



Statement

MAY 9, 1948

20

Events during the past several days underline the importance of an early statement by the President of his intention to recognize the new Jewish State in Palestine as soon as it comes into existence.

1. We asked for a special session of the General Assembly because at that time our experts said it was impossible to achieve partition. We continued to maintain that partition was our ultimate objective. But while the UN debated and discussed, the Jews in Palestine, by showing unexpected strength in relation to the Arabs, succeeded in achieving that objective.

2. Now it is clear that partition is an accomplished fact.

~~Everyone realizes this except the State Department.~~ The British realize it; British commercial interests are investing heavily in Jewish Palestine. The top British Military Commanders in Palestine and Egypt have officially reported that the Jews are in complete control of the partition area. Diplomatically, Creech Jones assumed a Jewish state after May 15th in his statement on Friday at Lake Success. (See attached N.Y. Times clipping of May 8 - clipping A). The UN realizes it; as recently as Friday, May 7, the head of the UN commission's advance party to Palestine urged recognition of the de facto situation -- that there are now two completely independent areas in Palestine. (See same N.Y. Times clipping). The Arabs now realize it, and admit it; a widely printed UP dispatch from Jerusalem, May 7, quotes a member of the Syrian Parliament as having said: "The battle is all over. The Jewish state has arisen." The same dispatch quotes another influential Arab as saying: "We have saved the Arab half of Palestine." (N.Y. Times, May 8 -- clipping B).

3. The practical reality of partition involves more than military superiority of the Jews. The Jews have successfully organized and maintained essential governmental services within the areas which they control. Moreover, they have announced their intention of confining the Jewish State to the areas designated in the UN partition plan, although it is now patent that they have the strength to extend their authority over wider areas.



4. The fact of partition now means it is no longer realistic to think in terms of whether partition can be implemented or whether it can be prevented. It is now only a question whether it can be reversed. To reverse the reality of partition would require military force, threats, sanctions or persuasion. None would be effective. If we could not muster military support to implement the UN resolution, or our trusteeship proposal, surely we could not muster it to dislodge the Jews from the areas assigned to them by the UN. Nor would we want to, for such a course would only precipitate a war against the strongest military force in the Middle East. Threats and sanctions would be equally ineffective, mainly because they would run counter to the letter and spirit of the UN resolution. Finally, it is unrealistic to believe that the Jews of Palestine could be persuaded to relinquish the State which they achieved largely through their own efforts pursuant to the highest international moral authority -- the UN resolution.

5. Since we cannot, and would not want to, reverse the reality of partition, we should derive the maximum advantage for the President and for the U.S. government from the existing situation.

This can best be done by an immediate statement by the President that he intends to recognize the Jewish State when it is proclaimed.

6. Such a statement would retrieve the prestige which has been lost on this issue during the past few months by the President, the U.S. Government and the U.N. The President has consistently maintained that he is in favor of partition and that he desires peace in the Holy Land. However, there has been a widespread feeling that the recent espousal of a truce and temporary trusteeship has been ineffective because so remote from reality. He would be widely acclaimed if he, in frank recognition of the facts of the situation and without rancor toward any element in the Palestine picture, proclaimed that full support should be given to the nascent Jewish state. Moreover, such an action would lift the prestige of the U.S. Government, which has fallen to a new low in the U.N. Our delegation to the U.N. has been ridiculed on all sides in the U.N. during the past few weeks for proposing a variety of unrealistic "solutions" -- none of which has worked, -- or even had a chance of working, in the view of seasoned observers. The President's statement would be welcomed in most UN circles as a sign that at last the U.S. has come "down to earth" again. And it would enable the special session to terminate promptly -- to the great relief of most of the delegates -- as soon as some general resolution is passed urging the members of the UN to support the Jewish (and future Arab) State. At the same time, this action would enhance the influence of the U.S. upon the Arabs who respect reality rather than sentimentality (as was shown during the war by their affinity for the Nazis when the Allies were having

hard going). It is most likely that they would accept the inevitable -- and it would be easier for them to do so -- if we made it clear that we considered partition to be inevitable. In the process, we would have rescued the UN from the terrible morass in which it is now floundering. The UN delegates are dispirited and pessimistic about the possibility of getting anywhere on any of the innumerable proposals. (See attached Associated Press dispatch in the Washington Star, May 8 -- Clipping E). While the delegates of other countries have had their noses kept to the grindstone by the State Department, they have come to realize that the State Department's proposals are grandiose as well as futile. The British delegation finally, on May 7, pointedly proposed that the large talk and large proposals be dropped, and that UN content itself with playing a small role, in a small way, in the partitioned Palestine of today. (See same clipping E).

7. The chief advantage resulting from American recognition of the Jewish State will be lost if prompt action is not taken by the President. The Soviet Union and its satellites are expected to recognize the state promptly. (See N.Y. Herald Tribune, May 6 -- clipping C). They might even announce their intention to do so in advance -- i.e. in the beginning of week, May 9. Once they have already recognized the Jewish state, any similar action on our part will seem begrudging -- no matter how well-intentioned. In fact, it would be a diplomatic defeat. On the other hand, if we take this action before the Russians, we can rest assured that they will not take issue with us, because their firm insistence upon partition will require them to follow suit.

Also, as soon as the Jewish State is proclaimed, there will be tremendous pressure domestically for its recognition. The Republicans will certainly push hard on this issue, before, during and after their convention. (This is clearly implied in the document prepared by 36 House Republicans, as indicated in the attached clipping from the May 8 Washington Post -- clipping D). There will be no such issue if the President has already said, in advance of May 16, that he intends to recognize the Jewish State.

8. Nothing will be accomplished by waiting for everybody to climb on the bandwagon, while we insist on getting some sort of agreement between Jews and Arabs. The Arabs have come to see that the U.N.'s partition plan has been implemented already, so far as the Jewish State is concerned. (See N.Y. Times, May 8, clipping A). The Arabs now want the Jews not to take any territory assigned to the Arabs. (See N.Y. Times, May 8, quoting the Lebanese adviser, evidently pleased that the Arab League had "saved the Arab half of Palestine"). What is really at play is a contest between various Arab States and rulers, to attach to themselves Arab Palestine, or a part of it. If there be any Arab troops in Palestine, this is a staking out of a claim by their ruler. Abdullah has begun to do this, and the British are believed to be behind him. There is fair reason to believe that any remaining contest for territory will be, not between Jews and Arabs, but between Arabs and Arabs; not for Jewish territory, but for the part of Palestine assigned to the Arab State.

Besides the Arabs, there is Britain, staking out increased financial relations with Jewish Palestine. There may be Soviet

satellites and the Soviets, recognizing the Jewish State France, still resentful of the British coup in driving the French out of Syria at the end of World War II and suspicious of the British moves, has been especially conciliatory toward the Jewish Agency in the U.N. proceedings.

At home, the Republicans are making their bid too -- Taft, Stassen, the House Republicans including such influential key leaders as Everett Dirksen of Illinois.

What is accomplished for the United States of America in building up powerful friendships in the Near East -- if the one military power there is flouted by us.



What interest of the United States is served? Is peace served? Is the avoidance of bloodshed served by a United States policy which enables the politicians (like the Mufti) who have lost out in the intra-Arab race, to cry for dissension, armed effort, that all is not lost, let the Arabs keep fighting, the United States is still holding out against partition. Those Arab politicians who have lost to Abdullah are completely out, unless they can keep the strife alive. The only issue they have is, Down with partition. The only hope they can offer to Arabs militarily defeated in the fight against partition is, The United States may yet come to the rescue against partition and against the Jews, with troops or with sanctions, embargoes, and penalties.

If, like the other major nations in UN, we accept the realities, we will not be used by Arab or Republican politicians, we will help to retrieve the prestige of U.N. and U.S., and we will cease to subject President Truman to unjust and unjustified

losses and sacrifices.

But the opportunity to retrieve for the U.S. and for the President is fast vanishing. If we continue instead to seek to retrieve the reputations, or to satisfy the amour propre of a few State Department officials, the opportunity to undo the damage to the President may fade out.



We cannot afford to live in a bygone day -- even four weeks can make a complete change. The Palestine Jews do not now need the United States. But our Government can in the future use their good will, and in the present needs to adjust its policy to changed conditions. To be sure, the Jewish State may ~~not-attack~~ need negative help from the U.S. -- that it should not attack them or stir up strife against them.

This is not the first occasion on which a great power has had to adjust or reverse its policy in dealing with a small power, or on which the experts of a great power have judged incorrectly. Britain is especially good at making such changes. Driven out of Palestine by the Jews, losing soldiers and officers to the Jews, Britain is now increasing its investments in Jewish Palestine and courting the new Jewish State. Why let experienced Britain outstrip the U.S. in this area?

ADDENDUM

The Accumulation of News on May 9, 1948



The press associations and the special correspondents of the leading American newspapers may, of course, all be wrong in the news they report. But there is such a large accumulation of news confirming the facts stated in the preceding pages of this memorandum that it may be useful to have a few of the clippings, principally of Sunday, May 9, and also of a few of the preceding days, establishing the probable correctness, and the wide spread recognition, of the facts.

The supplementary clippings are grouped as follows:

Clippings

1. The actuality of partition
 - (1) Partition is an accomplished fact F, G, H
 - (2) The majority of UN delegates frankly acknowledge that partition is an accomplished fact and that nothing could prevent proclamation of a Jewish State I, J
2. The actuality is an intra-Arab struggle not an Arab-Jewish struggle K, L, M, N, O
3. The Arab governments are probably unable to use their regular armies against the Jewish State P
4. Even if the Arab armies were all combined for an attack on Jewish Palestine, there is a reasonable likelihood that they would be defeated Q
5. The United Nations
 - (1) The UN is regarded as having been reduced, on the Palestine issue, to the status of an aimless debating society R
 - (2) The use of the special meeting of the UN assembly on the call by the U.S. has seriously damaged its prestige and therefore the influence of the U.S. on foreign policy . S
 - (3) UN delegates now prefer to follow the British plan of dropping the grandiose proposals made in recent weeks and resorting to a modest plan, with a small role for UN in Palestine affairs T