

23. At last year's General Assembly, one possible line of development in this field was referred to by Mr. St. Laurent. He then stated that it was not necessary to contemplate the break-up of the United Nations in order to build up a stronger security system within the United Nations. Without sacrificing the universality of the United Nations it would be possible for the free nations of the world to form their own close association for collective self-defence under Article 51. Such an association could be created within the United Nations by those free states which are willing to accept more specific and onerous obligations than those contained in the Charter, in return for greater national security than the United Nations can now give its members.

24. On April 29, 1948, in a speech in the Canadian House of Commons, Mr. St. Laurent said: "Canada and the United States need the assistance of the western European democracies just as they need ours. The spread of aggressive Communist despotism over western Europe would ultimately almost certainly mean for us war, and war on most unfavourable terms. It is in our national interest to see to it that the flood of Communist expansion is held back. Our foreign policy today must, therefore, I suggest, be based on a recognition of the fact that totalitarian Communist aggression endangers the freedom and peace of every democratic country, including Canada. On this basis and pending the strengthening of the United Nations, we should be willing to associate ourselves with other free states in any appropriate collective security arrangements which may be worked out under Articles 51 or 52 of the Charter. In the circumstances of the present, the organization of collective defence in this way is the most effective guarantee of peace. The pursuit of this course, steadfastly, unprovocatively and constructively, is our best hope for disproving the gloomy predictions of inevitable war".

III. POLITICAL QUESTIONS

(a) Palestine

25. Probably no issue which has come before the United Nations has aroused the keen controversy and wide public interest which has been caused by the United Nations discussions of the Palestine question. A year ago the General Assembly called a special session on Palestine, at the request of the United Kingdom Government, to make recommendations for the future Government of Palestine. This Special Assembly established a Committee which went to Palestine, investigated the situation and reported to the next regular session of the Assembly which met in September of 1947.

26. The majority of the members of this Special Committee, including a Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, Mr. Justice Rand, recommended a plan of partition with economic union. Mr. Justice Rand was sent no instructions whatever by the Canadian Government and reached his own conclusions independently. When this plan was recommended by the majority of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, they did not generally assume that the United Kingdom Government intended to withdraw from Palestine in the immediate future. Therefore, the plan recommended by the majority included, as an important feature, a suggestion that the mandatory power should continue to administer the territory during a two year transitional period. When this subject came up for discussion at the General Assembly, however, the Assembly had before it a statement from the Government of the United Kingdom that it planned to terminate the mandate and withdraw from Palestine at the earliest possible date.