

The Canadian delegation has approached the Palestine question at this session of the Assembly without commitments. The Canadian representative on the Special Committee on Palestine was in no way bound by instructions from the Canadian Government and his freedom to use his own judgment and to reach independent conclusions was made known publicly at the time of his appointment. The Canadian Government appointed to this Committee a Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, Mr. Justice Rand, who was specially qualified to consider evidence and to form impartial judgments, and who, in addition, was known to bring no preconceptions or prejudices to the consideration of the Palestine problem.

The conclusions which the Canadian Government has reached in regard to the question of Palestine and which I now propose to outline to the Committee are based on a careful consideration of the report as a whole, and the important discussion which has taken place in this Committee.

The Canadian delegation agrees in principle with the eleven recommendations of the Committee which were unanimously approved and with the twelfth which was approved by a substantial majority. In particular, in our view, the Special Committee established beyond doubt the need to end as soon as practicable the mandate for Palestine, to grant independence in Palestine and to clear out rapidly by concerted international action the assembly centres for displaced persons in Europe so as to relieve distress and create a better climate in which to carry out a final solution of the Palestine problem.

The discussion which has taken place in this Committee has, in our view, tended to confirm the principal argument given by a majority of the Committee in support of its proposal for partition with economic union. The report says: "The basic premise underlying the partition proposal is that the claims to Palestine of the Arabs and Jews, both possessing validity, are irreconcilable, and that among all of the solutions advanced, partition will provide the most realistic and practicable settlement, and is the most likely to afford a workable basis for meeting in part the claims and national aspirations of both parties." In the debate to which we have listened, strong arguments have been advanced in support of both Zionist and Arab positions, on the basis of geographical, historical, legal, social, ethnological and other considerations. These arguments lead in opposite directions rather than pointing the way to a mutually satisfactory adjustment. There has been much discussion of the principle of self-determination and of the areas and groups to which this principle should apply, much debate on the character, the interpretation and the priority of commitments. While these considerations are of great importance and cannot be ignored, we have come to the conclusion that the most important question for our consideration is what arrangement will best enable two peoples living within the confines of a restricted geographical area to avoid obstructing one another's development and most conduce to their welfare and freedom. In Canada we have had to work out a problem which while not analogous has points of resemblance to that which confronts the Committee for we ourselves are a nation of two peoples with two cultural traditions. During almost two centuries, both before and after the attainment of self-government in Canada, a number of solutions have been tried, including both partition and complete union. Eventually we reached a