

# ISSUE OF THE DAY

## YES: States Holy Places Under U. N. Supervision Acceptable to Israel

By MOSHE SHARETT  
Foreign Minister of Israel

An international regime over Jerusalem which does not derive its authority from the freely expressed will of its inhabitants denies to those inhabitants the elementary right enjoyed by their compatriots elsewhere, namely the right to belong to an independent state as its full-fledged citizens.

Do the religious associations of Jerusalem justify such a denial? Must they necessarily predominate over the elementary interests and legitimate aspirations of civilized human beings?

Cannot the Holy Places be protected and religious associations secured except by limiting the Jewish inhabitants of Jerusalem in the exercise of their civic and political self-determination? Is it indeed in the long-term interest of churches and religious institutions that they should be charged with responsibility for permanently interfering with the normal course of secular life and the full self-expression of the population?

The answer of my Government to all these questions is in the negative.

The draft instrument of the Palestine Conciliation Commission is to us unacceptable because its basis is the establishment of an outside authority over a whole area, namely, the subjection of the independence of Israel.

We also note the belief expressed by the representative of the U. S. that "the laws of Israel would continue to apply, as they do at present, to Jewish Jerusalem," and that the decision as to what political regime shall prevail is left to the inhabitants and to the Government presumably concerned with administration.

But these attenuations (proposed by the U. S.), though important, do not affect the core of the mat-

ter. It is true that within the framework of the international regime a maximum extent of local autonomy is repeatedly urged, but this cannot be accepted as a consolation. The term "local autonomy" is more disquieting than reassuring. It is an obvious euphemism for lack of independence.

Thus the conception of the representative of the U. S. retains the establishment of a general council, with vaguely defined powers but with inevitable possibilities of interference with the normal conduct of government.

A complicated system of United Nations courts, with jurisdiction conflicting with that of the state courts is another negative feature of the scheme which remains intact. Finally, the distinguished representative of the U. S. urges with considerable force the immediate demilitarization of Jerusalem.

No illusion could be more dangerous. Demilitarization is an easy catchword. In application to a holy city it sounds particularly attractive and plausible.

Jewish Jerusalem is bounded on three sides—north, east and south—by Arab territory. A complete bilateral disarmament of Jewish and Arab areas in Jerusalem would not establish a security equilibrium. It would leave the Jewish area in a position of very marked inferiority, extremely vulnerable to sudden attack which it would be unable immediately to ward off.

We thus reject the draft instrument even in its mitigated form.

The delegation of Israel has already had opportunities to indicate the nature of the solution of the problem which it considers both practicable and fair. It accepts the principle of international concern in the Holy Places, expressed through the United Nations.

It accepts the idea of an international regime to give effect to that concern but in its conception that the international regime should be of a functional, not a territorial character; viz., it should be concerned with the supervision of the Holy Places and the enforcement, throughout the appropriate authorities, of measures necessary for their protection and accessibility.

It points to the possibility of supplementing the exercise of such functional authority by the United Nations throughout the area of Jerusalem with the complete internationalization of the Old City which represents a massive concentration of all the main shrines.

The distinction between the Old City and the New City is of the essence, and its importance cannot be overemphasized. The Old City, which contains within its walls the chief sanctuaries of the three faiths, all the Christian patriarchates, a number of monasteries and hostels, the Moslem ecclesiastical foundations and a Jewish quarter, with ancient synagogues now in ruins, covers only 6.5 per cent of Jerusalem's municipal territory and only 2 per cent of its town planning area.

The Arab authorities in its control have refused the Jews access to their main shrine—the Wailing Wall, which is the remnant of the Temple.

If the present Arab inhabitants of the Walled City could be induced, by the offer of better housing facilities, to move of their free will out of the congested quarters and settle in the free space outside the walls, then the Walled City could be converted into a spacious and dignified compound, relieved of its present ugliness and squalor, containing only Holy Places and religious foundations and consecrated to religious worship and pilgrimage by members of all faiths under the aegis of the United Nations.

## Question:

Would Jerusalem's problem be solved by granting international supervision of the Holy Places?

Support for Israeli opposition to the internationalization of Jerusalem as proposed by the U.N. came from an unexpected quarter last Saturday when Fouzi Pasha el Mulki presented the views of the Government of Transjordan before the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly. And this declaration along with Friday's statement of Moshe Sharett, Foreign Minister of Israel, have been excerpted today in an effort to clarify the differences of opinion between the two parties most directly concerned.

Most of the Arab nations have supported the concept of complete internationalization of the Holy City, if not the compromise plan of two zones in Jerusalem under Israeli and Arab control. Mulki's stand demonstrated that segregation along the lines proposed by the Palestine Conciliation Commission in the recent Draft Instrument is unacceptable to both Transjordan and Israel. And it should be noted that Transjordan is the only Arab nation with troops in the disputed area.

The United States, meanwhile, continues to bring pressure in the U.N. toward a settlement as close as possible to the original proposal for internationalization. The fact that these proposals are not only against the best interests and rights of Israel, but are also unacceptable to the Arab state most closely involved, should be all the proof necessary to show that this particular issue is far more political than religious.

Our State Department would seem to be trading with the other Arab nations over oil concessions, while going through the motions of appearing to want a just settlement in Jerusalem. But it is just possible that Israel and Transjordan can now reach some agreement on their own, having come this far in the development of a basis for discussion. Neither nation wants its sovereignty threatened any further.

Moshe Sharett, former chief of the political department of the Jewish Agency in Palestine and now Foreign Minister of Israel, has been working for his homeland all his life. During the first World War he was conscripted into the Turkish Army, but worked under cover for the creation of the Jewish Legion which fought with General Allenby. And he was one of the men largely responsible for the Jewish units in World War II.

Dr. Fouzi Pasha el Mulki has served his government in a number of capacities. He was Transjordan's Minister to Egypt in 1947 and has been Foreign Minister since 1948.

—CLIP BOUTELL

## What's Your Opinion?

Have you a bone to pick, an ax of general interest you'd like to grind or information to round out the picture presented on this page? If you have by all means let us hear from you but please keep your letters brief. The most pertinent of them will appear on the page opposite. Write to Issue of the Day, THE DAILY COMPASS, 164 Duane St., New York 13, N. Y.

## NO: Warns of 'Unspeakable Dangers' If Arabs Withdraw from Old City

By FOUZI PASHA EL MULKI  
Foreign Minister of Jordan

Our Government is deeply concerned with the problem of Jerusalem—now commanding the attention of the whole world. My delegation, therefore, deems it imperative to express our views on the problem of Jerusalem with a keen desire that your discussions will bring about a settlement leading to peace and security, and which will be consistent with the principles of justice and democracy.

My Government views the security of Jerusalem as a duty, as an obligation from which we cannot be absolved. Moreover, our Government's responsibility before the world and the generations to come can only be discharged by securing the safety and stability of the Holy City.

It is needless to emphasize our respect for the wishes of the international community represented in your honorable organization and although we are not a member to this organization, yet our Government has sent an official delegation to state their views before your honorable committee. We had hoped that our talks with the Conciliation Commission would clarify our point of view. And now that the problem of Jerusalem is on your agenda I wish to seize this opportunity to elucidate our position.

To begin with, I can make this declaration, from which we have never departed. The Holy Places in the Holy City and its environs under the control of my Government are safe and secure, and shall be the sacred trust protected by everything dear to us.

It is worthy of note that our military forces have defended the Holy City, and with all the resources under their command, have endeavored to save the Holy Places from destruction, thus securing the reverence with which it is held by the believers of the whole world.

Were it not for this genuine effort on the part of the Jordan Kingdom, Jerusalem, like the rest of Arab Palestine, now under Jewish control, would have been overrun and lost and consequently, we would not be, I am afraid, discussing the future of the Holy City, for the future of the Holy City would have been, otherwise, sealed.

Having made such a contribution in preserving and protecting the Holy Places and having endeavored to reinstate the normal situation that existed, my country hopefully requests this honorable committee that this session of the Assembly be not closed before effective measures are taken to repatriate all Arab inhabitants of Jerusalem to their homes, thus restoring the city, Old and New, to the status that existed prior to the tragic events.

It is undeniable that the Jerusalem area occupies amongst Arab areas a position of paramount importance. Your honorable committee will not fail to remember that the responsibility for the defense of these areas has been shouldered by the Hashemite Jordan Kingdom.

The armistice agreement provided for detailed stipulations covering the whole area, including Jerusalem territory; although the armistice agreement was purely dictated by military considerations yet it provided the minimum degree for the prospects of safety and defense.

It must be remarked, however, that the delineation of the armistice lines has taken into account the contiguous character of the whole area under the control of the Jordan military forces.

It would certainly be a destruction of the equilibrium of the armistice lines should we isolate the area of Jerusalem from the ambit of the armistice agreement. It would form, so to speak, a vacuum in our lines of defense, it would form a large pocket in the area under our control.

It is quite evident that the Jerusalem area falls in the heart of the territory under our control. Any segregation will subject Arab Palestine to unspeakable dangers. The Arab areas falling south and north of Jerusalem will become dismembered and disconnected.

My delegation wishes, further, to assert that any change in the present situation of Palestine which my Government deems against its interests, as the present discussion contemplates, is bound to have serious repercussions in our country. It will further expose my country to imminent dangers as a result of Jewish territorial expansionist motives, to say nothing of the domination of the entire Holy City by the Jews, as a sequence to internationalization.

It is an established fact that my country, which has made its best endeavors to safeguard the interests of the victims of the Palestine tragedy and to administer their affairs, feels reluctant to exclude no less than 15,000 Arabs, inhabitants of the Jerusalem area, from Arab sovereignty, eventually undermining Arab existence.

Last, but not least, I should emphasize that the Holy City has been in Arab hands since time immemorial. The Holy Places and shrines adding sanctity to the Holy City had been met with the best guardianship the world has ever witnessed.

It is our profound and genuine belief that by creating a new regime is a break in the record of Jerusalem that has remained unblemished in the annals of history.

I feel that I cannot conclude before renewing the assurances of my Government to carry out to the fullest extent our obligations to guarantee the freedom of worship and right of free access to the Holy Places accorded to the believers from the four corners of the globe.



SHARETT



MULKI