

UNST
DPI
ORAL
HISTORY
(02)/J11
10/5/83
Eng.
Cop.1

Sabban

Table Of Contents
Subject Index

Algeria; 12, 18.
Arab Countries; 5-7, 9, 13.
Arab State; 22.
Atlantic City, N.J.; 17.
Belgium; 30.
Britain; 5, 13, 15.
ByeloRussia; 6.
Canada; 30.
Charter (U.N.); 3, 7, 15-16, 26, 33.
Committes (U.N.);
 Ad Hoc; 16, 24, 32-3.
 Credentials; 9.
 Political; 16.
 Third Comm.; 29.
 Trusteeship (2nd); 7, 12-13.
Cold War; 22.
Cuba; 24, 31.
Dumbarton Oaks; 3, 8.
Egypt; 6-7.
F.A.O.; 17.
France; 5, 13, 15.
General Assembly; 6, 10, 16, 24.
Geneva; 2, 22.
Haiti; 19.
Iraq; 6, 13.
Israel; 21-25.
Jordan; 2, 13.
Lake Success; 16, 19-20, 32.
Lebanon; 13, 21.
Liberia; 19.
Morocco; 12.
Nambia; 33.
Ottoman Empire; 13.
Palestine; 2, 13, 17, 19-20, 22, 33.
Phillipines; 13, 19.
Secretariat; 33.
Security Council; 23.
South Africa; 33.
Soviet Union; 2, 5, 13-15, 22, 25.
Sykes Picot treaty; 13.
Syria; 13.
Tunisia; 12.
Turkey; 13.
U.N.D.P.; 18.
U.N.I.C.E.F.; 18.
United States; 4, 7-9, 13, 15, 22, 25.
Veto Power; 6, 15.
Yemen; 6.

MASTER
COPY

5 October 1983

BG/Side 1

ORAL HISTORY

2

Question * *

I believe, Ambassador, that I have read that Saudi Arabia never joined the League of Nations because it was opposed to the Mandate System.

Mr. Jabbar: First of all, during the Peace Conference of the First World War there was no Saudi Arabia. There was a Sultanate of Nejd, the kingdom of Hijaz and King Abd al-Aziz was just emerging on the International scene. Part of the Peninsula, especially the western part, was already under the Ottomans and the Gulf States were under British sovereignty. So, Saudi Arabia did not join the Peace Conference, but Hijaz, which is the western part of Saudi Arabia did. It was a kingdom ruled by the great-grandfather of King Hussein of Jordan.

QUESTION: But you never took an opportunity in, say, the 1920s or 1930s.

Mr. JABBAR: No, there was a trip made by the late King Faisal - at the time he was a young man - to Europe and he visited its capitals and Governments: he went to the Soviet Union also. That was a sort of experience for him, and he carried messages from his father to the rulers of the Western world and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was the first country to recognize Saudi Arabia in 1926.

QUESTION: That's very interesting, in view of the subsequent development of relations.

Mr. JABBAR: That's right.

Many persons say we do not have relations with the Soviet Union. The other day, during the Geneva Conference on Palestine, I invited all the Heads of delegation, including the Soviet representative. He said: "We have always had diplomatic relations: we never severed diplomatic relations, we only withdrew our ambassador." Actually, we do not have diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union or any communist country in the world.

* The interviewer is William Powell asking questions of Sheikh Ahmed Abdul Jabbar.

QUESTION: I presume that the San Francisco Conference was probably one of the first great international conferences in which Saudi Arabia participated. Is that correct?

Mr. JABBAR: That's correct.

QUESTION: What was it like for the delegation of that hitherto rather remote desert kingdom to come to San Francisco and enter on the international scene at that time?

Mr. Jabbar: This was manifested as a sense of obligation, because the world leaders at the time, prior to San Francisco, met in Moscow, Yalta and Dumbarton Oaks and took many constructive measures in order to meet again in San Francisco and draft the United Nations Charter. Their aim was to give the peoples of the world an organization to prevent future horrors, calamities and so on. There was a real desire - we can say a deep conviction - all over the world that something must be done to avoid another catastrophe in the future.

I remember that in San Francisco all persons were enthusiastic and happy; they felt that that was the end of an era, in the sense that they wanted back home their sons, husbands and brothers. All that emotion that engulfed everyone of us at the Conference encouraged us, on the one hand; at the same time we were dreamers, thinking of a better future not only for us as representatives of Saudi Arabia but also for all mankind.

The invitation for Saudi Arabia to join in was a challenge, because we too had declared war against the Axis Powers. We were very well represented by the Foreign Minister, the late King Faisal, who at the time was Prince Faisal. In fact, King Abdul Aziz sent with him, in addition to the official delegation, three

of his sons: Prince Hamid Aziz Abdul, the eldest son, who is still alive; Prince Fahad Ibn-Abdul Aziz, who is now the king of Saudi Arabia; and Prince Nawwaf Bun Abdul Aziz as well as King Faisal's eldest son. They came on a sightseeing tour; he wanted them to know the U.S. and meet other world leaders, especially those meeting in San Francisco.

QUESTION: I want to come back to that in a minute.

You spoke of the enthusiasm that existed at the time of the opening of the San Francisco Conference. This was certainly true of the man in the street in San Francisco. Do you think it was also true of the delegations assembled there - the general enthusiasm?

Mr. JABBAR: It was a general, genuine enthusiasm and feeling that there we were constructing not only for ourselves but also for the future.

QUESTION: You had been in the United States before, I believe. You had been studying at Georgetown University, is that correct?

Mr. JABBAR: Yes, I was graduated from Georgetown and worked here for nine years, from 31 January 1946 to 2 September 1955.

QUESTION: So when you went to San Francisco the American scene was not new to you. You had been in Washington, you had —

Mr. JABBAR: No, the American scene in San Francisco was new to me because later on I worked in Washington. At the same time, the American scene was a continuous one, because I had had my previous education at the American University in Beirut, Lebanon. I had my elementary, secondary and college education. I received my BA from the American University at Beirut.

QUESTION: When you arrived in San Francisco, how did the other delegations approach you - were they friendly, hostile, working to get your vote on certain issues that would come up? How did you feel your reception was?

Mr. JABBAR: I don't believe there was any sort of hostility. There was a desire among all the delegates to have dialogue and to convince others of their point of view. I remember at one point Mr. Molotov, the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, told the Arab delegates that the Soviet Union had no ill feelings towards any country: "We have no quarrels with the Arab countries, why shouldn't you be just neutral?" To us, that signified that deep down there were some differences that did not come to the surface. We had not come to gang up on the Soviet Union nor did we feel that the Soviet Union and other delegations from Eastern Europe had come to gang up on the West.

QUESTION: That brings up something I was going to ask you in a little while about the whole question of the attitude of the super-Powers at San Francisco - particularly of the Soviet Union, France, Britain and the United States. Did they try to court the smaller and middle-sized Powers? Did you feel there was arm-twisting or attempts to influence your votes and so on? How did this work? In other words, what were the dynamics of the Conference?

Mr. JABBAR: There was no arm-twisting at the time. There was, at least on the surface, a real, genuine desire shown to everybody that they wanted peace. Of course, how they went about it was a different matter. I do not believe the Soviet Union was "grinding" the Western Powers or that the Western Powers were trying to pull the rug from under the Soviet Union; but, as later years proved,

there were some squabbles behind the scenes. We were especially disappointed that the Conference itself was for independent countries ByeloRussia and the Ukraine were imposed on us owing to a prior agreement with the Western Powers. We did not like the idea of the veto then, because we felt that, even if a big Power had the right to protect itself or its interests with the veto, if any member of the Security Council obtained a majority of the votes on a draft resolution it could reintroduce the same draft resolution in the General Assembly and then if it obtained a two thirds majority in the Assembly, the Security Council should accept it.

QUESTION: Were you active in opposing the veto? I know that Australia, and the Philippines, for example, were. Was the Saudi Arabian delegation active in that?

Mr. JABBAR: Actually we did not oppose it publicly - not in committee meetings nor from the United Nations rostrum - because we did not want to place a hurdle in the path of progress and at the time wished that the two major Powers - now called super-Powers - would get together and present to the world something that would live up to its dreams.

QUESTION: In preparation for the Conference itself, did you as a member of the Arab States Group have preparatory meetings with, say, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Egypt and some of the other countries?

Mr. JABBAR: Continuously.

QUESTION: You did. And this gave you a sort of common front or policy opinion?

Mr. JABBAR: Yes, on major issues. Of course, if you remember, at the time Syria and Lebanon were just emerging as two independent States. The really independent States were Yemen, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

QUESTION: Did you during the Conference continue to have meetings of that kind regularly in the Arab Group?

Mr. JABBAR: Yes, we had meetings continually. Until today we have meetings in the United Nations to express one opinion. Our aim has always been that we should stand as one front, representing the hopes of the whole Arab people.

QUESTION: I have also read somewhere that Egypt, more or less, took the lead in the Group. Is that correct?

Mr. JABBAR: Actually there was no leader. But if Egypt took the lead, at the time it represented and now represents the largest Arab country and it had more experience than any other Government. No one can deny that.

Question: Would you tell us exactly what preparations the Saudi Arabians or the Arab countries as a group made for the San Francisco Conference, if you remember?

Mr. JABBAR: When you say "preparations", preparations for what? You have the Charter, there are different chapters. We worked very hard at the time as Arab delegations - I am not speaking about myself but of delegations - on the questions of self-determination and Trusteeship; we were entangled with Representative Saleh of the U.S.; also at the time we contacted Senator Vanderberg.

QUESTION: The preparations that you undertook for the Conference. You mentioned you were in touch with Senator Vandenberg.

Mr. JABBAR: No, we were in touch with all the delegations. I recalled two outstanding names from the United States delegation. We always met Representative Saleh the elevator and he carried on conversations with us about certain

items on the agenda. To be honest, all in all there was a tremendous feeling of hope and confidence, despite the fact that we were not only dealing with persons but also with Governments. The war, its horrors and havoc all made people look forward to the creation of the United Nations to bring about permanent peace.

QUESTION: The Dumbarton Oaks proposals, for example, had been circulated to your Government, forwarded to Riyadh, some months in advance of the Conference, so you had ample time to study them and consult your Arab colleagues. Is that correct?

Mr. JABBAR: I do not really know about the background there in Saudi Arabia itself. As you may well know, I was just a junior diplomat, a junior official of the Government of Saudi Arabia, so what went on behind the scenes was beyond my reach, out of my sight.

QUESTION: I think you are being very modest.

Mr. JABBAR: No, that is the truth.

QUESTION: Frequently a very junior diplomat knows quite a bit about what goes on. I know that.

Mr. JABBAR: I would be putting myself in hot water if I said so, because it was not my prerogative at the time.

QUESTION: I have also heard it said or read somewhere that you had a relatively small delegation at San Francisco compared with some other countries.

Mr. JABBAR: Yes, the Head of the delegation was King Faisal - Prince at the time and Foreign Minister; Sheikh Hafiz Wahba, our Ambassador in London, who has since died; Sheikh Assad Al-Faqih, who was Minister in Bagdad and later became Ambassador to the U.S. - in the first legation that we opened he was

Minister and then became Ambassador; two gentlemen from the Foreign Ministry who have since passed away, Jamil Mussal Ami and Abd Sayed el-Rahman; the chief of the cabinet of the Viceroy of Hijaz; King Faisal, and myself were studying in the U.S. and were called to serve on the delegation.

QUESTION: Did this give you sufficient manpower to cover all the various commissions and committees, or were you handicapped in that respect?

Mr. JABBAR: No, until today this is one of the things about which we complain. We are understaffed. We do not have enough men to spare, especially since the responsibilities of Saudi Arabia have increased. At the time also we did not have persons who spoke English very well. I am among the first graduates of Saudi Arabia so far as American education is concerned. It was not enough to play a big role, so to speak. At the same time, one must be honest and say that the United States and other big Powers did not want anybody else to play a big role; they wanted to play that role themselves.

QUESTION: I think you have a very valid point there. They made it subtly though, I would suspect.

In looking over the Conference's records, I see that Prince Faisal did serve on the Credentials Committee but that he did not regularly attend the meetings of any of the various commissions. Was there a particular reason for that, or what was his particular role at San Francisco?

Mr. JABBAR: I personally do not recall that, but Prince Faisal's role at the time was to head the delegation, meet other heads of delegation and harmonize whatever moves the Arab countries made together. Therefore, to have been elected as a member of the Credentials Committee was only a sort of courtesy and could

have been carried by some other member of the delegation. It did not have to be the Head of delegation himself; he could have sent me or somebody else to be in his place since he had more important tasks, and the Committee members would understand.

QUESTION: But since you had present in San Francisco not only your Foreign Minister but also a ranking member of the Royal Family, was it necessary to refer a great many policy decisions back to Riyadh or could they be taken on the spot? I am referring to the day-to-day working methods of the Saudi delegation at San Francisco.

Mr. JABBAR: At the end of each day a telegram was sent to King Abdul Azis about what took place and what would take place. Of course, we expected his directives, but Prince Faisal had the authority to make decisions on the spot, knowing what Saudi Arabia's policy was and what his father wanted.

QUESTION: Tell me a little bit about the social atmosphere in San Francisco. Was it all work and no play, or did you have an opportunity to meet socially with other delegations and perhaps with citizens of San Francisco? Was there an interchange at that level, as there is during the General Assembly here? How did it work?

Mr. JABBAR: Social life was really abundant at the time: each delegation threw a party to get to know others, the people of San Francisco were very generous, the American State Department played a big role also in asking American citizens in the area to welcome and entertain the delegates. In fact, I remember that we were standing in the lobby of the Fairmont Hotel, our princes were lined up in their national garb, and one lady got so enthusiastic that she pushed

through the line - there were policemen - and said: "Aren't they handsome and beautiful?", and I replied: "Madam, you should see us on horseback!" So, as far as social life was concerned, we did not stay one night - in fact it was overdone, more or less, because we had to study certain things and some persons wanted us to give lectures.

I remember two ladies, Mrs. Bunty Fabian Kaiser and Mrs. Jean Crandall, came from the KFRC Radio Station - there was no television at the time - and requested Prince Faisal to deliver a lecture, which was passed on to our Ambassador to London, who did not have the time; and so I was chosen to deliver the lecture. I asked what kind of lecture, and she said on Saudi Arabia. I said all right and asked where; they said at the USO - at the time I did not know what the USO was. I accepted and prepared a very serious lecture, thinking that I was going to address university students. I went there and found some sailors playing pingpong and others were making rock-and-roll. I saw the Director, who brought us all together and introduced me. Luckily, I had a member of our delegation. Then he said: "I welcome a gentleman from Saudi Arabia who has taken the time to come and tell us something about his country. These servicemen are going overseas, and we want them to feel that the world is represented here in San Francisco."

So I put aside my lecture and spoke differently. I said:

"Men, I did not come here to take away your pleasure; I am here to share it with you. I want to carry you to a faraway place under the twinkling stars on the sands of Arabia. Had it not been for my ancestors you and I would stink tonight, because my ancestors were the ones who invented soap."

QUESTION: Obviously you enjoyed yourself in (unintelligible). I can tell that.

Mr. JABBAR: Yes, I enjoyed myself. I had many friends and I learned a lot. You know, the more you learn the less you know. And to feel that people are going out of their way to make you feel at home is something that is very touching to the heart. I remember that some American friends wanted to have us every night and said, "Well, you certainly cannot come every night, but if you could give us a chance to reciprocate your hospitality". So they agreed that one night we would be invited by a certain person - I think he was with the U.S. fleet at the time - and then a second night. And when my turn came, they wanted me all to cook an Arabian dinner. Of course I did not know how to fry an egg.

So I went to George Merdikian of Oman Khayyam Restaurant and I told him, "George, tonight is my turn, so I need some food". He told me, "Well, you bring the dishes and everything will be taken care of". Then we brought the dishes. We filled everything. I wanted to pay, but he said "No, the Arabs were very generous with my people, the Armenians, and I will never accept any money from you". And I took the food to them and it was real Arabian food, and they enjoyed it. This was one of the experiences.

[End of Side 1]

QUESTION: At San Francisco I know that certain delegations had a particular interest in particular sections or chapters of the draft Charter. As General Romulo told us, his delegation was particularly interested in the declaration on non-self-governing territories. Were there particular provisions of special concern to the Saudi delegation?

Mr. JABBAR: As I told you before, we wanted the non-self-governing - what we call Trusteeship - later on, and the countries that later we supported to be independent, like the North African States: Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. That

was, of course, of concern to us. Other Asiatic countries. And so the interest of the Philippines was also our interest. In fact, General Romulo was a spokesman not only for the Philippines at the time but also for many small nations.

QUESTION: And that was the reason, I guess, for the concentration of Saudi activity in, I believe. Commission Two. If I looked at the records correctly, you were constantly represented in that Commission and they were dealing with such questions as the trusteeship system in non-self-governing territories.

Mr. JABBAR: That's right.

QUESTION: Earlier I asked you about your relations with the great Powers, and you mentioned in particular the Soviet and the United States. What about Britain and what about France?

Mr. JABBAR: We had excellent relations with Britain and France. In fact, they were in our area before - especially the British in the Arabian peninsula - and around us. When I spoke about the Soviet Union and the United States I was not degrading the relationship between us and France and Britain. Of course, it was a sort of anguish for us that after the First World War some Arab countries emerged as Mandates under the British and the French.

QUESTION: You are speaking in particular of Syria and Lebanon?

Mr. JABBAR: Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. Also they were "doublecrossed" - you can say that in American - because they promised independence to all Arab countries which joined against Turkey, the Ottoman Empire, and they had a secret agreement called the Sykes-Picot Agreement in which they divided among themselves - the British took Palestine, Jordan, and Iraq; the French took Syria and Lebanon - and that was a real setback for our feelings towards the two Powers.

QUESTION: Now, looking back at the Conference, after all it has been 38 years, but to put it in perspective, who were, as you recall it now, the giants of the Conference in terms of personalities? As you think back to the meeting hall and the speakers, I mean, certain names come to mind, like General Smutts or Stettinius or Molotov or Eden. Who made the biggest impression on you - quite apart, of course, from the members of your own delegation?

Mr. JABBAR: This is really more or less personal, to say that I was impressed by this or that man. Those people carried big names, they represented powerful States. Mr. Stettinius may not have had the experience of being a Secretary of State at all, and he was assisted at the time by Alger Hiss, who was the Secretary-General of the Conference. Of course, Anthony Eden was well known all over the world by his opposition to Hitler and to Nazism and Fascism. Molotov, being at the time the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union of course carried a lot of weight. The two stars as far as public speaking was concerned were Harold Stassen of the United States and Carlos Romulo from the Philippines. They were orators of the first degree. But of course Eden impressed everybody by his attire, the way he looked as a British diplomat. Gromyko at the time was also young and was the ambassador of the Soviet Union in Washington and, you can say, he played a big role behind the scenes at the time, he and Jacob Malik.

Question In what way? Do you remember?

Mr. JABBAR: Lobbying.

Question For what in particular?

Mr. JABBAR: To convince you to support the Soviet point of view.

QUESTION: On any particular items? Like the veto?

Mr. JABBAR: No, whenever there was a resolution to be considered he was going to every delegate trying to explain the Soviet point of view. There was no hustle and bustle. It was only an exchange of views to tell you, "We stand thus on this and would like your support" and so on.

QUESTION: As a member of your delegation, were you working on any particular commission or committee or were you...?

Mr. JABBAR: Nothing. No. I was in charge of the delegation's office and of the press and cultural activities. Also all the documents and reports of the Conference came through my office. They were filed, they were sent to this and that delegate; and then I would go first to Prince Faisal and get my instructions and they would be carried to everyone.

QUESTION: But in a sense you were in a very key position to know what was going on because you were seeing everything, right?

Mr. JABBAR: That's correct.

QUESTION: And also the material that was going back to Riyadh.

Mr. JABBAR: Yes.

QUESTION: Did you at any time feel that the Conference was in danger of breaking down, that there might not be a Charter at all? Did it ever come to that stage as far as you were concerned or did it move forward pretty steadily?

Mr. JABBAR: It moved at the beginning pretty steadily, but at certain times there was real opposition to the veto and some countries thought they should do something. But they couldn't. This was a previous agreement reached between the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France. In fact, some people even questioned the role of France at the time because, as you know, France was occupied

by Germany throughout the Vichy régime and General DeGaulle was fighting in the name of liberating France. But France could not have been neglected as a Power in Europe and of course it contributed a lot to the signing of the Charter.

QUESTION: When the Charter was signed in June 1945 there was this wave of enthusiasm in the United States in particular for the World Organization. It was viewed as the solution to problems that had plagued the world for centuries. Did your Government share that enthusiasm or did you have a more measured view of the possibilities of such a World Organization. How did Saudi Arabia view the United Nations when it signed the Charter on 26 June 1945?

Mr. JABBAR: I cannot really compare Saudi Arabia with the United States of America and the media here was stronger than what we had at the time in Saudi Arabia. There was some cautious hope as far as the Government was concerned, but the people really did not care one way or the other, because the words of the United Nations did not reach them at the time and they were hoping only that we would not have another "doublecross" by the victorious Powers and that they would also dissect some Arab lands to their benefit.

QUESTION: You told me before we began our recording that you attended the session of the General Assembly held in 1946 at Lake Success.

Mr. JABBAR: Yes.

QUESTION: Were you then assigned to a committee or were you just working again with the delegation? I am just interested in how you fitted into the General Assembly....

Mr. JABBAR: I always represented Saudi Arabia, either at the political or at that political committee..

QUESTION: You always worked either on the First or the Ad Hoc, I see.

Mr. JABBAR: Yes. I never had other committees.

QUESTION: It's always been...

Mr. JABBAR: Always, through my years of service.

QUESTION: So you have been involved either in those interminable debates on disarmament or in the equally interminable debates on the Middle East.

Mr. JABBAR: Actually you can say the latter was my interest and my share.

QUESTION: I want to come back to that in a minute because I think we should discuss the whole question of Palestine, but first just one or two more things about the other roles of Saudi Arabia.

As you say, you represented your Government at sessions of the General Assembly and you were also mentioning that you were just recently at Geneva for the conference on the Palestinians. Have you represented Saudi Arabia at other United Nations conferences?

Mr. JABBAR: Yes, I represented Saudi Arabia at the FAO conference the first time we joined FAO, and I signed on behalf the agreement on behalf of Saudi Arabia. In fact President Truman was there at the time. That was in Washington, D.C., and I remember that he had a reception for us. Then my alternate delegate was a member of Bechtel International. He was twice as tall as myself, and when I came to salute the President I said, "Allow me, Mr. President, to introduce my colleague", and he looked from down upwards and said, "Wow!". I answered, "Mr. President, we come in all sizes". And he lost his decorum.

I also represented Saudi Arabia at Atlantic City, New Jersey, at two conferences. One was on telecommunications, about which I knew nothing, and one was held by the American Medical Association where I attended as a doctor - everyone was calling me Doctor Jabbar. I also represented Saudi Arabia at Arab foreign ministerial conferences, and the last time I represented Saudi Arabia in

Algiers at a meeting of non-aligned Powers. So I represented Saudi Arabia not just at United Nations affairs.

QUESTION: I believe that in recent years Saudi Arabia has considerably increased its contributions to UNICEF and to the United Nations Development Programme. In fact, you will have a kind of special envoy. Prince Talal is serving as a kind of envoy to the other Arab States to encourage their participation. How has this come about? Is this a deliberate change in Government policy? What is this about that you have suddenly become interested in both UNICEF and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in this way?

Mr. JABBAR: The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is a different matter. I represent Saudi Arabia in UNCTAD and in specialized agencies and other activities. Of course we send our recommendations and reports.

With regard to UNICEF, I think this is a personal achievement of Prince Talal himself. The Government of Saudi Arabia has nothing to do with it. Of course we are elated and happy that he has taken such an active part in UNICEF, pleading the case of deprived children in the world, but, as you may recall, Prince Sadr-ul-din Kham did also at one time. Others were called upon by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to see if they could find the time to help in those programmes. So Prince Talal accepted the request and he moved along. So with due respect to my Government, I think we should in justice give credit to Prince Talal for coming out all by himself for the task. He of course served well. He had to go to Saudi Arabia and get married. He also went to the Gulf States and pleaded, and he has been very successful.

QUESTION: As I said earlier, I will now turn to the question of the Middle East. I think this has been one of Saudi Arabia's major preoccupations with

the United Nations. Of course I should imagine that the developments over the years have been a great disappointment to your Government.

Mr. JABBAR: As far as the Palestine question is concerned, I was here in 1947 when the partition plan took place. It was a real disappointment because we had been idealists. We are not politicians. We were not diplomats at the time by Western standards. We did not have the experience that the West had. But we found out that the world was carried on a wave of humanitarianism, that there were press Jews who were taking boats and going to Palestine. And then the whole question of Palestine was in the political arena of the United States, so to speak. President Truman would ask that 100,000 immigrants be admitted. Mr. Dewey would say 200,000. They were inviting people to come from different parts of Europe at the time to settled in Palestine with complete disregard for the inhabitants of the country. Of course, what they had in mind was to help the oppressed Jews. The British were trying at the time to help. In fact, if those immigrants were distributed among all countries of the world, there would not have arisen the problem of Palestine. And then in Washington, the machinations, the pressures that were put by the White House because Mr. Truman wanted to be elected. He had only inherited the presidency from Mr. Roosevelt, who had promised our King that nothing would be done without consulting the Arabs. Well, Mr. Truman wanted to be President. He put pressure on Liberia, on Haiti and on the Philippines and they changed their votes in the committees, and every committee was against partition but in the end they shifted their votes. There was this flagrant

General Marshall, who gave his word of honor that no pressure would be put on any country, that every country would be left alone to vote. Then we came to the United Nations at Lake Success. Who was representing the Jews? The Jewish Agency. Who was the spokesman? Rabbi Hilal Silver, a rabbi from

Cleveland, Ohio, who was an excellent orator. He made people cry. He told about the persecutions of the Jews all over the world, which we sympathized with so far as that was concerned, but they were not the fault of the Arabs or of the Palestinians. The Zionist propaganda at the time, until today, was and is strong and changed and distorted history. They even said that there was no place for Palestine. They were even offered Australia, and they said, "No, we went to go to the Promised Land". Promised by whom and to whom? By God to Abraham and his children. Who are the children of Abraham? Ishmael. Ishmael is the father of the Arabs because we are Semitic too. But they disregarded all that and jumped to Jacob, who changed his name to Israel, and to his sons. Of course there was in Biblical times a State of Israel, but it was divided into two States: Israel and Judah, and there was also Philistia, from which the term Palestine comes. The land of Israel, as they call it, was the land of the Canaanites, and even Jerusalem was unintelligible) in our records. (unintelligible) means the castle of Salim. Salim was an Arab tribe.

So with all this pressure that was put at Lake Success on 11 May 1949 I delivered a speech on behalf of Saudi Arabia against the admission of Israel, and I turned to Trygve Lie and Mr. Herbert Evatt of Australia and scolded them in front of everybody because the night before they were at the Starlight Room of the Waldorf Astoria saying that they would do all in their power to push the admission of Israel. This was a breach of faith. We elected those people to their offices, and even if they wanted to feather their nests with the Jews in New York and the Zionists, they should not have done it so publicly.

What we feel is anguish, chagrin. We are not against the Jews as Jews. We have never been because we believe in the message of Abraham, of Moses. We also believe in the message of Jesus as far as Christians are concerned, and we lived in peace with the Jews throughout our history. But to come and distort the facts and

bring havoc and terror to our area under the banner of bringing justice to the Jews, to mete out justice by causing injustice, is no justice at all. They were not immigrating to a land that had no inhabitants. They were immigrating to a land that was resided in by an indigenous population, and the indigenous population was thrown out by force. This is the chagrin that we will always feel.

And then this proceeded from them. It has become chronic on the agenda of the United Nations.

QUESTION: I want to follow up with a question.

After all of these very long debates and four wars or more in the Middle East and the chaos in Lebanon, do you foresee a role for the United Nations in bringing about an ultimate solution to Middle East problem?

Mr. JABBAR: Of course it is the hope of every one of us that the United Nations have a role and play a role. But as the situation is, Israel is not interested in having definite boundaries. Israel is the only State in the region that has no boundaries at all, no recognized boundaries. Israel does not want boundaries because Israel's ambition is to expand. In fact, what brings us together with the Israelis and who are the Israelis? I will come later to who the Israelis are. Only geography, not mentality, not culture, not even the Semitic part that they declare, because these people who come as from the Khazar tribe in southern Russia, that came through Central Asia, they more or less embodied the Zionist idea, which was born first in Odessa and then carried to Basel, Switzerland, in 1897; and they wanted to have a Jewish State.

Of course we have come to the conclusion that there should be peace in the area. The peace that we present is based on the resolutions adopted at the Fez conference which give every State the right to live in peace but at the same time, what is the core of the problem? It is the Palestinian people. If they are not

given their right of self-determination, to erect a State on what remains of their country, there will never be peace.

Now as you may have heard the Israeli delegate saying a few days ago, well, according to the Mandate in Palestine we should have created two States: Jewish and Arab, whereby the Arab State, which is the Palestinian, is the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the other one is Israel. Which means that he is going to swallow up the East Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem. Where we can meet with Israel? On what ground? On the ground of what Mr. Shamir or Mr. Begin says? These are people who came dedicated to throw the Palestinians out and to have a single powerful Jewish State there backed by the United States of America. And since the United States is supporting Israel with arms and by economic means, they feel that they are safe and can get away with whatever they want and Mr. Begin can talk from his desk across the ocean to prod the President of the United States that "We do not bow but to God", as though only Jews bowed to God; Moslems do not bow to God; Christians do not bow to God. They are the only believers. As Mrs. Meir said once, "We gave God to the world, and I am the daughter of a carpenter too".

These things should come out and people should realize what the dangers in our area are. First of all, if you remember, who carried the banner of partition? The Soviet Union and the Ukrainian SSR. And then the United States and the Western Powers followed. Then when Israel became a Member of the United Nations, the whole thing changed and we started to have the "cold war", because Israel secured the economic and military support of the United States and the Western Powers and she wanted immigrants from the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union was reluctant to let emigration continue. So if peace is wanted in the area, why cannot the United States join a conference with the Soviet Union and the people concerned, as suggested at the Geneva conference? Lately we had a conference at Geneva where there was a declaration and a paper on how to go about it.

[End of Side 27]

Question: Did you want to continue with the Conference?

JABBER: No - if there is a desire to solve the Palestinian problem - a desire by the United States or by the major Powers in the world - something can be done. When they say, for example, "The PLO represents terrorists" - who brought terrorism to our area but Mr. Begin and Mr. Shamir? When they say "No, they were people who massacred our children" - who started the massacres, the Jews or the Palestinian Arabs? Deir Yassin, Kibbia, Kafr Kassim - and who was instrumental in that? Mr. Begin, Mr. Shamir and Mr. Sharon. Who killed Bernadotte? Mr. Shamir and he confessed it.

So this is an open book. We are not trying to distort the name of Israel or the Israelis. We are telling them that if they really want peace they have a chance. But if they just want to use and utilize their influence with the media in the United States and what they call their Jewish votes to influence anybody who wants to become a Senator or a President and then get money from here which is not taxed, then it is the taxpayer who should answer, not me. The American has the Right to say his piece. But if he is misled and misguided and if we, for example, see that Mrs. Kirkpatrick - of course, she has instructions - that now we find that Israel has a sixth veto, out of courtesy of the United States - the United States has used its veto 36 times regarding Palestine in order to obstruct any decision by the Security Council. Where is the hope that you want us to look at?

QUESTION: So you are not hopeful of any solution in the foreseeable future?

JABBAR: I am hopeful if the attitude of the United States changes, if they come to a point where they think that the Palestinian question should not be a domestic question. Now Mrs. Kirkpatrick has an example, that if she stands by Israel she might become another Senator, like Moynihan. That is the truth. If

Mr. Truman - if you recall, Mr. Truman went down in his pyjamas at Blair House in order to recognize Israel. And what was the scene here in the General Assembly? Mr. Warren Austin, the chief representative, was defending trusteeship and General Eisenhower's name was submitted as the trustee. And then the Soviet delegate went to the rostrum and said "Senator Austin, you are discussing trusteeship while the United States has already recognized the State of Israel". And then Guillermo Belt of Cuba - Cuba at the time of Batista - went to the rostrum and said "It seems to me that the Soviet delegation knows what is going on in Washington more than the American delegation". These are facts.

I recall at the Ad Hoc Political Committee the microphone was on and nobody knew that it was on and it seems that the United States delegation urged the Chinese delegation to support them. And we spoke to the Chinese and they changed their minds and said "Well, we will abstain". Then we asked for a roll-call vote and the Chinese said "Abstention" and the United States delegate said "What the hell is the matter with him?" And General Hieldring, his alternate, from the back said "Don't worry, I'll get him back in line". And everybody heard that. It was an open conspiracy, unabashed. They didn't give a damn about the Arabs or the area. They wanted to have a Jewish State in our part of the world which would serve their ulterior motives or dark political ends. Whether it was East or West, both Powers wanted something out of the Jewish State and now we see what is going on.

QUESTION: Do I take it that you are not then a very great optimist about the United Nations generally? How does your view of the United Nations in 1983 compare with your view of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945? Have you lost a lot of your youthful enthusiasm? Do you view it more realistically? How would you put it?

JABBAR: I'll put it this way. Maybe I have grown up and the United Nations too has grown up. But we should always remember one basic thing - the United Nations does not represent the peoples of the earth; it represents independent Governments. Each Government has its own policy and, unfortunately, this tug-of-war, the cold war, which goes on between the two super-Powers - and, of course, behind the United States comes the Western world; behind the Soviet Union, its satellites in Eastern Europe - is not serving the purposes of the United Nations as such. At the same time, as you recall, during certain years in the United Nations the Soviet Union had only six votes and the rest of the world voted against it - and thought it was fine and dandy. Now that the Soviet Union has joined the under-developed countries just to be on the safe side, the United Nations has become not a good place, it has an automatic majority, as the Israelis put it and as the chief delegate of the United States always reminds us.

The United States can and should be the leader of the free world, because many people look to it as a great champion of freedom and liberty and the United States has lost many of its sons in the cause of freedom; therefore it should not be blinded by the fact of Israel's security. Nobody is going to invade Israel when the United States is giving Israel all the power it needs.

At the same time, a thief or a murderer always feels insecure, because he has something that does not belong to him and he looks across the border or across his house to see from where the danger is coming. That is the state of Israel, the situation in Israel. They have usurped lands which are not theirs; they have occupied homes which are not theirs; territories which are not theirs, and despite all the arms that they are getting from the United States they feel insecure. Why?

According to the policy of the United States the balance should always be in favour of Israel - against all the Arab countries combined, not against one country - and yet Israel feels insecure. At one time, if you recall, Moshe Dayan even threatened the Soviet Union that Israel would go to war against it.

So once we regain our decorum, our consciousness, of what should be best for the world we shall really serve not just the interests of the principles laid down in the Charter - because those principles in the Charter are lofty ones in which most of the nations of the world believe. If there is such a rededication, then the United Nations has great hopes: but if it is going to be only an arena for the twisting of arms or showing in one way or another that the point of view of one country should dominate, then we have a gloomy picture.

I believe in the United Nations. I believe in its Charter. I believe in give-and-take. I believe in dialogue with other delegations. I believe this is a place where we can more or less hamper the march towards another, a third, world war.

QUESTION: In other words, you would say that the principles outlined and laid down at San Francisco are as valid today as they were then. The principles are all right.

JABBAR: Yes.

QUESTION: It's the practice.

JABBAR: It's the practice and the people who are practising it.

QUESTION: I think you remarked that as part of your duties in the Saudi delegation you dealt with the press. Is that correct?

JABBAR: In San Francisco, yes.

QUESTION: Was there a great deal of press interest in the Saudi delegation? I presume that they considered you a little exotic, did they?

JABBAR: Perhaps because of our clothes.

QUESTION: I am thinking about your story of the lady in the Fairmont Hotel.

JABBAR: Well, exotic in one way - that we came from a very faraway place. Of course oil was not playing any role at the time. But the fact is we come from a country which is the cradle of Islam, which is a sort of link or bridge - regardless of how you look at it - between three continents, Asia, Europe and Africa; then we are believers in the message of Mohammed^{ad} and the Koran is dominant all over the Moslem world. So, if that was their feeling at the time, I could not have contested it.

QUESTION: There was a huge press contingent in San Francisco, I believe - Americans and foreigners. I guess it was one of the biggest examples of coverage since World War II. Was the Saudi Arabian media represented very much there? Were there many Saudi correspondents, or did you not have that many at the time?

JABBAR: To tell you the truth, we did not have even a radio station. We were just emerging as a country. We did not have any money. The first royalties that we received from oil were in 1947. The United States gave us, through lend lease, a lot of help; the British before them also helped. Our main source of revenue was what we got from the pilgrims who came every year to Saudi Arabia. We did not receive anything even from customs. At the time our country was a poor one - and still is a poor country in a way, which I can explain, notwithstanding the dollars and what you have said. I say when you have to import a pin, thread, a button - everything that you need - even water, it is not a rich country. A country is rich not only because of the wealth you see but also because of its people. Take education, for example. We have to import everything. We started from zero to emerge as Saudi Arabia of today. So at the time we did not have a radio station. We were just receiving news and giving it to the press that we had. That is the truth.

QUESTION: So whatever dealings you had in San Francisco would be largely with American or other foreign correspondents?

Mr. JABBAR: American, foreign correspondents and Arab correspondents, especially Cairo: and then our press copied.

QUESTION: One of my very good friends over the years at the United Nations was, I think, one of the most remarkable ambassadors that ever served there, and that was Jamil Baroodi. He was for many years your acting Permanent Representative. What precisely was his function there? He enjoyed, I guess, the confidence of some of the highest circles in your country and it was the impression, I know, among a number of diplomats that only rarely did he refer policy questions or texts back to Riyadh, that he just went ahead on his own. Is that correct?

Mr. JABBAR: No. You see, Mr. Baroodi joined our delegation in 1947 actually.

QUESTION: Was he at San Francisco?

Mr. JABBAR: He was, but not with the delegation. He was with a private delegation. He was the interpreter of Prince Mohamed (unclear). Mr. Baroodi was a chemist.

QUESTION: I did not realize that.

Mr. JABBAR: Yes, he studied in London. He even had invented a sort of eau de cologne which he called Baroo(?). He was a poet. He wrote in Nation magazine certain articles. He was friendly with some princes from the Royal family, and in 1947 he was assigned to be in charge of our delegation here which was attached to our embassy in Washington. So he started, actually, to state a fact Prince Faisal was completely disappointed when partition took place and he did not want to come back to the United States until Truman was out of office, and that was what happened. He came in 1952 when General Eisenhower was elected, because, as I told you, of the open conspiracy, of the unabashed way that things

were going and the promises that were never kept by the U.S. Government and because the whole thing was put on a humanitarian plane that excluded the very people that were living in Palestine. If they were evenhanded with it, we would have welcomed it.

So Mr. Baroody stayed and was very active. Actually, his life was the United Nations. Regardless of the way he acted, it was pleasant to some, to others it was questionable. Mr. Baroody came from Souk el Gharb in Lebanon - Souk el Gharb has lately come into the news - and he was also an orthodox Christian. But at heart he was a believer in God and very humanitarian and served not only the cause of the Palestinians, but all independence causes. In fact, his role was limited at the time for many years to the Third Committee and he was a good friend of Mrs. Roosevelt at the time. So this is the story of Mr. Baroody. Of course, as you recall. He was never a full Ambassador of Saudi Arabia. Then Shukeir came along. Shukeir was a Palestinian who was given the rank of Minister of State for United Nations Affairs. Then our ambassador in Washington always represented Saudi Arabia. Now we have a new Permanent Representative. So I do not know whether I answered your question, but Baroody had a certain personality that was a lovable one among some people and obnoxious to others who thought that he was more or less acting on his own, that he did not refer anything to his Government and spoke off the cuff, and that that was not the right thing to do. But he always had the confidence of King Faisal and in fact was in charge of the education of many princes here because he had contacts with (unclear) school and Princeton University and among the students at the time was Prince Saud Ibn Faisal, who is now our Foreign Minister. He called them all "my sons".

QUESTION: Do you think we have covered most of the areas or do you have some other suggestions?

Question: I should like to ask if he would not mind elaborating a little bit on Sheik Al Faqih's role at San Francisco and his role at the U.N. later.

We notice that, almost without exception, the two of you attended the General Assembly together. Could you give us some insight into his various activities, and particularly into his role at San Francisco?

Mr. JABBAR: You see, actually the reason that you see our two names together is that he was the ambassador in Washington and I was the second in command; I was First Secretary and then Councillor. We always put our names together because most of the time he could not stay in New York and had to go back to Washington and I had to take over. Sometimes I would go and he would stay. So this was the only way.

As far as his role is concerned, I do not really recall a definite role, but we were clearly...

Question: Did you work closely with him?

Mr. JABBAR: Yes, we were very good friends. We collaborated together. But this was the problem that we faced: we were short of enough delegates. That is why we thought of another idea to fill the gap and marshalled our students studying in the States. So some of them are ambassadors today. We brought them from Harvard, from Yale, from Princeton, from the West Coast and made it obligatory for them to attend the General Assembly.

Question: From among that group, who are ambassadors now?

Mr. JABBAR: There is Mr. Ziad Shawaf, the Ambassador in Canada. There is Mr. Zain el-Abidin Al-Dabbagh, Minister of Belgium, there is our Minister to Brussels, Mr. Ibrahim Bakr, also an Ambassador. We have a charge d'affairs in Bangkok, whose name is Ghalib Samman. There is our Ambassador to Spain, Mr. Nuri Ibrahim. We benefitted these boys at the time because they got allowances, they participated in a way that advanced them as far as their courses were concerned and they felt

at least later on in life... in fact, I remember we had a reception once at the Waldorf and I saw that they were all surrounding Mr. Vishinsky and it dawned on me that something was going on. So I went to Mr. Vishinsky and said, "Mr. Vishinsky, are you happy to meet the future of Saudi Arabia?", and he said, "Yes, we are always happy to look forward to the future because the present is very dim".

Then I recalled Al Faqih and I - for example, when Vishinsky died and we were hesitant to go to the rostrum and say something because everybody was praising him...(unintelligible) was very nice. Jolly fellow. Of course, he defended his country. So I went to the rostrum and I said, "Death is not the end of life but the gate to eternity". Some people took it differently, saying "Why are you allowing an infidel to go to Heaven?"

These are some of the experiences. I recall one experience, for example - I don't know whether it should be included or not - When Sheikh Ali Reda, (unintelligible), and the Ambassador of Cuba to Washington, Claremont Pelt we had lunch together at Lake Success, and he told us, "The President left the decision on how to vote on partition to me and to my conscience and I am very stupid in that I am going to vote against partition because that is the call of my conscience. Stupid in the sense that I am a lawyer. I have a brother who is a physician, I have others, and the Jews are very influential in Havana. So we will lose many things. (unintelligible)". Well, when Batista was toppled Claremont Pelt was fired.

QUESTION: This has been extremely interesting. Ambassador.

Question: Is there anything else that you would like to add? Are there any episodes or points (unintelligible) that you were involved that you would like to...?

Mr. JABBAR: Yes. I recall for example, when we were waiting for our overcoats, and there was a gentlemen behind us...

QUESTION: Where?

Mr. JABBAR: At Lake Success. And he was talking to me in Arabic and saying, "Is it not nice to see that things are in order? That everyone has to take his turn?" And I said, "Yes, it is very nice". Then I turned; Prince Faisal was expecting me to join him and the delegation and I saw from his face that Prince Faisal was so angry he could have hit me. Well, I thought maybe something had happened. Then he said, "Do you know to whom you were talking?". I said, "I do not know. Somebody was telling me this and that". He said "That is Chertonk". Chertonk is Sharat. I did not know.

QUESTION: (unintelligible)

Mr. JABBAR: No, there were incidents. For example - maybe this one you should not register - Prince Faisal received an invitation from Peru's Victor Belaunde. He was the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Political Committee. And we opened the envelope. In the envelope was a card on which was written: "Dear Mr. Eban, I think that your speech was excellent. Tell the Arabs this. Tell the Arabs that." He was praising us and the secretary put the card that should go to Abba Eban into the envelope that was addressed to His Royal Highness Prince Faisal.

end of side 3

QUESTION: (not recorded)

Mr. JABBAR: It was my duty, since I lobbied for Mr. Belaunde to get him all the Arab votes to get elected as the Chairman of that Committee, to take the envelope back to him; I took Mr. Baroody with me and I said, "Oh, hello dear friend. Here is your note to Ebba".

QUESTION: You have probably heard the legendary story about Mr. Belaunde. He had left his speech on the podium and somebody went up to correct his manuscript and he had orchestrated it like a symphony conductor. At one point it said, "Weak point. Shout".

Mr. JABBAR: To work at the United Nations, to attend its sessions, to meet the members of the Secretariat and other delegates is really a great experience and an enriching one. I do not believe that one can have that in an embassy or, for example, if you were a professor at any university. Here you feel that people tick just the same whether they are with you or against you, that you are all gathered together at least, as an idea to serve a cause, and unless one believes in these principles he will be bored to death because people will be jabbering - although I am using my name, but with a difference. Really, I believe that to reach a goal, one has to work hard for it. We have worked for 38 years. I hope that I will come and celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Charter. I do not know whether that will happen or not, but as long as there is the desire of the people on earth to join together - not just for political questions: the question of Palestine, the question of Namibia, the question of South Africa - But we made a lot of progress in other fields: in scientific exchanges, in technical knowledge. In fact at least since the end of the war we did not have a major war; we had minor wars here and there, although some would say that more weapons have been used than in the Second World War. But at least maybe

we can call ourselves dreamers who look ahead. Some day, some how, our dreams will come true. This is my impression.

QUESTION: I hope we have not taken up too much of your time.

Mr. JABBAR: No, no. I apologize if I spoke too much.

QUESTION: No, indeed. And we are going to take you up on your offer to look you up when we get to Geneva.

Mr. JABBAR: You will be most welcome. I will get my better half to meet you.

QUESTION: I'd like that.