

1922; an independent Jewish State was thereupon proclaimed, and received immediate recognition from two of the great Powers; the open warfare which broke out between Jewish and Arab Forces was slowed down, and finally halted by a chain of actions in which the United Nations played the major role; at the end of the period the State of Israel had emerged as a new political entity in the Middle East, and had been accorded recognition by forty-six States, including the five permanent members of the Security Council (the United Kingdom, the United States, France, China, and the U.S.S.R.).

At the special session* of the General Assembly held at New York from 16 April to 14 May, 1948, to consider the question of Palestine, proposals for a temporary United Nations trusteeship for the area (which had been put forward on 19 March by the United States representative in the Security Council) failed to receive support. In the result, the Assembly adopted a resolution authorizing the appointment of a United Nations Mediator, whose principal task was to be "to use his good offices . . . to promote a peaceful adjustment of the future situation in Palestine." The resolution did not refer to the Assembly's previous resolution of November, 1947, which recommended the partition of Palestine into Arab and Jewish States, with specified territorial limits, and its effect was therefore to give the newly appointed Mediator (Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden) a fairly free hand in his efforts to promote an adjustment of the situation.

The United Kingdom mandate terminated on the night of 14-15 May, and the Jewish National Council in Tel Aviv proclaimed the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine, to be called the State of Israel. The new State was immediately recognized by the Government of the United States, and shortly afterwards by the U.S.S.R. and a number of other Governments. At the same time, on the termination of the mandate, Arab Forces entered Palestine territory from Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, and Iraq, and the Egyptian Air Force attacked Tel Aviv.

With great courage and tenacity, Count Bernadotte immediately bent his efforts towards securing a cessation of hostilities, and his mediation, combined with increasingly firm and determined action on the part of the Security Council, succeeded in effecting firstly a short truce of some four weeks' duration, and subsequently a more general truce which commenced on 18 July.

On 17 September the Mediator was assassinated in Jerusalem. On the previous day he had transmitted a progress report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, with the request that the

* See report of New Zealand delegation to the second special session of the General Assembly, External Affairs Publication No. 61 (A-2A, 1948).