

impartial persons chosen by the International Red Cross or the Secretary-General to convene after April 30, 1951, and examine the information furnished by governments still having prisoners of war in their custody, and to assist these governments in arranging for the repatriation of such prisoners. Under the resolution, all the Governments concerned are requested to co-operate fully with the Commission, to supply the required information and to grant the Commission the right of access to their respective countries and any areas in which prisoners of war continue to be detained. The results of the Commission's work are to be submitted to the Secretary-General for transmission to the members of the United Nations.

### **Jerusalem**

In the last week of the session a committee of the Assembly discussed three possible ways of dealing with the stalemate which had resulted from the inability of the Trusteeship Council to enforce its statute providing an international regime for the Jerusalem area.\* Sweden suggested that the Assembly should appoint a Commissioner for Jerusalem who might ask Israel or Jordan either to introduce or to suspend particular measures whenever he considered this to be necessary for the protection of the Holy Places or to ensure freedom of access to them or to maintain existing rights of religious denominations. Jordan opposed the Swedish draft resolution but, along with Israel, accepted an amendment offered by the United Kingdom, the United States and Uruguay. This provided that the United Nations should limit itself to sending to Jerusalem a representative who would report on the observance by Jordan and Israel of pledges concerning Holy Places, human rights, rights of religious denominations and reduction of armed forces. Those members of the Assembly, however, who thought a fuller degree of international control was possible supported a Belgian proposal that the Trusteeship Council should name four persons to study, in consultation with the states, authorities and religious bodies concerned, the conditions of a settlement to ensure United Nations supervision of the protection of Holy Places and spiritual and religious interests in the Holy Land. In the Assembly on December 15 this proposal failed to secure the requisite two-thirds majority, the vote being 30 in favour and 18 against. Nine, including Canada, abstained. No other resolution was brought forward, but Jordan and Israel have voluntarily undertaken to protect the Holy Places and to guarantee the recognized rights of religious denominations and freedom of access to Holy Places in areas under their respective control.

### **Palestine Refugees and a General Peace Settlement**

The Conciliation Commission has so far failed to secure the settlement of the refugee problem, chiefly because the Arabs have insisted that the refugees should be repatriated, in accordance with the Assembly's resolution of December 11, 1948, while Israel has maintained that they will have to be resettled in Arab lands. The Assembly defeated a Soviet proposal that the Conciliation Commission should be dissolved, leaving the parties to settle all their differences by direct negotiation. On December 14, after the issues had been warmly debated in committee, it adopted a resolution which was opposed only by the Soviet bloc. This provided (a) that negotiations for a final settlement of outstanding issues should be conducted either with the Conciliation Commission, as the Arabs desired, or directly, as Israel wished, and (b) that the Commission should establish an office to make arrangements for the assessment and payment of compensation to refugees for loss of their property and to work out practicable arrangements for implementing other provisions of an Assembly resolution of December 11, 1948 which had dealt with repatriation, resettlement and rehabilitation of refugees. Five Arab states voted for this resolution, although Israel and Iraq abstained along with two other members.

\* See *External Affairs*, January, May and July 1950.