was generally vague regarding implementation as well, although it was clear that the United States was not prepared to become directly involved in carrying out the UN's recommendations. Rather, Johnson contended that the responsibility for administering Palestine during the critical period of transition from mandated territory to statehood rested with Great Britain. The United Nations might "assist" in implementing the General Assembly's recommendations by extending financial assistance to ease the economic strain of partition and by recruiting an international police force or

constabulary on a voluntary basis to maintain internal law and order. The Palestine problem had thus far defied solution, Johnson concluded, but the plan adopted by the General Assembly would carry with it "the weight of world opinion" and would thus succeed where previous attempts had failed.¹ The American statement was a disappointment to ~~supporters of the~~ partition plan. Without a firm commitment from the United States to aid in the enforcement of a UN solution, it seemed unlikely that partition would attract enough votes from uncommitted delegates to secure the necessary two-thirds majority.

Almost immediately, however, unexpected support for the UNSCOP majority plan materialized. On 13 October the Soviet Union's representative on the committee, Semen Tsarapkin, outlined his Government's position on the Palestine question. Many western observers, including officials of the State Department and of the American and Canadian embassies in Moscow, had assumed that having expressed its preference for a bi-national state in May 1947, the Soviet Union would support the Arab position on the Palestine question.² Moreover, sceptics were convinced that the Kremlin, with an opportunism assumed to be characteristic, viewed the conflict in Palestine as a likely vehicle for the extension of Soviet

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1. GA, II, Ad Hoc Committee, 62-64. One State Department official was more sceptical: "I don't see how we can count heavily upon the moral authority of the UN, since, if UN votes the UNSCOP plan in the face of opposition and resistance by one of the peoples directly concerned, and by some of its own members, the UN's moral authority could be scored at zero, for it will have violated its own character." Chief of Near Eastern Affairs Division to Fraser Wilkins, 5 November 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1238.
 2. FRUS, 1947, V, 1166-1168.

influence in the Middle East.¹ Tsarapkin's speech came, therefore, as something of a surprise. Because of the prevailing tension between Arab and Jew, he said, the minority UNSCOP plan was impracticable. The partition plan offered "more hope of realization." Therefore the USSR delegation approved the majority plan in principle, "but thought that certain proposals and opinions could not be accepted without very careful examination and subject to necessary amendments."²

The speech was a blow to the Arab States, which had counted on Soviet support to defeat partition in the General Assembly. Zionists redoubled their efforts to sway uncommitted delegates, and they were not the only group encouraged by the Soviet statement. To supporters of a strong United Nations who had despaired of Soviet-American agreement on any UN issue of substance, there now seemed reason to believe that Palestine might be the exception. L.B. Pearson must have taken heart.

In keeping with its own "wait and see" attitude, the Canadian delegation had not made a statement in the Ad Hoc Committee. But it had not been idle. Pearson had asked Elizabeth MacCallum and Mr. Justice Rand to prepare draft statements on Palestine as a basis of discussion within the delegation.³ Rand's effort has not come to light, but MacCallum reasoned thus:

1. "Excerpts from the Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the United States Delegation at the Second Session of the General Assembly, New York, September 15, 1947", FRUS, 1947, V, 1148.
2. GA, II, Ad Hoc Committee, 69-71.
3. L.B. Pearson, "Memorandum for Mr. Riddell", 7 October 1947, 5475-CG-40C.

the Canadian government fully endorsed the unanimous UNSCOP recommendations calling for an international solution to the problem of displaced people, the termination of the mandate and the independence of Palestine at the earliest possible date. The government was, however, concerned about the problem of implementation. Before the UN proceeded on the basis of the UNSCOP plan for partition, the possibility of an Arab-Jewish agreement should not be ruled out. The likelihood of such an agreement might well have been enhanced by the recent British declaration of its intention to withdraw from Palestine in the near future. "I hope that other delegates will agree with me," the draft concluded, "that our first duty here is to use our good offices toward conciliation and that it will become our duty to vote on the report of the Special Committee only as a last resort if conciliation fails."¹

Léon Mayrand held a markedly different view. Having served on UNSCOP Mayrand was doubtless inclined to favour the majority plan; perhaps he was writing on Rand's behalf or after a conversation with him. Mayrand found it "very gratifying" that the Jewish Agency was "willing to accept our majority report... since acceptance of any report by the two interested parties was clearly an impossibility." As for the Arabs, Mayrand observed that they "were bound to shout loud." He was not, however, "inclined to take them too seriously." First of all, the great majority of the Arabs in Palestine had not yet seriously

1. E.P. MacCallum, "Palestine", 9 October 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

awakened to nationalism." Secondly, "the Jews would be capable of maintaining themselves by force if only the right to use force were conceded to them." Lastly, "the Arab chiefs could be appeased through concessions of a financial nature, especially if these were accompanied with the clearly declared will to impose a settlement by whatever means may be necessary." Mayrand looked to the United States and particularly to the British. He wished to ask United Kingdom representatives "what exact minimum of international collaboration would be required before the British government would consent to enforce a decision which was not acceptable to the Arabs." "Meanwhile," he concluded, "if we are pressed to state our views...we might safely **declare** our willingness to adopt the majority report as a broad basis for discussion."¹

Events almost immediately overtook the efforts of MacCallum and Mayrand. Upon learning that on 11 October the American representative would be declaring support for partition, the Canadian delegation was authorized to follow suit and announce its Government's acceptance of the UNSCOP majority plan as a basis of discussion in the Ad Hoc Committee. The delegation worked through the weekend on a draft statement. On Sunday evening, following a telephone conversation with Pearson in Ottawa, Riddell met informally with Ilsley and Ignatieff to discuss the final version of the text. He then prepared a draft for which he sought Ottawa's approval.

1. L. Mayrand, "Memorandum for the Under-Secretary: Note on the Present Palestine situation at the United Nations Assembly", 10 October 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

Riddell's draft did not satisfy at least two members of the delegation. Both Ilsley, who was slated to deliver the speech, and MacCallum voiced their reservations to Riddell, who in turn passed them on to Pearson. Miss MacCallum pointed out that the UNSCOP majority had, to some extent, disregarded democratic principles in making its recommendations. And did Canada have any right "to insist on the partition of Palestine against the wishes of practically the whole Arab population and of at least a substantial minority of the Jews"? Even the Mandatory Power had been unwilling to endorse the majority report. Partition, she argued, was not a solution to the situation in Palestine. It was likely to lead to more bloodshed and violence, which could lead to an unpopular decision to send Canadian forces to the Middle East.

Instead of partition, MacCallum called for a renewed UN effort on two levels: first of all, an international solution to the problem of refugees, including a reasonable quota for Jewish immigration into Palestine; and secondly, the establishment of a UN trusteeship which would bring a ~~democratic~~ form of government to an undivided Palestine, maintain order and control immigration during the transition period. "Any action," she concluded, "whereby we might keep our hands free to support proposals of this nature might be preferable to a decision binding us in advance to support partition."¹

J.L. Ilsley's reservations about the Canadian statement centred on the ethical issues involved in supporting partition. Ilsley was

1. R.G. Riddell to L.B. Pearson, 1319, 13 October 1947, 47B(S).

very concerned by the absence in the draft of an effort to judge the important questions of principle which had been raised. What, he asked, of the strong moral and political claims which the Arabs had made? What of the principle of self-determination and the commitments made to the Arabs prior to the Balfour Declaration? Riddell's reply was that "we need not feel bound to make a judgement on the historical arguments which have been advanced, particularly since Canada had no part in the events, and we have suggested that the empirical argument which we have advanced is defensible."¹ Ilsley conceded that the problem was now the practical one of determining the conditions under which the government of Palestine ought to be carried on.²

Ottawa did not share the misgivings of Ilsley and MacCallum. Riddell's draft received Cabinet approval, and Ilsley delivered the speech the same day, 14 October 1947. The address stressed the necessity of arriving at a solution to Palestine's difficulties that was practicable and constitutional. The central task facing the Ad Hoc Committee was to determine the arrangement that would "best enable two peoples living within the confines of a restricted geographical area to avoid obstructing one another's development and most conducive to their

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1. R.G. Riddell to L.B. Pearson, 1316, 13 October 1947, 47B(s). Pearson referred this despatch to St. Laurent with the comment that the draft speech had been prepared "by Mr. Riddell on the basis of talks with Mr. Ilsley and myself. In my talk I passed on to Mr. Riddell the ideas which you conveyed to me over the telephone concerning this question."
 2. E.P. MacCallum, "Early Portion of Discussion in Canadian Delegation, October 14, 1947", n.d., 5475-CD-2-40C.

welfare and freedom." Two plans were before the Committee, one based on partition, the other on a federal form of government. Federation, however, must be founded on agreement: "The representative of Pakistan has said here that partition should not take place without consent, but the question arises as to whether it is any better to try to maintain unity without consent. There is no evidence in anything we have seen or heard here that both Jews and Arabs will accept accommodation within the framework of a single state." The Canadian delegation was thus "led to accept, somewhat reluctantly, the majority proposals for partition as a basis of discussion."¹ Canada had formally embraced the partition principle.

Ilsley argued that, in the light of the United Kingdom's announcement of its intention to withdraw from Palestine in the near future, it was imperative that the Ad Hoc Committee begin immediately to work out specific recommendations for the governments of the new states as well as measures for their implementation. To that end, Canada endorsed the American proposal for the establishment of a sub-committee to draw up the details of a scheme of partition and suggested the creation of a second sub-committee, which would include the five permanent members of the Security Council, to discuss implementation and the question of the administration of Palestine during the transitional period. This sub-committee could examine the possibility of assigning

1. "United Nations Assembly; Palestine; Canadian Statement on Policy", 14 October, 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C. The original draft had not included the phrase "as a basis for discussion." This was added at Miss MacCallum's suggestion and it later gave the Canadian delegation the additional flexibility needed to bring about Soviet-American agreement in the Ad Hoc Committee.

authority for implementation and for the maintenance of law and order to the Security Council.¹

General debate in the Ad Hoc Committee closed on 17 October following further speeches from the Jewish Agency, the Arab Higher Committee and the United Kingdom. Before his address, Creech-Jones told his delegation that Committee opinion seemed to be hardening in favour of partition. He felt, however, that the Committee, the United States delegation in particular, was reluctant to confront the implications of enforcement. The Americans wished British administration to continue through the transitional period and suggested the "unwise and impracticable" instrument of a volunteer UN constabulary or international police force. Creech-Jones' speech would therefore emphasize the need for a more pragmatic approach to the problems of partition and for a thorough revision of the United States proposal. He would also take the opportunity to re-state his Government's intention to withdraw from the mandate as soon as possible.

Some members of the British delegation believed that the statement did not go far enough in explaining their position. Any Committee discussion was "unreal" in the absence of a fixed date for withdrawal.

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1. Shortly thereafter the UN Secretariat pointed out that the constitution of a second sub-committee to consider implementation would be too time-consuming since it could not begin to work out details of implementation until the first sub-committee had all but completed its work. See Drury to AUSSEA, 1347, 16 October 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

The failure to explain and to emphasize the consequences of withdrawal made the debate "more unreal still" since "very few of the Delegations had any idea what these consequences would be." One Minister unhappily commented "that the attitude of His Majesty's Government was somewhat disingenuous; they were not asking for advice, they were throwing in their hand." From conversations with Commonwealth representatives he was convinced that they were unaware that Britain had no proposal of its own to make and did not know how Britain would vote: "The Commonwealth delegations did not appreciate the need we felt not to alienate Arab States and did not seem to realize that British participation in any recommended solution was very unlikely." Other delegation members agreed with this assessment, but until London could give them a withdrawal date, there was little that could be done to induce the United Nations "to face up to the problem with more realism than it had hitherto displayed."¹ Meanwhile, the delegation felt obliged, "while keeping an ear close to the ground, to take a somewhat passive role at this early stage."²

At least one member of the Canadian delegation took note of the British delegation's dilemma. Miss MacCallum observed that the Creech-Jones speech seemed to be "a warning that the United Kingdom Government thinks we are proceeding on mistaken assumptions in proposing

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1. "Record of the 22nd Meeting of the United Kingdom Delegation to the General Assembly, 15 October 1947, F0371/61883/E9806.
 2. United Kingdom Delegation in New York to Foreign Office, 18 October 1947, ibid.

to partition Palestine." As the sole member of the Canadian delegation with longstanding experience and expertise on Middle Eastern questions, her analysis of the factors in Canadian thinking is worth quoting at length:

- (a) We should like to set up a Jewish State in order to recompense the Jewish people in some measure for their past sufferings.
- (b) The successful creation of a Jewish State would reduce the refugee problem and the pressure brought to-bear on Canada to accept more immigrants than it wishes to receive.
- (c) The majority of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine has proposed a plan of partition.
- (d) The United States and U.S.S.R. and most of our best friends are inclined to support partition, although some of them are doing so with serious misgivings.
- (e) The Jewish Agency has accepted partition and Canadian support for that policy would deeply gratify leaders of the Zionist Organization of Canada.
- (f) We have been assured by Zionists and others that the Arabs are bound to accept a United Nations decision in favour of partition if they are confronted with a show of solidarity and firmness.
- (g) We want a settlement in Palestine which has the virtue of finality.

Proceeding point by point, MacCallum outlined objections to the assumptions upon which Canadian policy was based. First of all, the establishment of a Jewish State in an Arab Middle East, "far from insuring the future safety of the Jews, may doom them to an insecurity for which we should hesitate to make ourselves responsible." Secondly, Canada's moral position, would be much improved if the Government was prepared to admit increased numbers of displaced persons. Thirdly, MacCallum did not question the "high-minded disinterestedness" of UNSCOP, but the Canadian Government proposed "to disregard the warning of the United Kingdom Government, which has been in close touch with

situation for 27 years, in favour of a proposal suggested by persons who spent only five weeks in Palestine and had opportunity to discuss the future government of the territory only with Jewish and British representatives." Fourthly, it would be a mistake for Canada to follow the lead of others in supporting partition. One could not assume Soviet disinterestedness in the area in view of its involvement in the affairs of Iran and Turkey, while to base Canadian policy on that of the United States "seems hardly defensible in view of the irresponsibility shown by the Administration in recent years in relation to Palestinian issues." Nor, in the fifth place, should the Government feel obligated to act because of the pro-Zionist lobby in Canada. North American Jews, she cautioned, "may not have so accurate a knowledge of Middle Eastern conditions generally as the United Kingdom Government." Sixth, the assumption that the Arabs would yield to a show of military force backed by a determined policy and the moral authority of the UN was not borne out by the violent record of the past thirty years in Palestine. Arab opposition could not be expected to melt away. Thus the seventh assumption was called into question: a UN settlement based on partition would not have "the hoped-for virtue of finality."¹ It is not known whether Miss MacCallum's memorandum found its way to the chief policy-makers. The main lines of Canadian policy, at any rate, were not about to be changed.

1. E.P. MacCallum, "Note to Mr. Pearson", 17 October 1947, 5495-CD-2-40C.

During the three-week long period, fourteen members, including Canada, had given approval in principle to the partition plan.¹ Thirteen states² declared their opposition, eight calling for the establishment of an independent unitary Arab state in Palestine. The minority UNSCOP plan recommending a federal solution had failed to win supporters. The final outcome was still not clear. Writing to the Foreign Office, one British delegate admitted that "as to the likely course of future events, your guess is as good as ours. All that can at present be discerned through the fog is the emergence of a Jewish state in some shape; but how and just when it will come into being cannot yet be judged." Some members of the Committee had "only a superficial acquaintance" with the real issues.³

The next procedural phase of the Ad Hoc Committee's work was to consider the draft resolutions and amendments, some seventeen in all, tabled during the general debate. Canada had been invited by a member of the American delegation to join in submitting a draft resolution proposing that UNSCOP's unanimous recommendations and the majority report be accepted by the Committee as a basis for its recommendations to the

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1. E.P. MacCallum to E. Reid, 1385, 18 October 1947, 5475-CF-40C.
 2. The six Arab states (Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Yemen) Afghanistan, Argentina, Cuba, India, Iran, Pakistan and Yugoslavia.
 3. United Kingdom Delegation in New York to Foreign Office, 18 October 1947, FO 371/61883/E9806.

General Assembly. "If we carry the flag," one State Department official observed, "we shall inescapably be saddled with the major, if not sole responsibility for administration and enforcement, which, we gather, neither the Congress nor the American people are willing to undertake."¹ Since the Government's acceptance of the majority report had been as a basis for discussion only, Canada felt able to decline the invitation.² The Americans subsequently approached Sweden, another "neutral" country, which accepted. In spite of the American delegation's efforts to ~~disassociate~~ itself from the proposals discussed by the Ad Hoc Committee, references to "an American Plan" were frequently made, Dr. Evatt being one of the chief offenders.³

Canadian and American views on Palestine, it soon became apparent, diverged in other areas. Members of the Canadian delegation were convinced that, if partition was to have a chance of success, it was crucial that details of the plan and of its implementation should be worked out in advance. In this view they were close to the British

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1. Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs to the Under-Secretary of State, 22 October 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1195-1196.
 2. E.P. MacCallum to E. Reid, 16 October 1947, 47B(s). The Canadian delegation decided to vote in favour of the United States-Sweden draft resolution even though it was not prepared to sponsor it.
 3. Robert M. McClintock to Under-Secretary of State, 20 October 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1188-1192.

delegation, which believed "it was essential that the question of enforcement and its implications should be worked out in all its details since enforcement and the question of future administration of Palestine were inseparably connected."¹ Officials in the State Department, on the other hand, were "disturbed" at the tendency in New York "to go into the details of the organization of the constabulary, of the administrative framework of the government, et cetera." Dean Rusk, Director of the Office of Special Political Affairs, stressed the "necessity of maintaining a broad approach to the question of implementation and the nature and organization of the interim administration to be set up in Palestine."² Rusk's preference for a policy of studied vagueness led one member of the American delegation to suggest that the State Department was deliberately keeping New York uninformed on the issues of implementation, administration, boundaries and the like, because "it does not wish the US to adopt clear cut attitudes regarding some of these questions as clear cut attitudes might lead to responsibility for implementation."³

Concerned about the workability of partition, Canada put forward an amendment to the American draft resolution for the ~~constitution of a sub-committee~~ on 15 October. The Canadian amendment broadened the sub-committee's

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1. "Record of the 22nd Meeting of the United Kingdom Delegation", 15 October 1947, FO 371/61883/E9806.
 2. Rusk's point of view was not shared by all State Department officials. See FRUS, 1947, V, 1185-1186.
 3. Gordon Knox to the Acting United States Representative at the United Nations, memorandum, 18 October 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1186-1187.

terms of reference in order to include the questions of administrative responsibility during transition and implementation. The amendment was not well received by the American delegation.¹ General Hilldring, the alternate American representative on the committee, tried to persuade Canada to withdraw it because the amendment focussed on "certain facets" of the Palestinian problem which "should not be over-emphasized." His efforts met with little success: "Mr. Pearson said that he was not impressed with Hilldring's argument that the original United States proposal embodied in itself the substance of the Canadian amendment. He said it was important to be perfectly clear that questions relating to implementation and administration during the transitional period should be considered by the sub-committee."² The Canadian delegation then learned that the United States, having already made clear its reluctance to become involved in the work of the sub-committee, now threatened to refuse to serve unless the Canadian amendment was withdrawn.³ The Canadian delegation would not be swayed, however, and they were determined "to resist strongly" any attempt by the United States to withdraw.⁴ Should the United States refuse to serve, Canada would do

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1. By contrast, the British felt that because of the "unsatisfactory nature" of the majority UNSCOP recommendations, the Canadian amendment deserved support. "Summary of Recommendations With Comments", 23 October 1947, FO 371/61883/E9780.
 2. E.P. MacCallum to E. Reid, 1454, 26 October 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.
 3. E.P. MacCallum to E. Reid, 1385, 18 October 1947, 5475-CG-40C.
 4. Drury to AUSSEA, 1408, 21 October 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C. The Canadian delegation had envisaged a sub-committee of ten: the five permanent members of the Security Council, "neutral" states and states which had declared themselves for or against partition. See E.P. MacCallum to E. Reid, 1385, 18 October 1947, 5475-CG-40C.

likewise.

On 21 October Evatt proposed that sub-committees be established and that no decisions of principle should be taken until they had reported back to the main Committee. The Soviet delegate, supported by the American representative, lost a motion designed to reverse the process, to have partition in principle approved first and a sub-committee then work out the details. The American draft resolution and the Canadian amendment were approved; two sub-committees were appointed and instructed to work out realistic plans for partition and a unitary state. Sub-Committee I was composed of delegations which had declared their support for the partition principle: Canada, Czechoslovakia, Venezuela, Guatemala, Poland, South Africa, the Soviet Union, ~~Uruguay and the United States~~. The Jewish Agency applauded the decision: "Here were nine stalwart defenders of the partition principle; one of them, Lester Pearson of Canada, was putting his emollient diplomacy to work for the first time in a major international issue."¹ Membership on Sub-Committee II was drawn from those states which had favoured the creation of an independent, unitary Arab state in Palestine.² The United Kingdom was to attend meetings of both sub-committees as an observer. Evatt himself headed a third sub-committee authorized to explore the possibilities of conciliation. It never met.

1. Eban, 91.

2. Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Yemen. Colombia was originally a member but withdrew almost immediately.

Evatt's constitution of Sub-Committees I and II was criticized by members of the State Department, who termed it "most unwise" because the partition principle had not first been formally approved in the Ad Hoc Committee,¹ and by the Foreign Office which considered it to be a "curious arrangement and hardly calculated to lead in the direction of compromise."² J.G.S. Beith "doubted whether the device used is really a practical one. The setting up of a parallel Arab Plan Sub-Committee is merely a sop to the Arabs. Its work is not likely to be very realistic, nor for that matter is the work of the Majority Plan Sub-Committee."³ It was not thought likely in London that Sub-Committee I could "accomplish very much until our intentions with regard to withdrawal are made more clear."⁴ And who knew when that would be?

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1. "Memorandum by Mr. Robert M. McClintock to the Under Secretary of State", 20 October 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1189.
 2. Paul Garrahan, covering minute, UK Delegation in New York to Foreign Office, 3043, 23 October 1947, FO 371/61884/E9939.
 3. Minute of J.G.S. Beith, 27 October 1947, FO 371/61884/E9903.
 4. Minute of Beith, 25 October 1947, FO 371/61884/E9966.

TOWARDS THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE23 October - 27 November 1947

The first meeting of Sub-Committee I was devoted to questions of procedure. Ksawery Pruszenski of Poland was chosen Chairman, and in that capacity he ruled in favour of Jewish Agency participation in the Committee's sessions. It was also agreed that UNSCOP's unanimous and majority recommendations would be the basis of discussion. Examination would proceed clause by clause and amendments, submitted in writing, would be voted on seriatim. A three day recess was then called to allow the United States delegation, which was in the process of compiling a draft position paper on Palestine, to complete its work and receive State Department approval.¹

The Canadian delegation had also been busy. Having declared its support for the partition solution as a basis of discussion, the Canadians concentrated on making the UNSCOP formula as legally sound and practicable as possible. George Ignatieff, Elizabeth MacCallum and legal expert Max Wershof, examined the options, possibilities and implications of UN action on partition. MacCallum, indeed, argued

1. The breakdown in communications between New York and Washington had prompted Dean Rusk to visit the American delegation in an attempt to iron out a policy on Palestine which was acceptable to the delegation and to the State Department. New York's draft paper was sent to Washington, which revised it and sent it back to New York, which revised it again, to the consternation of certain State Department officials: "our recent experience indicates a rubber stamp, and ignores even the most strenuous objections." Chief of Division of Near Eastern Affairs to Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs, 28 October 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1214-15.

that partition was not a legally acceptable solution. A decision on the part of the United Nations to divide the country against the wishes of the majority of the population and to "turn over 65% of the territory to the Jews, who now own only 6% of the land," would constitute an aggression and a violation of the UN Charter. Under Article 51, the Arab states would have the right "to resort to individual or collective self-defence." Furthermore, "if strong desire to settle in another country, to develop its land, and to take over the government of all or part of it, is now recognized by the United Nations as a valid cause for partitioning their country, a precedent will be set whose consequences may be easily foreseen."¹

There were questions from the other Canadians as well. Under the terms of the Charter the power of the General Assembly was limited to making recommendations. It had no power to enforce them. The Charter did not authorize the Assembly to create new states. The Assembly, in fact, was ill-equipped to deal with the vacuum which would exist when the United Kingdom withdrew. The Assembly might "unload" the problem on the Security Council, which had ample powers to provide for administration and maintenance of law and order, but there was some doubt about the ability and willingness of Security Council members to agree on details of implementation and enforcement. Wershof believed that the best available method for providing interim administration under

1. E.P. MacCallum, "Palestine: The Partition Issue", n.d., 6475-CD-2-40C.

United Nations auspices was to set up a trusteeship. The governing authority could be one or more states, or the United Nations itself. Such a trusteeship could be established in the event of a failure to recommend partition, when the need for action would be all the more pressing.¹ Another possibility set out by Wershof had originally been put forward by the Jewish Agency: that there be no transitional period at all. The Assembly might approve a partition plan and recommend that the United Kingdom Government, at the moment of withdrawal from Palestine, hand over the powers of government in each area to Jewish and Arab provisional governments. Failing action by the UN before the mandate came to an end, Palestine would have no legal position: "There will be anarchy from an international law viewpoint," wrote Wershof, "There will be no State and no government. There will simply be a land and peoples in it struggling to establish one or more governments."²

R.G. Riddell also underlined the seriousness of the situation. "Confusion and disorder may well follow upon the withdrawal of the mandatory," he wrote, "and decisions may be taken by force in Palestine that bear little relation to our plans. There is no use fooling ourselves that the new arrangements in Palestine will fall into place automatically once we have decreed them. We are contemplating a complicated political operation and some one will have to take responsibility for putting it into effect." Like Wershof, Riddell favoured a trustee arrangement in

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1. M.H. Wershof, "Legal Aspects of Action on Palestine by the United Nations", 17 October 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.
 2. M.H. Wershof, "Supplementary Memorandum Regarding Legal Aspects of the Palestine Question", 21 October 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

order to govern the territory during the months of transition from mandate to statehood. He suggested that MacCallum examine measures which would be necessary for the difficult and complex problems of implementation and enforcement under trusteeship. E.R. Hopkins, who had replaced Wershof, was asked to develop the legal argument concerning trusteeship; Mayrand would assess the proposals which had been put forward in the majority UNSCOP plan regarding territorial arrangements and guarantees, and economic aid to the Arabs.

When the delegation met the following day, the three memoranda were ready. Hopkins' draft echoed previous doubts about the power of the General Assembly to administer Palestine during the period of transition from mandate to statehood. The Security Council might wish to intervene, or the Great Powers might take joint action on behalf of other UN members under Section 106 of the Charter. In Hopkins' view, however, such actions were against the spirit of the ideals and objectives of the UN as set down at the San Francisco conference, and perhaps even contrary to the letter of the Charter as well. A more appropriate and legally sound method of administering the area during the transitional period would be under the trusteeship provisions outlined in Chapter 12 of the Charter. The UN itself, operating through a neutral body of non-partisan representative states, was the most suitable trusteeship body, although Article 79 stated that the terms of such an agreement had to be accepted by "the states directly concerned, including the mandatory power." If the phrase "states directly concerned" were interpreted in a broad sense to include

neighbouring Arab states, any agreement on the trusteeship terms seemed very unlikely. MacCallum suggested a way around this problem. Once the Ad Hoc Committee had drafted the terms of a trusteeship agreement in consultation with the United Kingdom delegation, and after the principle of partition was accepted by a two-thirds vote in the Assembly, the draft agreement could be put to a vote.¹ Failing two-thirds approval, the matter could still be referred to the Security Council.

Léon Mayrand cautioned against an excessively legalistic approach. Examining possible amendments to the UNSCOP majority recommendations and especially possible guarantees and compensation to the Arab Palestinians, he argued that "only partition possesses the character of finality.... the problem is primarily a political one and...it would be a mistake to entertain too many legal scruples about it." Compensation to the Arabs should not be at Jewish expense: "we do not believe that the Jews could abandon much of what is provided for them in the majority plan. Jewish acceptance of the majority plan meant a serious curtailment of their previous claim over the whole of Palestine." Financial assistance to the Arabs was the responsibility of the United Nations, not the Jewish people. Since the thousands of Arabs in the Jewish state would be "very seriously hurt in their pride at being ruled by Jews," the United Nations should set up an agency to encourage the orderly transfer of population from one state to

1. E.P. MacCallum, "A Plan for Partition for Submission to Sub-Committee I of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question", 25 October 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

another.¹

Characteristically, the Canadian statement would not be prepared until the delegation assessed American and Soviet policies on partition. Areas of agreement could then be identified and, with the co-operation of the British delegation, a practicable solution found. Following consultation with their Governments, the American and Russian delegations drew up their recommendations concerning the partition of Palestine. On 31 October Herschel Johnson put forward a plan for implementation in which the transitional period, with all its problems and complications, was eliminated. The date of the termination of the mandate, possibly 1 July 1948, would be Independence Day for the two states. Until then, the Mandatory Power would be responsible for administration, law and order and assisting the Jewish and Arab populations in the establishment of provisional governments. To advise in the transfer of power, the American delegation suggested that the UN Assembly set up a two or three man commission headed by a high commissioner.

There were some obvious flaws in the scheme. The United States assumed that Britain, acting without any form of international assistance apart from the "advice" of a small commission, would provide the administration and resources to carry out the UN's recommendations. This unfortunately was precisely what that British had already stated they would not do.² Britain "must at

1. L. Mayrand, "Necessity of Partition of Palestine", 25 October 1947 and "Suggestions re Amendments in Majority Plan", 25 October 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. Minute, Beith, 5 November 1947, FO 371/61886/E10304.

all costs avoid being saddled with responsibility for implementing a plan not agreed to by Arabs and Jews," commented one member of the Foreign Office. A State Department official put it more colourfully: "what has happened is that on examination the gendarmarie horse proved to be an intractable beast, so that the Delegation sought to transfer the burden to the British goat.... My guess is that it was a good try on our part but that...they won't fall for it....no matter how we dress up what we have in mind for the British in a stand-by-role, they know they would have to implement partition."¹

The United States had also thought, "somewhat too optimistically" from the Canadian standpoint, that full co-operation would be forthcoming from Jews and Arabs as well as the Mandatory Power. If any of the three parties objected or if confusion broke out, the plan would fail. No legal obligation was created by the scheme; there were no provisions designed to anticipate difficulties in the transfer of power. The Canadians in New York did not agree that a recommendation by the General Assembly constituted sufficient authority for the Mandatory Power to surrender its authority to the Jewish and Arab states. The American delegation's thinking, revealed in confidence, was that it was "most anxious" to avoid involving the Security Council because of the opportunity it would give the Soviet Union to intervene directly in Palestine affairs. Unfortunately the plan could not be enforced without the Security Council's backing.²

1. Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs to Fraser Wilkins, 5 November 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1238.

2. Consulate General in New York to the SSEA, 1525, 2 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

The Canadian delegation transmitted its misgivings about the American proposals to Ottawa. The elimination of a transitional period after the surrender of the mandate "had much to commend it," but there were many problems which would arise between the UN's adoption of a plan and British withdrawal. These should be anticipated and practical measures adopted to resolve them. Alternative methods of transferring power, including trusteeship, should be weighed. Finally, it was pointed out, the effectiveness of the UN Commission depended on the Great Powers -- on Britain's co-operation and Soviet-American concurrence, and the flexibility of all three.¹ C.M. Drury, a member of the delegation, hoped that a Canadian statement would be made soon, in order to give "direction to the discussion and avoid some of the confused thinking which is becoming evident."²

The Secretary of State for External Affairs' approval of the delegation's position was tempered with a note of caution: "I would be very careful about how the very serious and obvious difficulties can be overcome. No one else seems to be prepared to subscribe and I am not sure enough about our diagnosis to be ready to do so. If there is to be a Commission," he added, "we should not be so prominently identified with the matter as to be placed in the position of having to serve on such a Commission."³

1. Ibid.

2. Drury to AUSSEA, 1536, 3 November 1947, 5475-CW-40C.

3. L. Beaudry to SSEA, "Memorandum for the Minister", 3 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C. St. Laurent's comments are written on the memorandum.

On 3 November L.B. Pearson attended Sub-Committee I as Canadian representative. "I came to the United Nations Assembly for two or three weeks only," he recalled two weeks later, "but soon found myself very deeply involved in two of the most important issues that we are dealing with and because of which I am still here. There was first the establishment of the Little Assembly.... Then I switched to Palestine for what I thought was my last day or two..."¹

On the agenda was a place reserved for the Soviet representative. Tsarapkin began by criticizing the American proposal that the Mandatory Power carry out all of the UN's recommendations before independence. British statements had made it abundantly clear that they would not implement a decision which was not agreed to by both Arabs and Jews. As for the proposed Commission, it would be "powerless and useless and would serve only as a cover by which the United Kingdom could exercise its policy under the flag of the United Nations." The Soviet Union wanted the mandate terminated on 1 January 1948, although the British would be given until 30 April to withdraw all their men. A transitional period of up to a year would then ensue. During this time Palestine would be administered by the Security Council through a special Commission composed of representatives of Council members. The Commission would supervise the establishment of provisional councils, democratic elections and the constitutions of the new states.²

1. L.B. Pearson to Vincent Massey, 16 November 1947, PAC, L.B. Pearson Papers, Pre-1958 series, volume 10.

2. "General Proposals of the USSR on the Structure of Palestine", UN Press Release 717, 3 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

Following his statement Tsarapkin offered to answer questions. Pearson was quick to intervene. What was the purpose of a one year transitional period? Who would govern and keep order in Palestine after the British withdrawal but prior to the establishment of the provisional councils? If the Commission, what forces would it use? Did the Commission have the same powers as the Security Council? If so, did the veto apply? What election procedures were contemplated? The Soviet representative promised to answer the Canadian questions the next day. Herschel Johnson commented, meanwhile, that the American and Soviet proposals "differed only in minor details,"¹ but the Canadians thought otherwise: "Although superficially there is a close resemblance to the United States scheme, fundamentally the approach is entirely different."² In fact, the working out of areas of agreement would not be easy.

During the Sub-Committee I session of 4 November, Tsarapkin replied to the first of Pearson's questions regarding the length of the transitional period. The Soviet delegation wished as brief a period as possible; one year was considered the absolute limit. The Canadian Under-Secretary of State then took the floor. Reading from a statement drafted by Hopkins and Riddell, Pearson said that his delegation had observations to make on the question of implementation; Canada's proposals would follow. Pearson then turned his attention

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1. Consulate General in New York to SSEA, 1544, 4 November 1947, 5475-CW-40C; British Delegation in New York to the Foreign Office, 3190, 3 November 1947, FO 371/61886/E10307.
 2. Consulate General in New York to SSEA, 4 November 1947, 5475-CW-40C.

to the American plan. The General Assembly, he argued, should not be given responsibility for the administration of Palestine. Its powers were explicitly those of recommendation, not of enforcement. The scheme would stand or fall on the co-operation of all the concerned parties. Should any refuse, the plan would fail. The termination of the Mandate and British withdrawal, moreover, would create a legal vacuum which would be filled -- and not necessarily satisfactorily -- by the emergence of the two projected states. Again this assumed unanimity. The Canadian delegation agreed that there should not be a period of transition, but the interim between the UN's adoption of a plan and withdrawal presented problems which could not be blithely dismissed, as the Americans had done. The situation called for a clear definition of the measures to be taken during this period.

Pearson suggested that two further possibilities should be considered: a trusteeship system, mentioned briefly in the Canadian address of 14 October, and action through the Security Council, a proposal which formed the basis of the Soviet Union's suggestions. Should there be a period of transition, a trusteeship arrangement would, juridically speaking, be appropriate, although practical difficulties might arise in identifying the "states directly concerned." Trusteeship, however, would be unnecessary without transition. As for the Soviet suggestion that the Security Council could implement the Assembly's recommendations, Pearson thought it "distinctly arguable" that Articles 24, 39, 41 and 42 in their combined effect authorized the Council to take the necessary action. Nevertheless, this could not be done without

agreement among its members that the situation in Palestine constituted a "threat to the peace" -- and without agreement on the means of implementation. Before a final position was adopted, the Canadian representative urged that the partition proposals be carefully scrutinized with regard to the role that the Mandatory Power was expected to play before withdrawal and to the methods employed to maintain law and order in Palestine after the British had departed.

The Canadian delegation, Pearson added, "had some suggestions of its own which it felt might serve to bridge the gap between other proposals which have been made. We shall be glad to submit these in writing to any working group which is set up."¹ The Venezuelan delegate then repeated a suggestion made earlier in the day that the Canadian delegation be invited to join the proposed working group on implementation. Pearson accepted. It was agreed that representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union, Canada and Guatemala would meet informally to work on reconciling the various proposals before them.²

Such gatherings were Pearson's milieu. He prospered in small, private groups, where no commitments need be made. If there was agreement on the elimination of a transitional period, Pearson suggested that the Assembly should ask the Security Council to assist the British in the maintenance of law and order prior to withdrawal, to appoint a

1. L.B. Pearson, "Statement Made on 4 November 1947 in Sub-Committee I of the Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine...", 5475-CG-1-40C. See also E.R. Hopkins, "Draft Statement on Palestine", 2 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C and R.G. Riddell, "Draft Statement on Palestine", 4 November 1947, ibid.

2. David Horowitz claimed credit for the addition of Canada to the working group. See Horowitz, 290.

preparatory economic commission, to make arrangements for the administration of the City of Jerusalem, and later, to recognize the new Jewish and Arab States and call upon representatives of the two populations to form a government. Having placed such responsibility in the hands of the Security Council, the Assembly might then recommend that any attempt to alter the settlement by force be interpreted as a threat to the peace or an act of aggression. Canada's aim, said Pearson, was to "throw responsibility for administration and the maintenance of law and order back upon the people of Palestine themselves." An international authority would only be called in if there was an act of aggression, and in that case responsibility would fall to the Security Council anyway.¹

The delegation emphasized in its report to Ottawa that the Canadian statement had been distributed only to members of the working group and the United Kingdom observer. Again Pearson was tentative: it was intended "merely as an indication of practical compromise which might be found between Soviet and United States plan." It appeared possible, he told St. Laurent, that Canada "might be involved in a most unsatisfactory manner in plans already under consideration." Of the three possibilities, Canada would be automatically and directly involved in two in its capacity as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. As for the third, the United States "might well attempt to have a Canadian appointed to this three-man Commission." The suggestions made

1. Consulate General in New York to SSEA, 1551, 5 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

on 4 November

have not been put forward as a distinct plan, nor are we, as press has suggested, trying specifically to bridge the gap between US and USSR proposals. We are, on the contrary, endeavouring to eliminate from proposals of both United States and USSR impractical and ineffective elements, which might have the added disadvantages of involving us.... I would like to reassure you that we will avoid membership of any group or Committee that may be appointed to act for the United Nations in this matter, unless such a group consists of the whole of the Security Council, in which case, of course, we might have to serve.

Canada, it appeared, was again being placed in the role of a "linch-pin." This time, however, the rhetoric was not of our choosing. Both the United States, which had expressed the hope that the Canadian delegation would act as a "link" with the United Kingdom,¹ and the British themselves were "anxious" that Canada "remain on Working Group and even U.S.S.R. seem quite happy about our participation," Pearson told his Minister that "we will extricate ourselves ... if possible, and unless it looks as if it will complete its work in a day or so."² The Under-Secretary also discussed the question of continued Canadian involvement in the working group with St. Laurent on the telephone the following afternoon. The Minister was willing to leave the matter in the hands of Ilesley and Pearson.

On 7 November, in Pearson's suite at the Biltmore, Herschel Johnson and other members of the U.S. delegation listened as the Canadian

1. C.M. Drury to AUSSEA, 1554, 5 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1566, 6 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

diplomat briefed Sir Alexander Cadogan, British representative at the UN, on the plans being considered by the working group. Cadogan was also told of the belief, or "suspicion," in some quarters "that his Government would be completely "non-co-operative." They would not work with the United Nations Commission or inform it of British plans, and might even refuse to assume any responsibility for the maintenance of law and order.¹

Cadogan's reply might have led some to conclude that such charges had validity. He was not helpful. Speaking only for himself, Cadogan repeated that Britain would withdraw from the Mandate at the earliest possible moment, but when he did not know. He thought that British forces "would gradually withdraw from the more stable areas, hand over administration to the new authorities and would leave what were believed to be the more unstable areas to the last. If during this process trouble broke out in an area which the British forces had already evacuated...[he] did not believe that the British forces would return to it...."² Cadogan's report to the Foreign Office claimed that Johnson and Pearson did not find this statement "unreasonable," but the American, in fact pointed out that so long as the United Kingdom remained responsible for the Mandate, it was also in charge of keeping the peace. In the event of "serious difficulties developing in Palestine as a result of a UN

1. Sir A. Cadogan to Foreign Office, 3249, 7 November 1947, FO 371/61887/E10469. One purpose of the meeting was apparently to persuade the British to stay in Palestine, in which case "it is likely that the Working Group will adopt the United States plan and vote down the scheme of the Soviet representative". C.M. Drury to AUSSEA, 590, 7 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.
2. Fraser Wilkins, "Memorandum of a Conversation", 7 November 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1244-46.

partition resolution," said Cadogan, Britain could not be held responsible for maintaining law and order. It was not an answer calculated to please the United States.

Cadogan concluded from the conversation that the working group was "making small if any progress." It was clear to him that Pearson and Johnson hoped "at the best" to get agreement along the lines of the American proposal, and they both "seemed anxious to defeat the Soviet proposal which they considered completely unworkable." Under those terms, the UK would no longer have the authority or responsibility of the Mandatory as of 1 January 1948, but until they withdrew, British troops would be at the disposal of the Security Council's Commission. "Mr. Pearson told me afterwards that he feared the group would not reach an agreed recommendation but would send all 3 proposals to the Sub-Committee who would probably do no better."

Pearson would have reluctantly agreed. Two days of heated discussion in the working group had brought members no closer to a compromise formula. For the Canadian it was a frustrating time: "Here I am in the middle, between an obstinate Russian and a not too skilful American, and it has been about the most exhausting experience of my life."¹ Neither the Soviet nor the American delegate had fundamentally altered his position. It looked like a "deadlock."²

At the working group's morning meeting on 8 November, Pearson made one more attempt to draw together the American and Russian

1. L.B. Pearson to V. Massey, 16 November 1947, Pearson Papers, Pre-1958 series, volume 10.

2. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1599, 10 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

points of view. He asked whether the United States would agree to the termination of the Mandate on the first day in 1948 if satisfactory arrangements could be worked out with the British for the maintenance of law and order and essential services until the two new states were constituted. The Soviet delegate, for his part, was asked to recognize the necessity of immediate discussions with Great Britain to determine whether, as an agent of the UN, it would accept such responsibilities. Pearson then proposed a UN Commission of three, appointed by the Assembly but responsible to the Security Council on matters of peace and security. "To my surprise, both representatives thought that a compromise arrangement might be worked out along these lines."¹

Pearson was quick to cover his tracks. "There may be exaggerated and misleading reports of this effort on our part," he wrote to St. Laurent, "so I am anxious to tell you at once what we have done." The working group and Sub-Committee I were merely attempting to produce the most practicable scheme for implementing a plan based on a principle -- partition -- which had not yet been accepted by the Assembly. The participation of any country, he stressed, was "without prejudice" to the decision which had to be made. If no way of successfully implementing partition could be found, it would be useless to vote for the principle. After

1. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1599, 10 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

outlining his proposals to the US and USSR, Pearson explained that one reason he hoped "such a compromise (which would go forward as a Soviet-American proposal, not a Canadian one) could be reached is that it would dispose of the unworkable Guatemalan plan to entrust authority for law and order to a Commission of three small States with security forces from five other small States." The delegation would continue to make it clear that if a Commission was established, Canada was "not available for membership, having already played a quite sufficient part in the Palestine business." Pearson concluded "that it is of the greatest importance that every possible effort should be made to reach such a solution, because if the United Nations fails, or even falters, in this regard, a further tremendous, almost a fatal blow will be struck at its prestige."¹

St. Laurent replied that he was "favourably impressed" with the steps Pearson had taken and hoped that he and Ilsley would "be able to contribute further to the resolution of this difficult question."² By the time the message had reached New York, indeed, it was evident that Pearson's initiative had succeeded. The Soviet delegate proposed a set of implementation principles "which took into

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1. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1599, 10 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.
 2. SSEA to Consulate General in New York, 1356, 10-November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

account our suggestions and represented considerable compromise on earlier position." The American representative, too, had indicated his willingness to alter his position.¹

The main features of the Soviet draft, which was used as a basis of discussion and won American approval, were the acceptance of 1 May 1948 as the termination date of the mandate and withdrawal of troops, the establishment of two independent states by 1 July 1948 and the creation of a small-power Commission responsible to the Assembly rather than the Security Council.² The New York Times gave front page credit to the Canadian Under-Secretary: "The latest draft was a series of compromises that were largely a result of the tireless efforts of Lester B. Pearson."³ Conversations had been "friendly and accommodating," Pearson stated, "with the result that Working Group was able to report to Sub-Committee at afternoon meeting that agreed statement of principles had been accepted."⁴ The mood of optimism and congratulation was breathlessly described by the Times reporter: "In both the drafting body and a Palestine

1. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1624, 12 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. Ibid.

3. New York Times, 11 November 1947.

4. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1624, 12 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

subcommittee this evening, the rare and exhilarating spectacle of American-Russian agreement on a vital question so spurred the delegates that they followed up their preliminary findings with a series of enthusiastic speeches, extolling the two powers for their co-operation and predicting a bright and successful future for the international organization."¹

Pearson was cautious. Unless the United States and the United Kingdom made some fundamental concessions, the former accepting some responsibility regarding implementation and the latter stating their willingness to stay on in Palestine for a further short period, no satisfactory Palestine solution was possible. Even if the Anglo-American obstacles over implementation were surmounted, there remained the further problem of Arab participation in the setting up of the new Arab State. "From all this," he told St. Laurent, "you will gather that I am not too optimistic about a satisfactory solution being reached at Lake Success." At the meeting of the working group on 11 November, Pearson pointed to serious problems which remained, particularly the terms of reference of the Commission and the part which the British were expected to play.² "Mr. Pearson seems to have been the only delegate who saw any of the difficulties inherent in these unrealistic arrangements," commented one member of the

1. New York Times, 11 November 1947.

2. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1624, 12 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

Foreign Office.¹

Time was running short. The Assembly was scheduled to adjourn in two weeks, and Evatt was pressing the Sub-Committee Chairmen to produce their reports quickly.² After two more days of discussion, the Canadian delegation was able to report to Sub-Committee I that the working group on implementation had "virtually completed" its work. Important questions remained; however, and the Canadians again "regretted" the passivity of the United States and Great Britain. The British in particular were losing sympathy with their rigid ways. After all, wrote Pearson, "it was the United Kingdom that presented the problem to the United Nations, so surely they cannot completely wash their hands of the matter irrespective of the decision reached here."³ Canadian frustration and weariness -- mixed with the usual caution -- was showing: surely they "should not feel obliged to give the lead in every aspect of the Palestine problem"?⁴

The Palestine question finally came before the British Cabinet on 11 November, at which time the conclusions of the Defence Committee and the Chiefs of Staff were presented. Cadogan was then authorized

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1. Minute of G. S. Beith, 13 November 1947, FO 371/61887/E10546.
 2. C.M. Drury to AUSSEA, 1620, 11 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.
 3. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1599, 10 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.
 4. C.M. Drury to AUSSEA, 1639, 13 November 1947, 5475-CW-40C.

to put the Cabinet's views to the Sub-Committee I.¹ This he did on 13 November. British intentions, it was immediately apparent, did not conform in key respects to the working group's scheme for implementation. The Attlee Government reserved the right to end the mandate when, in its view, circumstances made it expedient to do so. Civil administration would be terminated in certain areas prior to military evacuation and if a UN Commission were at work in Palestine "taking preparatory steps for a settlement which would require enforcement," it must not expect British authorities to exercise administrative responsibility or to maintain law and order, except in those areas where withdrawal was incomplete. The deadline for the final evacuation of British troops was given as 1 August 1948.²

The British statement was thought "somewhat cryptic" and "not very helpful," but "not as damaging as it might have been." The Canadian delegation, reported Charles Drury, "felt that this did not represent the final British position but that they would be amenable to influence directed towards a more satisfactory compromise."³ Pearson optimistically interpreted Cadogan's statement as evidence of British desire to assist in the working group's planning process. Admittedly, adjustments in the time-table for the establishment of the two new governments would have to be considered, and the attitude of the

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1. Cabinet Meeting 86 (47), 11 November 1947, PRO CAB 128/10.
 2. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1657, 14 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.
 3. C.M. Drury to AUSSEA, 1659, 14 November 1980, 5475-CD-2-40C.

British remained obscure on several points. Still, the implementation group would proceed on the assumption that its plans "would not be made impracticable through unwillingness of the Mandatory Power to cooperate."¹

Stalemate, even so, again threatened the working groups. The Soviet Union was adamant that British troops must be out of Palestine by 1 May 1948 and argued that Cadogan's statement was too general to justify optimism. There was a continuing division of opinion over the relationship between the UN Commission and the Security Council, with the United States favouring as much freedom as possible for the Commission. If every decision had to be submitted to the Council for approval, the Commission could not operate effectively. The Soviets, suspecting a move to by-pass the Security Council entirely, were not prepared to make any concessions on the point.²

Nor was there much help from the United Kingdom. Attempts to advance their time-table had produced no results. Indeed, Pearson and Riddell met two British representatives on 16 November, only to learn that the delegation had "no clear idea" of the details of withdrawal. The British spokesmen were unable to answer, even informally, questions aimed at co-ordinating United Nations proposals with the British time-table. "I got the impression," Pearson wrote, "that they were having some difficulty in getting their authorities in London to understand

1. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1656, 14 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. C.M. Drury to AUSSEA, 1706, 17 November 1947, 5475-CW-40C.

or appreciate the situation at Lake Success."¹ The British representatives believed they would be unable to make any comments or suggestions until a plan had emerged with the requisite two-thirds majority in the Assembly.^v Only then would the British Government indicate whether it was prepared to cooperate.

Pearson and Riddell persisted. They privately communicated the details of the latest set of proposals under discussion in the working groups to the British, and took the opportunity to warn that their government "would be subject to very severe criticism" should it refuse to cooperate in any way once a plan had received UN approval. While there had been "much sympathy and support" for the British Government when it first brought the problem before the UN, "feeling was certainly now changing and many Delegations were increasingly critical of the attitude of the United Kingdom."²

Canada was no exception. "We find it difficult to understand their attitude," Pearson wrote St. Laurent. The United Kingdom had asked the United Nations to deal with the Palestine problem, "but now refuse to make any contribution to the finding of a workable solution to the problem." The British Government had had to face difficulties, it was true. The Americans, and others, had been

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1. L.B. Pearson to N.A. Robertson, 1699, 17 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.
 2. United Kingdom Delegation to Foreign Office, 3406, 16 November 1947, FO 371/61888/E10748.

"irresponsible," but it seemed to Pearson "that the United Kingdom is leaving itself open to the charge of equal irresponsibility." The United Nations would be greatly discredited if the Palestine plan failed, and success was impossible without the United Kingdom's co-operation. Surely the British delegation could indicate whether one implementation plan or the other was acceptable without irrevocably committing itself. It had, however, "taken a completely detached attitude, and in private conversation some of their advisers tend to take the line that United Nations efforts are doomed to fail and that United Kingdom is not going to get itself involved in so impracticable a proposition as partition." In consequence, and despite the fact that a Soviet-American accord on the issue was not yet a certainty, Pearson thought Britain would be blamed "for discrediting the United Nations and frustrating a plan for Palestine on which the United States of America and USSR have agreed."¹

Pearson worried that "all the heat" would be turned on the United Kingdom and that the United States might escape "the censure they deserve."² Throughout the discussions in the working groups, he felt the Americans had "tended to take unrealistic attitude of easy optimism, brushing aside difficulties and insisting that cooperation of both mandatory power and Arab states could be counted on." Although somewhat more conciliatory during the past few days, "in general they have shown little concern to prepare plans in a form which will be acceptable to the

1. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1692, 17 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. United Kingdom Delegation to Foreign Office, 3406, 16 November 1947, FO 371/61888/E10748.

United Kingdom Government. They had, furthermore, apparently not consulted the British delegation on the relative merits of the various proposals. There was no evidence of a desire or readiness to give any material assistance to resolve practical problems which would inevitably arise during implementation. Pearson had suggested, "personally and informally," to American representatives that their Government simply state its willingness, "in the event of disturbances in Palestine following the adoption of a partition plan to fulfil its responsibilities as a good member of the United Nations." They had not been willing to go even this far.¹

The Canadian Under-Secretary's assessment of the Soviet policy -- "the subject of anxious speculation before it was made known, and of equally anxious and sceptical analysis when it had been announced" -- was more equivocal. On the face of it, the Russian stance seemed to be "a sincere if groping attempt, in collaboration with other States, to find a solution to a troublesome international problem." The Soviet representative, Tsarapkin, was "an agreeable, diligent, conscientious and even flexible colleague."² Having supported the principle of partition, he appeared "genuinely anxious" to be accommodating in working out the details. Tsarapkin did have Russian self-interest to promote, "but he made this known in a straightforward and generally inoffensive way."

1. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1692, 17 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. L.B. Pearson to J.W. Holmes, 30 December 1947, 47B(s).

Co-operativeness and constructiveness, however, become obstinacy and a lack of realism when the subject became British intentions to withdraw from Palestine. Tsarapkin "was convinced that despite all their protestations the British would remain in Palestine in some guise unless an international authority were there to make certain of their going." Thus his insistence that the United Nations establish the new states, in order to prevent the setting up of a British puppet government.

Pearson also had his doubts about the working group. He continued to press for a compromise solution, however, and on 18 November his formula won general approval. It provided for a brief period of transition during which a UN Commission, acting on behalf of the General Assembly, would exercise legal sovereignty in Palestine.¹ Ironically, only Pearson's delegation expressed dissatisfaction with the idea, but Canadian worries about its legality and suggestions of alternatives were swept aside. One American diplomat even took the unusual step of taking Pearson aside to show him the State Department's generous interpretation of the extent of the General Assembly's powers of recommendation.²

Pearson understood the American wish not to involve the Security Council, a device which was sure to draw the Soviet Union into Middle

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1. R.G. Riddell to E.R. Hopkins, 1710, 18 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.
 2. L.B. Pearson to E.R. Hopkins, 1622, 11 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

Eastern affairs -- a prospect dreaded in Washington. The Americans, for that matter, did not wish to become involved themselves. Soviet thinking was more perplexing. They did not seem bothered "in the least" about the legal anomalies which would be created by setting up a Commission of the Assembly to assume administrative authority over the area. Pearson noted "a flexibility which contrasted strongly with their behaviour elsewhere in the Assembly." On other questions the Soviets were "the firm defenders of a strict and literal interpretation of the Constitution"; on the Palestine problem, "they did not feel in the least inhibited by the Charter." Tsarapkin finally asked Pearson, "almost with irritation," why he insisted on raising this legal point. "It undermined our whole work", he said. "The Canadian delegation must have some ulterior motive....no doubt it would become evident in due course." Tsarapkin argued that the situation in Palestine had not been foreseen at San Francisco. A "constructive interpretation of the Charter must be taken to meet it. The measures adopted would necessarily be sui generis and we must not be prevented from adopting them by a narrow and restrictive view of the instruments under which we were working."¹

The Department of External Affairs' legal expert disagreed, and the Canadians would continue to argue the point even after it was lost. "It would strain," wrote Hopkins, "the ingenuity of a Philadelphia lawyer to contend successfully that the General Assembly has of itself, the necessary power, sui generis or otherwise." He did not think that the device of a multilateral convention, to which the states voting for the

1. L.B. Pearson to E.R. Hopkins, 1622, 11 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

Assembly resolution were signatory, strengthened the legal position materially. The last thing the Canadians wished to be was obstructionist, however, and it was questionable how far they should press the point. Pearson felt that his delegation should itself be flexible.¹

Pearson's plan called for termination of the mandate and the withdrawal of the armed forces of the Mandatory Power by 1 August 1948 and for the establishment of independent Arab and Jewish States barely two months later. During the transition period, a UN Commission would be responsible for the administration and maintenance of law and order in Palestine. Consisting of the representatives of five states, the Commission would be appointed by the General Assembly, but would act under the guidance of the Security Council. It was on such hard-won compromises that a widening international reputation was being built. "The most remarkable job of a long and successful day at the United Nations was the achievement of yet another careful plan for the partition of Palestine by the Special Committee Working Group of four nations...", a correspondent wrote in the Manchester Guardian. "Mr. Lester Pearson of Canada has been the creator of these successive compromises, and this capacity to watch a plan knocked down and then set up another should give him some special sort of status with the United Nations."² Pearson presented his plan with characteristic modesty

1. E.R. Hopkins to R.G. Riddell, 1427, 19 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. N.A. Robertson to SSEA, 1731, 19 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

to the committee the next morning. It was a scheme "which, in the judgement of its members, is workable on paper Workability on paper and workability in practice, of course, are different things, ... But we do feel that we have before us a scheme of partition and independence which is a practicable one."¹

The compromise formula was approved by Sub-Committee I on 19 November. After a last minute debate on boundary questions, the plan passed on to the Ad Hoc Committee that evening. It was none too soon. Having declared his intention of setting sail for England in just ten days,² Evatt was making "a determined effort to rush matters to a vote."³ Pearson carefully avoided the legal issue, asking that one of the other members of the Sub-Committee make that part of the case.

Sir Alexander Cadogan followed Pearson with his comments on the reports of both Sub-Committees. Amendments and clarifications were suggested, notably in an attempt to avoid the difficulties which would arise if the UN Commission and the Mandatory Power were concurrently responsible for administration: "Even in a stable political situation, confusion of authority is dangerous. In Palestine it would obviously have disastrous consequences." Cadogan stressed that his Government could lay down the mandate at any moment of its choosing; it need seek

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1. L.B. Pearson, "Statement Before the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question", 20 November 1947, 5475-CG-1-40C.
 2. C.M. Drury to AUSSEA, 1724, 19 November 1947, 5475-CW-40C.
 3. United Kingdom Delegation to Foreign Office, 3449, 19 November 1947, FO 371/6188E/10884.

neither the advice nor the approval of the Security Council in so doing. It was not prepared, furthermore, to assume any responsibility for transferring authority to the provisional councils of the two communities. That task belonged to the UN Commission. Cadogan reiterated that his Government would soon announce a date when its civil administration in Palestine would end. After that, apart from the exercise of strictly limited functions, Cadogan warned that "there will be no regularly constituted authority unless the United Nations can fill the gap."¹

This continuing lack of co-operation meant that further modifications were called for in the plan. Various revisions were suggested by Pearson in the meeting of Sub-Committee I that afternoon.² Discussion continued the following day, when legal aspects of the partition were raised by the delegation from Pakistan. Which articles of the Charter, it was asked, conferred on the General Assembly and the Security Council the power described in the Sub-Committee's report? From what source would the proposed UN commission draw its executive, legislative and administrative authority? The Americans were inclined to make light of such questions, arguing at one point that if "two-thirds of the world" made a recommendation, it automatically became lawful. Unable to resolve the problem, the Sub-Committee turned to its chairman, "in his personal capacity." "They could rely on him," Pruszyński replied, "to find a

1. SSCR to SSEA, D579, 22 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. United Kingdom Delegation to Foreign Office, 3473, 20 November 1947, FO 371/61889/E10930.

formula which would not suggest a lack of agreement. They could now adjourn and, he added, relax."¹ For the Canadians, however, there were already indications that they would be asked to contribute yet further to the solution of the Palestine problem.

The composition of the five-member UN Commission had been a matter of some concern when the Sub-Committee I report was under consideration. "Respectable" states were wanted.² On 21 November the United States Ambassador, Ray Atherton, called on Escott Reid, Acting Under Secretary in Pearson's absence, to deliver a message from the State Department. Would Canada be willing to serve on the proposed UN Commission? The role which Pearson and Canada had played in the discussions of the Palestine question had "given all the conflicting elements a belief in the integrity of purpose and the devotion of Canada to a fair solution of the problem." It would be a stronger Commission with Canada as a member. Reid replied that he would pass the message on to his Minister, but he did not give Atherton "much reason to hope that we could accept. Indeed, my own understanding was that we were doing our best to keep off this commission. We had already been appointed to serve on the Korean Commission and our resources were, as he knew, very strained."³ St. Laurent also wished to decline the invitation, but for

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1. United Kingdom Delegation to Foreign Office, 3490, 21 November 1947, FO 371/61889/E10974.
 2. C.M. Drury to AUSSEA, 1755, 22 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.
 3. E. Reid to L. St. Laurent, "Memorandum for the Secretary of State for External Affairs", 21 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

different reasons. It would be unwise, he told Reid, for any member of the British Commonwealth to serve on the Commission while Britain still had troops in Palestine. The rationale was both diplomatic and political, the line between the two being very fine at the best of times. Canada "would not want to be put in a position where it had to criticize the United Kingdom in this matter; nor would it want to be put in a position where it felt impeded from criticizing the United Kingdom because... it was a fellow member of the Commonwealth."¹

Atherton's request and St. Laurent's viewpoint were relayed to Canadian diplomats in Washington and New York. From Washington, H.H. Wrong agreed that Canadian participation would strengthen the Commission "considerably," provided that the representative "was of the quality of Mr. Justice Rand or Mr. Pearson. But he shared Reid's worries about departmental resources: "The trouble is that our deep involvement in United Nations affairs, with the possibility that we shall during the lifetime of the Commission have to find competent delegations to cope with a number of issues that closely touch our national interest, would mean that the assumption of this new and onerous international responsibility would inevitably result in inadequate performance of the essential functions of the Department of External Affairs." Canada's membership on the Security Council, he reminded Ottawa, was an additional burden. Wrong opposed Canadian participation in the Palestine Commission, and he went even further, suggesting that it would "be

1. E. Reid to L.B. Pearson, 1458, 22 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

wise to postpone for a year all plans for the opening of new offices abroad, and to give the greatest feasible amount of concentration to the most important aspects of our international relations, such as our relations with the United Kingdom and the United States and our representation on the Security Council."¹

From New York, Charles Drury wrote "of the importance of having on the Commission reputable individuals who could work with the British Palestine administration."² Perhaps he had L.B. Pearson in mind; certainly Pearson himself appeared to be of two minds on the question. The Under-Secretary's memorandum to the Minister outlined the advantages of an affirmative response to the American proposal, "Canada would obviously have special advantage in having men who might be available for the purpose," he said, "who would command the confidence of the British military authorities in Palestine and would, therefore, be more likely to secure co-operation between the Mandatory and the Commission." A good member of the Commission "might prevent situations arising, by action on the spot, which, under the terms of the proposed plan of partition, have to be referred to the Security Council for decision, or possibly action involving Canada as a member of the Council." Pearson also pointed out that the proposed slate of candidates for the Commission was being dismissed as "far too weak for the purpose." A new

1. H.H. Wrong to E. Reid, WA 3673, 22 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. C.M. Drury to AUSSEA, 1759, 22 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

list would likely be prepared, and Canada might well be one of the nominees.

Pearson also put the arguments against the proposal. He pointed out that Canada could say justifiably that it had fulfilled its obligations to the United Nations. In this regard it was already heavily involved in the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Atomic Energy Commission, the Commission on Conventional Armaments, the Korean Commission and the Interim Committee. He raised St. Laurent's argument about Canada's British connection, and the possibility that Canada might be regarded as prejudiced in favour of the Mandatory Power. And, after all, had not Canada already made it clear that it had no intention of serving? The memorandum is cast in the "pro" and "con" mould of Dr. Skelton. Unlike many of Skelton's efforts, it is impossible to know what Pearson's real wishes were. The Under-Secretary, however, does not appear to have ruled out the idea of membership on the Commission; indeed, his most elaborate and carefully-structured arguments were reserved for the "pro" side.¹

Perhaps St. Laurent sensed Pearson's lack of resolution. He told Reid that Pearson's arguments against participation had not gone far enough. "We would not want to refrain from criticizing the United

1. L.B. Pearson to L. St. Laurent, 1763, 22 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

Kingdom," the Minister said on 24 November, "yet, if we were to criticize the United Kingdom, it would create a terrible storm in Canada, as many people...would consider it presumptuous that we should criticize a country which had thirty years' experience in trying to deal with the Palestine problem." Accusations of "prejudice" might be made in another important regard: "we were now generally looked upon, rightly or wrongly, as having espoused the Jewish cause. The Arabs would feel that, as members of the Commission, we would be hostile to them. Moreover, if armed forces were needed in Palestine to implement the partition plan, it might be felt that the members of the Commission had "a peculiar responsibility" to furnish the men and material. St. Laurent also feared that the job description for the Commission's chairman might fit Pearson only too well, and that an effort might be made to conscript him. He must have been relieved when Pearson telephoned him from New York later that same day to say that the delegation had made it clear that Canada would not serve on the proposed Commission.¹

Pearson had in fact been investigating a different sort of Commission. Rather than a membership of five small states, it would be composed of representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union and one "neutral." Early on 24 November he privately consulted the

1. E. Reid, "Palestine", 24 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C. - The Prime Minister had made it clear to Pearson that he did not wish Canada or its Under-Secretary of State to serve. King Diary, 5 February 1948.

British delegation.¹ In London the Foreign Office's reaction was immediate and negative: "Any plan involving the participation of the Soviet Union in a Commission operating in Palestine is most undesirable, even admitting that there would in any case probably be a Russian stooge." It would be preferable, however, for opposition to the proposal to come from the United States or some other country. If the delegation in New York had any doubts that the proposal would be rejected, the Foreign Office suggested that Pearson be approached; "we should have thought it advisable to take him into our confidence in any case."² The Americans, on the other hand, insisted upon Russian participation if the United States was to be a Commission member. In any case, President Truman was "most reluctant" to have the United States serve on any such Commission.³

Pearson's role was again central as debate in the Ad Hoc Committee moved to its final stages. "We were quite aware," Pearson said on behalf of his colleagues in Sub-Committee I, "of the difficulties of the position, the legal difficulties, the moral difficulties, and the physical." He admitted that the General Assembly was being asked to

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1. United Kingdom Delegation to Foreign Office, 3518, 24 November 1947, FO 371/61889/E10041.
 2. Foreign Office to United Kingdom Delegation in New York, 4073, 24 November 1947, FO 371/61889/E10041.
 3. Acting Secretary of State, memorandum, 24 November 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1283-84.

take "a calculated risk." The Sub-Committee's plan could work, however, "providing we obtain three conditions which I think we are entitled to expect or at least to hope for." The first was Britain's co-operation. Pearson defended the British against American allegations that they had been of little help to the Sub-Committee. "We like to think in Canada that we know something about the British," he said, and he claimed to have "every confidence" that their support would be forthcoming. The partition plan, secondly, must have the "active backing and support of the permanent members of the Security Council; the great powers which have to accept a special responsibility in this matter." The third condition was the most obvious and difficult of all. The plan must be approved by two-thirds of the Assembly and then "accepted by the people of Palestine and by all members of the United Nations." Towards that end, Pearson gave a pledge of his Government's support.¹

Evatt closed debate in the Ad Hoc Committee on 24 November. Enthusiastic American support and the activities of Eban's Jewish Agency were notable factors in mobilizing the "yes" vote.² Such pressures were

1. L.B. Pearson, "Canadian Statement on the Partition Plan for Palestine", 22 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. See "Statement by the Acting United States Representative at the United Nations", 22 November 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1280-81; GA (II), Ad Hoc Committee, 180; Eban, 96.

undoubtedly effective. On 25 November the report of Sub Committee I came to a vote. It was approved by a twenty-five to thirteen margin. Seventeen abstained and two were absent. Pearson could now relax. As he left New York, the debate was transferred to the General Assembly.

On 26 November, J.L. Ilsley, as head of the delegation, put Canada's position before the General Assembly. He saw four "un-attractive and difficult" alternatives. They could do nothing. They could set up a unitary Arab state along the lines advocated by Sub-Committee II.¹ They could establish a federal state in accordance with the minority recommendations of the United Nations Special Commission on Palestine. Or they could support a plan of partition. Although far from satisfactory, the last was the best of the four. It was "full of difficulties," but "any other solution would be worse." Canada supported it "with heavy hearts and many misgivings. No responsible delegation could do otherwise, after listening to the threats of reprisals and all the talk of fire and sword which we have heard from both sides to this controversy...." Something had to be done.²

Events were moving quickly to a climax. The session was ending,

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1. The report of Sub-Committee II, advocating a unitary state in Palestine, had been rejected by the Ad Hoc Committee on 24 November by a twenty-nine to twelve vote with fourteen abstentions. Canada voted with the majority.
 2. J.L. Ilsley, "Statement on Palestine", 26 November 1947, 5475-CG-1-40.

and a decision on partition would have to come soon. On 28 November the French representative requested a twenty-four hour adjournment in order to allow a final examination of alternatives. The motion was adopted with the support of Canada and twenty-four other members.¹ The next day radio and television reporters and newspapermen crowded into the lobbies; places reserved for delegates and the visitors' gallery were full, tense and expectant. Attempts at conciliation had apparently failed. "What was needed now," as Abba Eban put it, "was 'decision', not the vain pursuit of agreement."²

Success for the Jewish lobby was anything but assured. It will be recalled that the Ad Hoc Committee was composed of a representative from each member of the United Nations. The vote there was a dry run for the Assembly's decision. Had the two-thirds majority rule been in force in the committee, as in the Assembly, the partition plan would have failed -- if barely. The pressure for action, however, worked in the Jewish lobby's favour and they -- and their American friends -- did their best to help the decision along. The debate began to move inexorably in their direction. An Arab motion for adjournment was ruled out of order by the Assembly President. The head of the Philippine delegation was suddenly gone. His replacement was just as ardent a supporter of the plan as his predecessor had been a

1. S. Freifeld to L.B. Pearson, FLEA0-7, 28 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

2. Eban, 98.

opponent.¹ Liberia changed its view, and the Benelux countries agreed to support partition.² When the vote came, there were still thirteen against. But a number of the abstainers had come around. There were thirty-three in favour, with ten abstainers and one absent. Bolivia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Panama and the Philippines were elected without opposition to the UN Commission on Palestine.

The partition plan adopted by the General Assembly on 29 November 1947 was, with a few revisions, that approved by Sub-Committee I ten days earlier. Palestine was divided into three political units: an Arab state, a Jewish state and the City of Jerusalem, which was placed under a United Nations trusteeship. The Jewish state was divided into three geographically distinct areas, the Arab into four. The three political units were linked together in economic union, sharing currency, railroads, highways and communications.

1. The reason for the Philippine volte-face became clear two weeks later when the President of that country told the American Ambassador that he had instructed his delegation to reverse its position and vote in favour of partition "because of his fear, based on a report from Ambassador Elizalde and a telegram from some ten United States Senators, that a vote against partition would have an adverse affect on United States-Philippine relations." Acting Secretary of State to Truman, 10 December 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1305-6. Truman found the account "most interesting", particularly in light of a similar incident involving Haiti. "It is perfectly apparent," he wrote, "that pressure groups will succeed in putting the United Nations out of business if this sort of thing is continued and I am very anxious that it be stopped." Truman to Acting Secretary of State, 11 December, 1947, ibid., 1309. See also "Loy W. Henderson", Oral History Interview number 156, Harry S. Truman Library, Oral History interview Collection, 136-137.

2. Eban, 99.

The United Kingdom was called upon to give up the mandate as soon as possible, but not later than 1 August 1948. As the British administration and forces were withdrawn, authority would be transferred to the United Nations Commission, appointed by the General Assembly to supervise partition under the powers vested in the Security Council. The Commission was to assume responsibility until the provisional Jewish and Arab governments were established.

EPILOGUE

Throughout the discussions on Palestine, Canada had emphasized practicality. As L.B. Pearson frequently observed, "there was nothing more difficult in a situation such as we have in Palestine than converting a principle into a practice, into a performance."¹ The path to the General Assembly's approval of partition had been difficult enough. Now the plan would have to be implemented; the will and influence of the United Nations would be put to the test.

In his address before Sub-Committee I on 22 November,² the Canadian Under-Secretary had set out three conditions that would have to be met before the partition plan could effectively be put into place. The first was the co-operation of the Mandatory Power. This surely would be forthcoming. On 25 November the British Cabinet discussed its future course of action in Palestine, one member arguing that "the time was approaching when His Majesty's Government might be compelled to adopt a more positive attitude towards this problem."³ When a plan of withdrawal was approved by the Cabinet on 4 December, however, there was little evidence of such an attitude. The date of termination of the mandate was unilaterally advanced to 14 May. In the meantime, it would be "intolerable" for the British Administration in Palestine to be asked to share authority with the UN Commission; indeed, it would be preferable if Commission members did not set foot in Palestine until 1 May 1948,

1. L.B. Pearson, "Statement on Palestine", 22 November 1948, Statements and Speeches, 48/61.

2. L.B. Pearson, "Partition Plan for Palestine", 22 November 1947, 5475-CD-2-40C.

3. Cabinet Meeting 90(47), 25 November 1947, CAB 128/10.

because "even the arrival of the Commission would probably provoke Arab disturbances on a scale which would seriously affect the withdrawal plan and endanger the whole British position in the Middle East."¹ For the same reason, the British would not allow the delimitation of boundaries and the recruiting of local militia, preparations essential to the plan, to be carried out until after the mandate was brought to an end. Nor would it assist in the establishment of the two provisional councils. It had been blithely assumed in New York that a transfer of authority from the Mandatory Power to the provisional councils would take place rapidly and efficiently, with the Commission doing little more than acting as an observer. The Commission, apparently, would have to undertake much wider responsibilities in the implementation of partition than was ever intended, or believed possible.

Pearson's second condition was that partition must receive the active support of the permanent members of the Security Council. Should outbreaks of violence occur in Palestine following the surrender of the mandate, the Council alone was empowered to take steps to maintain law and order. By the end of December 1947, however, it had become clear that such powers were not likely to be invoked. Information reached Ottawa that the United States and the United Kingdom were "concerting action" to prevent the subject even being discussed in the Council.²

1. Cabinet Meeting 93(47), 4 December 1947, CAB 128/10.

2. L.B. Pearson to H.H. Wrong, 30 December 1947, 47B(s).

Thirdly, Pearson knew that partition must be accepted by all members of the United Nations and the people of Palestine. He thought that a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly -- and thus the force of world opinion -- would sway the doubters, abstainers and opponents, but not so. Neighbouring Arab States refused to recognize the will of the UN and threatened military opposition. Inside Palestine itself Arab and Jewish communities showed no inclination to lay aside their historic grievances. A year after the partition resolution had been passed in the General Assembly, Pearson explained that he and his colleagues had made an assumption of Jewish-Arab co-operation and goodwill, particularly in the economic sphere, and that this assumption had been crucial to the partition strategy:

We hoped then (though not blind to the obstacles and difficulties in the way) that it would have been possible for the two communities, though in separate states, to work together through a very considerable measure of economic integration. The resolution of November 29 was based on this assumption, which in turn led to the further assumption that a complicated distribution of territory which in other circumstances would have been quite unworkable, could be made between the two communities.

Pearson defended himself from criticisms after the fact: "Whether or not it was wise to make these particular assumptions is now a matter for history, but it is clear that some assumptions had to be accepted or no recommendation could have been made and this would simply have meant that nature would have been allowed to take its course."¹

1. L.B. Pearson, "Statement on Palestine", 22 November 1948, Statements and Speeches, 48/61.

As 1947 drew to a close, the American Consul General at Jerusalem reported that "terror is prevalent and normal life (i.e. normal for Palestine) is disappearing." Much worse, he predicted, was to come. The UN Commission was undertaking a virtually "impossible" task; its members and staff were "generally believed to be in real danger of assassination." As for the British, "their chief desire seems to be to prevent any organized warfare before departure."¹

The British were not to have their wish. In January 1948, the Palestine Commission received another setback when it realized that its activities would have to be restricted to the relative safety of the City of Jerusalem because of the violence in the Jewish and Arab areas. Unable to carry out its major responsibilities and with too little evidence of support from the United Nations itself, the Commission could only watch helplessly as the situation deteriorated into civil war.

In February 1948 Commission members described the problem to the Security Council members, including the Canadian representative, General A.G.L. McNaughton. The Commission called for the armed assistance necessary to discharge its responsibilities. But progress was slow. On 5 March the Council set up a five member committee made up of the permanent members to recommend a course of action. As Pearson feared, they were unable to come to an agreement. Ten days later, the Commission again reported that until law and order was restored, implementation would be

1. American Consul General at Jerusalem to Secretary of State, 31 December 1947, FRUS, 1947, V, 1322-1328.

impossible.¹

Meanwhile the withdrawal of British personnel was proceeding, and the conflict between Jews and Arabs widening. Faced with the distasteful possibility of implementing partition by force, the American representative on the Security Council advocated that partition be abandoned and a Special Session of the General Assembly convened to consider the establishment of a temporary trusteeship over Palestine. The Security Council was not prepared to jettison the partition scheme so abruptly, although a motion was adopted recommending a Special Session of the Assembly. Another Council motion advocated a truce in Palestine, and on 17 April this action was supplemented by a resolution calling upon the warring factions and neighbouring Governments to cease all activities of a military or para-military nature. One week later a Truce Commission was established, made up of the American, French and Belgian Counsuls in Jerusalem.²

The General Assembly's Special Session met for the first time only one month before the scheduled termination of the mandate. Despite the urgency, little was accomplished. Immediately after the United Kingdom relinquished the mandate on 14 May 1948, Jewish authorities in Palestine announced the establishment of the 'State of Israel.' A few hours later,

1. E.P. MacCallum, "The Palestinian Question", 15 September 1948, 47B(s).

2. See Charles M. Dalfen, "Canada, the United Nations and the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes", unpublished research paper, Department of External Affairs, 1968, 27-28.

without withdrawing the 29 November partition resolution, the General Assembly dissolved the Palestine Commission and recommended that a United Nations mediator be appointed to "promote a peaceful adjustment of the future situation in Palestine."¹ The new state of Israel applied to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for membership. The lines had been drawn, and the problem would find no easy solution. Years of turmoil and bloodshed would follow.

1. E.P. MacCallum, "The Palestinian Question", 15 September 1948, 47B(s).

CONCLUSION

Canada's part in the peaceful attempt to partition Palestine was an important and central one. The problem was complex, the issues emotionally charged, and time was short. For those involved in devising a solution, the experience was exasperating, exhausting and ultimately disappointing. At the United Nations, L.B. Pearson and his colleagues sought pragmatic and realistic solutions, always emphasizing legality and practicality. As Chairman of the First Committee and Canadian representative on committees of implementation, Pearson demonstrated skill and determination as negotiator and conciliator but also as a moulder of opinion. Justice Ivan C. Rand, too, was a central actor. He was prominent in bringing the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine to its difficult decision. Many of the provisions of the committee's majority report, which recommended partition, were drafted by Rand, and his interventions at key moments were crucial. Zionists so appreciated Pearson's and Rand's role that they called the Under-Secretary of State the "Balfour of Canada"¹ and they established the Ivan C. Rand Chair of Law at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.²

Involvement in the Palestine affair represented a departure and reflected a new way of thinking in Canadian external policy. "Instead of avoiding issues," Robert Spencer has pointed out, "there was a real willingness to stand up and be counted. Instead of shrinking from

1. Robert A. Spencer, Canada in World Affairs: From the UN to NATO, 1946-1949 (Toronto, 1959), 147.

2. Rosenberg, 31.

responsibility, there was usually a disposition to accept commitments. Instead of following cautiously, there was an occasional desire to lead." Spencer singled Pearson out for particular praise, and he was not alone.¹ Pearson "always found the proper device in all circumstances to help the two big contestants find proper ground," commented Horowitz. "His adherence to the pro-Partition fold was an important turning-point. His influence, as one of the foremost figures at the UN, was tremendous."²

Why did Canada become so deeply involved in the Palestine question? Certainly the Prime Minister was not pleased by the prominence of Pearson and Rand at the United Nations. King regretted ever consenting to Rand's participation in UNSCOP and recalled that he had tried to persuade St. Laurent that "it was better for us to keep out."³ As for Pearson, "Apparently they all use him in New York to be prominent in the Palestine Affair, and he being young and no doubt feeling his ability in these matters, I think lent himself perhaps too wholly to the desires of others."⁴ The Prime Minister believed

1. Spencer, 96, 147. See also, for example, Maurice Western, "Canada's Role in the Second Assembly", International Journal, III, (Spring, 1948), 128.

2. Horowitz, 279-80, 290.

3. J.W. Pickersgill and D.F. Forster, (eds.) The Mackenzie King Record, IV: 1947-1948 (Toronto, 1970), 121.

4. Ibid.

that he should concentrate on building his Department instead of involving himself in United Nations affairs. "If necessary," King confided to the British High Commissioner, "our officials would have to choose between positions they held in Ottawa and positions they would like to have in the United Nations. They could not serve two masters."¹

Pearson, of course, did not see it that way, and it was the Under-Secretary of State who was the key policy-making figure throughout the crisis. The Prime Minister, old and tired, was no longer Secretary of State for External Affairs. He was, furthermore, absent from Ottawa during most of the UN's fall session. A major constraint on the making of Canadian external policy was thus removed, or much diminished. The new Secretary of State, Louis St. Laurent, became Acting Prime Minister in King's absence. He had less time for his own portfolio. And he trusted Pearson implicitly. The Under-Secretary's scope and influence became all the greater.

Pearson was convinced that broad collective security arrangements were the key to a peaceful future for the nations of the world. The United Nations had been constituted to maintain international law and order. The Palestine problem came at a vital early moment in the UN's career, making it all the more important that the organization respond to the challenge. And Canada was well-placed to contribute to a solution: "of all the people," wrote Pearson, "in these discussions, we were best able to be objective."² But there was more to it than that. Responding to

1. Ibid., 155-156.

2. L.B. Pearson, "Palestine", 16 May 1949, Pearson Papers, MG 26 N9, vol 2.

the criticism that Canada was playing "Boy Scout" or "Sir Galahad"¹ to the international community, Pearson told A.F.W. Plumptre that he and the Department of External Affairs set their objectives "in terms of our responsibilities." "We may not always have made the right decisions, but we were nevertheless trying to calculate what was in our own best interests rather than to be merely enthusiastic or noble."²

Canada's own self-interest, then, lay at the heart of Pearson's thinking. In a dangerous and shrinking world, the UN was important to Canadian security. This made the manoeuvrings of the great powers all the more exasperating, all the more worrying. The British, Pearson told Robertson, "often seemed to go out of their way to be uncommunicative about... their timetable.... It would have made matters much simpler also if the United Kingdom had said before, rather than after the close of the Assembly, that they would not permit a United Nations Commission to enter Palestine before the termination of the Mandate." Such examples of "reticence", although not decisive, "created the impression that the United Kingdom Government was deliberately attempting to make it as difficult as possible for the Assembly to answer the question which the United Kingdom itself had placed on the

1. Pickersgill and Forster, IV, 135.

2. L.B. Pearson to A.F.W. Plumptre (then Associate Editor of Saturday Night), 3 April 1948, 5475-CD-2-40C.

agenda."¹ Pearson criticized the Americans, on the other hand, for their "apparent unwillingness to come to grips with the problem of Palestine in a realistic manner."² If they refused to take a firm line on Palestine, Pearson saw "little hope" of peace in the Middle East.³

The Palestine question posed a threat to Anglo-American harmony. That was bad for Canada and bad for the UN. Pearson acknowledged that it was important to strengthen any organization which brought London and Washington into closer alignment. The UN, in the face of the communist menace, usually did that. When a divergence of view developed inside the UN, "all the old Canadian fears" came to the surface.⁴ Pearson claimed that he and his colleagues drew back from UN commitments when Anglo-American discord was evident and that at the same time they worked hard behind the scenes to reconcile British and American views. There is little evidence of this, however, and it may be that Pearson made this assertion in order to meet or forestall criticism from Canadians for whom good relations

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1. L.A. Pearson to N.A. Robertson, 30 December 1947, 47B(s). Pearson added: "we incurred a certain amount of unpopularity amongst the junior members of the United Kingdom delegation for our part in the Palestine discussions, and there was even some talk...to the effect that we had been "disloyal" and had worked against the interests of the United Kingdom in a most deliberate and offensive way....I understand...that criticisms of a similar character have been circulating in London. They are regrettable for many reasons, but I think it particularly inopportune that we should be abused for abandoning the United Kingdom line on Palestine when it was quite impossible for anyone, in public or private, to discern what the line was. All we know was that it certainly wasn't a United Nations line even though the United Kingdom was alone responsible for the United Nations being seized of the matter at all."
 2. L.B. Pearson to H.H. Wrong, 30 December 1947, 47B(s).
 3. L.B. Pearson to Trygve Lié, 27 May 1948, Pearson Papers, MG 26 N, vol 63.
 4. L.B. Pearson, "Some Principles of Canadian Foreign Policy", January 1948, in Words and Occasions, 70.

in the North Atlantic triangle were more important than internationalist involvement. Pearson was also aware that there would be criticism from those who believed that Canadian policy was too closely identified with the United States. "...are we just a tail to the American State Department...?" a Maclean's Magazine interviewer asked Pearson in late 1949. The Under-Secretary used differences with the United States at the UN "in certain aspects of Palestine policy" as evidence "that we're no satellite to the United States or to anybody else."¹ He explained on another occasion that Canada ought to be flattered by American attention, but United States self-interest was part of the explanation as well.

The Americans are already tending to consider us their strong and invariable supporter. We are nearly always their first choice among foreign countries for election to United Nations jobs and memberships to which they attach importance. This is, in part, a tribute to our United Nations record. It is due, however, also to their feeling that they can "count on Canada"; that our reaction to events is usually the same as theirs; that they can talk frankly with us and thereby no doubt influence us; that we are one of themselves.²

The Palestine problem caused unpleasant and dangerously public disagreements between Britain and the United States over Palestine, and Pearson feared that the Soviet Union, which was commonly suspected to have "no policy but to fish in these troubled waters,"³ would be quick to take advantage.

1. "Straight Talk from Mike Pearson", Maclean's Magazine, LXII, 20, 15 October 1949.
2. L.B. Pearson, "Canada and the Security Council", 31 December 1947, 5475-DC-40c.
3. L.B. Pearson to Trygve Lie, 27 May 1948, Pearson Papers, MG 26 N, vol 63.

The partition plan was attractive to Canadian diplomats partly because it seemed the only chance of resolving the problem with the Soviet Union's co-operation but without its direct intervention. Partition, R.G. Riddell argued, would create a Western bulwark in the Middle East -- "an independent, progressive Jewish State in the Eastern Mediterranean with close economic and cultural ties with the West generally and in particular the United States.... [Its] existence may be of very real consequence to us in the future development of the Middle East."¹

Pearson frankly admitted to the Vancouver branch of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs in January 1948 that he "would have liked in this Palestine issue to have taken a strong independent stand for what we thought was the proper and right solution and to have dismissed the British and Americans with 'a plague on both your houses; on votes in New York, and oil in Arabia.'"² That course of action, however, was impossible for Canada:

A Canadian government is...limited...by the policies and attitudes of other governments. Of course we are independent now, constitutionally. But that independence is only relative....decisions can be taken in Washington or in London, which often have as important, and sometimes almost as immediate, an effect on the well-being

1. R.G. Riddell, "The Policy in Regard to Palestine of the Canadian Delegation to the Second Session of the General Assembly", 27 December 1947, 47-B(s).
2. L.B. Pearson, "Some Principles of Canadian Foreign Policy", January 1948, in Words and Occasions, 71. Pearson told the UN Secretary-General: "On the one hand there are the British who are determined not to prejudice their relations with the Arab States if that can be avoided while not formally opposing a Jewish State. On the other hand are the Americans who are determined not to prejudice their relations with Jewish voters, but are also interested in oil and strategy in Arab countries." Pearson to Trygve Lie 27 May 1948, Pearson Papers, MG 26 N, vol 63.

and security of our people as a Canadian act of Parliament or an order-in-council.

When we talk of Canadian foreign policy, therefore, we are not talking of clear-cut, long-range plans and policies under national direction and control. We are certainly not without power to influence our own external policies - and in many matters the influence is of course decisive. But we needn't exaggerate our power, or deceive ourselves about it, by talk of sovereign rights and unrestricted independence.

What was impossible was also undesirable:

We can most effectively influence international affairs not by aggressive nationalism but by earning the respect of the nations with whom we co-operate, and who will therefore be glad to discuss their international policies with us. This principle is based on both political and economic considerations. We instinctively know that Canada cannot easily secure and maintain prosperity except on the broadest basis of multilateralism - which is another name for internationalism. Even the British Commonwealth of Nations, which we quite properly consider to be a cornerstone of our external relations, is not wide enough for our needs in the postwar world. We also know, or should know, that there can be no political security except on the widest possible basis of co-operation. If that basis can be a universal one - so much the better. If it cannot, then on the broadest possible basis and inside the United Nations.

Pearson said that this "modesty" and "timidity" was "a sensible recognition of the fact that middle powers who once might have expanded in a rewarding, an imperialist, way can now merely expand their responsibilities and their worries."³ Another desirable feature of the partition

1. L.B. Pearson, "Some Principles of Canadian Foreign Policy", 68.

2. Ibid., 69.

3. Ibid.

plan, and one which Canada fought hard to have adopted, was that responsibility for implementation was thrown, in great measure, back on the people of Palestine. In the event of a breakdown of law and order, the authority of the Security Council could be invoked. The Canadians had argued that the partition plan should not be passed at all unless the permanent members of the Security Council were prepared to see it through, and for this reason they consistently urged that responsibility for dealing with the problem, if efforts to put the plan into effect were resisted, should rest with the Security Council.¹ Thus, Canada and her colleagues among middle and small powers would avoid being involved in an enforcement operation which did not have widespread support.²

Another traditional determinant of Canadian external policy was public opinion. In his analysis of Canadian public opinion, Zachariah Kay estimated that almost forty per cent of newspaper editorials in 1947 and 1948 were "neutral" about partition. A Canadian Gallup Poll, released in early February 1948, indicated that most of the Canadian public was also neutral on the Palestine issue; 58 per cent of those interviewed had no opinion. When and where there were views and opinions, Kay claimed, they were contradictory and divided: the "activities of the minor parties, opinions expressed in parliamentary debates and press comments revealed no clear-cut emergence of a Canadian public consensus supporting a Jewish national home, let alone

1. L.B. Pearson to A.F.W. Plumptre, 3 April 1948, 5475-CD-2-40c.

2. R.G. Riddell, "The Policy in Regard to Palestine of the Canadian Delegation to the Second Session of the General Assembly", 27 December 1947, 47-B(s).

a state in Palestine." Public opinion was therefore apparently negligible in its impact on government policy-making.¹

This evidence must be judged against clear indications that Jewish and Zionist pressure was felt, and doubtless acted upon, in Ottawa and New York.² George Ignatieff recalled that Pearson and the Canadian delegation "were clearly more responsive...to Jewish pressure and influence than they were to Arabs because they'd say that there were far more Canadians who were of that persuasion." Ignatieff and MacCallum remembered that Pearson in particular was wooed by the Zionist lobby and "under very strong Jewish pressure." Ignatieff recalled one conversation with Brooke Claxton, the influential Minister of National Defence, at a time "when we were in doubt how to vote. '...I don't mind how you vote but...Don't forget that I have no Arabs in my constituency and I have forgotten how many hundred Jews.'"2

Despite a genuine desire for balance, the Canadians were widely thought to be pro-Zionist, or at the very least sympathetic to the Jewish search for and claim to a homestead in Palestine. As we have seen, Rand and Pearson were lavishly praised by Canadian Jews and international Zionists. Such views can only have been buttressed by Pearson's public expressions.. In May 1949, he explained that he and Rand had been influenced by "the same principle of action":

1. Kay, 111, 119, 148, 194-195.

2. Stursberg, 72; Interviews with G. Ignatieff and E.P. MacCallum.

There were many ways in which the Palestine problem might have been solved, but we felt that no one of them would be satisfactory which did not give to the 750,000 Jews, who had been permitted, and even encouraged, to settle in Palestine, an opportunity to control their own affairs, and to work out their own future freely and independently. We were aware of the great accomplishments which this Jewish community had made in Palestine during the Mandate. We knew of the tremendous interest which Jews elsewhere in the world had in their experiment. We took into account the enormous investment, both human and material, which had gone into the founding of this Jewish community. We realized that whatever political arrangements might succeed the Mandate in Palestine, they would have to include for the Jewish community, the control of its own affairs.¹

Canada's policy on the Palestine question was a nice mixture of fresh Pearsonian idealism and internationalism and traditional Canadian caution and realism. That internationalism and idealism, of course, was not confined to Pearson alone, and his own sense of realism and caution was acute. "There are dangers in seeking perfection," he said in 1945. "If we insist on perfection we might not get anything. We would merely make the best the enemy of the good."² Partition, he recalled in his memoirs, "was certainly no ideal solution but it seemed...to me, the best that could possibly be achieved, the only solution that might bring peace and order to Palestine, with some recognition of the just claims of both sides. Provision was made for a Jewish state in Palestine, a 'national home', something which I felt was a sine qua non of any settlement."³ Looking back on a long and

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1. L.B. Pearson, "Palestine", 16 May 1949, Pearson Papers, M6 26 N9, vol 2.
 2. L.B. Pearson, "Canada and the San Francisco Conference", 4 June 1945, Words and Occasions, 63-64. See also Lyon and Thordarson, 3-4.
 3. Mike, II, 214.

distinguished career in international affairs, Pearson remembered the Palestine question as an important moment in the life of his country and that of the United Nations. It had been, in addition, his first great international crisis as Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs. Canada, he assured himself and his readers, had done its part in supporting peaceful international co-operation and conciliation. Events, however, had quickly overtaken the partition solution.¹ The Holy Land remained - and remains to this day - torn by division and hatred between Arab and Jew.

1. L.B. Pearson, "Statement on Palestine", 22 November 1948, Statements and Speeches, 48/61; and L.B. Pearson, "Palestine", 16 May 1949, Pearson Papers, MG 26 N9; vol 2.

APPENDIX I

Text of the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917
(Letter from the British Foreign Secretary to Lord Rothschild)

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet:-

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

(Signed) ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

APPENDIX II

General Recommendations of the UNSCOP Committee

31 August 1947

The eleven unanimously-adopted resolutions of the Committee were:

That the Mandate should be terminated and Palestine granted independence at the earliest practicable date (recommendations I and II);

That there should be a short transitional period preceding the granting of independence to Palestine during which the authority responsible for administering Palestine should be responsible to the United Nations (recommendations III and IV);

That the sacred character of the Holy Places and the rights of religious communities in Palestine should be preserved and stipulations concerning them inserted in the constitution of any state or states to be created and that a system should be found for settling impartially any disputes involving religious rights (recommendation V);

That the General Assembly should take steps to see that the problem of distressed European Jews should be dealt with as a matter of urgency so as to alleviate their plight and the Palestine problem (recommendation VI);

That the constitution of the new state or states should be fundamentally democratic and should contain guarantees for the respect

of human rights and fundamental freedoms and for the protection of minorities (recommendation VIII);

That the undertakings contained in the Charter whereby states are to settle their disputes by peaceful means and to refrain from the threat or use of force in international relations in any way inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations should be incorporated in the constitutional provisions applying to Palestine (recommendation VIII);

That the economic unity of Palestine should be preserved (recommendation IX);

That states whose nationals had enjoyed in Palestine privileges and immunities of foreigners, including those formerly enjoyed by capitulation or usage in the Ottoman Empire, should be invited to renounce any rights pertaining to them (recommendation X);

That the General Assembly should appeal to the peoples of Palestine to cooperate with the United Nations in its efforts to settle the situation there and exert every effort to put an end to acts of violence (recommendation XI);

In addition to these eleven unanimously approved recommendations, the Special Committee, with two members (Uruguay and Guatemala) dissenting, and one member recording no opinion, also approved the following twelfth recommendation:

"Recommendation XII. The Jewish Problem in General

"It is recommended that

"In the appraisal of the Palestine question, it be accepted as incontrovertible that any solution for Palestine cannot be considered as a solution of the Jewish problem in general."

APPENDIX III

United Nations General Assembly Resolution on the Future
Government of Palestine (Partition Resolution) 29 November 1947

The General Assembly,

Having met in special session at the request of the mandatory Power to constitute and instruct a special committee to prepare for the consideration of the question of the future government of Palestine at the second regular session;

Having constituted a Special Committee and instructed it to investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine, and to prepare proposals for the solution of the problem, and

Having received and examined the report of the Special Committee including a number of unanimous recommendations and a plan of partition with economic union approved by the majority of the Special Committee,

Considers that the present situation in Palestine is one which is likely to impair the general welfare and friendly relations among nations;

Takes note of the declaration by the mandatory Power that it plans to complete its evacuation of Palestine by 1 August 1948;

Recommends to the United Kingdom, as the mandatory Power for Palestine, and to all other Members of the United Nations the adoption and implementation, with regard to the future government of Palestine, of the Plan of Partition with Economic Union set out below;

Requests that

- (a) The Security Council take the necessary measures as provided for in the plan for its implementation;
- (b) The Security Council consider, if circumstances during the transitional period require such consideration, whether the situation in Palestine constitutes a threat to the peace. If it decides that such a threat exists, and in order to maintain international peace and security, the Security Council should supplement the authorization of the General Assembly by taking measures, under Article 39 and 41 of the Charter, to empower the United Nations Commission, as provided in this resolution, to exercise in Palestine the functions which are assigned to it by this resolution;
- (c) The Security Council determine as a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression, in accordance with Article 39 of the Charter, any attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged by this resolution;
- (d) The Trusteeship Council be informed of the responsibilities envisaged for it in this plan;

Calls upon the inhabitants of Palestine to take such steps as may be necessary on their part to put this plan into effect;

Appeals to all Governments and all peoples to refrain from taking any action which might hamper or delay the carrying out of these recommendations, and

Authorizes the Secretary-General to reimburse travel and subsistence expenses of the members of the commission on such basis and in such form as he may determine most appropriate in the circumstances, and to provide the Commission with the necessary staff to assist in carrying out the functions assigned to the Commission by the General Assembly.

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