

I do not wish to comment on the denial or breaking of pledges, nor on the ethics or legality of making contradictory promises. I wish to emphasize, however, that the claim of the Arabs for termination of the mandate and recognition of their independence does not rest on promises or pledges. The Arabs of Palestine are not claiming their independence on assurances; they are entitled to such independence as being their natural and inalienable right.

The value of those pledges, however, is twofold. In the first place, they nullify any contradictory assurances given to the Jews, if the Balfour Declaration is to be read as meaning more than a cultural home. In the second place, those pledges show that the administration of the country in a manner inconsistent with and contrary to the wishes of the large majority of the inhabitants is a glaring injustice.

I have mentioned the Balfour Declaration. It is at the root of and the very reason for all the troubles. It is the cause of the problem into which you are inquiring. It is the cause of the disturbance of peace and security in Palestine and the Middle East. Several Commissions of Inquiry into the disturbances in Palestine have invariably found that the Balfour Declaration and its policy of immigration were the primary and fundamental causes of such disturbances.

When we remember that the Balfour Declaration was made without the consent—not to say the knowledge—of the people most directly affected; when we consider that its making is contrary to the principles of national self-determination and democracy, as also to the principles enunciated in the Charter of the United Nations; when we know that it was inconsistent with the pledges given to the Arabs before and after its date—it will be the duty of the Special Committee to inquire into the legality, validity, and ethics of this document.

Out of the conflict of the First World War there emerged certain high principles which were to govern the organization or international relations and serve as the basis of the structure of modern civilization.

The principles propounded by President Wilson—that is, the rejection of all ideas of conquest and recognition of the right of self-determination—were incorporated in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. The Covenant laid down that, to the peoples inhabiting territories which have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the State which formerly governed them, there should be applied the principle that their well-being and development form a sacred trust of civilization.

Moreover, in particularizing certain communities detached from the Turkish Empire—that is to say, the Arab Nation—Article 22 laid down that, having regard to their development, their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone.

Notwithstanding the pledges of Great Britain and the Allied Governments, notwithstanding Wilson's Fourteen Points, notwithstanding Article 22 of the Covenant, notwithstanding the riots in the country and the expressed opposition of the people of Palestine, the mandate was formulated in a manner embodying the Balfour Declaration.

One of the points which the Special Committee will have to consider will be the inconsistency of the mandate with Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. Article 22 is the primary and enabling instrument from which the mandate can derive its force and validity, if any.