

JK: So, Dean Rusk was right.

Epstein: Dean Rusk was right. One other interesting thing was that there were four of us working at night. There was Ralph Bunche, Vigier, the old League of Nations chap, Stavropoulos, the legal man, and myself, the senior Jewish advisor and the senior officer of the Security Council Political Affairs. You had to have people from different areas of the Secretariat. We sat around one night. There were about 600,000 Arab refugees at that time. There were roughly half a million or 600,000 Jews. Egypt had around 190,000 and Iraq had some and Yemen, mainly those three countries. Stavropoulos, who was Greek, recalled the exchange of Turks and Greeks after WWI and he kept suggesting this to Bunche. This refugee problem will never be solved. He wanted to bring about an exchange of populations, Arabs for Jews. But, Bunche fought that like a tiger. We stayed there all night.

JK: Do you recall what Bunche's reasons for that were?

Epstein: Yes, he said that it was "a forceful exchange of populations and just imagine what kind of precedent this would set. In the United States there are a lot of people who don't like the Negroes" -- Bunche himself was a Negro -- "and some wise guy will say, if we set this as a precedent, 'Why don't we exchange our blacks for the whites in Africa?'" He and Stavropoulos fought nearly all night. Vigier and I