

Palestine question should be placed on the agenda of the third regular session of the General Assembly, which was to commence in Paris on 21 September. In his report the Mediator arrived at certain conclusions involving considerable revisions in the disposition of territory which had been recommended in the Assembly's partition resolution of November, 1947, one of the most significant being the suggestion that the Negev area should be included in Arab territory.

When discussion commenced on the question at the third regular session of the General Assembly,* it became apparent that the conclusions which the Mediator had arrived at were opposed by both Arabs and Jews, and that they were not acceptable in all their particulars to a number of other delegations. Thus, while the United Kingdom delegation fully endorsed the Mediator's proposals, the United States representative expressed only general agreement with them, and they were strongly opposed by the representative of the Soviet Union and other Eastern European States. A draft resolution incorporating the proposals was placed before the First Committee, but it was subjected to heavy amendment, and even so it seemed unlikely to receive the necessary two-thirds majority in plenary session.

In these circumstances, the New Zealand, Australian, and Canadian delegations joined with those of certain other States, including France, in proposing amendments which would overcome the objection of those delegations who had opposed the amended United Kingdom proposal in Committee I, and the resolution as thus amended was finally adopted by the Assembly on 11 December by 35 votes (including New Zealand) in favour, with 15 against and 8 abstentions. The resolution established a Conciliation Commission to carry on the work of mediation in Palestine, and called upon the parties to the dispute to seek agreement by negotiation with a view to reaching a final settlement of all outstanding questions. It did not specifically refer to the partition resolution of November, 1947, or to the conclusions of the Mediator's report, but it provided for a permanent international regime for the Jerusalem area and for the repatriation of refugees.

In speaking to the resolution in the Assembly, the Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, described the task of the Conciliation Commission as being to endeavour to reach a settlement between the parties, and to achieve peace in Palestine. He appealed to Arabs and Jews to accept the existing situation, and to negotiate in an impartial spirit uninfluenced by past animosities, the alternative to which, he said, could lead only to the destruction of both peoples. Mr Fraser asked

* See report of New Zealand delegation to the first part of the third regular session of the General Assembly, External Affairs Publication No. 75.