

# FROM MONTH TO MONTH

## NEW PALESTINE REPORT—NEW PROSPECTS

*An Editorial Article*

*By Moses Miller*

**WHAT** hits you between the eyes in the UNSCOP (United Nations Special Committee on Palestine) report is that here is something radically different from any other official document on Palestine for decades. There have been commissions before. But they were either solely British or, as was the case last year, Anglo-American. All of them without exception started from the premise that Arab-Jewish aspirations were incompatible. All of them portrayed imperialism as the innocent bystander seeking only peace and the interests of both peoples.

This UN commission is not imperialist. It was appointed by the United Nations. The commission was subjected to ceaseless pressure from both progressive and reactionary forces which affected its work. Nevertheless, some of its basic conclusions indicate why progressive forces throughout the world had persistently demanded that the Palestine question be turned over to the UN and that only from the UN could we hope for a real solution.

Consider the outcome. The representatives of eleven nations unanimously agreed that the British mandate must be abrogated and that Palestine must soon become a free, independent and democratic country.

Both the majority and the minority reports recognized the basic rights of the Jews in Palestine. Although they disagreed as to implementation of this right, both agreed that the Jews are entitled to statehood.

Both the majority and the minority reports agreed that Arab-Jewish cooperation is vital to the security and full national development of both peoples. Both agree that economic unity is necessary for the life of both the Jewish and the Arab peoples, although they differ on how to achieve it.

Both the majority and the minority reports recognized that the right of Jews to immigrate to Palestine must be guaranteed although here, too, there are differences as to execution.

These conclusions are indeed epoch-making and indicate the possibilities of reaching a solution of basic international problems by means of United Nations efforts.

Both plans have positive features. The majority plan,

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calling for the partition of Palestine, has been warmly received by Jews because it concretely proposes a Jewish state with all appearances of autonomy, sovereignty and complete self-determination.

The majority report also has in its favor that it establishes clearly the number of Jews who could enter Palestine within the next two years.

These considerations are important and are decisive in determining the attitude of the average Jew towards the majority plan. But even the ordinary layman who is not too familiar with the intricate problems of Palestine can see flaws and serious weaknesses in the majority plan.

The plan calls for an interim period of two years, during which Great Britain will be responsible for the eventual termination of the mandate and the establishment of the two independent states. This is an extremely dangerous proposition. For anyone who knows the record of British rule in Palestine, will find it hard to visualize British imperialism, or even Anglo-American imperialism jointly, undertaking to fulfill a plan which would help remove imperialist influence and bring freedom and independence to the two peoples of Palestine. The proposal for direct United Nations supervision in the minority report is certainly far more realistic and a more reliable guarantee for the success of any future plan.

Furthermore, the majority plan turns Jerusalem, as well as a number of other cities, into autonomous areas independent of both states. The creation of a vacuum in the heart of Palestine can not serve anyone but the imperialists who would have thus created a vantage point from which to manipulate both peoples. Nor should one forget that to many Jews it would be paradoxical to speak of a Jewish state without Jerusalem.

Another significant weakness of the majority plan is that despite its proviso for creation of a joint economic council, the Jewish and Arab economies will nevertheless remain distinct and separate. The economic development of the Yishuv depends not only upon its own resources but in very great measure upon its relationship with its Arab neighbors in Palestine and with the entire Arab Middle East. Economic unity is perhaps the most fundamental and the most vital area of cooperation and is necessary for both the Yishuv and for Palestine as a whole. The majority plan as it now stands leaves the entire economic

structure very indefinite. Without more concrete and specific plans for tighter economic unity there is great danger that hostile forces will be able to sabotage the plans and thus endanger the future development of the Yishuv.

The majority report made a serious mistake by including the Arab cities of Jaffa (population 90 per cent Arab) and Beer Sheva in the Jewish state and including a number of important Jewish colonies in the Arab state. This would leave an Arab minority of approximately 400,000 in a Jewish state of approximately 600,000 Jews. What an excellent opportunity for the Mufti to incite the Arab masses and to provoke permanent feuds in the heart of the Jewish state. This provision is completely untenable and could hardly lead to peace and cooperation.

The minority plan for the establishment of Jewish and Arab states within the framework of a federation plan is free from many of these weaknesses. According to this plan Palestine would be a unified economic entity, thus opening great possibilities for the development of Arab-Jewish cooperation. Jerusalem would be the capital of this federal state. The United Nations itself, and not any imperialist power, would undertake to carry out this plan.

But the minority plan also has important weaknesses. It does not take a sharply defined position on immigration and does not definitely indicate the number of Jews who could enter Palestine immediately. The proposed parliament, as well as the high court, which is the final authority on all questions, would have an Arab majority, according to the minority plan. This Arab-weighted tribunal does not correspond to our conception of a two-peopled state where *equal* rights of both are guaranteed.

Both of these plans come up for consideration by the General Assembly in September. Both plans require amendments and improvements before they can provide a basis for a real solution.

JEWISH LIFE is proud that its policy has consistently included the demand that the question of Palestine be placed

on the agenda of the United Nations and has insisted that Jewish aspirations could never be fulfilled outside the framework of a United Nations solution.

JEWISH LIFE has from the day of its inception believed that the just demands of the Jewish people for statehood in Palestine could be achieved only after abrogation of the mandate, complete removal of British troops and control and the establishment of maximum cooperation, politically, economically and socially, between Jew and Arab. JEWISH LIFE has always maintained and still believes that establishment of a Jewish-Arab state would be the only lasting solution to the problem.

JEWISH LIFE has furthermore insisted that the question of immigration cannot be separated from the general problem of Palestine and that any proposal which does not take immigration into account and does not make concrete provisions for its realization cannot be held a real solution.

From this standpoint of our basic position we judge both the majority and the minority reports. And we believe that it is from this standpoint that every Jew concerned with the establishment of a secure, prosperous and healthy Jewish home in Palestine, should judge the problem.

We desire real, and not imaginary or fictitious independence for our people in Palestine. We wish a solution that will help to create conditions favorable to mutual trust and cooperation between Jews and Arabs, for the two peoples cannot live side by side without the closest and most intimate collaboration. Hence we believe that it is the duty of all Jews, together with all other peoples, to fight to eliminate the indicated weaknesses in both plans. No matter which plan is considered, efforts should be made to eliminate the weak points in the direction of creating greater and firmer unity, politically and economically, between both peoples.

JEWISH LIFE believes that energetic efforts directed towards achieving the unity of the three major powers, America, Great Britain and the Soviet Union, will enhance the prospects of the fulfillment of Jewish aspirations and make it possible in the near future.