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THE ARAB REFUGEE PROBLEM

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THE whole question of Arab refugees has, in the last six weeks, been given considerable prominence in the Press. Well informed articles have been printed and a number of letters have appeared, while appeals for help have received greater attention. At the same time not nearly enough is being done, for people are so easily sidetracked by their political or racial feelings into discussion about responsibility instead of need.

It was with some trepidation that I accepted the invitation of your committee to speak on this subject, for you are accustomed to hearing experts and I cannot claim to be one of them. However, I am a refugee. Though not an Arab, I was born in the Middle East and have lived three-quarters of my life there. Though not homeless, I have been compelled to leave my house in Jerusalem and most of my possessions have been looted. I have also had the experience of being wounded and then taken to hospital by Arabs at considerable risk to themselves. With other wounded and sick—almost all Arabs—I was lying in the French Hospital when it was captured and occupied by Israeli forces. Finally, like some who were too old or too seriously wounded to be regarded as combatants, I was evacuated with the help of the British Consulate and the International Red Cross to the Cathedral at St. George's, just inside the Arab lines. This explains such right as I have to speak to you on this subject. I have been through some of the experiences which thousands of others have had, with this great difference, that I did not have the disadvantage of having no land to which I could return.

We lived in a part of Jerusalem called Musrara. It is a thickly populated quarter just to the north of the Old City. The majority of those who lived there were Christian Arabs, though there were a large number of Moslems and a few families of Jews. Many of the houses had been well built, but the district had "gone down" and in most cases a number of families lived together in each building, many of them having no more than one or two rooms. Children swarmed everywhere with no playground but the streets and a few pieces of waste ground. The various communities had lived there in comparative peace, though in times of tension it was not a very healthy quarter in which to live as it was just on the border where Arab and Jew met.

Such tension had been rising after the war, until early in 1947 it was decided to evacuate British women and children and to set up a series of zones surrounded by barbed wire, within which most British people lived and which enclosed Government offices and sections of the city occupied by the Army or R.A.F. This practically partitioned Jerusalem with zones acting as buffers between Arab and Jewish quarters. An R.A.F. zone and the prison and the broadcasting station provided this sort of buffer between Musrara and the Jewish quarters to the East.

However, incidents continued and eventually all Arab and Jewish

quarters established their own road blocks manned by locally appointed guards—at first unarmed but later armed and supported by municipal police. Just before this happened the Jewish families in Musrara became convinced that it was no longer safe for them to remain. I appealed on their behalf to the police, who helped to remove them and their possessions to a Jewish quarter. I was immediately besieged by Arabs who wished to leave Jewish areas and wanted the rooms vacated.

The Evelina de Rothschild school, which was almost next door to us, remained there until Christmas. The principal had always had friendly relations with her Arab neighbours but the strain was increasing. Though the Arab local committee assured me that neither staff nor girls had anything to fear, the extent of their control was open to doubt especially after three bullets had come through the office window one night. Soon afterwards we were able to arrange for an exchange of buildings with our Jerusalem Girls' College, most of whose pupils were Arab though the College was in a Jewish quarter. This caused general satisfaction and enabled the Evelina de Rothschild school to reopen for the spring term with its full numbers.

For our school the change came too late, for a number of the wealthier people had begun to send their families out of the country. In many cases they put their sons and their daughters into schools in the Lebanon or Egypt. The number who did this may not have been very large, but it seriously affected our fee-paying secondary schools. In cases where the menfolk went with their families there was a good deal of bitter feeling among those who remained, and I never found any evidence for the propaganda put out that the Arabs were ordered to leave by some higher authority. The really great difficulty was that there seemed to be no higher Arab authority to whom anyone could appeal. In Musrara in the early spring a very definite attempt was made to prevent people leaving. A special licence was required if anything was taken out of the quarter.

It was on a Sunday afternoon at 5 p.m. some time in February that Musrara had its first experience of mortar bombs. I do not know whether there had been any provocation for this breaking of the afternoon's peace. The first bomb struck a balcony where a young man with his wife and two children were enjoying the spring afternoon. Several others were killed or injured. We called on the bereaved, and found that many were for the first time realizing what might have to be faced.

In the meantime things were happening in a block across the road. The people there were Christian Arabs and Jews. Some of the Arabs became nervous and moved away. Their houses and shops were occupied. A half-dozen young men, afraid that Jews might make some move at night, took it by turns to be on guard. One of them eventually bought a German officer's revolver and a few rounds of ammunition. Not many days later a group of young armed Jews took possession of a room on the roof of a neighbouring house which commanded the whole block. They claimed that a band of the Arab Youth Movement had taken up positions there and that they had come to protect the Jews who lived there. Tension continued to increase until an Arab youth from another

quarter tried to throw a Mills bomb at a Jewish shop. Then some of the women and children moved down to us for the nights because they feared reprisals. Finally, an elderly Arab carpenter was shot dead by a sniper as he chatted to a friend outside his house. After an appeal to the police the Arab families evacuated their houses. The same thing was happening in other quarters. Rumours, threats, an unfortunate incident, and innocent citizens felt that it was no longer safe to remain in their homes.

Then one evening in Musrara I met a stream of exhausted, wailing women and little children from Deir Yassin. Some were so overcome that they had to be carried. They had seen men and women shot down and killed. They had been taken and robbed and were finally released on the Jewish side of the R.A.F. zone through which they had been allowed to pass. Here was a further warning of what the future might bring. There was some further exchange of mortar fire. Children began to disappear from the streets. One met people carrying what they could into the Old City. Supplies were more difficult to come by. Arab irregulars began to appear in place of the local guards. Then the news was brought that the Arab Legion, who were guarding the broadcasting station, were to be withdrawn. It was clear that we could not remain. It was too late to move more than the bare necessities, so, like other families, we bricked up most of our possessions under the church and moved away.

Others moved too, some to the Old City where they thought that they would be safer, and others to Jericho or Transjordan. Those who moved first took many of their possessions with them—those who stayed as they could saved very little—the cost of moving became almost prohibitive. That was what happened in the towns.

During April and early May I also had to travel about the country. At the end of the month I had to go to Ramallah for a funeral. The little town was crowded with refugees. Everywhere I met friends from Jaffa—townspeople like those in Musrara—officials, shopkeepers, small merchants. It is said that 25,000 of them had come up from Jaffa when a part of the town had been occupied after bombardment. Every room in Ramallah seemed full and rents had soared high.

A little earlier in the month I had been in Gaza, where again I found a number of refugees from Jaffa. It was not until later, however, that the position had become really serious, though local doctors were planning to treat wounded without charge and to give voluntary service to the very poor.

I then travelled over Transjordan. In the north some refugees had arrived from Tiberias and Eastern Galilee. In Amman I found many families from Jerusalem. In Salt there was a Jaffa family in each room of the school I visited. They told me of their escapes—of how their mukhtar had been killed on the truck which brought him and his family away as they passed a Jewish orange grove. They told me of how they had been compelled to pay £150 for a truck to bring them 100 miles from their homes. They all hoped that they might soon return home as their savings were being exhausted. After visiting families in the town of Salt, I went up to our hospital on the hill above. There I saw some

wounded. One man told me that he was a mechanic in Jaffa, working in a garage when mortar bombs rained upon them and he was severely wounded. His family had then packed what they could into a truck and brought him over to Salt. What the future would bring he could not say. I also found a young man whom we had employed to look after the C.M.S. hospital in Jaffa. I had handed it over to the Arab Medical Association, who had the backing of the International Red Cross. He told me that the bombing had become too bad and that doctors, nurses, and patients had been compelled to leave. Before I left I met some of the young men from Musrara who told me that they would have liked to have stayed in Jerusalem, but nobody seemed to wish for their services. Many people had expected some sort of conscription, but nothing had been done and those who stayed to defend their homes had, for the most part, to buy their own weapons. This was not difficult provided that they had the money, for arms and ammunition were being sold openly in the streets. One could choose the make of cartridges one preferred—English, German, or French. (One sportsman offered me a revolver for £25 as I came out of the gateway of our hospital in Gaza and I had had to move his stall to get my car out of the gate.)

That was what had happened before the British Mandate had been terminated, and it was one of the things which made Arab refugees feel most bitter about the treatment which they had received from Great Britain. Whatever irregular forces might have done to give cause for Jewish attacks upon them, how could we allow peaceful citizens, many of whom had served the Mandatory Government most faithfully for long years, to be driven from their homes in Haifa, Jaffa, Katamon or Talbich in Jerusalem? One evening in May, for example, I was called up by two families who said that fighting was going on all around them and all they wanted was help so that they might get out.

Some, of course, stayed where they were sometimes, only fleeing into convents, churches, or hospitals at the very last moment. I think of one woman who used to come to talk to me after I had been taken wounded to the French Hospital in Jerusalem. At the end of the first week in May, she and her husband had moved from Katamon with their three children, her brother-in-law and an aunt. They had taken refuge in a large convent in the Mamillah Road. There, first her husband and then her brother-in-law had been wounded inside the convent grounds. Her husband had been taken to the Government Hospital, her brother-in-law to the French Hospital. On May 14th, the day British forces left Jerusalem, she had gone early to see her husband and then to see her brother-in-law. While she was there fighting broke out all around and she could not leave. About five days later her brother-in-law died of his wounds and had to be buried in the garden. She could get no news of her husband, who was in the Government Hospital—by then in Jewish hands. Nor could she get any news of the small children she had left behind. What was she to do? In the hospital I met a number of others who had fled from nearby houses and did not know what had happened to relatives and friends. In one or two cases younger men were taken away from the hospital as prisoners.

I have spoken of these townfolk at some length, because I saw most of them and they are apt to be forgotten when the miseries of those who have always lived nearer to the starvation level are being described. I hear fairly often from people of this class. Only recently I heard from one who has been fortunate in having employment in Beirut, but he wrote of some three hundred, who used to attend the Arabic Anglican Church of St. Paul's in Jerusalem, who are for the most part out of work in that Lebanese capital. The Government of the Lebanon was faced with a fairly serious unemployment problem when British forces were withdrawn a few years ago, and it has not been able to afford, except in special cases, to employ foreigners—as the Arabs of Palestine are—for fear of aggravating this problem. It had probably been this same fear which had in so many cases made the Arab refugees feel that they were not wanted. They have told me that the Palestinian was so unpopular that they could not bear to remain, and I know of several such families who have returned to Arab Palestine.

In Syria this problem of unemployment has apparently not been so acute. A number of those who had technical qualifications have been given employment and are being very well treated. Engineers and teachers in particular have found good openings.

In Transjordan the situation is rather different again. According to some (an article in *The Times* newspaper) the Arabs of Transjordan are the most willing of all to accept the Palestinian and are likely to benefit most from having an influx of men qualified for various kinds of work by their experience under the Mandatory Government. A number have been given employment, but the Palestine Arab has not shown much anxiety to become a citizen of Transjordan. One letter recently spoke of the unwillingness of some, at least of the educated refugees, to accept anything but temporary employment as their chief anxiety was to get back to their more developed land as soon as might be. They do not consider that Transjordan is their land.

The position of these first refugees was serious, but it was not beyond the capacity of the Arab states to deal with it in some measure, at least temporarily. At first most of these people were not destitute, they had some savings and the Arabs in the surrounding countries did what they could for their guests.

It was in mid July that the refugee problem suddenly began to become desperate. Just before the end of the first truce, June 11th to July 9th, there had been a considerable evacuation from the Old City where mortar shelling had caused a number of casualties in early June. Then came the Israeli attacks upon Lydda and Ramlah, using what the *Palestine Post* described as blitz tactics, and we suddenly became aware of the immensity of the problem which was about to face the U.N.O. These villages in the plain had been crowded with refugees from Haifa and Jaffa. Now they were driven out and in many cases robbed of the few things which they had tried to carry away with them. Ramallah became the centre to which these thousands poured. Some were lucky and were able to get transport—many had to struggle up the weary miles on foot. Women with small children had lost their menfolk, some of whom were dead and others

prisoners of war. The little summer resort of 10,000 people suddenly found itself faced with an invasion of 70,000 people—mainly women, children, or the aged—who had nothing but what they stood up in. I was still in Jerusalem unable to move, but people who went out to see what was going on told heart-breaking stories of what they had seen and heard. Thousands were camping under the trees, a blanket hung from a branch was the only shelter—most of them had no means of cooking and though the bakeries of Nablus and the Transjordan Government did what they could to supply them with bread it was little enough that could be done. Some had collapsed and died on the journey, some had lost their children and were wandering from group to group trying to hear news of them. And then there was the problem of water. There is always a danger that supplies may run out during the summer months and the numbers were far too many for the water available. One day we were told that the supply could not last for more than about three days. That meant that these people must be moved on to other villages or across to Transjordan. A lot of excellent work was done by volunteers who tried to get particulars of the people and to pass them on to other districts in as orderly a manner as possible.

I have described what happened at Ramallah because I had first-hand evidence of what was going on. The same sort of thing was happening in Galilee from which people were fleeing over the Lebanese and Syrian borders as the Israeli forces pushed north. A large number of refugees moved into Nazareth and it was reported that some 20,000 Arabs had taken refuge in that area.

Up to this time Arabs were anxious to cope with their own problem in their own way. They were not over anxious for refugee organizations, except the I.R.C., to come in to organize relief. As the problem grew ever more appalling they were glad of whatever help the United Nations could give. There were, however, some splendid pieces of individual work which must not be forgotten, such as the emergency hospitals organized by Arab doctors in Jerusalem after the hospitals which used to cater for the Arab population had been captured. There was the orphanage and a convalescent hospital run by Moslem ladies; there was relief work undertaken by the various Christian Churches and there were some generous gifts from abroad, but it hardly touched the problem.

On July 21st Count Bernadotte appealed to the Secretary-General of the U.N.O. for help. He saw that the problem had what he called three phases :

- (a) Immediate relief of absolute basic needs.
- (b) A programme from September to December, 1948, based on exact figures obtained by experts.
- (c) A long-range programme to keep the people supplied until August-September, 1949, when harvesting will be completed.

It is important to realize that the long-range programme envisaged the return of some at least of the people who had fled or been driven from their homes by August 15th, 1948, if possible and it assumed that they would be able to till their lands in the winter and spring.

Telegrams were sent to many nations and promises of help in the way of supplies were received. A good many voluntary organizations also promised supplies, and the International Red Cross organized much of the transport of these goods and medicines. It was very much feared that there would be a serious outbreak of disease, but the figures which I saw for typhoid seemed to indicate that the preventive work done with slender resources had been remarkably effective.

Those summer months saw the formation of many committees and there was a good deal of discussion about organization, though the actual work was sadly held up for lack of supplies. It was a great relief when we were told that bales of clothing and supplies of food were on the way and that the British Government was making tents available to help with the appalling problem of housing. It was not until October that supplies in any quantity began to get through and the tents which had been supplied had been put up in organized camps.

The problem before the Disaster Relief Project, organized under the chairmanship of Sir Raphael Cilento, was very great. A large number of voluntary organizations (a list of them appears in the Mediators' report) had to be welded together into some sort of unity. The liaison between them was not always good.

Then again there was the question of transport. Supplies arrived in Beirut, but the railway could not carry half of the weekly tonnage which needed to be carried. The obvious alternative was motor transport, but much of this had been commandeered by Arab army authorities and the rates demanded by those who were left were prohibitive.

Yet another difficulty, of which many have written, has been that though the organization at the top has been on a grand scale, the contributions from the countries to whom an appeal was made have not been forthcoming as quickly as they were needed. What is more, when it comes down to the actual cash available to the voluntary organizations doing the distribution for the employment of local workers to distribute relief it has been found over and over again that the allocation has been insufficient. There are many hundreds of trained Arab social workers and teachers of whom use could be made if funds were available.

Yet a further problem has been the fact that though many of the poorest class of refugees have been gathered into camps there are vast numbers crowded into towns and villages in many different areas of whom it is difficult to keep track. There are hundreds more living in caves or sleeping in trenches as their only shelter. To look after these scattered people is in itself a work of great difficulty. The camps do simplify the work of distribution, but the conditions in them were often very bad.

I heard of a large camp of 40,000 near Tyre and of camps in Syria, mainly around Aleppo, but those of which I have had most information are at Jericho and Shuneh, on the west and east sides of the Jordan Valley. The camp at Jericho was considered to be one of the best organized, with a very able and experienced Belgian in charge. He had so organized it that families from the same village were as far as possible kept together. An English doctor from Jerusalem helped to organize the medical side of the work, but found the terrible lack of equipment very

hampering. The climate is fairly warm in the Jordan Valley even in winter, and there was not the danger of people being frozen to death in their tents as happened in Ramallah, but conditions were pretty grim, though, in addition to relief, the Y.M.C.A. did endeavour to introduce activities for the children and other social work.

The camp at Shuneh, which you may have heard described by Sister Jordan in her appeal for help in the work being done there by the British Red Cross, was one of the worst. When it was first established there was but one Arab clerk in charge with 17,000 to 20,000 to look after. He had had no experience of such camps—he had no medical assistance though there were many cases of smallpox. No one even knew how to mix the powdered milk sent by U.N.I.C.E.F. for distribution to mothers and babies. A doctor who went there and established a clinic for the day in a hut had to pack up when the mobs who wished to see him caused the collapse of the hut. An appeal was then made to the Church Missionary Society at Salt, and arrangements were made for the doctor and nurses to visit the camp several times a week until the British Red Cross could take over, though it meant closing the hospital to in-patients.

In the meantime voluntary workers were able to start distribution when food supplies began to arrive through U.N.O. and U.N.I.C.E.F.

Only the other day I received an account from an English missionary nurse of the progress of her work in Salt. She described poky rooms and damp caves into which the refugees were crowded. She described how she was able to open her centre on October 25th. She had intended to supply milk to 300 children, but after a time the numbers increased so greatly that she was asked to confine herself to children under two and nursing mothers. She had 746 on her books. Receiving supplies of meat and margarine, she also started a soup kitchen for 364. She was able to add rice, lentils, and vegetables to the rations received from U.N.O. This was made possible by the generosity of the local people. All went well through November, but then supplies failed and were not resumed until January 24th. It meant a desperate struggle, for prices in the local market were terribly inflated, but they could not bear to see the people starve. Even when food was provided it was not always easy to make the poor peasants appreciate what was given to them. It was not always the kind of food to which they were accustomed. Workers have spoken of the difficulty of persuading people that Swiss cheese was not bad though its taste was so different from what they were accustomed to, nor was it very easy to cope with Norwegian tinned foods with instructions for use in Norwegian.

The granting of these preliminary supplies was followed towards the end of November by the decision of the United Nations to make a contribution of 32,000,000 dollars, but this sum was calculated on the basis (a) that the number of refugees was in the neighbourhood of 360,000 Arabs and 7,000 Jews; (b) that a long-range project would be terminated by August, 1949. Even while discussions were going on some 200,000 more people were leaving their homes and pouring into the surrounding districts. This was particularly in the southern part of Palestine following Israeli moves in the Negev. It was then that I began to hear from workers

in Gaza of the appalling conditions of these people who were flooding into the area. It seems to be true that the number of deaths in the Gaza area has been higher than anywhere else.

In mid-December it was decided that the relief works should be re-organized under three main bodies. The International Red Cross (Swiss) continued its work in Palestine and became responsible for all Arab refugees in that area. The League of Red Cross Societies became responsible for the administration of relief in the Lebanon, Syria, and Transjordan, while in Southern Palestine the American Friends Relief Service was to assume responsibility. This meant for the first time that workers trained for relief became available in the refugee camps and those volunteers who had struggled to carry on had adequate support.

This was all the more important as such institutions as Mission hospitals had been finding it almost impossible to carry on in face of increasing expenses and the almost complete loss of the fee income on which they had in part depended. In Gaza the doctor wrote to me in November to say that they needed about £700 a month extra if they were to carry on. The three new societies, who assumed responsibility on January 1st, were very prompt in getting to work and those who were already there were only too thankful to co-operate. In Gaza, for example, the C.M.S. Hospital has become the centre of a big scheme for medical relief. New staff have brought new hope to the over-burdened doctors and nurses, who now can see a work developing which is at least bringing temporary relief to the stricken people around them.

The same thing has happened in Transjordan, where the C.M.S. has handed over its hospital and equipment to the British Red Cross. This has become their base hospital. They have also taken over the work which had been begun at Shunah in the Jordan Valley. I have already referred to the moving appeal made on Palm Sunday by Sister Jordan who is working there. She told of the appalling need which still exists. At Zerka, where two English ladies and other helpers have been at work since October, a qualified Red Cross nurse has been able to take over supervision of some of the medical work. An admirable account of the work there has been printed. In Palestine itself the Anglican Bishop's Hospital in Hebron is being opened by the I.R.C. All these ventures are a great improvement on what has been in the past, but there is still a great deal which has not been touched.

I have referred already to the lack of sufficient funds to pay workers or finance projects of those actually dealing with the refugees. I have heard of nurses buying drugs with their own money because they could not get supplies. I do not know how many thousands of pounds the British Red Cross have paid out of their own funds. Two months ago I was told it was £45,000. The Anglican Bishop is spending at least £700 a month to support relief work. At Zerka, in Transjordan, £180 a month from gifts is being spent to keep the work of distribution services going. A generous gift through Lady Spears has been an absolute god-send. Every one of these societies or individuals has a real claim upon the generosity of their fellow-men. Without voluntary organizations the whole work would break down.

But the distribution of relief is not enough. Take, for example, the children. The most recent figures I have seen (April 12th) state that 39 per cent. of the refugees are children under the age of fifteen. Well over 300,000 children to be looked after. Here again voluntary workers have been doing what they can. I have heard of one large building in Lebanon which is to be evacuated during the summer months so that it may be used as a school. The evicted refugees will spend the summer in tents (Baaklen). In Ramallah I have heard how an Arab lady with great educational experience has started a school of 250 girls in the Friends Meeting House which has been put at her disposal. "It is all very makeshift," writes a correspondent from Ramallah at the beginning of this month, "but the girls seem so eager and absorbed that they even forget to shiver. Even in this bitter cold many had nothing on their feet." (Other letters, too, beg for shoes.) Most of them were in the cotton frocks in which they were carried out of Ramleh and Lydda. Inside a class in turn had an oral lesson while the rest studied quietly. Outside another group cheerfully jumped up and down and did exercises in their efforts at once to keep occupied and warm. The English Friends, the Lutheran World Federation, and the Church World Service are financing this venture and some equipment is supplied by local authorities. The preparation of a hot meal for the children is done by a volunteer staff in return for rations. The families of 300 more girls are demanding a school and some even infiltrate, especially at soup-time. The whole cost is under £1100 a month.

The same letter informs me that though the Government schools are so crowded that there are at least eighty in a class there must be 1,000 boys in Ramallah alone who cannot get in to school. Who is going to educate them?

Added to all that I have said about the terrible condition of the people in crowded rooms, in caves, camping under trees or a dozen in an army hut, they have had to face the worst winter for very many years. A letter of April 6th spoke of snow that morning. Tents have been blown down by the gales and hundreds have died of exposure. Clothing and blankets have been sent out but they are still not enough. Now there is the problem of heat: 70,000 are moving from the Jordan valley to the hills, partly because of the heat, and partly because of an outbreak of typhus and meningitis in Jericho.

And what of the future? Owing to the delay in sending supplies or paying over grants the money is likely to last beyond the end of August, but the end of August is the time when the present plans are to finish. I had a letter a fortnight ago asking what was to be done with the hospital in Gaza when the Friends Relief Service ceases work—without their help we should simply have to close down. Fortunately another letter has come in since to say that they hope to continue after the end of August. May I remind you again that Count Bernadotte's long-range scheme envisaged the return of the people to their land in time to plough and sow their fields. Even if they were allowed to return to Israeli-held territory the next harvest could not be gathered in before August, 1950. I have not yet heard whether the U.N.O. has yet faced this fact.

At least a year must be added to the nine months long-range relief

voted by the U.N.O. Also plans must be made for the relief of far more than 360,000, for the number of refugees has been steadily increasing. I have avoided figures, but the calculation dated April 12th is that there are now 875,000 homeless Arabs—nearly three times as many as there were when the Mediator made his report in September. And that number does not include those who have not had to flee but can now barely afford to live in their own homes.

I feel sure that plans for settlement in Syria or 'Iraq or Transjordan have been considered. We are told that there is room for such settlement. The Arab States must find it hard to discuss such plans, however, until the Israeli State and its boundaries have been determined and the question of the return of the refugees solved. But even if they accept the situation and agree to settle these people, they will need the support of the world for very many years to come if they are to be settled and rehabilitated. For this refugee life is the most deteriorating possible and every month makes things worse. These people can see no hope. Their plight they see as the direct consequence of the British policy in Palestine, which has left them helpless to face the consequences of a decision of the United Nations which ignored the justice of their cause. What is to be done?

Day by day their hopes dwindle.

Only a few days ago I had a letter from one who had visited Bethlehem. Is there any chance, he asked, of these people we have educated getting to the Colonies or to the Dominions? For they can see no hope in the Middle East. I have in my case a letter from another asking if I will support his application for British nationality. That is the way many of them are thinking. Another is meeting me to-morrow to discuss how the social services, which are not considered as a relief fund responsibility, may be kept going when the funds left by the Mandatory are exhausted. And what of those hundreds of thousands who cannot raise their voices and are waiting hopelessly to find out what their fate will be?

It is easy to apportion blame. It is easy to say that the U.N.O. should do more, but the fact is that:

Public opinion must be roused so that immediate relief is continued and increased.

The voluntary organizations of a humanitarian and non-political character must be given a vastly increased support by people of this and every land if they are to administer sympathetically the relief which U.N.O. gives. That is what our experience shows.

And immediate steps must be taken to resettle these people on the land and rehabilitate them. If, as seems inevitable, Israel declines to allow more than a small percentage to return other plans for them must be made.

A very great responsibility rests upon us.



