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ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE

COMMUNICATION FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE JEWISH AGENCY RELATING  
TO THE AGENCY'S VIEWS ON PARTITIONING

The following letter has been received from the Executive Office of  
the Jewish Agency relating to the Agency's views on partitioning.

The Executive of the Zionist  
Organisation/The Jewish Agency  
for Palestine

Genève, August 23rd, 1947.  
37, quai Wilson

The Chairman,  
United Nations Special Committee  
on Palestine,  
Palais des Nations,  
Geneva.

Sir,

In view of the fact that the deliberations of the Committee appear to  
be reaching a decisive stage, I find it necessary to address to you the  
following communication.

The Jewish Agency is deeply concerned lest its insistence on the  
imperative necessity for a Jewish State in Palestine should give rise to the  
impression that the Jews would be prepared to accept any scheme of partition  
provided only it gave them statehood. There could be no graver misconception  
of the position. The primary vital need of the Jewish people is for an  
adequate area, such as would render possible a comprehensive development  
and settlement programme and ensure the absorption of large-scale immigration.  
A solution not providing for such large-scale absorption of immigrants would  
not meet the burning issue of the homeless Jews of Europe, nor would it solve  
the problem of the Jewish people's future. For the issue to be met, the  
Jewish State must comprise the areas where Jewish settlement has already  
been in progress as well as areas capable of further large-scale development.  
The two under-cultivated and under-populated areas which offer room for  
substantial agricultural development are the Negev, particularly its northern  
part, and the whole of Galilee. The inclusion of both in the Jewish State  
is thus indispensable. Another essential condition is the inclusion of  
the Jewish part of modern Jerusalem.

I must make it clear that the principle of partition has not been  
officially endorsed by the governing bodies of the Jewish Agency. The  
Executive believes that there is a fair prospect of a scheme for the  
/establishment

establishment of a Jewish State in part of Palestine securing the necessary endorsement if the concrete scheme proposed were, territorially and otherwise, of such character as to secure the fulfilment of the vital needs of the Jewish people as indicated above. If, on the other hand, the area of the Jewish State were reduced to such proportions as would cripple further progress in terms of the absorption of immigrants and their settlement on the land, the statehood to be conferred on the Jews will be regarded by them as devoid of any real substance and there would be no prospect of the scheme being supported by any responsible Jewish quarter.

Attention may here be drawn to the concluding paragraph of the "Political Survey 1946-1947" which was submitted by us to the Committee soon after their arrival in Palestine, reading as follows:

"In the light of the analysis presented in these pages, a solution on partition lines, if it is to be at all acceptable, can hardly be regarded as other than a pis aller. The original area of the Balfour Declaration has already been partitioned by the excision of Transjordan, and a further curtailment of the area of the Jewish National Home must involve great sacrifice. Any solution of the Palestine problem which may be proposed will be judged by the Jewish people by reference to whether it ensures large-scale immigration and settlement and leads without delay to the establishment of the Jewish State."

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Yours faithfully,

Sgd. M. Shertok  
EXECUTIVE OF THE JEWISH AGENCY.