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THE PROBLEM OF PALESTINE—A SUMMARY

When World War II opened in 1939 the situation for Palestinians worsened. The League of Nations formed at Versailles in 1919 had lost almost all its prestige and influence, and an international anarchy prevailed due to tensions and disputes. The immigration of Jews into Palestine rose sharply during the war. In May, 1942, American Zionists adopted the Baltimore Programme, which repudiated the British Plan of 1939 for an independent Palestine and instead demanded a Jewish State and a Jewish Army. On Aug. 13, 1945 the World Zionist Congress demanded that Palestine be opened to 1,000,000 Jews. President Truman on Aug. 31, 1945 asked for the immediate admission of 100,000 Jews displaced from Europe. On October 20, 1945, Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon warned USA that the creation of a Jewish State in Palestine would lead to war. But the Zionists and their allies paid no heed to it. On October 24, 1945 the United Nations Organisation came into formal existence. On Nov. 29, 1947, following the majority report of its Special Committee on Palestine, the General Assembly of the U.N. O. adopted a plan for the partition of Palestine into independent Arab and Zionist states. The British Mandate came to an end on May 14, 1948. The same day the State of Israel was created and within two days it was recognized by USA and the Soviet Union. On May 20, 1948 Count Folk Bernadotte, President of the Swedish Red Cross, was appointed UN Mediator in Palestine. He was assassinated on Sep. 17 by Jewish terrorists. The Security Council ordered a truce in Palestine on July 15, 1948, but it did not work. Israel was admitted to membership in the U. N. on May 11, 1949, and thus the fate of an independent Palestine was sealed.

To record the most recent happenings a large territory of the divided Palestine in possession of the Arabs since 1947 was also occupied with armed aggression by Israel in 1967. This also led to war crimes and crimes of genocide committed against the Palestinians and Zionist illegal occupation of 80% of the ancestral homelands of the Palestinians.

On April 8, 1980 the Arab Higher Committee for Palestine submitted to the Security Council a Memorandum on the Palestinians Rights but the fate it will meet is an analogous guess. Gen. Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq the President of Pakistan, in his inaugural address at the eleventh session of the Islamic Foreign Ministers Conference, held at Islamabad on May 17, 1980, summed up the situation prevailing in Palestine in the following words:

“Israel continues to flout all canons of morality, justice and the universally accepted principles of international behaviour. The so-called peace efforts of Israel are in fact a cloak for its desire to perpetuate its occupation of Arab lands. The firm stand of the Government of Pakistan is that the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination be unambiguously acknowledged. Israel should withdraw from all occupied territories including Bait-ul-Maqdas and the Palestinian people be restored their basic national rights so that they can establish an independent and sovereign State in their own home land. We are of the firm belief that until these demands are met there can be no lasting peace in the Middle East.

“Israel is totally impervious to world opinion and remains in occupation of Arab land. It is setting-up Jewish settlements on the lands usurped by it and is continuing its aggression against Lebanon. These Israeli acts constitute a grave danger to world peace and security.”

Before I close, I must remove one misunderstanding. The Muslims of Pakistan and some other people too have been led to believe that the Palestine problem centres round the conflict between the Muslim Arabs and Jews. This is far from being a fact. The conflict is between Arabs (comprising Christians, Jews, and Muslims) and the non-Arab Jews. Arabs, whether Muslims, Christians, or Jews, have all the same aspirations, i. e., to establish a free Arab State and to turn out the non-Arab Jews from Palestine, as is clear from the following declaration made by the Palestinian Jewish workers to the seventh Arabian Congress in September 1928:

“We the Jewish workers of Palestine, renounce officially our connection with Zionism and declare our whole-hearted agreement with the oppressed Arabian peoples. We realise that Zionism is only a toy and a weapon in the hands of British imperialism. Palestine is the land of the Arabs and belongs to the Arab people who have worked for it with their sweat and blood for hundreds of years. The home of the Jew is where he has been born”....