

VERNMENT



CANADA

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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CANADIAN STATEMENTS ON THE STATUS OF JERUSALEM AND THE HOLY PLACES

1. Statement on the Status of Jerusalem, made by General A.G.L. McNaughton, in the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations, November 29, 1949.

Some of the delegates who have preceded me in this general debate have referred to the resolution of the General Assembly of November 20, 1947, as well as to the resolution of December 11, 1948. The latter, in the opinion of the Canadian delegation, is complete and, in itself, it sets forth the explicit terms of reference of the Conciliation Commission which it established, that is, we recognize that the resolution of 1947 should be regarded in the light of the changed circumstances. In particular, we consider that the words "maximum local autonomy for distinctive groups" in the resolution of 1948 were designed to instruct the Commission to take into account the relevant new elements of the situation which had developed since November 29, 1947.

Of course, "maximum local autonomy" for the Arab and Jewish communities of Jerusalem is subject to the primary requirement for an effective United Nations control with full safeguards for the protection of the Holy Places and sites and free access to them, and for religious freedom.

Thus, the first question which arises is what kind of United Nations control is required to ensure the effective protection of, and free access to the Holy Places and sites, as well as religious freedom in Jerusalem. For its part, the Canadian delegation continues to believe that these matters must be organized under international authority.

The next question is the extent of international control which will, on the one hand, safeguard effectively the religious interests and, on the other hand, leave "maximum local autonomy" to the two main groups of the population of Jerusalem. Here, our reply is that the plan of the Conciliation Commission offers an acceptable basis for discussion. These proposals may well have to be strengthened in a number of respects, as many delegates have suggested; yet, generally speaking, they seem to us to be in accord with the resolution of December 11, 1948, and nothing has happened since that date to suggest that any radically different solution should be considered. The Conciliation Commission plan appears to us to provide for the legitimate interests of the Peoples of Jerusalem and, at the same time, to offer a way to give effect to the basic principle of the protection of the Holy Places and freedom of access thereto. It offers a much