

could not accept Western Galilee as a substitute for the Negev. This case should be considered on its intrinsic merits and the whole of Galilee, which was now in the hands of Israel as a result of the successful but costly warding-off of Arab attacks, should remain part of the Jewish State.

There remained the Arab parts of Palestine which the Mediator had proposed should be joined to Transjordan. Israël, however, would prefer to see established an independent Arab State in accordance with the 29 November resolution. Mr Shertok expressed sympathy with the Arab refugees, but pointed out that their present plight was the direct result of Arab resistance to partition: serious thought, he said, should be given to their resettlement in neighbouring Arab territories.

Finally, he favoured the establishment of a Conciliation Commission to initiate peace negotiations, but, before the appointment of this Commission, Israel should be admitted to membership of the United Nations, representing as it did the fulfilment of the Assembly's will.

The Arab Position

The Arab attitude was outlined and defended not only by the representative of the Arab Higher Committee, but also by the delegations of the six Arab States.

The representative of the *Arab Higher Committee* declared that the Mediator's report was based on three main premises: the need to keep the peace, the *de facto* situation, and the partition plan. The Arabs, as "the legitimate owners of Palestine," were more concerned to maintain the peace than any one else, but the Mediator's suggestions rested on the partition scheme, which had set the country ablaze; only when all ideas of partition and of a Jewish State were put aside could there be a good chance of a real peace. No peace was possible while a Jewish State existed, lost as it was in the midst of Arab populations and "faced by a semi-circle of hostile cannon." Arab territory had been invaded under a vague pretext of historic rights and the Arabs would repulse armed force by armed force. There was no foundation for the Mediator's belief that a strongly backed Assembly resolution would not be resisted by force; the Arabs were prepared to accept an Assembly resolution only if the views of the majority in Palestine were not violated and Arab resistance would not be overcome by sanctions.

So far as the Mediator's expectation that the Arabs would accept the *de facto* situation was concerned, any such belief made mediation meaningless. Who would have accepted, for instance, the *de facto* situation created by the Nazi conquest of many European countries?