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Chairman: Mr. Leopoldo BENITES (Ecuador).

AGENDA ITEM 31

Report of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (A/5136, A/5214; A/SPC/74, A/SPC/L.89, A/SPC/L.90) (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN expressed concern at the short time remaining for conclusion of the Committee's work. He asked the members of the Committee to help him by keeping their statements as short as possible and by voluntarily limiting the exercise of their right of reply. Speakers could, in their statements, deal both with the substance of the question and with the draft resolutions (A/SPC/L.89 and L.90). He was afraid that, unless the Committee co-operated, it would be necessary to arrange for three meetings a day.

2. Mr. ADEYINKA (Nigeria), speaking on a point of order, asked when the report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine would be distributed.

3. The CHAIRMAN replied that it would probably be distributed on the morning of 12 December.

4. Mr. ROWAN (United States of America) said that his delegation had not exercised its right of reply immediately after the criticisms levelled at the United States during the debate, because it had wanted to reply by simply stating its main ideas on the problem.

5. The question of the Palestine refugees was almost as old as the United Nations. While other problems had become less acute, the problem of the Palestine refugees still existed, although the most energetic efforts had been made to find a practical solution. Each year the problem became more difficult to solve, and each day without a solution meant one more day of frustration for over a million human beings. The problem became worse as the number of refugees increased, and time only accentuated the wastage of the new generation.

6. The main responsibility for solving the problem lay with the five States directly concerned—Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and the United Arab Republic.

The Assembly should face that fact. Conciliation efforts by third parties, however earnest, fair, ingenious and well-intentioned, would not succeed if the sovereign States on both sides of the armistice line were not prepared to solve the problem and to display genuine concern for the refugees as human beings above all else. Unfortunately, such good will had for the most part been lacking. The refugees themselves had cause to be sorely disappointed at the attitude of Governments which denied them and their offspring the opportunity to lead normal lives; it was the refugees, after all, who were the core of the problem; it was they who should be the fundamental concern of Governments and who, in a free world, should have a say in their own future.

7. As the years passed, each side adhered to the same rigid attitude, hoping, in the face of all logic, that the arguments of the adversaries would be miraculously destroyed and that it would be possible to solve the problem in accordance with its own wishes. After fourteen years of polemics, such a development seemed unlikely. The spokesmen of both parties had boasted that time was on their side. There should be an end to such self-deception. Indeed, as long as the dispute existed and aroused all the passions to which expression had now once more been given, time would be on the side of danger, and despair would increase. It was certainly not on the side of the refugees, a new generation of whom would inherit the deprivations and burdens inherent in their grievous situation.

8. Again and again new tactics were tried. Some people appeared to think that the chasm dividing the parties would suddenly be bridged, if only the Assembly invited them to sit round a conference table. The United States had always been and still was in favour of direct talks between the parties, at such time as there were real prospects of helping the refugees or reaching some other constructive solution. Unfortunately, the time did not seem ripe and, in those circumstances, such proposals were unhelpful.

9. The United States would very much like Israel and its Arab neighbours to negotiate a settlement of their differences. In view of the emotions involved, that would probably take some time. It should not be forgotten that at the centre of the problem were human beings who felt dispossessed of their ancestral lands and sincerely believed they had suffered an injustice. That was a compelling reason why a peaceful and just solution should be found. His delegation was convinced that a solution could be achieved more quickly if there was willingness to compromise on the key issues dividing the parties, such as the refugee question itself. It was obvious to any objective observer that the Arabs were still not convinced of the good will of Israel, and that it was very difficult for Israel to display good will in the face of the continued threats to its very existence.

10. It had also been proposed that a United Nations custodian should be appointed to administer the property in Israel which the refugees regarded as theirs. That proposal, too, did not seem to offer a realistic basis for compensation or aid for the refugees. In fact, the proposal was a retrograde step, since it was clearly designed to undermine the very foundation of Israel's sovereignty.

11. From the outset, the United States had taken a deep and sympathetic interest in the Arab refugee problem. It was the United States which had borne the heaviest share of the expenditure designed to ensure the refugees' survival and minimum welfare. It was also most sincerely concerned about the rights and interests of the States involved.

12. Since the fifteenth session of the General Assembly, the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine had engaged in a new initiative to overcome the deadlock on the issue. Thanks largely to the dedication and realism of the Commission's Special Representative, Mr. Joseph E. Johnson, that had proved to be a useful endeavour. The Commission had learnt what was not feasible, at least in existing circumstances, and what might be feasible. In deference to the specific and unanimous request of all the parties directly concerned, and because the Commission had not concluded its work, it had been decided that specific details about Mr. Johnson's efforts should not for the time being be published. The United States representative urged the members of the Committee to respect the wishes of the parties and not to give credence to distorting rumours which had been circulated on the subject.

13. The representative of the United States wished to point out that his Government was profoundly disappointed by the course which the dispute had taken over the years. It was not enough to come to each session of the General Assembly and hear the same recriminations and the same conclusions on the lack of progress. For the refugees, lack of progress was not enough. The United States, for its part, did not accept the *status quo*. The Members of the United Nations should unite to find a solution. Since no solution perfect from all points of view could ever be found, each side should be prepared to sacrifice some part of its desires. Every new proposal should be thoroughly explored and every initiative offering any hope of progress should be encouraged. The United States was prepared to continue to work with other members of the Conciliation Commission in search of a solution, and it sincerely hoped that during the coming year the parties would show a spirit more co-operative than that which they had so far displayed.

14. As was only too frequent in debates on the question, there had been little emphasis on the report (A/5214) of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)—in other words, on the measures being taken to provide the refugees with food, education and medical attention. Considering the means at its disposal, the Agency was doing excellent work. The United States Government wished to pay a tribute to Mr. Davis and his colleagues for the humaneness and administrative qualities they were displaying in their difficult task. The United States Government did not share all the views expressed in the Agency's latest report, but it was convinced that the Agency was ably fulfilling a function

of prime importance not only to the refugees but also to the five Member States directly concerned with the problem. The United States delegation was prepared to support the extension of the existing mandate until 30 June 1964. At the pledging meeting, it would speak in greater detail about the successes of the Agency and the problems involved in its work. His delegation hoped that all Member States were carefully considering whether their forthcoming pledges were in fact proportional to their means and to their expressed interest in the question.

15. The United States representative did not intend to go into more detail at the present stage. The solution of the Arab refugee problem would be found, not in repetition of the same debates, but in the quiet endeavours of men of vision and good will who were working out point by point a procedure for meeting the desires of the refugees so far as possible, while protecting the legitimate interests of the States concerned. But no plan, however ingenious, could succeed unless there was a minimum of good will and tolerance. It was precisely that good will which had been lacking for fourteen years. The refugees had been encouraged to look to the United Nations for help. It was now for the United Nations to respond effectively to that challenge.

16. Mr. GALLIN-DOUATHE (Central African Republic) recalled the Committee's debates on the question of Palestine refugees at the sixteenth session.

17. At that time (306th meeting) the Director of UNRWA had pointed out that in thirteen years little progress had been made towards a solution of the problem, that 300,000 young refugees had reached adult age without an opportunity to develop any skills, and that many of them had become unemployable. The number of refugees had increased, their life would continue to be difficult, and they would demand repatriation ever more insistently. Aid to the refugees should be continued, in order to ensure peace and stability in the Middle East. But the problem would remain in all its complexity unless means of solving it were found without delay; and the search for such solutions was the function of the Conciliation Commission rather than of UNRWA.

18. Speaking on behalf of the Arab States at the same session (308th meeting), the representative of Saudi Arabia had questioned the impartiality of Mr. Johnson, the Special Representative of the Conciliation Commission; he had criticized Mr. Johnson's report, and had requested that the Assembly should reconstitute the Commission on a broader or more neutral basis. In the Saudi Arabian representative's opinion, the only possible solution was repatriation, and if the United Nations did not undertake that task, the people of Palestine would not hesitate to resort to force. The representative of Saudi Arabia had accused Israel of having started the war in 1948 in order to bring about the partition of Palestine: Israel had created itself by expelling the Palestinian Arabs from their country and robbing them of their property and land; the number of Arab refugees already exceeded one million and was steadily increasing.

19. At the 309th meeting, the Israel representative had replied that, blinded by hatred, the Arab States were bent on eliminating Israel by military, political and economic means and on vilifying it with their propaganda; Zionism was not expansionist, neo-colonialist or racist; Israel had not expelled the

refugees, and the Arab States were responsible for their present plight, because they had denied to them the means of living a productive life and had preferred to keep them as political hostages; the Arab minority was not persecuted in Israel; and the Arab countries had nothing to fear from Israel, which was prepared to settle the disputes by negotiation.

20. On the conclusion of the 1961 debate, two draft resolutions had been presented to the Committee. One, submitted by fifteen delegations^{1/}—six of which had represented members of the African and Malagasy Union, including his own country—had called for direct negotiations between the Governments concerned, with the assistance of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine if they so desired, to settle the questions in dispute, including the refugee question. Unfortunately, that draft resolution had been rejected. Another draft resolution,^{2/} submitted by the United States of America, had requested the Conciliation Commission to intensify its efforts for the implementation of resolution 194 (III), concerning the compensation and repatriation of the refugees. That draft resolution, the purely humanitarian nature of which had been altered by successive amendments, and which approached the political problem indirectly, was the one which had been adopted, in its original form, however (resolution 1725 (XVI)). Since that time, the situation of the Arab refugees had become even more difficult. In addition, the physical privation which they had suffered and the psychological damage inflicted on them had inevitably had a corroding effect on their personality.

21. Summarizing the background of the problem, the representative of the Central African Republic recalled the birth of the Zionist movement, the Balfour Declaration^{3/} and its incorporation in the League of Nations Mandate,^{4/} Jewish emigration to Palestine between the two World Wars, the reference of the question to the United Nations,^{5/} and, lastly, the partition plan prepared by the United Nations Special Committee for Palestine (UNSCOP) and adopted by the General Assembly by its resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947. The Arab States had refused to implement that resolution, the Arab League had prepared for military action, and Arab irregulars had intervened in Palestine. He mentioned the proclamation of the State of Israel just before the end of the Mandate, the invasion of Israel by the armies of the neighbouring States, and then their defeat, which had enabled Israel troops to occupy territories beyond the frontiers originally established.

22. The Arabs driven out by those military operations had become the refugees with whose welfare, education and resettlement the Agency was now concerned, but who continued, with the encouragement of the Arab States and despite Israel's opposition, to demand the right to return to their homes.

23. The representative of the Central African Republic then recapitulated the arguments of the contending parties.

24. According to the Arabs, Palestine was Arab, there was no such thing as Jewish nationality and

Jewish nationalism was imbued with racialism and religious fanaticism. For Israel, on the other hand, the Jewish people had with Palestine historical and spiritual ties which had been recognized by the League of Nations and later by the United Nations, which had created the Jewish State by resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947.

25. Likewise, Israel denied the Arab accusation that it had, by a systematic campaign of terrorism, caused the exodus of the refugees with a view to seizing their property. According to Israel, the Arab States themselves had deliberately sown panic by means of radio broadcasts. While it did not seem to be proved that such a radio campaign had actually taken place, and although the large scale of the exodus gave rise to certain suspicions, Israel apparently had in some instances tried to persuade the Arab population to remain. In any case there could be no doubt that Arab countries had been guilty of aggression, as they had themselves admitted, and they unceasingly proclaimed their relentless hostility through such spokesmen as President Nasser.

26. Lastly, the Arab States saw no possible solution to the refugee problem other than the return to their homes of those who so desired, and the compensation of the others in accordance with General Assembly resolution 194 (III). The refugees were in fact the lawful owners of the property which they had left in Palestine and the expropriation of which was prohibited under the partition resolution (181 (II)). Pending their return, a custodian should be appointed to manage their properties on their behalf, collecting the income from it and transmitting it to them. Israel, on the other hand, held that the Arabs could not base any arguments on the partition resolution, since they had rejected it and violated it themselves; resolution 194 (III) provided only for the return of refugees who were willing to live at peace with their neighbours, and that was hardly true of most of them; furthermore, their return was not a right but depended upon a permission which the sovereign State of Israel alone could grant; likewise, Israel alone was qualified to decide on the status of property in its territory, and the appointment of a custodian by the United Nations would be incompatible with its sovereignty.

27. Israel declared its willingness to negotiate with the Arab countries. The latter, however, held that the conditions imposed by Israel foredoomed any negotiation to failure; in addition, they questioned the impartiality not only of the Special Representative, Mr. Johnson, but also of the other two members of the Conciliation Commission, whom they suspected of favouring Israel in various ways.

28. So long as both sides maintained such unyielding positions, the problem inevitably remained intractable and the sufferings of the refugees became daily more humiliating and more tragic. The human and social aspects of the problem could not be dealt with simply on a hand-to-mouth basis, by injections of dollars which kept the refugees alive without enabling them to live a decent life and to free themselves from dependence on international charity. Any serious effort at a settlement must deal with the political issue; but that could not be done by resorting to sophistry, by raising the spectre of racialism, or—as for example the representative of Saudi Arabia, doubtless carried away by his passion and his great eloquence, had done—by making bellicose statements

^{1/} See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 25, document A/SPC/L.80.

^{2/} *Ibid.*, document A/SPC/L.79.

^{3/} *Ibid.*, Second Session, Supplement No. 11, vol. II, annex 19.

^{4/} *Ibid.*, annex 20.

^{5/} *Ibid.*, annex 1.

and threats of armed aggression, which, to say the least, were contrary to the principles of the Charter, to international morality and to the precepts of the Koran.

29. The delegation of the Central African Republic preferred the force of law to the law of force, and believed that any dispute could be settled by peaceful means.

30. To achieve the negotiated solution which international opinion constantly adjured the Arabs and Jews to seek, the first step would be for the Arab countries to recognize the resolution of 29 November 1947 (181 (II)), not only in order to benefit from its provisions but also in order formally to recognize the right of Israel to exist, and to declare their willingness to live at peace with it. While there was no doubt regarding Israel's willingness to negotiate, Israel encountered the systematic opposition of the Arab countries which, bent on destroying it, rejected any discussion *ab initio* and accused the negotiators, whom they refused to hear, of being unyielding.

31. He urged the Arab countries to understand that such an attitude would divert them from the course leading to the peaceful settlement of a dispute of which the Arab refugees were the standing victims. The adoption of that attitude meant condemning thousands of human beings to remain in a status midway between slavery and freedom. It was necessary to negotiate, even without hope. If the negotiations proved fruitless, they would at least have had the merit of replacing violent language with diplomatic dialogue, and would perhaps make it possible eventually to approach the problem in a constructive spirit. It was only through the concerted efforts of the Arab countries and Israel, with the material assistance of other States, that a true solution for the refugee problem could be found. For that reason his delegation urged the Arab States to understand the urgent need for direct negotiation, for which Israel continued to proclaim its readiness, in order to settle that tragic problem once and for all.

32. Mr. SABRI (United Arab Republic) expressed regret that the statements attributed by the representative of the Central African Republic to President Nasser had apparently been taken from unreliable and obviously prejudiced sources, for they were incomplete and even inaccurate. Moreover, they had been quoted out of context. President Nasser had in fact spoken of defence and counter-attack under the threat of aggression by Israel.

33. Mr. HASSAN (Iraq) wished at the outset to emphasize his delegation's unreserved support for the statement, which he called a veritable manifesto, of the representative of the Arab people of Palestine, Mr. ALGhouri (358th meeting). It supported every point of the manifesto, which lucidly reviewed the origin of the refugee problem and defined the position of the Palestinian people, which was a legitimate party to the dispute. For it had to be stressed that the Arab States were only a third party. The Iraq delegation also wholeheartedly supported all the ideas which had been expressed by the delegation of Saudi Arabia on the Palestine question and were shared by all the Arab peoples. Through the hearing which the Committee had granted to the representative of the Palestine people, in spite of the protests of the Zionists and their supporters, the people of Palestine had been able to make its voice heard and

to reiterate that it was determined to regain its usurped lands. The Zionists and their friends had always tried to hide the truth with the help of the Press in the United States, which day after day devoted so much space to the activities and manoeuvres of Israel and the Zionists, while everything concerning the Arab world was always ignored or misrepresented. Profiting by the presence of United Nations Headquarters in New York, Zionist propagandists used various tactics to mislead public opinion by hiding behind a façade of innocence. The ill-informed were told that the Jews had been living in Palestine for thousands of years, that the creation of the so-called State of Israel had followed the evacuation of Palestine by British troops, and that the Arabs of Palestine wished to destroy that State in spite of its offers of peace and negotiations. As a result of that deceptive picture, the Committee once more had before it a draft resolution (A/SPC/L.89) which was in fact a reflection of Israel's designs. The Zionist comedy played in the Western Press and the United Nations was accompanied by an incessant flood of publications, all following the same line: to distort facts and history in order to achieve certain well-defined objectives. That method had served its purpose, for the State of Israel existed and a million Palestinians had been driven from their country. Moreover, Israel and its supporters were still trying—albeit without success—to abolish the Palestine question once and for all by a masterly plan of deceit.

34. The representative of Iraq would cite reliable sources. For the manoeuvres by which the Zionists had obtained the establishment of a Jewish National Home, he quoted a passage from *The Art and Practice of Diplomacy*,^{6/} by Sir Charles Webster, describing the tactics employed by Mr. Weizmann in approaching various British statesmen. Mr. Weizmann had adapted himself to the personality of each one of them, appealing to their emotion, their intellect or their ambition for their country, as the case required. Thus he had depicted to Mr. Lloyd George an alleged resemblance between Palestine and Wales, while before Sir Charles Webster he had dangled the advantages of a Jewish National Home to the strategic position of the British Empire. By those efforts he had succeeded in persuading the British leaders to support a movement which the representative of Israel wrongly called a national movement (362nd meeting) and which subsequently became one of the levers of the United Kingdom's colonial policy.

35. There was no doubt that the problem had resulted from Great Britain's policy in the East. Even before the first Zionist had ever set foot in Palestine, Great Britain had already drawn up its plans to reinforce its influence in the Arab world. As early as the first half of the nineteenth century the British imperialists, having conquered Mohammed Ali, that champion of Arab emancipation, and won the diplomatic victory over France which had led to the occupation of the shores of Lebanon and Palestine, had laid their plans for the establishment of a Jewish State. Their main concern after 1840 had been to prevent any Arab leader from succeeding Mohammed Ali. That year a British mission had gone to Palestine to study in secret the means of implementing that undertaking, as Mr. Jules Berthou, the French Observer at Beirut, had reported to his Government on 6 November 1840. At that time there were only a few hundred Jews

^{6/} London, London School of Economics and Political Science, 1952.

living in Palestine together with 700,000 Arabs. In 1882 approximately 3,000 Jews had immigrated into Palestine and founded a colony near Jaffa; and the same year had witnessed the creation in Tsarist Russia of a movement known as Chibbath Zion which had promoted the emigration of Jews to Palestine and the revival of the Hebrew language. Thus the first seeds of Zionism had been sown only three years after the first Zionist Congress, held in Basle on the initiative of Theodor Herzl.

36. From the beginning it had been planned to uproot a whole people and replace them by invaders. The British authorities had carried out their plans by stages, starting with the Balfour Declaration in 1917, on which the State of Israel was based. The circumstances of the Declaration's adoption showed that Jewish and United States circles had then had great hopes of establishing a Jewish State in Palestine. The United States Government had supported the Balfour Declaration from the outset as consistent with its interests and policy. It had even seen fit to leave no doubt of what it considered the Declaration to mean. While the Declaration was being debated in the House of Commons, President Wilson had issued a statement from the White House announcing that the Allied Powers had decided, with the unreserved support of the United States Government and people, to lay the foundations of a Jewish State in Palestine. In 1921, when the League of Nations had placed Palestine under a British Mandate, the United States Congress had adopted a resolution urging the United States Government to encourage the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. Two years later, the White House had prevailed on Great Britain to sign a Special Convention stipulating that the prior consent of the United States was necessary for any change in the Palestine Mandate. For their part the Zionists, while allying themselves with successive British Governments, had enjoyed the support of powerful United States interests.

37. The evidence showed clearly that, throughout the period between the end of the First World War and the creation of Israel, British colonial policy had followed a specific course towards the Arab countries in general and Palestine in particular. The first objective had been to encourage Jewish immigration into Palestine. Mr. Lloyd George had stated that, if the Jews were in the majority when the time arrived for granting representative institutions to Palestine, Palestine would become a Jewish Commonwealth. Thus the Zionists had been offered an easy solution, and it was thus scarcely surprising that Zionist propaganda had either avoided any reference to the Arab population of Palestine or, on the rare occasions when it had been mentioned, had pictured it as exclusively nomadic.

38. Meanwhile, the colonization of Palestine had continued. At the outbreak of the First World War there had been 59 Jewish colonies containing approximately 12,000 inhabitants; between 1919 and 1923 the number had increased to 35,000; between 1924 and 1931 to 81,000 and in the subsequent ten years to 250,000. During the Second World War, still in keeping with British plans, Jewish immigration into Palestine had been completely free, so that some 600,000 Jews had been settled in Palestine before the end of the war. At that time the Arabs, the legitimate owners of the country, had numbered 1,250,000. Notwithstanding all the Zionists' efforts, they had not

been able by the date of the partition of Palestine to purchase more than 6 per cent of Arab cultivable land, or approximately 25,000 square kilometres. The fact that the United Nations had agreed to assign to the Jewish State 55 per cent of the best cultivable land of Palestine showed that the United States had been the principal author of the partition plan; the United Nations had been greatly misled throughout by the United States and Zionist propaganda. It was also incorrect to say that Israel forces had acquired the land of Palestine by brilliant feats of arms. Actually the Arab States had not been free to frame their own policies, develop their military potential, or even choose the high command of their armed forces. It had to be confessed that in the war between the Arab States and Israel the movements of both sides had been manipulated by Western imperialism. When the Zionists claimed the honour of having established a State for the Jewish nation, that claim was contrary to the concept of nationhood, the rules of international law, and the United Nations Charter. Jews assembled little by little from every corner of the globe could not constitute a nation; a territory which had been forcibly occupied by aliens and which rightfully belonged to the Arabs could not be regarded as the territory of a State having clearly-defined frontiers. The recognition of the so-called State of Israel by the United Nations could not remedy the illegality of the resolution adopted for that purpose; it could not endow Israel with the attributes of a State in the sense accepted by free nations, or change the character of the aggressive forces established in the country. The tripartite aggression of the Suez campaign was an eloquent example of the way in which Israel had served as a tool of Western imperialism's expansionist plans.

39. In justification of their crimes, the Israel spokesmen invoked the persecutions inflicted on the Jews by the Nazis, for which they claimed that the Arabs must pay the price. They even accused the Arabs of nazism for demanding the return of their usurped country. There were no grounds for the resentment which the same charge aroused in the Zionists, and which was the prevailing note in the Israel representative's statement. Of course the phenomenon of nazism had not been confined to Hitlerite Germany. A comparison between the Zionist communities in Israel and all the dictatorial fascist and imperialist régimes led to the conclusion that the two systems had many points in common. Both employed systematic terrorism to serve their political, economic and expansionist ends. Thus Israel had tried to glut its imperialist and expansionist ambitions at the time of the Sinai campaign. Zionists, like fascists, sought to exploit the workers and peasants under the cloak of socialism. The organization of the working classes into trade unions on a so-called socialist basis was one of the most deceptive forms of their State capitalism. In exactly the same way as fascism in Germany, Italy or Japan, Zionism had never had any economic ideology but colonialism and aggression. Its policy of frenzied investment was designed to divert the attention of the Arabs in order the better to exploit them.

40. In conclusion, the representative of Iraq asked the Committee to contemplate the wise words of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, who pointed out in his report that not only the refugees themselves, but also the Arab peoples of the Middle East as a whole, felt deeply that an injustice had been com-

mitted against the Arabs of Palestine, that those feelings were still as deep as ever, and that UNRWA should not undertake large works projects so long as there was no substantial progress towards the implementation of operative paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III). There was no ignoring that situation or the effects which the presence of an aggressive modern ghetto in the heart of the Middle East could have on the political, economic and social life of the Arab countries.

41. However, despite the calculations of the Zionists and colonialists, there had been a radical change in the Arab world. The liberation revolution in Egypt had ousted the colonialists from the country and put an end to their influence. The Suez Canal was now an Arab canal. The Lebanese revolution had saved Lebanon from becoming a centre for Western conspiracy. The Iraq revolution of 14 July 1958 had brought the Arab liberation movement to its zenith by uprooting British and Western influence from the region, by rendering the Baghdad Pact a pact without Baghdad, and by liberating the national economy of Iraq from Western exploitation. Moreover, a chain of revolutionary movements was now taking place in the south of the Arabian peninsula, particularly in Yemen and Oman. The Middle East was now free and would never

be covered by a network of military bases to serve Western plans of aggression. A new situation had come about in the region, and the Arab people would not rest until the legitimate inhabitants of Palestine had been restored to their rights. The delegation of Iraq considered Israel an imperialist military camp threatening the peace and security, not only of the region, but of the whole world. The role assigned to Israel in the Middle East by Western strategy was proved by the powerful rockets which the United States had recently delivered to it.

42. The injustice done to the Arabs was in fact the issue before the Committee. If the United Nations wanted to restore peace and justice to the region, it should use all possible means to implement previous General Assembly resolutions; it should allow the refugees to be repatriated, check Zionist immigration, and appoint a custodian to supervise Arab property. Such decisions would be the beginning of other constructive and just steps towards the solution of the Palestine problem detailed by the representative of the Arab people of Palestine, Mr. AlGhouri, in his statement at the 358th meeting of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.