

As all of you are aware, the United States has modified the position it took in relation to the Palestine question last November. For reasons which have been given wide publicity and which were discussed by Canada in the Security Council on March 24, it is evident that immediate implementation of the partition plan is not practicable. You cannot have two states set up and get them to act as an economic union. Necessary adjustments have now to be considered. On March 19 the United States drew the attention of the Security Council to the fact that if the assembly plan were not put into effect by May 15 the United Nations would have no administrative responsibility in Palestine after the mandate ended. In order that this responsibility might now be definitely assumed, the United States proposed formally on March 30 that a second special session of the general assembly should be summoned. It indicated that it would suggest to the assembly the creation of a temporary United Nations trusteeship, without prejudice -- I emphasize those words "without prejudice" -- to the final political settlement in Palestine. This would, it was hoped, serve as a suitable medium through which the United Nations might fulfill its responsibility. The United Kingdom supported the proposal for summoning a special session of the assembly, as well as the United States motion calling for an immediate truce in Palestine. The Canadian government also gave its support to both proposals. In voting for the calling of a special session we had in mind the desirability of enabling the assembly to consider whether in this new and changed circumstance, alternative plans should be made for Palestine, particularly if there is hope that by these means processes of mediation and conciliation may be initiated and peace restored.

This special session is now meeting at Lake Success. A specific proposal has been made to it that responsibility for the administration of Palestine now be placed under a United Nations trusteeship. An arrangement of this nature, however, unless it were accepted by both parties, might create even greater difficulties of enforcement than partition with economic union. Before such a plan could be put into effect, therefore, it would be necessary to have the concurrence of a decisive majority of the members of the United Nations and particularly those members who would be expected to play a leading part in the implementation of the plan. For this reason, the Canadian government, before it expresses a judgment on these proposals, will await some clear indication that the plans which have been placed before the assembly will produce a constructive result which can and will be put into effect. In the meantime, the Canadian delegation, to the special assembly, and to the Security Council will use its best efforts to support the truce agreement which was carried in the Security Council during the session of April 16 and by which methods were recommended to the two parties for avoiding further widespread violence in Palestine.

Apart from the references which I have made to our relations with our fellow members of the British commonwealth and with the United States, the picture which I have presented to the House had been gloomy. The cause of freedom, of democracy and of peace has had setbacks -- in Europe, in the far east, in the United Nations. But these setbacks have resulted in a strong democratic reaction.

In Italy, for instance, the communists have been waging a ruthless, determined and skilful fight for power. They have, however, been rejected by the Italian electorate in the kind of free election which they would never have permitted if they had been in power. The free people of Italy have declared that they want to remain free, to remain a part of western civilization and not to become a province of a new totalitarian slave empire. Their decision has been welcomed by free men in every country.

The Italian elections have once again proved the truth of the thesis that no nation by an honest vote has ever put the communists in power. It is well to remember, however, that once in power, the people will not be allowed to vote them out. The communists have only to win one election, because it will be the last of elections as we know them.