CHAPTER II

THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF ISRAEL — THE INDIAN ATTITUDE.

Palestine has throughout the ages occupied an important place, in the Middle East. From the point of view of cultural origins, it has all along been one of the most ancient centres of civilization. In terms of modern political phenomena, it is the seat of one of the youngest of nation-states. It is the bridge across which have traversed the caravans of trade, the armies of war, and on its surface have fused and contrasting culture although maintaining the distinct overtones of a particular cultural. For quite substantial periods of time Palestine has formed parts of the European-Mediterranean world. At other times it has belonged to the empires of Asia minor the Iranian plateau and the valley of the Nile. Never has it figured more consequentially in human fortunes, however, than in the contemporary period. Throughout medieval and most of modern times, the history of Palestine has been chequered with the good rule and bad rule of the power that happened to gain ascendancy in the land last of the Mediterranean. Owing to the conquest of Sultan Selim I, Palestine after 1516 lay within the fold of the ottoan Empire. During the subsequent four hundred years, while ottoan Empire, and its prestige gradually diminished the state of affairs in Palestine were such as to rule out the possibility of developing anything even distantly resembling a national sentiment.

The Palestine issue which developed during the period 1945-48 had its origins in the inter-war period as stated before, after the world War I Britain was the Administering Authority for Palestine. "The intense conflict between the Arabs and Jews continuously disturbed the peace of the country and raised many problems".1

A number of plans were proposed for the solution of the political deadlock in Palestine. The Peel Commission, appointed by British Government, went to Palestine in 1936 to study the question. They recommended the partition of Palestine into two states. This and many other plans for the solution of the deadlock, which were suggested between 1945 and 1948, were rejected by one party or the other.

The great strategic importance of the East Mediterranean and the Middle East for the British Empire was clear to those who were in power in the United Kingdom, and consequently they had their own limitations in regard to their policy in Palestine. British had also to take account of the fact that all the members of the Arab League had supported the Palestine Arabs in their unqualified refusal to admit even a single Jew to Palestine. In 1939 a British White Paper suggested the limitations of the Jewish immigration to 75,000 for the following five years. They were to be settled only in a restricted area and there would not be any further immigration after that period without the consent of the Arabs. The Jews feared that this proposal would reduce their position to that of a permanent minority dominated by the Arabs. Now it was the turn of the Jews to become agitated and organize violent activities against the British authorities. They said that the United Kingdom was going against the spirit of the Balfour Declaration which envisaged the creation of a separate state for them. The problem of displaced Jews intensified their grievances. As has been explained earlier, in 1942 the International Zionist organisation called for the creation of a Jewish state, a Jewish Army and the opening of Palestine to unlimited immigration.²

² Ibid.
The United Kingdom was placed in a very difficult position. On the one hand she had to fulfil her promises to the Arabs, maintain her friendship with them and deal with the united demands of the Arab States. On the other hand there were her own promises to the Jews, and the force and influence of International Jewry. After World War II Britain's political influence and international prestige had considerably decreased and she had also to consider the interests of the two other Great Powers in this strategically important region. Meanwhile, the situation in Palestine was becoming very tense; violence and terrorist activities were organised by both parties. It was under these circumstances that the United Kingdom invited the United States to cooperate with her in holding an inquiry into conditions in Palestine and discovering a solution to the problem. Britain, her-self dependent upon American support in the Second World War could not ignore American representation, but felt that the intervention of the U.S.A. in Palestine affairs should be matched by American willingness to share responsibility for the execution of policy. The only solution to their problem lay in the establishment of a Jewish state.

At least the matter was referred to the U.N. General Assembly where the feature of Palestine raised many irreconcilable views. The Arab states were as one, and were firm in their view that Palestine should be converted into a free and United State at an early date. The Jews stood for the creation of a separate state of their own. These conflicting approaches were reflected in the speeches at the first special session of the Assembly though it had met for the purpose of constituting and instructing a special committee to consider the problem.

In the end the British Government felt absolutely convinced that the mandate was injurious and unworkable. Consequently the United Nations
sent its special Commission for Palestine to study the situation and make recommendations.

After studying the report of the Commission the general Assembly decided on a scheme of partition on the 29th November 1947. The Great Britain made it known that she would surrender the mandate at midnight on the 14th May 1948. The India could very well understand and appreciate that it was the typical method of the British - they always administered a parting kick and left some sources of tension and confusion in the country from which they withdrew.
The Indian attitude can be chronologically divided into two parts. The first phase of the issue troubled the Indians in general during the interwar period. The British had their strangle hold on India as well. Any entrenchment of the British Empire, direct or indirect would mean a better bargaining position and greater capacity to tighten its grip over the other colonies and dependencies. That is India's reaction was violent and her top leadership condemned the intrusion of Israel, with the active and secret support of these imperialist powers. The reaction of the Muslims (both Ulema and Politicians) was more violent. For them it was not only a political issue but also a religious one. The Indian Muslims have all along been very touchy about the British manoeuvres in the west Asian region.

The Khalifat movement in India, which gave a filip to the freedom movement in this country was mainly directed against the British who have been engaged in political manipulation in this region. The Muslims of India hated the British for three reasons:-(a) A large section of the Muslims justifiably considered the Christians their main rivals in the real of religion and culture. It were the Christians with whom the Muslims had to contend, and at whose hands they had suffered set backs. They were practically wiped out from Spain and in this race for domination throughout the later middle ages, both spiritual and intellectual the Christians proved triumphant. (b) This fact was never forgotten by the Muslims world, and more particularly by the Muslims in India, where the centuries old Muslim empire was thrown into confusion and later demolished by the British imperialists. The Muslims in India never forget this
humiliating stoke of fortune, and were always prepared to participate in any movement which was against the Christian powers more particularly the British. Their Hindu compatriots shared their sentiment for two reasons: firstly, the British Imperialists had spread their tentacles far and wide and India move to dominate economically and politically any underdeveloped region was opposed by them. Growing strength of the Imperialists forces would have evidently meant a postponment of the Indian emancipation. Any move to dabble in west Asian politics would have meant dominating all the routes to India. In the early twenties there was universal displeasure in India expressed in various forms against these imperialistic moves. West Asia was militarily the most strategic point, politically the most important area and economically the most useful. The Muslim League which claimed to represent the Muslims masses passed the following resolutions:

"The Working Committee of All India Muslim League deeply deplore and strongly condemn the attitude of the British Government and their policy in setting aside the declaration of the white Paper on Palestine under the pressure and influence of the Jewish capitalists and the American Zionist propaganda which is backed up and supported by the Government of U.S.A.

"Instead of implementing the white Paper which laid down that all Jewish immigration into Palestine should cease on the 1st of April 1946, the very readiness shown by the British Government to join the Anglo-American Committee on Palestine and their being a party to the setting up of this Committee with the object of reconsidering the Palestine question makes it clear beyond doubt that having shamelessly gone back upon their pledges given to the Arabs from time to time, the British were still trying to find some excuse for dumpng more Jews on the Holy Land in order to
to please the American Jewry.

"The Committee view that great concern and alarm the various reports emanating chiefly from U.S. sources suggesting the partitioning of Palestine into Arab and Jewish divisions. This barbaric suggestion which is tantamount to depriving the Arabs of their own homelands by importing fresh aliens national as emigrants, is a monstrous outrage and contempt of the basic principles of democracy and this would never be tolerated in any form or under any excuse or cover by the Arabs, as it would clearly means reconquest of Palestine by the Jews with the help of American and British baynets which is the aspiration and real objective of the Jews.

"The working Committee having considered carefully the situation in Palestine and as it is taking shape from day to day, are emphatically of the opinion that if Jewish immigration, which is forcible and illegal, does not cease immediately and if the U.S.A. Government does not give up its anti-arabs and unscrupulous policy in Arabia, the whole Middle East will be lit up into a huge conflagration that would shatter the peace of the whole world, which is supposedly so dear and of very deep concern both to the U.S.A. and the British Government but which can only be achieved if these Big Powers can provide a sense of security to other smaller nations and peoples and respect their independence and their right to live as independent and free people.

"The Committee, therefore, assure the Arab League which have now taken up the matter in their hands, and particularly the Arab Higher Committee and its Chairman, that Muslim India will stand by them and will extend all support possible and as far as the circumstances allow will cooperate with them in securing the freedom of the Holy Land from the
clutches of the British and in resisting and putting a stop to the onslaught of the Jewry packed up by the United States of America"1.

"The Committee urges upon the British Government to meet the solemn pledges made to the Arabs and the Muslims of India who stood by them solidly in the Great War"2.

"Resolved that Muslim Festivals such as Id, Bakrid, Barawat etc. should be celebrated in such a manner as to promote political unity and social solidarity among the Muslims of India, and that these occasions should be utilized for some useful and political work in support of the Muslim League. With this object in view, it is further resolved, that the 27th of Rajab next (the day of the prophets' Miraj) should be observed as Palestine Day. The programme to be observed on this day should include mass meetings and processions and a vigorous effort should be made to collect subscriptions for the Palestine Arabs Relief fund, under the control of Palestine Fund Committee appointed by the Working Committee in July last"3.

An emergency meeting of the Working Committee of the All India Muslim League was held at Gul-e-Ptana, the residence of Nazabsada Liaqat Ali Khan, Harding Avenue, New Delhi on the 17th and 18 of September 1939 under the Presidentship of Jinnah and the following resolution was passed:

"The policy of the British Government towards the Arabs in

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1. Text of the Resolutions passed by the working Committee of the All India Muslim League at its meeting held in Bombay from 26th July 1946 to 2nd Aug.1946, under the Presidentship of Quid-e-Azam Molvi M. A. Jinnah (Resolution No. 2).

2. Text of Resolution of the meeting of the working Committee of the All India Muslim League held at Mustafa-Castle, Meerut, on Sunday the 26th of March 1936 under the Presidentship of Mr. M.A. Jinnah (Resolution No. 6).

3. Text of Resolutions passed at the meeting of the Council of the All India Muslim League held in Delhi on the 27th and 28th of Aug. 1939, under the Presidentship of Mr. M.A. Jinnah (Resolution No. 14).
Palestine has wounded deeply Muslim feeling in sentiment and all representations in that behalf have had no real effect so far. The Committee once more urges upon His Majesty's Government to satisfy the Arab National Demands.

"That the All India Muslim League declares in the name of the Mussalmans of India that recommendations of the Royal Palestine Commission and the subsequent statement of policy presented by the Secretary of State for the colonies to Parliament conflict with their religious sentiments, and in the interests of world peace demands its rescission without further delay.

"The All India Muslim League calls upon the Government of India to issue instructions to the representatives of India at the Assembly of the League of Nations that in view of the failure of the present mandatory to carry out the terms of the mandate which was never accepted by the Arabs and the rest of the Islamic World and in order not to prejudice the Civil and religious rights of the Arabs they shall demand the annulments of the mandate and disassociate themselves from any decision tending to perpetuate it and thus to violate the fundamental right of the Arab inhabitants of Palestine to choose the form of Government best suited to their needs and requirements as guaranteed to them under International treaties.

"The All India Muslim League appeals to the rulers of Muslim countries to continue to use their powerful influence and best endeavours to save the holy places in Palestine from the sacrilege of non-Muslim domination and the Arabs of the Holy Land from enslavement of British's Imperialism backed by Jewish influence.

"The All India Muslim League expresses its entire confidence in the Leader and Members of the Delegation selected by the Palestine
Conference held on September 24, and 25, 1937 and appeals to every friend of the Arabs in Palestine to raise a united voice to redress their grievances.

"This session of the All India Muslim League warns the British Government that if it fails to alter its present pro-Jewish policy in Palestine the Mussalmans of India in consonance with the rest of the Islamic world will look upon Britain as the enemy of Islam and shall be forced to adopt all necessary measures according to the dictates of their faith."1

In 1928, the congress warmly assured the people of Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Iraq of its full sympathy with them in their struggle to free themselves from the grip of western Imperialism which in its view was also a great menace to the Indian struggle.

The following resolution was passed:

"This congress sends its warmest greetings to the People of Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Iraq and its assurances of full sympathy with them in their struggle for emancipation from the grip of western Imperialism, which is, in the opinion of the Congress, a great menace to India's struggle for freedom."2

As early as 1922, C.R. Dass in his presidential address had advised India to keep themselves in touch with world movements and with the lovers of freedom all over the world. Not until after the Brussels congress, however, did this become a recurrent theme in the pronouncements of the Congress leaders or affected their action. Mr. Nehru described the Brussels congress as the outward symbol of the intense desire for mutual cooperation which had taken possession of the oppressed and the exploited all over the world. He warned that in India in her

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1. Text of Resolutions passed at the Twentyfifth Annual session of the All India Muslim League on the 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th of Oct. 1937 at Lucknow with Mr. Jinnah in the Chair.

2. The Indian National Congress 1928. Being the Resolutions passed by the Congress, the All India Congress Committee and the working Committee during the year 1928. Calcutta Congress Session 1928 Dec. 29, 30, & 31 1928
own interests as well as in the interests of the world could not afford to remain isolated from the great movements and forces which were shaping the future. At this suggestion the Congress in 1927, decided to affiliate itself with the League against Imperialism as an associate member. In 1928, the Congress declared that the Indian struggle was part of the general world struggle against imperialism and hence desired that India should develop contacts with other countries and peoples who were also combating imperialism. It also decided to open a Foreign Department in its office to develop such contacts.

In defence as well as in foreign affairs it was Mr. Nehru rather than Gandhiji who showed the keener interest and whose voice generally prevailed.

Mr. Nehru took the opportunity presented by the brief respite from prison in 1933, to share his thoughts with his countryman through a series of articles on the national and international situation which were subsequently published in a pamphlet entitled "Whiter India". Here he emphasized that it was only in a world perspective that the Indian problem could be properly understood.

With Mr. Nehru's assumption of the presidency of the Congress in April 1936, these views became the foundation of the Indian Nationalist outlook on world affairs. In his presidential address he devoted a good deal of space to his analysis of the world situation and called upon the congress to identify itself with the nationalist and socialist forces in the world struggling against Imperialism and Fascism, the two forces of decaying capitalism.

The Congress followed the lead given by Mr. Nehru and between 1936 and 1939, extended its sympathy and support to all victims of Fascism and imperialism in Abyssinia, Spain, China and Palestine. The Palestini
imbroglio also attracted the attention of the congress. Its sympathies were entirely on the side of the Arabs in their struggle against British rule as well as against the aims of Zionists. Despite its sympathies for the Jews in view of their persecution in Europe, it considered Palestine as an Arab country and deplored the efforts of Zionists to establish themselves there under the cover of British armed might. Mr. Nehru explained his thinking on this question in an article in June 1936. He made it clear at the outset that for from harbouring any prejudice against the Jewish people, he had every sympathy with them, especially in view of their tragic Flight in Europe. Few people, he wrote, could withhold their deep sympathy from the Jews for the long centuries of the most terrible oppression to which they had been subjected all over Europe. Fewer still could repress their indignation at the barbarities and racial suppression of the Jews which the Nazis had indulged in during the last few years, and which continued till that day. The article runs as follows:

"My expression of sympathy with the Arab National movement and their struggle for freedom has brought me some protests from Jews in India. But my reading of war-time and post-war history shows that there was a gross betrayal of the Arabs by the British imperialism. The many promises that were made to them by Colonel Lawrence and others, on behalf of the British Government, and which resulted in the Arabs helping the British and Allied Powers during the war, were consistently ignored after the war was over. Having been promised freedom and independence repeatedly from 1915 onwards, suddenly they found themselves converted into a mandatory territory with a new burden added on - the promise of the creation of a national home for the Jews - a burden which almost made it impossible for them to realize independence......
"Such case as the Zionist has might be called a moral one their ancient associations with their Holy Land their reverence for it one may sympathise with it. But what of Arabs? For them also it was Holy Land - both for Muslims and Christian Arabs. For thirteen hundred years and more they have lived their and all their racial and national interests had taken strong roots there.

"It is quite possible that a number of Jews might have found welcome in Palestine and settled down there. But when the Zionist came with the avowed object of pushing out the Arabs from all places of importance and of dominating the country, they could hardly be welcome.

"The problem of Palestine is thus essentially a nationalist one - a people struggling for independence against imperialist control and exploitation. It is not a racial or religious one. If the Jews had been wise they would have thrown in their lot with the Arab struggle for independence. Instead they have chose to side with the British imperialism and to seek its protection against the people of the country.

"India and Palestine have both their national problems and both struggle for independence, they have something in common in this struggle and the opponent is the same."}

Speaking on occasion of the Palestine Day on September 27, 1936 in Allahabad, Mr. Nehru said: "The Jews have been and are the victims of a cruel fascism and we must feel for their sufferings. It is misfortune that they should allow themselves to be exploited in Palestine by British imperialism. Their future in Palestine lies in cooperation with the Arabs and in recognition of the fact that Palestine is and must continue to be essentially an Arab country. Our sympathies and good wishes must go our to the people of Palestine in this hour of their distress."
His reading of history, however, led Mr. Nehru to conclude that the happenings in Palestine since the Balfour Declaration represented a betrayal of Arabs, by British Imperialism. He admitted that the Jews had a right to Jerusalem as their Holy Land and to have free access to it, but pointed out that the Balfour Declaration went much beyond that it envisaged the creation of a Jewish State within an Arab community which was to grow in number and economic strength till it dominated the whole of Palestine. Besides, Palestine was also a Holy Land for the Arabs Muslims as well as Christian, who had lived their for thirteen hundred years or more, and not empty with ultimate scope for new colonization.

It is possible, Mr. Nehru continued, for a certain number of Jews to go and settle in Palestine in an atmosphere of peace and good-will, but when went with the object of dominating the country, they could hardly expect to be welcomed by the Arabs. "Fundamentally the problem of Palestine was for Nehru a nationalist one: the Arabs were struggling against imperialist control and domination. It was a pity, therefore, that the Jews of Palestine instead of aligning themselves with that struggle had thought it fit to take the side for British imperialism and to seek its protection against the inhabitants of the country."1

Against this background, the congress working Committee in 1936, sent its greetings to the Arabs of Palestine and sympathised with them in their struggle for independence. The underscore its attitude the congress observed September 27, 1936, as Palestine Day by holding meetings and demonstrators throughout the country in support of the Arabs. One of the resolutions runs as follows:

"The Committee record their emphatic protest against the regime of terror that has been established in Palestine by British Imperialism with a view to coerce the Arabs into accepting the proposed partition of

Palestine and ensure them of the solidarity of the Indian people with them in their struggle for national freedom.\textsuperscript{2}.

When after the suppression of Arab rebellion in Palestine in 1936, the British Government introduced repressive measures and intimated talks for partition, the congress came forward in support of the Arabs and the above referred resolution was passed.

In October 1937, the All India Congress Committee recorded its emphatic protest against the reign of terror said to have been instituted in Palestine with the aim of coercing the Arabs into accepting partition. In February 1938 the annual session of the Congress returned once more to the subject of Palestine, condemning the plan for partition, protesting against the repressive policy of British, and expressing sympathy with the Arabs. The resolution runs as under:

"The Congress condemns the decision of Great Britain as a Mandatory power to bring about the partition of Palestine in the teenth of opposition of the Arabs and the appointment of a Commission to carry out this project.............

"The Congress express its full sympathy with the Arabs in their struggle for national freedom and their fight against Britain Imperialism.

"The Congress holds that the proper method of solving the problem by which the Jews and the Arabs are faced in Palestine is by amicable settlement between themselves and appeals to the Jews not to seek the shelter of the British Mandatory and not to allow themselves to be exploited in the interest of British Imperialism\textsuperscript{1}.

\textsuperscript{2} Indian National Congress 1936-37. Being the resolutions passed by the Congress, the All India Congress Committee and the working Committee during the period between April 1936 to Jan. 1938 (Calcutta, October 29, 30, and 31, 1937).

\textsuperscript{1} Fisher S.N.- The Middle East (A History) (London 1959) Page 439.
Towards the end of 1938, the growing persecution of Jews in Germany and the Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine led both Gandhiji and Mr. Nehru to discuss the whole Jewish question at some length. Gandhiji condemned the persecution of Jews in Germany in very strong terms. "If there ever could be a justifiable war," he wrote, "in the name and for humanity, a war against Germany, to prevent the wanton persecution of a whole race, would be completely justified." Gandhiji, however, did not sympathise with the idea of a Jewish national home, and saw no reason why the Jews should not, like other peoples of the earth, make their country their home where they were born and where they earned their livelihood. If the Jews maintained that they had no home but Palestine, would they relish the idea of being forced out of the other parts of the world? or did they want a double home? Palestine belonged to the Arabs in the same sense that England belonged to the English or France to the French. It is wrong and inhuman to impose the Jews on the Arabs..........................

Gandhiji had no doubt that the Jews in Palestine were proceeding in the wrong way. "If religious conviction drew them to the idea of the national home, they should give up their reliance on force and try to win the Arab heart."

On July 14, 1946, Gandhiji wrote on Jews and Palestine.

"I do believe that the Jews have been cruelly wronged by the world. "Getto" is so far as I am aware, the name given to the Jewish locations in many parts of Europe........................

The world should have been their home, if only for the sake of their distinguished contribution to it........why should they depend on American money or British arms for forcing themselves on an unwelcome land."2.

1. Prof. Bimal Prasad - Origins of Indian Foreign Policy. Pages 132, 33, & 34.
Mr. Nehru entirely agreed with "Gandhiji's views on the Jewish problem. Mr. Nehru thought it unfortunate that the Jews had aligned themselves with British imperialism. By doing so they had not even served their own interests, for British imperialism had had its day and was fading away. These views were also reflected in the resolution of the next annual session of the congress held in March 1939. It referred to the previous expressions of sympathy with the Arabs in Palestine and conveyed to them greetings and good wishes for complete success. The resolution stated:-

"The Congress has previously declared its full sympathy with the Arabs in Palestine in their struggle for National freedom and their fight against British Imperialism and has condemned the policy of mandatory power in Palestine. The congress trusts that the Arabs and Jews will endeavour to find a basis for direct cooperation with a view to establishing an independence democratic state in Palestine with adequate protection of Jewish rights".

After independence the attitude of Indian Government and the Indian public opinion in general was more in favour of the newly independent and emerging nations of the Arab countries. This attitude was mainly due to (a) liberal leadership which had all along supported the Arab cause (b) the secular character of the state which was more in keeping with the Arab approach in respect of their own domestic policies, (c) The age-old cultural ties of these regions with India. Many cultural currents which constituted composite culture of India had flowed in from the west Asian regions. The impact of that culture in Indian

1. Indian National Congress - March 1939 to Jan. 1940. Being the resolutions passed by the congress, the All India Congress Committee and the Working Committee during the period between March 1939 to Jan. 1940 (Tripura, Mhakosha; March 10, 11, and 12, 1939).
national life was great and called for a homogeneity in outlook, (d) India always sympathised with the countries which had fallen prey to the Imperialist designs and was always prepared to help in clearing up the political cob webs which these imperialist had woven around all such peoples, (e) India was follower and an advocate of the policy of non-alignment and she wanted to help these nations which were being dragged into the vortex of cold war and whose economy and political stability was being threatened by such moves, (f) Economically India's interest were bound more with this regions. They were, besides suppliers of Oil, the main countries which imported Indian goods. India has quite substantial trade with these countries, (g) Suez Canal was the sea only link between India and the Western world. If Suez Canal is closed indefinitely or if the area around it is in a state of political flux, India stands to lose.

For these reasons India went all out to support the Arab countries, approvingly looked at the sentiment of Arab nationalism and actively supported them in International Councils and the United Nations.

Ever since the National Government of India began to send her accredited representatives to the United Nations Conferences, they had been proclaiming not only the adherence of the country to the principle and purposes of the United Nations, embodied in the Charter, but also the determination of her people to help to strengthen the organisation. It is India's faith in the world organisation that encouraged her to refer to it question of treatment of Indian in South Africa and Pakistan's complicity in the invasion of Kashmir. India is convinced that only the United Nations provides the machinery for peaceful settlement of disputes between nations. On many issues her delegates have taken independent stand
in line with the declarations of their Government that India was not prepared to fall in with the members of any block. On the question of Palestine, this independent policy of India was very striking. Among the important matters that came before the United Nations this was the only one on which the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. though for difference reasons, found, themselves in agreement. Both suggested partition of the country. India did not agree with this view and suggested a deferral Palestine instead of a unitary state.

Those who proposed partition were Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay. Their plan envisaged the establishment of an Arab state, a Jewish state and the placing of the city of Jerusalem under international trusteeship. The Plan submitted by India, Iran and Yugoslavia was based in the creation of a Federal state of Palestine. Within the federation there would two autonomous Arab and Jewish states. For a period of three years Jews would be allowed to immigrate into their state to extend compatible with its absorptive capacity as determined by an International Commission.

The second session of the Assembly in September 1947 considered, along with the report of the Committee, a proposal by Saudi Arabia and Iraq that mandate should be terminated and Palestine recognized as an independent unitary state. The Assembly rejected the plan for a federation as well as the plan for a unitary state of Palestine and accepted the recommendations of the majority plan of the special Committee, which
provided for the partition of the country into separate Jewish and Arab states, bound together by a system of economic union, with an international area for Jerusalem.

A Commission was created to implement Assembly's decision and to assist the Mandatory Power performing its functions up to the time of the termination of the mandate. The Security Council was requested to take necessary measures, as provided for in the plan, for its implementation and to determine as a threat to peace, branch of peace or act of aggressions, or any attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged by the plan.

The resolution containing these recommendations was accepted by the Assembly by a vote of 33 to 13 with 10 abstentions. Among those who supported the resolution were 15 European countries (including Soviet Union), 13 Latin American States, the U.S., four Commonwealth Countries, the Philippines and Liberia. All the Asian states opposed it, except China which abstained and Siam whose representative was absent.

In accordance with the Assembly's resolution, the Security Council took cognizance of the resolution of 9 December 1947 and the Trusteeship Council engaged itself in preparing a draft state for Administering the city of Jerusalem.

Conditions in Palestine were not very encouraging for the U.N. Palestine Commission to perform its functions. Early in 1948 the Governments and organisations of the Arab world declared that they did not recognize the validity of the Assembly's decision and would not accept the partition of the country. The Jews, on the other hand, demanded that United Nations should implement its decision, if necessary by force.

The Commission's report made it clear that it was impossible for it to fulfill its decisions unless the Security Council compelled the parties
to agree to easy out the provision of the resolution of 29 November 1947. This would mean providing the Commission with armed assistance to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.

The special session of the Assembly met in April 1948. The first resolution adopted by the Assembly called upon persons and organizations in Palestine to cease all military and violent activities and to refrain pending the General Assembly's further consideration of the issue, from any political activity which might prejudice the rights and claims of either community.

But bitter fighting continued in Palestine. This was intensified to a very high degree after the withdrawal of British forces on 15 May.

The discussion in the special session of the Assembly had in the meantime made it clear that the U.S. proposal for establishing a temporary trusteeship for Palestine would not secure the required two-thirds majority. A resolution of the Assembly called all Governments and organizations interested in Palestine to secure a truce in Palestine as early as possible.

The Palestine Commission was also relieved by this resolution from further exercise of its authority. Instead the resolution provided for the appointment of a United Nations Mediator whose chief function was to promote a peaceful adjustment of the future situation in Palestine.

The U.N. Mediator had to perform his functions in surroundings which were very hostile to him. The Jews were very dissatisfied with the non-implementation of the General Assembly's resolution of November 1947. Almost simultaneously with the termination of the United Kingdom mandate they established a Provisional Government which proclaimed the independence of the State of Israel.

The situation was more complicated by the action of Egypt, Transjordan,
Iraq, Syria and Lebanon who become involved in a war against the Jews and their new state.

The Security Council's resolution soon had their effect and hostilities ceased on 1st June. Much of the credit for the observance of the cease-fire must go to the Mediator and his military observers, who worked under most unfavourable circumstances. On 28 June he out-lined his plan for the settlement of the dispute. In accordance with this plan, Palestine would be a Union of two members, one Arab and one Jewish.

Both parties rejected this plan and there were continuous breaches of the truce during August. Count Bernadotte, the Mediator, informed the Security Council of his concern and stated that the situation was rapidly getting worse. He submitted another plan on 16 September but on 17 Sept., the day on which the Mediator's proposals were forwarded to the United Nations - he was assassinated by irregulars in the Jewish-held territory of Jerusalem.

The problem of Palestine came up before the General Assembly in its third session. During the debate in the Political Committee, India reiterated her opposition to the partition of Palestine. Her delegate suggested that the General Assembly should adopt the proposal for a federal state, with autonomous Jewish and Arab areas. No solution of the problem, which was not based on the consent of the Arabs, could be considered satisfactory by India.

Britain, supported by the U.S., at first submitted a resolution endorsing the Bernadotte plan for Palestine. The Soviet delegate accused both Britain and United States of manoeuvring to shape Palestine to their own interest. He supported due-right reaffirmation of the original 1947 partition plan.
The Political Committee accepted this proposal of Great Britain. It gave the consilieation Commission a broad mandate to seek agreement between the Arabs and the Jews. The Commission was to draw up detailed proposals for a permanent international regime for Jerusalem.

On the whole there was a distinct improvement in the Palestine situation towards the end of 1949. But some aspects of the problem still remained to be solved.

India's attitude towards the problem was influenced by many factors. On this issue Muslims in all parts of the world had taken a clear stand favouring the Arabs. The Muslim states of West Asia and Pakistan had taken a keen interest in Palestine and uncompromisingly opposed the idea of partition. The Government of India, which wanted to encourage cooperation among Asian countries in the International field, could not afford to antagonize those states by adopting a different policy of this issue. Moreover, India had also to take note of the fact that Pakistan had tried to make capital out of the Hindu–Muslim disturbances in this country by propagating the view that her Government was hostile to the Muslims. Again, the feelings of Sixty Millions Muslim in India on this matter were also important.

Another factor which influenced India's decision was her own experience of partition. Weighting the merits of the issue, India could not agree with the view that, because many Jews were ill-treated by the Europeans, Palestine should provide a home for them. She felt that the Palestine problem must be separated from that of the Jewish refugees of Europe.

These facts led India not to give immediate recognition to Israel. But there was a gradual realization in this country that the new state
had come to stay and that it had to be recognized one day.

While speaking at the United Nations the Indian representative Mr. Asaf Ali said: "I appeal to everyone concerned that peace should be the aim of all, in so far as Palestine is concerned. This time has now come when the conscience of humanity must be turned to the fact, that, that land shall remain the sanctuary and shrine of peace forever. Palestine has become the acid test on human conscience. The United Nations will find out that upon its decision will depend the future of humanity; they will decide whether humanity is going to proceed by peaceful means or humanity is going to be torn to pieces.

Do not think of constitutionality; it is the determination of the people that counts - I know. The Palestinians have a determination of their own. No one can possibly wipe that determination out; no, not even the United Nations. They can wipe out Palestine, they can wipe out the Palestinians, but they cannot wipe out the determination, the soul of the people. Do not be impatient.

While the British representative, Sir Alexander Cadogan, favoured the Jewish Agency, Mr. Asaf Ali (India) wanted the Arab Higher Committee to be heard by the members of the General Assembly. Mr. Asaf Ali said: "It has been said that the Jewish agency was mentioned in the mandate. This is true. However, I find that, even before the Jewish agency is mentioned in Article 4 of the mandate, the people inhabiting Palestine

are mentioned in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which is of permanent importance. It is impossible for me to understand how we can hear one section of the population and not hear a considerable portion—infact, a majority—of the population of Palestine, and come to any conclusion whatsoever.

I do not see how it is possible for any body to make up his mind about the actual issues involved in the question which is going to be referred to the Committee unless he has heared all sides.

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