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Ninth Meeting, Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine

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MR. HERSCHEL JOHNSON STATES US POSITION ON PALESTINE

Convening in private under the chairmanship of Mr. KSIMERY FRUSZYNSKI (Poland) the Sub-Committee this morning heard a statement by MR. HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON (USA) on Implementation of the General Assembly's Recommendations and on the Transitional Period.

Mr. Johnson said that it was clear from the report of the Special Committee on Palestine and from statements of various representatives in the Ad Hoc Committee that there is general agreement with respect to early termination of the Mandate. Mr. Johnson pointed out that it was also clear from statements made by the United Kingdom Delegation that its Government regards the early termination of the Mandate and withdrawal of its forces and administration as desirable.

Mr. Johnson stated that the report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine recommended a two-year transitional period starting from September 1947. However, he added, there had been suggestions that it might be possible to shorten the time between the recommendations of the General Assembly and the independence of the two states. Mr. Johnson also said that the United States Delegation felt that early independence was not only feasible but desirable. He stated that the United States Delegation furthermore believed that the date for independence could be so fixed that the Mandatory Power may, upon withdrawing, turn over all governmental responsibility, including responsibility for the maintenance of law and order to the authorities of the Arab and the Jewish States. Mr. Johnson said that this would obviate the necessity for a separate transitional period under a trusteeship or other arrangement, and for the establishment of a special United Nations Police Force.

Mr. Johnson went on to say that if this idea of termination of the Mandate and simultaneous independence of the two states is adopted by the Sub-Committee, certain changes in the Report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, such as the deletion of all reference to a "transitional period" would be desirable, and would have to be made. He suggested that the Sub-Committee discuss and come to a conclusion on this suggestion and that, if it is favorably considered,

work begin immediately on the necessary detailed changes in the plan contained in the Report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine.

Mr. Johnson stated that in that event, the United States Delegation was prepared to present specific proposals for the Sub-Committee's consideration.

Mr. Johnson stated that he did not presume to set a definitive date for the attainment of independence in Palestine but he suggested that July 1 1948 may be a suitable date for working purposes. He pointed out that the steps leading to independence should take place with the advice and assistance of the General Assembly. He added that for this purpose the General Assembly should establish a United Nations Commission, headed by a High Commissioner, to advise and assist in the transfer of the powers of Government from the Mandatory Power to the two independent states and the proposed territory of the city of Jerusalem and in the establishment of the new units of Government on a stable basis.

After his statement, Mr. Johnson replied to some requests for clarification on the part of members.

The Sub-Committee will reconvene this afternoon at 3 p.m.
