

The Final Round¹

Everett Rutan

Xavier High School

everett.rutan@ctdebate.org

or

ejrutan3@acm.org

Connecticut Debate Association

Glastonbury High School

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Resolved: The UN should accept Palestine as a member state.

A Note about the Notes

I've reproduced my flow chart for the final round at Glastonbury High School augmented by what I remember from the debate. The notes are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. I'm sure the debaters will read them and exclaim, "That's not what I said!" I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight: what a judge hears may not be what they said or wish they had said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was actually presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow chart, with each contention "flowed" across the page as the teams argued back and forth. It's close to the way I actually take notes during the debate.

The Final Round

The final round at Glastonbury High School was between the Daniel Hand team of Hank Cohen and Catherine Guo on the Affirmative and the East Catholic team of Kayvon Ghoreshi and Ryan Baniszewski on the Negative. The debate was won by the Affirmative team from Daniel Hand.

1) First Affirmative Constructive

- a) Introduction
- b) Statement of the Resolution
- c) Definitions
 - i) "member" is simply a member of the UN and not a sovereign state
- d) A1²: The "United" in United Nations means all nations
 - i) All includes the Palestinians
- e) A2: Membership is an alternative to the use of violence by the Palestinians
 - i) The Aff is seeking a more peaceful route
- f) A3: It makes it possible to investigate purported crimes by Israel
 - i) There is a history of aggression and broken treaties

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² "A1" indicates the Affirmative first contention, "N2" the Negative second contention and so forth.

- ii) Palestinians need representation to make their case
- iii) We are not saying there is proof of crime
- iv) UN provides a forum for negotiation
- g) To pre-empt some possible Neg arguments
 - i) The Aff has no position on Palestinian independence
 - ii) The Aff has no position on walls or borders
 - iii) The problem isn't terrorism. The real problem is fear and hate
 - iv) Hamas has renounced violence
 - v) What would be the harm of Palestinian membership

2) Cross-Ex of First Affirmative

- a) What is the goal of the Aff case? Palestinian representation as a member state
- b) Are the Palestinians a nation? That's in dispute. Others are members. The UN created Israel.
- c) Are the Palestinians peaceful? The recently said no violence. Islam and violence are different.
- d) Haven't they been negotiating for decades? The problem is there is no way to hold Israel to any standards.
- e) Don't you have to be a nation to be a member of the UN? Then Israel shouldn't have been made a member. The Palestinians need to be in the UN if there is to be lasting peace.
- f) Is Israel looked upon favorably by its Middle Eastern neighbors? There have been lasting tensions

3) First Negative Constructive

- a) Intro
- b) A2: The UN has not been effective as a mediator
 - i) The US and other countries have also failed
- c) N1: The UN doesn't have the influence, effectiveness or power to make this happen
 - i) Foolish to believe UN will succeed
 - ii) 3 decades of negotiations has yielded no progress on borders or land or religion
- d) N2: Membership will cause an escalation of violence
 - i) In cross-ex Aff admitted tensions between Israel and neighbors
 - (1) E.g. Iran, missiles fired on Israel
 - ii) Most Middle Eastern countries favor the Palestinians over Israel due to religion
 - iii) Borders and land are relevant issues
 - (1) 1967 borders are indefensible
 - (2) E.g., evacuation of Gaza in 2005 led to 500% increase in missile attacks
 - (3) Syria and others will take harmful actions
- e) N3: Palestinians lack the credentials for statehood, and Israel will object
 - i) Palestinians want a homeland
 - ii) The problem is the UN already made the land a Jewish homeland

4) Cross-Ex of First Negative

- a) What were the Negative contentions again? (Neg repeats N1, N2, N3)
- b) Have there been other mediators? Yes, the US

- c) What happened? Essentially nothing.
- d) So if others have failed you answer is not to try? No, but it is a false assertion to say the UN will succeed
- e) Will the problem be solved if there is no mediator?
- f) Are the Palestinians asking to join the UN? Yes
- g) Are you saying the Palestinians shouldn't try? No
- h) The Israeli 1967 borders are untenable? Gaza and the West Bank
- i) What's wrong with UN membership? The Palestinians will want the land back
- j) So the Palestinians are right? No, they just want the land
- k) You said a 500% increase in rocket attacks? Yes
- l) So that could be from 1 attack to 5? Or 100 to 500. The article didn't give numbers.

5) Second Affirmative Constructive

- a) Intro
- b) Resolution
- c) I will cover the Aff then the Neg
- d) A1: Philosophy of the UN is to promote peace
 - i) To do this it must include all
 - ii) Palestinians need representative to solve the conflict
 - iii) Otherwise peace talks are stymied
 - iv) An apartheid state results if the Palestinians aren't in the UN
- e) A2: Membership will push the issue to the forefront of the global agenda
 - i) Settlements and borders are not the issue
 - ii) Misunderstanding and fundamental hatred is the problem
 - iii) UN membership exposes the issue to more people`
 - iv) Exposure will decimate hatred
- f) A3: Israeli crimes will be investigated and condemned if true
 - i) UN will be a fair and unbiased
- g) N1: The UN has worked in the pasts to solve the problem
 - i) E.g., South Africa and apartheid
 - ii) UN is a paragon of liberty and hope
 - iii) No quick result is likely
 - iv) Clashes with A2, greater exposure help
- h) N2: Contradicts the entire Aff premise
 - i) A greater audience won't result in greater violence
 - ii) Israeli defense is strong and Israel has the support of allies
- i) N3: The Montevideo convention is not authoritative
 - i) The UN created Israel

6) Cross-Ex of Second Affirmative

- a) What exactly will the UN do? They won't necessarily solve anything. As we said in A2, the will provide exposure, bring the issue to the global forefront.
- b) So according to A2 people aren't aware of the issue now? No, but it forces people to take responsibility
- c) You say the UN broke its own rules in the past. Is that a reason to do it again? The exception was justified after the holocaust.
- d) A2 says people aren't aware of the issue? Some are, some aren't.

- e) Does Israel follow UN rules? We don't recall the UN giving them orders. Both sides violates agreements on boundaries and other things.
- f) Isn't Israel the victim here? No victim, no bad guy in this dispute.
- g) Do you believe the Arabs would attack? There have been tensions in the past.
- h) If borders aren't the issue, then what is? Problem is each side misunderstands the other, racism, hatred.

7) Second Negative Constructive

- a) Intro
- b) A2: Aff says problem isn't borders but communication
 - i) Not the source of the problem
 - (1) Both sides have been communicating for decades
 - (2) They know what they are fighting for: borders and land
 - ii) UN can't solve this problem
 - (1) There is no mechanism for the UN to deal with the '67 borders
 - iii) Aff says bring the UN in to expose the problem
 - (1) We know what the problem is. It was discussed in the Republican debates
 - (2) Aff is ignoring historical precedents
- c) N1: Does the Aff want the Palestinians to have independent status?
 - i) If so, they have to solve the border problem
- d) N2: Iran and the Arab countries have problems with Israel
 - i) Aff says no one is to blame
 - ii) But Israel is the victim
 - iii) All these countries will attack Israel
 - iv) Who will help Israel respond.

8) Cross-Ex of Second Negative

- a) You say that to solve the problem you must solve the borders? You said the problem was miscommunication, and that isn't true
- b) Can you repeat the resolution? (States resolution)
- c) Does the resolution mention borders anywhere? Peace is only possible if the borders are settled
- d) Isn't this an implication? It isn't possible to be sovereign without borders.
- e) Didn't you accept out definitions? No one gets representation at the UN unless they are a nation
- f) Unless the UN creates the nation? Yes
- g) Can you repeat the resolution?

9) First Negative Rebuttal

- a) Intro
- b) Background
 - i) Palestinians want a state
 - ii) This means there is a border dispute with Israel
 - iii) Israel's neighbors are against her
 - iv) Resolution will set off trouble
- c) Resolution may not say borders, but this is the key issue
 - i) Bad borders make Israel more vulnerable to attack
 - ii) We need to protect Israel as a democratic foothold in the Middle East
- d) Resolution puts Palestinians on a pedestal

- i) UN membership is appeasement, asking for trouble
- e) N1: UN has failed in the past, as have others
 - i) Israel will ignore efforts that result in harm to Israel
- f) N2: The result of the resolution will be violence
- g) N3: Lack of credentials
 - i) Palestinians don't meet UN standards

10) First Affirmative Rebuttal

- a) Intro
- b) There is a mismatch in the contentions
- c) A1: This is a positive step in reducing terrorism
 - i) It rewards democracy rather than punishing
 - ii) Can't say we need a democratic Israel and then deny democracy to the Palestinians
- d) A2: There are many issues that need to be discussed
 - i) Oslo Accords signaled progress is possible
 - ii) Rome was not built in a day
- e) Aff only has to affirm the resolution
 - (1) The resolution isn't about borders or homelands
- f) Territory is not the goal of the Palestinians
 - (1) The Neg scenarios of attacks and homelands are imaginary fear tactics
- g) Negative contentions don't refer to the debate

11) Second Negative Rebuttal

- a) In the last rebuttal the Aff summarizes the debate as simply calling for representation
 - i) Drops any idea that the UN will actually fix anything
- b) There are real problems that need to be solved for this to work
 - i) Borders—give the Palestinians something and they will want more
 - ii) Who decides negotiates
 - iii) If the UN can resolve any of these problems, why hasn't the Aff explained how?
 - iv) If the UN can't solve the problem, why are we risking relations with Israel and others?
- c) Can't permit the Palestinians to be a member illegally
- d) Aff ignores issue of violence
- e) Resolution worsens the situation

12) Second Affirmative Rebuttal

- a) Intro
- b) Negative rebuttal is full of distortions
 - i) Neg says the real problem is borders
 - (1) This distorts the resolution, which is about representation
 - ii) Neg says the result will be violence
 - (1) Neg says Israel is the victim
 - (2) This ignores wall, settlements, apartheid
 - (3) You defeat violence by giving voice
 - iii) Neg never said what credentials were needed
 - (1) UN created Israel

- c) Aff believes the UN needs to give the Palestinians a voice
 - i) The UN is in the forefront of the global democratic audience
 - ii) Both sides have committed crimes and will be prosecuted
 - iii) The two-state solution is a dream deferred
 - iv) Hatred can be dissolved by the intervention of a third party