

## The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine - 1947

### ○ Exhibit Scope

This exhibit documents efforts of the fledgling United Nations organization between 28 April and 29 November 1947 (a period of 7 months), to settle the land dispute between the Arab and Jewish populations in the Palestine Mandate.

### Historical Background

In late 1946 the newly formed United Nations organization inherited the League of Nations' resources and responsibilities, including the oversight of international mandates. In April 1947, Great Britain announced it would no longer administer the Palestine mandate as of May 1948. They proposed a 'special session' of the U.N. Security Council to address administration and security under U.N. auspices once British forces departed. The Special Session produced a Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to evaluate the issues and propose a solution which would prevent future disagreements and violence.

### Exhibit Development

○ Exhibit development progresses chronologically from the special session of the Security Council, and the resulting U.N. Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to the issuance of a formal report with recommendations to end the conflict. Events are outlined in the exhibit plan chronologically (date range top right of exhibit pages - some ranges may overlap) and presented using related material to illustrate each subject.

### Exhibit Plan

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 U.N. Special Session on Palestine     | - General Assembly discusses British departure recommending a special committee to investigate the mandate's status |
| 2 Special Committee (UNSCOP)            | - Special Committee is formed and relocates to Jerusalem  |
| 3 Documentation Gathering               | - Document Information is gathered and prepared for review  |
| 4 Field Surveys                         | - Committee interviews residents throughout the Mandate   |
| 5 Interviews and Hearings               | - Formal hearings held with testimonies and interviews  |
| 6 Jerusalem to Geneva HQ                | - Special Committee moves to Geneva to write reports  |
| 7 Proposals and Ad Hoc Committee        | - Major and Minor Report proposals formulated and presented   |
| 8 Formal Ratification of Resolution 181 | - Committee recommendations approved and ratified   |

### Subject Knowledge

The story-line of this exhibit includes major events arranged by date and illustrated with diverse official documents and philatelic elements selectively chosen to demonstrate specific story-line details and balance presentation.

### ○ Philatelic Knowledge

Care is taken to ensure the proper descriptions of all elements to demonstrate knowledge of philately which includes information on stamps, cancel devices, rates, rarity or other justified information as appropriate.

## Exhibit Synopsis - Page 2

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### Philatelic Elements

This exhibit utilizes a rich array of materials spanning many exhibit genres (traditional, thematic, postal history, etc.) to carry the story forward with postage stamps, specimen, plate numbers, postage meters, surface and airmail services, printed matter, miscellaneous markings, ephemera, etc. Material from the appropriate period and offices is incorporated.

### Condition

Covers are selected for the best condition available, bearing in mind official service mail is seldom pristine. Folds, creases, nicks, small tears or missing corners are common and are indications of actual transit through the mail systems of the time and place.

### Rarity

Challenge is very high as the committee's brief existence (7 months) makes mail extremely scarce or unique with fewer than 30 examples recorded, 8 in this exhibit. This is the most comprehensive exhibit of UNSCOP mail to date. Rarity is determined from published sources:

Articles from "*The Journal*" (UNPI) and "*The Israel Philatelist*" (SIP)

Gaines Catalog / monographs of international U.N. philatelic societies (Germany, Holland and France)

Philatelic exhibits (international) / web sites / personal correspondence with international collectors

Key items are matted on gold:

- Special Committee service mail from Jerusalem to New York (#1 of 6 reported) Page 4
- **Special Committee service mail sent to Haifa (two reported)** Page 5
- **Committee member countrywide pass with embossed British M.E.F. seal (only reported)** Page 6
- Special Committee service mail from Jerusalem to Ottawa, Canada (#2 of 6 reported) Page 7
- **Special Committee service mail sent within Jerusalem (only reported)** Page 8
- **Special Committee service mail sent as postcard to Fort Gary, Canada (only reported)** Page 9
- Special Committee service mail from Jerusalem to Ottawa, Canada (#3 of 6 reported) Page 9
- Special Committee service mail from Geneva to Ottawa and New York (#1 and #2 of 9 reported) Page 10
- United States Delegation to the U.N. service mail from member Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt Page 12

### Political Viewpoint and Importance

The exhibit attempts to remain non-partisan on a controversial subject. Service mail of the UNSCOP reflects efforts to resolve the problem of two cultures and millions of people in conflict. It was a valiant first effort to address serious social issues continuing to this day.

### Literature References

- "*To Consider the Future of Palestine*", *The Israel Philatelist*, 1998, **Vol. 49 #4**
- "*UN Relief for Palestine Refugees*", *The Journal of United Nations Philatelists*, 2015 **Vol. 37 #2**
- "*United Nations Philately*", Arleigh Gaines, R&D Pubs, 1980-92, **pages 1715-1717, 3026, 1791 and 1425**