



Abba Hillel Silver Collection Digitization Project

Featuring collections from the Western Reserve Historical Society and
The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives

MS-4787: Abba Hillel Silver Papers, 1902-1989.

Series VII: Personal Miscellaneous, 1908-1989, undated.

Sub-series A: Biographical, 1908-1981.

Reel
211

Box
79

Folder
4b

Autobiography/memoirs, Book 2, 1963?.

~~SECRET~~

The final months of 1946 and the early months of 1947 were to be the most decisive for our Movement. In December, 1946, the World Zionist Congress finally repudiated the Weizmann line and refused to follow his leadership any longer. In February, 1947, Bevin's policies collapsed. Following the failure of the London Conference, he was compelled to make an announcement in the House of Commons that Great Britain ^{was} ~~is~~ referring the Palestine problem to the United Nations. Thus the man who had earlier ~~declared that "he"~~^u staked his reputation on solving the Palestine problem" and went about it in the clumsiest way conceivable, confessed in the House of Commons that "his efforts to solve the problem had been thwarted by a person named Earl Harrison, by certain New York Jews and by -- President Truman".

This decision of Ernest Bevin was the fortunate break-through for which our Movement had been waiting and it came most unexpectedly. In a sense, Bevin in his hostility proved to be the greatest benefactor of our Movement since Balfour.... We were now able to enter new and ampler dimensions. We could now face a world tribunal where our historic claims would be considered afresh, and the final arbiters would be not a confused and insensate Foreign Office, but the judgment and conscience of mankind. The political battleground now shifted from London to Washington, which could now act more independently, and to Flushing and Lake Success.

I attended the 22nd World Zionist Congress which convened in Basle in December, 1946. It was, perhaps, the most crucial in Zionist history. It was the first since the war ended and it met in the very city where the immortal Herzl, fifty years before, had convoked the first Zionist Congress. Delegates from nearly all parts of the world, except from behind the Iron Curtain, were in attendance.

The main issue was the question whether the Jewish Agency should send representatives to the London Conference which was to meet the following month and thus continue negotiations with the British Government in the face of all that had transpired and was even then transpiring in Palestine.

Those who were opposed to participation insisted that conditions in Palestine must first change, as well as the attitude of the Government, before the Agency could attend another conference which they felt was but another delaying device.

The debate, which lasted several days was prolonged and stormy. All the leaders of the Movement participated in it. All parties had their spokesmen. Each spoke with the deep earnestness which the occasion warranted and with the intensity of his convictions. Among the Americans, ~~Ben~~^{Simon} Wise spoke eloquently in defense of Dr. Weizmann's position, although many American delegates did not share his viewpoint. Dr. Emanuel Neumann called for new men and new methods to lead the Zionist Movement and demanded the elimination of "Vichy defeatism in favor of the Dunkerque spirit". ~~He spoke brilliantly with his customary clarity and logic. I spoke in criticism of the position which had been~~

I spoke twice at the Congress. In my second address I gave my reasons for criticizing the partition position which had been taken by the Executive -- the reasons which I stated in the previous chapter, and I explained my opposition to going to the London Conference.

I dwelt at considerable length on the importance of tactics.

In diplomatic, as in physical warfare, I said, battles are frequently won or lost by good or bad strategy.

Assuming that the Executive was right in its decision, was it tactically sound to proclaim to the world that we will accept partition? As soon as this was announced, partition became the Jewish solution, and therefore, unavailable as a compromise solution. There were many ways open to the Executive to learn whether ^{partition} ~~such a solution~~ would be favorably regarded by Great Britain or the United States. It required no formal action which was sure to become known to the world within twenty-four hours.

If, at least, the manoeuvre of the Executive had succeeded in getting Great Britain to accept partition as a basis for discussion at the London Conference, its advocates might be justified, but Great Britain has not accepted. Every effort in the past few months on the part, both of friends and foes, of partition to get Great Britain to accept the Agency proposal as a basis, failed. The United States, too, did not accept the Executive's proposal, nor did it succeed in persuading Great Britain to accept it.

Because the Executive had made a public offer of partition, it had to insist, in order to protect the Movement, upon an absolute condition, a sine qua non. It would not attend the London Conference unless its proposal of partition was accepted as the basis for discussion. Had the Executive not hastened to make any partition proposal to Great Britain and the United States, it could have considered the question of going or not going to the London Conference on its merits -- whether more could be gained by going than by staying away. If it had decided to go to the Conference, it would undoubtedly present to it the full Zionist program, even as the Arabs would present theirs. Perhaps out of the deliberations at the Conference some satisfactory compromise solution would then evolve. But this was no longer possible as soon as the Executive proposal became public, because this proposal represented its absolute 'irreducible minimum' beyond which the Movement could not go. How can one go to a Conference to negotiate on an 'irreducible minimum'?....

Ben Gurion, the Chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, was somewhat ambiguous at the Congress. He and his Party approved of partition and favored participation in the London Conference, but he personally was unhappy over Weizmann's leadership, and differed with him sharply on the subject of resistance. Accordingly, he sparred forensically....

Dr. Weizmann spoke at the opening of the Congress and again at the conclusion of the general debate.

I listened to his rebuttal at the conclusion of the debate with rapt attention. At times I was deeply moved by it. Dr. Weizmann threw his heart and soul into this speech. It was by way of an 'apologia pro vita sua'. The inner fire of the Weizmann of the earlier days was there, although he was now seventy-three. He reasoned, pleaded, scorned, and castigated his opponents with biting sarcasm -- the extremists, the unrealistic romanticists, the terrorists and activists in Palestine. I came in for my share of reproof. "It is easy to live in Cleveland and tell the youth of Palestine to go shed their blood." Of course, the youth of Palestine had never waited upon my bidding or my approval. . . .

The American delegation felt constrained to issue a statement later expressing its deep resentment "at the offensive remarks concerning American Zionism's support of Haganah and its resistance activities, coming as they did from one who must be fully aware that the Zionists of America were repeatedly called upon by authoritative spokesmen of the Yishuv to give their utmost support to the responsible Jewish resistance movement in Palestine".

I stated my position at the Congress on the subject of resistance. "We believe in resistance to the illegal acts of the Mandatory power. The way to end resistance is to open the doors of Palestine.

"We must, in every way, support the Yishuv in its struggle against the attempt of the Mandatory Government to liquidate the Jewish National Home.

By maximum financial and moral support, we must strengthen the Yishuv's power of resistance. The Yishuv must, in the last analysis, decide for itself the form and the timing of its resistance to British lawlessness in Palestine. But, whatever their decision -- we will stand by them. We must insure, regardless of cost, continued Jewish immigration into Palestine."

Weizmann fought hard in his speech which was to be the peroration to his long and distinguished career. But for what? For a policy of continued cooperation with the British Government which had betrayed him and the Jewish people time and time again! How did his policy of moderation pay off? An historic cross-road had been reached and he -- the astute statesman -- was somehow unaware of it. He was the captive of his own "line" which he had followed faithfully all his life. He could see no other!

Dr. Weizmann remained pro-British in his political orientation, even when it had become clear to many of us that Great Britain had no intention to carry out the mandate either in letter or in spirit and that a new political orientation was called for. Not that Dr. Weizmann accepted tamely and submissively the progressive whittling away on the part of British governments of the clear terms of the mandates. Frequently he voiced his bitter criticism and his indignation at his own government in strong and courageous terms. And one, as in the case of the Passfield White Paper of 1930, which aimed at a suspension of Jewish immigration altogether and the introduction

strict restrictions upon land acquisition as well as the curtailment of the authority of the Jewish Agency, Dr. Weizmann in protest resigned his office as president of the Jewish Agency along with Felix Warburg who at that time was chairman of the Council of the ~~large~~^{enlarged} Jewish Agency.

But, Dr. Weizmann could not at any time envisage a full break with Great Britain.

Years later, Ben-Gurion was to write: "From the White Paper of 1939, until the U.N. decision in 1947, Dr. Weizmann was beset by a gnawing inner confusion and stress, and I believe that he failed to find his way."

At Basle, this inner confusion and stress were sadly in evidence.

I was appointed Chairman of the important Political Committee. We met for five days and nights and finally hammered out a set of fifteen resolutions which I presented to the Congress plenum on the evening of December 23rd in an electric atmosphere of extreme tenseness.

The resolution confirming the principles of the Biltmore Declaration and calling for the establishment of Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth was adopted. So was the resolution denouncing the 1939 White Paper and calling for continued resistance to its policies. A resolution which condemned terrorism,

murder, and the shedding of innocent blood as a means of political warfare was also adopted.

The critical resolutions upon which the fate of Weizmann's leadership depended was, ~~of course~~, the one on participation in the London Conference. Dr. Weizmann had made it clear that he wanted the Congress to approve of participation and to give him a free hand to negotiate. The Political Committee had by a vote of twenty-two to sixteen adopted a resolution opposing participation. The resolution read: "The Congress resolves that in the existing circumstance, the Zionist Movement cannot participate in the London Conference. If a change should take place in the situation, the General Council of the Zionist Organization (The Actions Committee) shall consider the matter and decide whether to participate in the Conference or not."

A furious debate followed the introduction of this resolution. The minority parties introduced resolutions of their own. They were all voted down. Various parliamentary maneuvers were employed to defer action on the majority resolution of the Political Committee, to refer it to the incoming Executive, or to adopt a voting procedure which would keep the majority sentiment of the Congress against participation from effectively registering itself. All this proved unavailing.

The vote was finally taken -- 171 for the resolution and 154 against. Most of the General Zionists, the Mizrachi, the Revisionists and some independent labor delegates voted for it. Almost solidly against it were the Mapai, the Hadassah, and some General Zionists.

The Congress adjourned without electing a President or an Executive. Dr. Weizmann, since his policy failed of approval, would not and could not be re-elected President, but the Congress elected no one in his place. The Actions Committee, after the Congress ended, elected a coalition executive. David Ben-Gurion was made Chairman of the World Zionist Executive with headquarters in Jerusalem. Two other sections were established, one in London and the other in the United States. I was elected Chairman of the Executive for the United States. Moshe ~~Sharett~~^{Shertok} remained head of the political department of the Executive but stationed in the United States. The other members of the American section were Dr. Emanuel Neumann (General Zionists), Mrs. Rose Halprin (Hadassah), Hayim Greenberg (Laborites), and Rabbi Wolf Gold (Mizrachi).

The Partition emissary, Dr. Nahum Goldmann, who was responsible for my resignation from the Executive on August 4th, was shifted to London, but before long found his way back again to New York.

It was not long, of course, before the members on the newly elected Executive, who had favored participation, began a series of informal and private talks in London with the British Government, looking to a "change in the situation" which would make it possible for the Movement to participate in the London Conference. This was technically violative of the Congress resolution but could be justified on the basis of a broad construction of the resolution. I had little hope of their success.

In view of the exploratory talks which the Agency representatives were conducting in London in the hope of bringing about "a change in the situation", I thought it advisable upon my return from Basle to call upon the British Ambassador in Washington and our Secretary of State.

I reported to the Ambassador on what had taken place at the Congress and the reasons for the resolution which was adopted there. I told them that the resolution not to go to the London Conference was a conditional resolution predicated on existing conditions, and that if conditions would change, the movement would stand ready to go to the Conference. I pointed out that the next move was up to Great Britain. It could indicate a change in the situation either by word -- by promising to establish the Jewish State or by revoking the White Paper -- or by deed -- by starting to move the one hundred thousand refugees. The Ambassador believed the first unlikely since it would prevent the Arabs from coming into the Conference, but he thought well of the second suggestion and said that he would forward the idea to Foreign Secretary Bevin.

The interview with Secretary Byrnes was along similar lines and Mr. Byrnes appeared much impressed with the possibility of the second suggestion, that of moving the one hundred thousand refugees at once. He told me that he would request Lord Inverchapel to transmit to Mr. Bevin his own approval of this suggestion. A few days later I received word from Mr. Byrnes that this had been done:

"Dear Dr. Silver:

Referring to our recent conversation, I advised Ambassador Inverchapel of your views and requested that he communicate them to Mr. Bevin.

I asked the Ambassador to advise Mr. Bevin that I earnestly hoped that he could do something along the lines of your second suggestion, in order to make it possible for you and your associates to attend the conference."

But nothing came of this intervention. Mr. Bevin, as was soon to be revealed, had other plans of his own.

The London Conference met on January 27, 1947. It was attended only by representatives of the Arab States and the Palestine Arabs, but there was a back-door contact between members of the Agency and the British Government. Actually, a series of five long meetings took place in the Colonial Office with the spokesmen of the British Government, its Foreign Secretary, Mr. Bevin, its Colonial Secretary, Mr. Creech Jones, attended by their advisors and assistants. In addition, there were several private talks between single members of the Executive and one or another of the members of the British Cabinet.

The discussions led no-where. The British Government was unwilling to implement the Mandate, nor was it in favor of setting up a Jewish State even in a part of Palestine. Its proposals followed more or less the lines of the Grady-Morrison Plan which Mr. Bevin insisted was "the Bevin Plan"

The Arabs rejected the proposals of the British Government in toto on February 12th and the Agency on February 13th. Whereupon Mr. Bevin informed the House of Commons on February 18, 1947, that the Conference with the Arabs

and the consultations with the Zionist Organization about the future of Palestine have come to an end without any prospect of reaching a settlement.

"That being the case, the only course now open to us is to submit the problem to the judgment of the United Nations."



11 4
924 10

While the negotiations in London were going on and just prior to Mr. Bevin's announcement, I had a conversation with Dean Acheson which followed a luncheon which I had a few days previously with Mr. Loy Henderson. I suggested to Dean Acheson that the American government should renew its representations to the British, reiterating its ~~own~~ previous stand. Mr. Acheson indicated that he felt that further representations at this time would not be helpful and might even be resented. I suggested to Dean Acheson that if the negotiations in London were in fact concluded and the matter would be referred to the United Nations, it was inevitable that there would be long delays and that in the meanwhile the intolerable situation in the D. P. camps would continue unchanged. Mr. Acheson indicated that he was sure that a change would have to be made by way of increasing the present immigration schedule, but he emphasized that the primary responsibility in regard to Palestine rested on Great Britain. He also indicated that ^{no} one on the "Hill" would favor our military intervention."

At the same time, I requested Senator Taft and Senator Vandenberg to contact the State Department and impress them with the urgency of pressing for the original request made by the President of the United States for one hundred thousand certificates to relieve the situation in the D. P. camps. Senator Taft wrote to General Marshall the following letter:

February 17, 1947

My dear General Marshall:

As you know, I have been interested for a long time in the Palestine problem. While I sympathize with the British difficulties, it seems to me they have not been pursuing either a reasonable or a consistent position. The last proposal made by the British Government does not seem to me to meet in any respect what I understand to be the official position of this Government. In the first place, it does not provide for the admission of a hundred thousand immigrants immediately to relieve the situation in German camps. Instead of that it postpones the whole matter because of Arab objection, until the United Nations meet six months from now. Furthermore, it provides for admission at the rate of only four thousand a month, so that it will be two and a half years before the American suggestion is really complied with.

In the second place, the proposal for partition is not a proposal for partition. Only a shadow of self-government is to be given in the Arab and Jewish areas, and the proposal seems to contemplate a federal state at some time in the future without saying who shall control that state. I have understood that the American Government approved the idea of a partition within a definite time, and complete autonomy for the Jewish territory.

Since the British proposal does not comply with the policy of the American Government in any way, I suggest that proper representation to that effect should be made to the British Government.

Respectfully yours,

/s. ROBERT A. TAFT

From Senator Vandenberg I received the followed letter dated:

February 17, 1947

Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver
Cleveland, Ohio

My dear Dr. Silver:

This will acknowledge your note of February 12th.

It goes without saying that I share your disappointment regarding developments at London. On the other hand, perhaps it is just as well that this controversy should head toward the United Nations for settlement if there is no other way out. There must be a conclusion to it somewhere. I am frank to say, however, that I still prefer an immediate determination of the issue on the basis of a viable partition of Palestine.

Since our last talk upon the subject, I have found the occasion to re-emphasize this view to our own State Department and through it to the British Foreign Office.

Thanks for your last visit. You are always welcome.

With warm personal regards and best wishes,

Cordially and faithfully,

/s/ A. H. Vandenberg

On March 26, 1947, I saw former President Herbert Hoover. I learned that he was leaving for Germany to make a study of the relief situation there. I requested him to visit the D. P. camps while in Germany and to talk with our people there. He was very understanding of the problem and he expressed the belief that Palestine was the proper solution for most of the D. P's.



Upon my return from Basle, the members of the American Section of the Jewish Agency and I set about organizing the office of the Agency in New York and assembling a staff of professional members. We were most fortunate in the men whose services became available. They included Aubrey Eban; Elahu Epstein (Elath); Moshe Tov; Gideon Rufer (Rafael); Dr. Jacob Robinson; Arthur Lourie; Kahane; Lionel Gelber, and others.

In October 1947, a Political Advisory Committee, appointed by the World Executive, arrived in the United States to join us in our deliberations and to assist us in our efforts.

Now that the Palestine problem had been transferred to the United Nations, the bulk of our political work would have to be carried on by the American Section of the Jewish Agency. This Agency would have to prepare our Palestine case before the United Nations. The Emergency Council would be carrying on as heretofore our public relations work in the United States. There was little danger of overlapping since three of the four members of the Executive were also members of the Emergency Council and I was Chairman of both bodies. It was clear to all of us that the country which would play the decisive role in the forthcoming U.N. proceedings would be the United States. The work of the Council would, therefore, be as important as in the past.

Following the 22nd Congress, our Movement may be said to have faced four periods of uncertainty and struggle:

- 1) The period leading up to the London Conference, its collapse and Great Britain's referral of the issue to the United Nations.
- 2) The period of the United Nations study of the Palestine situation, the Report of UNSCOP, culminating in the approval by the United Nations of the Majority Report which favored an independent

Jewish State, November 29, 1947;

- 3) The attempted reversal and the proclamation of the State of Israel in Tel-Aviv on May 14, 1948; and
- 4) The war of liberation and the signing of the Armistice with Egypt (Feb. 24, '49) and Syria (July 20, '49) and the admission of Israel to the United Nations (May 11, '49).



On April 28, 1947, a special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations opened at Flushing Meadows, New York to deal with the Palestine question which had been referred to it by Great Britain on April 2, 1947. On the merits of the referral itself, I issued a statement on May 5, 1947 in the name of the American Section of the Jewish Agency For Palestine and the American Zionist Emergency Council, in which we declared: "We are pleased that the question of Palestine is now to be reviewed by the United Nations. We did not ask for it, hoping that a solution could be reached without the long delay involved in another investigation and in protracted discussions which are so very costly both in terms of the political deterioration in Palestine and in the suffering of our refugees who are still languishing in the Displaced Persons camps of Europe.

"Great Britain asked for a special session of the United Nations after Mr. Bevin's political improvisations in this field, upon which he said he banked his political career, ended, as it was bound to, in total failure. We are pleased that Great Britain will no longer be the judge and jury in the case in which it is the accused."

Oswaldo Aranha of Brazil was elected President and Lester B. Pearson of Canada was elected Chairman of the Political and Security Committee (also known as the First Committee) in which most of the deliberations on this subject took place.

Many requests were submitted by non-governmental organizations who wished to be heard. A number of Jewish bodies likewise asked for this privilege. The motion to grant the Jewish Agency the privilege of the floor was made by Poland, backed by the Soviet Union. The

Assembly finally decided to grant hearings to only two bodies--the Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

The First Committee proceeded to discuss the proposal to establish a Special Committee of Inquiry with broad powers "to ascertain and record facts, and to investigate any questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine and to submit such proposals as it may consider appropriate for the solution of the problem of Palestine".

Mr. Jamal el Husseini was the spokesman for the Arab Higher Committee.

On May 8, I addressed the First Committee of the United Nations as the spokesman for the Jewish Agency. The evening before, I read the draft of my address to the Executive members of the Jewish Agency, and with minor suggestions, they approved of it enthusiastically. It was agreed that I was to make the general presentation of our case first and at a later stage, Mr. Shertok was to discuss in greater detail the Arab-Jewish problem. My appearance at the United Nations was an event unique in Jewish history, a moment rich in drama and in historic significance. The official representatives of fifty-five nations of the world were there, and I, as spokesman of the Jewish people, was addressing them, voicing the demands of the Jewish people for national recognition and for the right to re-establish their state in their ancestral home.

The proceedings were broadcast all over the world and millions listened in--the Jews of Palestine especially listened in. I had written my address under pressure--all of one night--for until the very last moment it was not certain whether I would speak or Mr. Ben-Gurion, General Chairman of the Jewish Agency, who was on his way, flying in from Palestine.

This is what I said:

"Mr. Chairman and Delegates to the United Nations:

"I should like to say at the outset that were Mr. David Ben-Gurion, Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, here this morning, he would be making the statement for the Agency. Unfortunately, the arrival of Mr. Ben-Gurion has been delayed. He will be here tomorrow, and I hope that in the course of the deliberations he will have an opportunity to participate.

"Permit me to thank the Assembly of the United Nations for granting the Jewish Agency for Palestine a hearing on the question which is before this Committee. We are grateful for the opportunity to take counsel with you in the matter of constituting and instructing a special committee of this body which is to study the problem of Palestine and to bring in recommendations for the future government of that country. We trust that our participation in these deliberations will be helpful and will prove to be a contribution to the just solution of this grave international

~~the~~ problem which this international community is now earnestly seeking. Such a successful solution will prove a blessing not only to Palestine and to all its inhabitants, to the Jewish people, to the cause of world peace; but it will also enhance the moral authority and prestige of this great organization for world justice and peace upon which so many high hopes of mankind now rest.

"We are pleased that the Palestine problem will now be reviewed by an international body and that the thought and conscience of mankind will now be brought to bear on a situation which, heretofore and for some years now, has been made extremely difficult by unilateral action and by decisions made presumably within the terms of a mandatory trust, but actually without the sanction or supervision of the international body which established that trust and which defined both its limits and its purposes. The administration of Palestine has, since the outbreak of the war, been conducted by the Mandatory Power as if it were vested with the sovereignty of Palestine, whereas it had assumed to administer that country of which it was not the sovereign, as a trustee for carrying out the purposes of the Mandate which clearly defined its rights and its obligations.

"The problem of Palestine is, of course, of paramount importance to the Jewish people, and that fact, I take it, motivated the General Assembly of the United Nations to extend an invitation to the Jewish Agency of Palestine to present its views. We thank all those who so warmly urged our admission for their good will and their gallant action. The Jewish Agency, you will recall, is recognized in the Mandate for Palestine as a public body authorized to speak and act on behalf of the Jewish people in and out of Palestine in matters affecting the establishment of the Jewish National Home. It is the only recognized public body in the Mandate. It is recognized as such, to quote Article 4, 'for the purpose of advising and cooperating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social, and other matters as may affect the establishment of the Jewish national home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine and, subject always to the

control of the Administration, to assist and take part in the development of the country.' Under Article 6 the Jewish Agency is entitled further to cooperate with the administration in encouraging 'close settlement by the Jews on the land'; and by Article 11 it is given a preferred status in respect to the construction and operation of public works and the development of the national resources of the country.

"The Jewish Agency, which we have the honor to represent, therefore speaks, not merely for the organized Jewish community of Palestine, the democratically elected National Council of Palestine Jews, who are today the pioneering vanguard in the building of the Jewish National Home; it speaks also for the Jewish people of the world who are devoted to this historic ideal, for it was charged, by the same Article 4 of the Mandate, 'to secure the cooperation of all Jews who are willing to assist in the establishment of the Jewish national home.'

"I have spoken of 'the Jewish people' and 'the Jewish National Home.' In defining the terms of reference of the Committee of Inquiry which you are to appoint and in all the Committee's future investigations, these in my judgment should be regarded as key terms and basic concepts. They were the key terms and basic concepts of the Balfour Declaration and of the Mandate under which Palestine is, or should be, administered today. To proceed without relation to them would be to detour into a political wilderness so far as Palestine is concerned. To treat the Palestine problem as if it were one of merely reconciling the differences between two sections of the population presently inhabiting the country, or of finding a haven for a certain number of refugees and displaced persons, will only contribute to confusion. The Balfour Declaration which was issued by His Majesty's Government as 'a declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations', declares: 'His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.' The Mandate,

in its preamble, recognizes 'the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine' and 'the grounds for reconstituting'--I call your attention to the word 'reconstituting'--'their national home in that country.'

"These international commitments of a quarter of a century ago, which flowed from the recognition of historic rights and of present needs, and upon which so much has already been built in Palestine by the Jewish people, cannot now be erased. You cannot turn back the hands of the clock of history. Certainly the United Nations, guided by its great principle proclaimed in its Charter, 'to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained', can never sanction the violation of treaties and of international law. Having this and similar situations in mind, a specific provision, you will recall, was written into the chapter of the Charter of the United Nations which deals with territories which might become trusteeship territories, and which is, therefore, especially applicable to territories now under mandate. This is Article 80 of the Charter which reads:

Except as may be agreed upon in individual trusteeship agreements made under Articles 77, 79 and 81 placing each territory under the trusteeship system and until such agreements have been concluded, nothing in this Chapter shall be construed in or of itself to alter in any manner the rights whatsoever of any states or any people or the terms of existing international instruments to which members of the United Nations may respectively be parties.

"It is the perspective of your Committee of Inquiry on the entire problem which, in our judgment, will prove decisive. It will give direction and will greatly expedite its work, and its conclusions will prove of constructive significance if it will keep the proper perspective always in view. A generation ago the international community of the world, of which the United Nations today is the political and spiritual heir, decreed that the Jewish people shall be given the right long denied and the opportunity to reconstitute their

national home in Palestine. That national home is still in the making. It has not yet been fully established. No international community has cancelled, or even questioned that right. The Mandatory Power which was entrusted with the obligation to safeguard the opportunity for the continuous growth and development of the Jewish National Home has unfortunately in recent years grievously interfered with and circumscribed it. That opportunity must now be fully restored.

"When will the Jewish National Home be an accomplished fact? The answer to that question may well be given by the man who was Prime Minister of Great Britain at the time when the Balfour Declaration was issued. I am quoting the testimony of Mr. Lloyd George given before the Palestine Royal Commission in 1937:

There could be no doubt as to what the Cabinet then had in their minds. It was not their idea that a Jewish state should be set up immediately by the Peace Treaty . . . On the other hand, it was contemplated that when the time arrived for according representative institutions to Palestine, if the Jews had meanwhile responded to the opportunity afforded them . . . and had become a definite majority of the inhabitants, then Palestine would thus become a Jewish Commonwealth. The notion that Jewish immigration would have to be artificially restricted in order to insure that the Jews would be a permanent minority never entered into the heads of anyone engaged in framing the policy. That would have been regarded as unjust and as a fraud on the people to whom we were appealing.

"The same answer could also be given by Mr. Winston Churchill who was an important member of the Government which issued the Balfour Declaration; by General Smuts who was a member of the Imperial War Cabinet at that time, who foretold an increasing stream of Jewish immigration into Palestine and 'in generations to come a great Jewish State rising there once more'; by Lord Robert Cecil and by many others. American statesman shared this view of the Jewish National Home. Thus, President Wilson on March 3, 1919 stated: 'I am persuaded that the Allied Nations, with the fullest concurrence of our Government and people, are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations

of a Jewish Commonwealth.'

"That the Government of the United States does not consider the Jewish National Home is already established is clearly stated in the letter of President Truman to King Ibn-Saud of Saudi Arabia, dated October 29, 1946. He wrote:

The Government and people of the United States have given support to the concept of a Jewish National Home in Palestine ever since the termination of the first World War, which resulted in the freeing of a large area of the Near East, including Palestine, and the establishment of a number of independent states which are now members of the United Nations. The United States, which contributed its blood and resources to the winning of that war, could not divest itself of a certain responsibility for the manner in which the freed territories were disposed of, or for the fate of the peoples liberated at that time. It took the position, to which it still adheres, that these peoples should be prepared for self-government and also that a national home for the Jewish people should be established in Palestine. I am happy to note that most of the liberated peoples are now citizens of independent countries. The Jewish National Home, however, has not as yet been fully developed.

"It should, of course, be clear—that I regret that statements made by certain representatives in recent days have tended to confuse what should be clear—that when we speak of a Jewish State, we do not have in mind any racial state or theocratic state, but one which will be based upon full equality and rights for all inhabitants without distinction of religion or race, and without domination or subjugation.

"What we have in mind by the Jewish State is most succinctly stated in a resolution adopted in 1945 by the British Labor Party—which requested this special session of the United Nations. I am quoting:

Here we halted half-way, irresolutely, between conflicting policies. But there is surely neither hope nor meaning in a Jewish National Home unless we are prepared to let the Jews, if they wish, enter this tiny land in such numbers as to become a majority. There was a strong case for this before the war, and there is an irresistible case for it now.

"When your Committee of Inquiry will come to consider proposals for the future government of Palestine, this inescapable and irreducible factor—the

international obligation to insure the continuous development of the Jewish National Home--should be kept, in our judgment, constantly in mind.

"I believe that it would be extremely helpful to the Committee of Inquiry if the Mandatory Government would present the account of its stewardship of the Palestine Mandate to it, rather than wait for the next Assembly of the United Nations. It would assist the Committee in thinking through the problem and in arriving at helpful recommendations for the future government of Palestine. It is illogical, I fear, to ask of the Committee of Inquiry to consider the future government of Palestine without first making a thorough study of the present government to discover what was faulty in the present administration, what neglect and what deviations occurred to have brought about a condition so dangerous and explosive as to necessitate the convoking of a special session of the United Nations to deal with it.

"I believe that the Committee of Inquiry should most certainly visit Palestine. Written documents are important, but infinitely more instructive are the living documents, the visible testimony of creative effort and achievement. In Palestine they will see what the Jewish people, inspired by the hope of re-constituting their national home after the long, weary centuries of their homelessness, and relying upon the honor and the pledged word of the world community, has achieved in a few short years against great odds and seemingly insurmountable physical handicaps. The task was enormous--untrained hands, inadequate means, overwhelming difficulties. The land was stripped and poor--neglected through the centuries. And the period of building took place between two disastrous world wars when European Jewry was shattered and impoverished. Nevertheless, the record of pioneering achievement of the Jewish people in Palestine has received the acclaim of the entire world. And what was built there with social vision and high human idealism has proved a blessing, we believe, not only to the Jews of Palestine, but to the Arabs and other non-Jewish communities as well.

"That the return of the Jews to Palestine would prove a blessing, not only to themselves but also to their Arab neighbors, was envisaged by the Emir Feisal, who was a great leader of the Arab peoples at the Peace Conference following the first World War. On March 3, 1919, he wrote:

We Arabs . . . look with the deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement. Our deputation here in Paris is fully acquainted with the proposals submitted yesterday by the Zionist Organization to the Peace Conference, and we regard them as moderate and proper. We will do our best, insofar as we are concerned, to help them through. We will wish the Jews a most hearty welcome home . . . I look forward, and my people with me look forward, to a future in which we are mutually interested may once again take their places in the community of civilized peoples of the world.

"Your Committee of Inquiry will conclude, we are confident, that, if allowed to develop uninterruptedly, the standards of life which are being developed in

Palestine, the concepts of social justice and the modern scientific methods will serve as a great stimulus to the rebirth and progress of the entire Near East with which Palestine and the destinies of the Jewish National Home are naturally bound up.

"Your Committee of Inquiry should also consider the potentialities of the country which, if properly developed, can, according to the expert testimony of those most qualified to speak on the subject, sustain a population much greater than the present one. Many more projects, which will result in great economic and social improvement not alone in Palestine but in all the neighboring countries, are awaiting development pending a satisfactory political solution.

"Your Committee of Inquiry should, while in Palestine, also look into the real—the fundamental—causes of the tragic unrest and violence which today mar the life of the Holy Land to which our Jewish pioneers came not with weapons, but with tools. They will inquire, I am sure, why a peace-loving community whose sole interest was in building a peaceful home and future for themselves and their children, is being driven to a pitch of resentment and tension and lamentably driving some of its members to actions which we all deplore. They

will ask themselves, I am sure, why shiploads of helpless Jewish refugees, men and women and children, who have been through all the hells of Nazi Europe, are being driven away from the shores of the Jewish National Home by a Mandatory Government which assumed as its prime obligation the facilitation of Jewish immigration into that country. They will also investigate, I hope, how the Mandatory Government is carrying out another of its obligations, which is to encourage close settlement of the Jews on the land. In actual practice it is today severely restricting free Jewish settlement to an area less than 6 per cent of that tiny country, and is enforcing today in the Jewish National Home, discriminatory racial laws which the Mandate, as well as the Charter of the United Nations, severely condemns.

"By way of digression, let it be said, if it need be said at all, that we are not engaged nor shall we be engaged in any criticism of condemnation of the people of the United Kingdom. We have no quarrel with them. On the contrary, we have the highest regard and admiration for that people and for its monumental contributions to democratic civilization. We shall never forget that it was the United Kingdom which, first among the nations, gave recognition to the national aspirations of the Jewish people. It is only a wrong and unjustifiable policy which contradicts and tends to defeat the far-visioned British statesmanship of earlier years, which we condemn.

"We hope most earnestly that the Committee of Inquiry will also visit the Displaced Persons' camps in Europe and see with their own eyes the appalling human tragedy which mankind is permitting to continue unabated two years--it is exactly two years today since V-E Day--after the close of a war in which the Jewish people was the greatest sufferer. While committees of investigation and study are reporting on their sad plight, and while inter-governmental discussions and negotiations are going on, these war-ravaged men and women are languishing in their misery, still waiting for salvation. They ask for the bread of escape and hope; they are given the stone of inquiries and investigations. Their morale

is slumping terribly. A spiritual deterioration, I am afraid, is setting in among them. It is only the hope that tomorrow--perhaps tomorrow--redemption may come, that keeps their spirits from breaking utterly.

"Most of them are deperately eager to go to the Jewish National Home. I hope that the conscience of mankind, speaking through you and through your Committee of Inquiry, will make it possible for these weary men and women to find peace at last and healing in the land of their fondest hopes, and that their liberation will not be delayed until the report of the Committee is finally made and the action of the Assembly is finally taken, but that pending ultimate decisions and implementations, these unfortunate people will be permitted forthwith to migrate in substantial numbers to Palestine.

"There is a desperate urgency about this tragic human problem, my friends, which brooks no delay. An immediate relaxation of the restrictive measures on immigration into Palestine and a return to the status which prevailed before the White Paper policy of 1939 was imposed, will not only be a boon to these suffering humans, but will greatly relieve the present menacing tensions in Palestine, will wash out much of the bitterness, and will enable the deliberations of your Committee of Inquiry and of the next Assembly to be carried on in a calmer spirit, in an atmosphere of moderation and good will. We are all eager for peace. We must all make a contribution to achieve it. But the decisive contribution can be made only by the Mandatory Government.

"I hope, Mr. Chairman, that I have not abused your patience and the patience of the representatives of the United Nations here assembled. Permit me to conclude with this observation: The Jewish people places great hope upon the outcome of the deliberations of this great body. It has faith in its collective sense of justice and fairness, and in the high ideals which inspire it. We are an ancient people and though we have often, on the long, hard road which we have travelled, been disillusioned, we have never been disheartened. We have never lost faith in the sovereignty and the ultimate triumph of great moral principles.

In these last tragic years when the whole household of Israel became one great hostelry of pain, we could not have builded what we did build had we not preserved our unshakeable trust in the victory of truth. It is in that strong faith and hope that we wish to cooperate with you in this task which you have undertaken.

"The Jewish people belongs in this society of nations. Surely the Jewish people is not less deserving than other people whose national freedom and independence have been established and whose representatives are now seated here. The Jewish people were your Allies in the war and joined their sacrifices to yours to achieve a common victory. The representatives of the Jewish people of Palestine should sit in your midst--the representatives of the people and of the land which gave to mankind spiritual and ethical values, inspiring human personalities, and sacred texts which are your treasured possessions. We hope that that people, now again rebuilding its national life in its ancient homeland, will be welcomed before long by you to this noble fellowship of the United Nations."

The address, from all accounts, made a fine impression. Many of the United Nations delegates crowded around me to congratulate me. Mr. Trygve Lie thanked me for raising the tone of the discussion at the United Nations to such a high level. The head of the British delegation, Sir Alexander Cadogan, praised me for the fairness of my presentation. Messages poured in from all parts of the United States and from abroad, especially from Palestine. The Executive of the World Zionist Organization cabled cordial congratulations on "the excellent presentation of our case."

I was very pleased, but I knew that a good speech was not yet victory. Many months of hard work and uncertainty lay ahead.

A very surprising and welcome event at the session of the United Nations on May 14, 1947, was the speech of the Soviet delegate, Mr. Andrei Gromyko. He stated that the legitimate interests of both the Jewish and Arab peoples in Palestine could properly be protected only by the creation of an independent democratic Arab-Jewish State, but failing this solution, consideration should be given to the division of Palestine into two independent states--Jewish and Arab. In subsequent proceedings the Soviet Delegation turned out to be firm and consistent supporters of the case for a Jewish State. No doubt they had their own motives but we had every reason to appreciate their help and steadfastness throughout the proceedings.

The position of the United States Government was not yet declared. To a letter from twenty-nine members of Congress which was addressed to the Secretary of State George C. Marshall requesting the Administration to declare its policy with respect to Palestine, Secretary Marshall replied that it would be premature for the United States to outline its Palestine policy before the report of the Inquiry Committee ^{was} issued.

The Assembly appointed a special eleven-member Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to study the problem. The Committee spent three months on its investigation. It surveyed the situation in Palestine and in the Displaced Persons camps in Germany and Austria and made its report on August 31st, 1947. The Report contained eleven general principles which were unanimously agreed upon by the Committee and a Majority plan which proposed partition of the country into Jewish and Arab States in an economic union. The Minority plan recommended the creation of a federal state of Palestine, with two autonomous Arab and Jewish enclaves or states within the federal state.

The Arabs rejected both plans. The Zionist General Council (Actions Committee) which was meeting at the time of the publication of the Committee Report in Zurich, and which I attended, welcomed the Majority plan. I, too, voted in favor of it as a basis of negotiation. Here, finally, was a definite proposal which held the promise of a settlement, put forward by a responsible international body representing the United Nations. This was in keeping with the position which I had taken at the Basle Congress and the Convention of the Zionist Organization of America in 1946.

As long as there was no official proposal before the Zionist Movement, Zionists had no reason to discuss it, certainly not to propose it. At the Z. O. A. Convention in 1946, I said: "When proposals will be made to us at any time by Governments which we shall find truly reasonable and which will meet our fundamental needs and satisfy our national aspirations and our sense of justice, our Movement will be prepared, I am sure, to give them serious consideration. Sound and just proposals are bound to be made to us sooner or later if we do not lose our nerve and our perspective."

Here now was such a proposal.

On September 23, the General Assembly of the United Nations voted to establish an Ad Hoc Committee, composed of all the member nations, to study and report on the UNSCOP recommendations. Dr. Herbert V. Evatt of Australia was elected Chairman. On September 29, Jamal el Hussein, in addressing this Committee, announced that the Arabs will not accept either Report and threatened to drench the soil of Palestine in blood if attempts were made to implement either of them. On October 2, I appeared before the Committee and gave the official Zionist reactions to the Committee's Report in considerable detail. The Report had been carefully examined and studied, as may well be imagined, by the Zionist Executive.. We had taken counsel with other Jewish organizations in the United States on the nature of our reply--the American Jewish Committee which had withdrawn from the American Jewish Conference over the issue of the Jewish Commonwealth now favored the Majority Report and Judge Proskauer was cooperating in obtaining American support for it, the Jewish Labor Committee, the American Jewish Conference, the American Jewish Congress, the Agudat Israel and other bodies. We gave our reasons for rejecting the Minority Report. As far as the Majority Report was concerned, I stated:

"As regards the Majority report, we wish to make the following observations. These proposals are those of the Committee. Needless to say, they are not the proposals of the Jewish Agency which, in fact, ~~none~~ were ruled out by the Committee. They do not represent satisfaction of the rights of the Jewish people. They are a serious attenuation of these rights. At the hearings of your Committee we fully

defined these rights and their justification. I will not here impose upon you by restating them.

"Partition clearly was never contemplated by the Balfour Declaration or the Mandate. It was intended that Palestine, the whole of Palestine, shall ultimately become a Jewish State... The Royal Commission of 1937 declared that 'the field in which the Jewish National Home was to be established was understood at the time of the Balfour Declaration to be the whole of historic Palestine.' That area has already been partitioned.

"The first partitioning of Palestine took place in 1922 when Transjordan, representing three-quarters of the original area of Palestine, was cut off and has since been set up by the British as an Arab kingdom. Thus, one Arab state has already been carved out of the area assigned to the Jewish National Home. It is now proposed to carve a second Arab state out of the remainder of the country. In other words, the Jewish National Home is now to be confined to less than one-eighth of the territory originally set aside for it.

"This is a sacrifice which the Jewish people should not be asked to make. The legitimate national aspirations of the Arab peoples have been fully satisfied..

"The Arabs possess today independent monarchies in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Egypt, Iraq and Transjordan, and independent republics in Syria and Lebanon. A population of 17,000,000 in Arab Asia occupies an area of 1,290,000 square miles, enormously rich in resources and potentialities. This area, which formerly belonged to the Ottoman Empire, and which, together with Egypt, was liberated by the Allied nations, includes all the centers which are primarily associated in history with Arab and Moslem traditions. Palestine, the historic home of the Jewish people, which the nations of the world after the last war declared to be the Jewish National Home, is, after the loss of Transjordan, only 10,000 square miles in extent, and it is now proposed, in the Majority report, further to reduce the area of the Jewish National Home by almost one-half.

"It is not our intention at this time to enter into a detailed discussion of the many territorial provisions in the proposals of the Majority report. But we feel constrained to point out at least two features which are open to most serious objections. The Majority report eliminates western Galilee—that is, most of Galilee—from the Jewish State. The Peel Commission included western Galilee in the Jewish State. For reasons which we shall endeavor to explain more fully at a later stage, we regard the proposed exclusion of western Galilee as an unjustified and a particularly grievous handicap to the development of the Jewish State.

"Under the terms of the Majority proposal, the City of Jerusalem is set up as a separate government unit. We would not question the propriety of placing the old city of Jerusalem, which contains the holy places, as well as the holy shrines, which may be outside the walls of the old city, in the custody of an international trustee. But outside the old city a modern new city has grown up which contains a compact Jewish section of approximately 90,000 inhabitants. This new city includes the central national, religious and educational institutions of the Jewish people of Palestine.

"Excluding all of Jerusalem from the Jewish State would be a particularly

severe blow. Jerusalem holds a unique place in Jewish life and religious traditions. It is the ancient capital of the Jewish nation and the symbol throughout the ages of Jewish nationhood. The undefeated resolve of our people to be reconstituted as a nation in the land of Isreal was epitomized in the solemn vow of the Psalmist and of the exiled people throughout the ages: 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.' We strongly urged that the Jewish section of modern Jerusalem, outside the walls, be included in the Jewish State.

"There are other modifications which we will take up at a later stage of these discussions.

"To return to the basic solution of partition proposed by the Special Committee: it entails, as we have said, a very heavy sacrifice on the part of the Jewish people. But if such a sacrifice is made the inexorable condition of an immediate and final solution, we would be prepared to assume the responsibility for recommending acquiescence to the supreme organs of our Movement, subject, of course, to further discussion of the constitution and territorial provisions which we assume will take place in the course of these sessions.

"We would be prepared to do so because the proposal makes possible the immediate re-establishment of the Jewish State, an ideal for which our people ceaselessly strove through the centuries, and because it ensures immediate and continuing Jewish immigration which, as events have demonstrated, is possible only under a Jewish State. We would do so also as our contribution to the solution of a grave international problem and as evidence of our willingness to join with the community of nations in an effort to bring peace at last to the troubled land which is precious to the heart of mankind...

"We mean to be good neighbors, not only to the Arab State of Palestine, but to the Arab States throughout the Middle East. And certainly we mean scrupulously to respect the equal rights of the Arab population in the free

and democratic Jewish State. With the removal of political friction and bitterness which we hope will eventually result from the setting up of these two independent states, each people master in its own home, it should be possible to usher in an era of progress and regeneration which would be a boon to all the peoples in that important part of the world. What the Jewish people has already achieved in Palestine in a short time and in the face of enormous obstacles is indicative of what it hopes to do in the future along with, and in fullest cooperation with, all of its neighbors.

"Neighborliness, however, is a two-sided affair. Sincerely and without reservations, we bring the offer of peace and friendship. If it is met in the same spirit, rich and abundant blessings will redound to all. If not, we shall be compelled to do what any people must do under such circumstances, defend our rights to the utmost. We have builded a nation in Palestine. That nation now demands its independence. It will not be dislodged. Its national status will not be denied. We are asked to make an enormous sacrifice to attain that which, if uninterfered with, we would have attained long ago. In sadness, and most reluctantly, we are prepared to make this sacrifice. Beyond it we cannot, we will not go....

"The Jewish State when it is established, will respect the sovereignty of its neighbor states as fully as it will defend its own. The Jewish people in Palestine is prepared to defend itself. It is not impressed by idle threats. A people that has survived the accumulated fury of the centuries, faced powerful empires in a bitter battle for survival, and during the last war saw hundreds of thousands of its sons fighting for freedom in all the liberating armies of the Allied nations--while the head of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee was broadcasting Nazi propaganda from Berlin and congratulating Hitler on his African victories over the Allies--such a people will not be intimidated. Nor, we are confident, will this great international body which

is earnestly wrestling with this tremendously difficult problem and which is seeking a just and equitable solution, be terrorized into surrendering its high mandate.,.,

"The Jewish people in Palestine, I repeat, will be prepared to defend itself. It will welcome, of course, whatever support can properly be given to it by the United Nations or its members, pursuant to the decisions of the United Nations.

"In this connection we must take note of the announcement made by the representative of the United Kingdom that its forces may not be available to the United Nations during the transitional period, and may be subject to early withdrawal from Palestine. In that event, in order to avoid the creation of a dangerous vacuum which might affect public security, the Jewish people of Palestine will provide without delay the necessary effectives to maintain public security within their country.

"Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee: With this United Nations report we have reached one of the important crossroads of history. The course which will be followed will be fraught with destiny for all, the Jews, the Arabs and the United Nations. We hope that it will be a course of wisdom, justice, and courage. The Jewish people hopefully awaits the decision of this body.

"Twenty-five years ago a similar international organization recognized the historic claims of the Jewish people, sanctioned our program and set us firmly on the road of realization. We were not then regarded as intruders or invaders, not even by the foremost leaders and spokesmen of the Arab world, but as a people returning home after a long sad exile. The world approved and acclaimed the return of Israel to its ancient homeland. The statesmen of the world faced the tragic problem of Jewish national homelessness and they set about to solve it.

"The Jewish people was confirmed in its right to rebuild its national life in its historic home. It eagerly seized the long-hoped-for opportunity and

82

proceeded to rebuild that ancient land of Israel in a manner which evoked the admiration of the whole world. It has made the wilderness blossom as the rose. Surely this great international body, surveying this faithful and fruitful work, will wish to see that work continued, that undertaking advanced, that hope of the centuries consummated. It will be a noble achievement which will redound to the everlasting glory of this world organization. It will be a supreme act of international justice."



The months between the presentation of the UNSCOP Report towards the end of August and the final vote which was taken by the United Nations Assembly on November 29, 1947, were for us intense with activity, uncertainty, and anxiety. Everything depended on the attitude of the American government--and our government was slow to show its hand. From time to time rumors swept through the corridors of Lake Success that the United States government was vacillating, was abandoning its position on partition, or that the President had become unfriendly and indifferent. This was causing confusion in the ranks of our friends among the United Nations delegations. Our Zionist Executive in Jerusalem was also in the dark.

When the World Zionist Executive met in Geneva, Switzerland in the middle of August, I wanted to bring to it some authoritative information on the American attitude which would guide it in its deliberations. I asked my friend Herbert Bayard Swope, to sound out his friends who were close to the Administration about the situation. Mr. Swope was very helpful in our behalf. He had introduced me to Mr. Bernard Baruch with whom I conferred a few times at his home and persuaded him to use his great influence in Washington. He was glad to assist. He saw the President and Secretary Byrnes. When Winston Churchill visited the United States, Mr. Baruch introduced me to him and together we discussed the subject of Palestine. Mr. Churchill expressed his traditional interest and friendship for Zionism and the Jewish National Home--but of course, he was no longer Prime Minister...

Mr. Swope talked to Ambassador Herschel V. Johnson, who was the alternate United States Representative at the United Nations, who told him that policy would be formulated in the topmost echelon (the President and the Secretary of State) but that it had not been handed down yet. However, he added that he thought it would take enormous weight to force America into an oppositional attitude.

Secretary of the Treasury John W. Snyder volunteered to take up the matter which Mr. Swope brought to his attention, with the President. In a telegram to Mr. Swope, Secretary Snyder informed him that the



"President confirms the statement I made to you yesterday that he has made no change in his Palestine policies" (favoring partition).

I conveyed this information to the Executive meeting in Geneva. In the midst of its sessions the UNSCOP Report was made public, and the information which I conveyed to it helped it to formulate the position of *of* ~~our~~ our Movement on the Report.

It was not until September 17, 1947, that Secretary of State Marshall made a statement to the United Nations in which he said:

"While the final decision of this Assembly must properly await the detailed consideration of the report, the Government of the United States gives great weight not only to the recommendations which have met with the unanimous approval of the Special Committee but also to those which have been approved by the majority of that Committee."

While this ^{statement} was quite general, it was nevertheless a welcome declaration, the first official public declaration of our government on partition. It remained to be seen how this would be followed up. There were many forces at work to try to shift the American position somewhere between the Majority and the Minority Reports.

It was not until October 11, 1947 that Ambassador ^{Marshall} V. Johnson addressed the Ad Hoc Committee and declared that "The United States Delegation supports the basic principles of the unanimous recommendations and the ~~Majority~~ plan which provides for partition and ~~immigration~~." He suggested that certain amendments and modifications would have to be made in the Majority plan, certain geographical modifications. Jaffa should be included in the Arab State. He probably also had in mind, without wording it, the entire Negev in the south of Palestine, which the State Department wanted transferred to the Arab state.

This declaration was publicly welcomed by ~~the~~ Emergency Council which, however, in view of Ambassador Johnson's reference to "certain geographical modifications" which will have to be made in the Majority plan, cautioned against this.

"The American Zionist Emergency Council, speaking on behalf of the entire organized Zionist movement in the United States, welcomes the statement of the Government of the United States on Palestine before the United Nations. We are pleased to note that the United States supports the Majority report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, that it has called for a solution at this session of the General Assembly, and has expressed willingness to participate in the implementation of the solution. The United States' reaffirmation of our country's historic connection with the upbuilding of the Jewish National Home and its warning against the threat or use of force against the implementation of the UN decision are most gratifying.

"We are hopeful that the United States' declaration will hasten an early and just decision. The American people and freedom-loving nations will, we are confident, be on the alert to prevent such modifications and whittling down of the area designated as the Jewish state as to render that state utterly unviable. Acceptance of the recommendations of the Majority report represents an enormous sacrifice on the part of the Jewish people. It cannot and must not be asked to sacrifice further."

Throughout the three tense months of the United Nations debate on Palestine ^{our people} kept in touch with the members of the United States delegation to the United Nations and with the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and other public officials.

On October 6, 1947, twenty-three Governors joined in sending a telegram to President Truman in which they urged that the United States delegation to the General Assembly give full and vigorous support to the Majority Report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine. Other Governors wrote independently to the President urging that the United States back the UNSCOP Majority Report.

The press of the country gave its hearty endorsement to the Majority Report. The Arabs were doing their utmost to create an impression of the imminence of war. They bombed the American consulate in Jerusalem. They were playing for a panic propaganda on the United Nations. Friends of ours, mostly newspaper men, Edgar Ansel Mowrer, Frank Buxton, George L. Cassidy, James G. MacDonald, Frank Gervasi, and others sent telegrams to leading newspaper editors and columnists exposing this military blackmail diplomacy.

A joint appeal was sent to the President and the Secretary of State by twenty-five of the most prominent Christian religious leaders in America, headed by Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr and Dr. Henry Atkinson.

The Synagogue Council of America, representing all shades of Judaism, asked the members of all congregations to write to the President

and they responded most eagerly. The response was unprecedented. The readiness of the rank and file of our people to be marshalled into action was truly remarkable.

The members of the American Section of the Jewish Agency and its professional staff were in constant touch with the United Nations delegations and their governments.

Especially active in advocating the Majority Report were two distinguished members of UNSCOP, Jorge Garcia-Granados of Guatemala, who was the Guatemalan Ambassador to the United States at the time of his appointment to UNSCOP, and Professor Enrique Redríguez Fabrigat of Uruguay. They were staunch, forthright, and effective.

On November 27, 1947, an impressive group of United States Senators sent a wire to the heads of all the delegations to the United Nations stating that world opinion stands behind partition, and urging them to vote for the Majority Report.

Much of this activity may perhaps appear to some to have been excessive or unnecessary, but we could not afford to take any chances. What took place a few months later when our government, under pressure from unfriendly sources, suddenly reversed itself and asked for a reconsideration of the United Nations partition resolution for which it had voted, confirmed for us the political wisdom of what we had done, and what we then had to do over again...

It was in consequence of the favorable attitude towards the Majority Report, which was so widely expressed by nearly every sector of American public opinion, that our government finally gave it the full measure of support which it required.

A purely formal declaration of its position was ostensibly not enough. Many member nations -- especially those of Latin America -- were waiting to see how earnest and determined the American Government was in its declaration.

At a meeting of the American section of the Jewish Agency held on October 13, 1947, it was agreed that Mr. Shertok should deliver the closing argument at the Ad Hoc Committee. Mr. Beryl Locker of the Jerusalem Executive, who was in attendance, then suggested that Dr. Chaim Weizmann, who had not long before ^{then} arrived in the United States, should also be invited to address the Ad Hoc Committee of the United Nations. It would be a personal tribute to him in the evening of his life. Shertok and Goldmann seconded the proposal. There was objection. The Zionist cause had been adequately represented at the United Nations by members of the Executive. The final hour was now in sight ~~and~~ promising victory for us. ~~The Great Powers had already declared themselves.~~ The appearance of Dr. Weizmann at this stage would change nothing, but would only be exploited by his political followers as proof that he was called in at the last moment to save the situation. . . . Everyone waited for my reaction. Everyone recalled the friction which had developed between Dr. Weizmann and myself at the Zionist Congress the year before. I said:

"This matter came up, as you will recall, in Zurich, and it was then suggested, I think by Dr. Goldmann, that Dr. Weizmann as one of the leaders of our Movement should be invited to help along during the coming critical months in whatever way he could. This was shortly after Dr. Weizmann delivered his address in Basle, in which he spoke so bitterly about the "man from Cleveland". Within twenty-four hours after this suggestion was made the press of the world carried the news that the Executive had invited Dr. Weizmann to head the Delegation of the Executive to the U.N. Dr. Weizmann was to represent the Movement before the U.N., implying that only Dr. Weizmann would be adequate to the situation. During the last few weeks, a similar propaganda has been set in motion by Dr. Weizmann's partisans to the effect that while Dr. Silver represents the Jewish Agency at the U.N., the critical situation at the U.N. calls for the appearance of Dr. Weizmann. Now it is quite clear that as far as our cause at this present session of the U.N. is concerned, Dr. Weizmann will be coming in at the tail end of all that has transpired. The Great Powers have already declared themselves and Dr. Weizmann will not be able to make any significant contribution to the situation which is well in hand. Therefore, the question is whether this tribute should be paid to Dr. Weizmann and whether an invitation extended to him would be a gesture towards unity in our Movement. On these two grounds I say that Dr. Weizmann should be invited.

I feel that he is entitled to this recognition and that his appearance would indicate the joining of our forces and would so be interpreted. There is no reason why this should not be done. I know that this act will be deliberately interpreted by some that we had come up against a stone wall and had to call in Dr. Weizmann to save the situation. Nevertheless, although I realize the use to which this invitation will be made by those who are opposed to us here and in Palestine, I will vote to invite Dr. Weizmann to speak along with Mr. Shertok at the conclusion of the debate.

My position must have surprised Mr. Locker, Dr. Goldmann, and Shertok for they all thanked me for the position which I took."



When the Subcommittee which was appointed by the Ad Hoc Committee to consider in detail the partition plan recommended by UNSCOP, came to the question of boundaries, the United States proposed that the entire Negev should be transferred to the Arab State. This gave us considerable concern. Accordingly, on November 10, 1947, I wrote to Senator Warren R. Austin, Chairman of the United States delegation to the United Nations, whom I had known for several years and whose friendship I valued, the following letter:

"My dear Mr. Austin: I do not know whether I will be able to reach you this afternoon by telephone. I am, therefore, sending this urgent message to you by air mail.

"Definite progress seems to have been made in the Palestine question before the U.N. I was informed this morning that the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. delegations have come to a fundamental agreement on the question of implementation, an issue which threatened for a time to defeat the entire project. There remains now but one serious stumbling block, and that is the apparent insistence of the U.S. delegation to make radical revisions in the boundaries of the Jewish state

as recommended by the UNSCOP Report. I have been informed that the U. S. delegation is insisting that the Negev -- the southern part of Palestine which was assigned to the Jewish state -- shall be added to the Arab state on the principle that the territories of the two states should be equalized. This was a principle which was considered and rejected by the United Nations Committee. It was recognized that room must be allowed for the influx of large numbers of refugees and future immigrants. It was also recognized that if this area, largely wilderness, is to have any chance of development, even to a degree, it is the Jewish state under the necessity of caring for large immigration which would undertake experiments in development. Added to that was the realization that one Arab state was already carved out of Palestine in 1922 and set up as an Arab state -- Trans-Jordan. The Palestine which was originally contemplated as the Jewish National Home was 40,000 square miles. After Trans-Jordan was set up as an independent territory, now a state, Palestine was reduced to 10,000 square miles. The UNSCOP Report reduced the Jewish National Home further to an area of about 6,000 square miles. The U. S. delegation now insists on reducing that area still further by about one-half.

"I do not know why the U. S. delegation, of all the delegations, should take this position. There are certain rectifications in the boundaries which are indicated and which can be adjusted on the basis of a quid pro quo, but our delegation seemingly has in mind radical reductions and substituting its own conception as to just boundary lines for those of the United Nations Committee.

"If the U. S. delegation insists upon this unwarranted whittling down of the area of the Jewish state, the Jewish Agency might be compelled reluctantly to reject the whole proposal. As you well know, the UNSCOP proposals for partition were violently resisted by large sections of our people.

"Our delegation seems also to be taking a negative attitude towards the

proposal approved by all the members of the subcommittee to limit the international zone of Jerusalem to the Old City within the walls which contains the sacred places of the three Faiths, and to add the modern City of Jerusalem which contains ninety-eight percent Jews to the Jewish State and the modern Arab section to the Arab state. Such an arrangement has worked out satisfactorily in the case of the Vatican City in relation to the City of Rome. The Old City, plus the sacred places outside of the city, such as those in Bethlehem and Nazareth, may well come under the control of an international regime.

"I do hope that you will use your fine leadership in the U.N. to take a position on the question of boundaries more in keeping with the letter and spirit of the UNSCOP Report, and facilitate action. It is not true that revisions of boundaries are required in order to insure a two-thirds vote in the Assembly. The justice of the boundaries has not been seriously questioned, and has not been an issue between those who favor and those who oppose partition as the solution.

"With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours, Abba Hillel Silver"

I wrote letters, in a similar vein, to Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, who had helped me time and again with his wife counsel and fine political insights and to the Minority Leader of the House, John W. McCormick, who was a loyal friend of our cause throughout. They both promised to help.

On November 18, 1947, I received the following letter from Senator Austin:

"Dear Dr. Silver: Thank you for your letter of November 10, concerning the boundaries of the proposed Jewish state, which has been carefully considered by the Members of our Delegation charged with this subject.

"I wish to assure you that the points you have raised have been, and will be, carefully considered by the United States Delegation.

"I am not sure that you have been kept fully informed concerning the views expressed by the United States Delegation regarding the frontier question, but in any case I can emphasize that this Delegation has no desire to insist on an unwarranted whittling down of the area of the proposed Jewish state."

Yours sincerely,
(signed) Warren R. Austin

We worked desperately hard until the very last moment--the Emergency Council in Washington and the Jewish Agency Executive among the United Nations delegations. Our colleagues in the Agency worked feverishly, each in the sphere assigned to him, the Soviet Bloc, the Catholic countries of Latin America, the British Dominions, Western Europe. Every avenue of support was thoroughly explored, every clue meticulously checked and pursued, the smallest or the remotest of nations was contacted and Jews everywhere eagerly cooperated.

On Saturday, November 29, the report of the Ad Hoc Committee proposing partition was finally presented to a plenary session of the Assembly for approval. I sat tense and alert and listened with deep repressed emotion to the fateful roll call. I strained my ears to catch the "Yes" or "No" of each delegation, especially of those whose final decision was uncertain. When France, which had earlier asked for a twenty-four hour delay in the hope that a compromise policy might be submitted, cast its vote in favor of the Majority Report, a burst of applause swept through the hall. The Report of the Committee, as is well known, was adopted by the necessary two-thirds majority--33 in favor, 10 against, 10 abstentions, with 31am absent. When the vote was announced, there was commotion in the hall, and in the corridors there were cheers and rejoicing. In the eyes of many there were tears of joy.

The decision was regarded as a turning point in the history of the United Nations which greatly enhanced its prestige, for the hope was universally held that the decision would lead to the settling of the difficult Palestine problem.

The press of the country hailed the decision. In the U.S. Senate man after man rose to express gratification over the action which was taken in the United Nations.



I sent a message of thanks to President Truman to whom on so many other occasions in the past I had been constrained to send messages of complaint, criticism or appeal:

"On this joyous occasion for the Jewish people throughout the world, when the age-old hopes of Israel have been endorsed by the United Nations, we send you, Mr. President, this heartfelt expression of our thanks for the great support which you have given our cause. On behalf of the entire organized Zionist movement of our country which is represented in the American Zionist Emergency Council, we express our profound gratitude for the leadership you have shown on the question of Palestine -- leadership which culminated in the United Nations' historic decision of Saturday, November 29. Your policy on Palestine, Mr. President, has also served to create a strong bond of friendship between the American people and the Jewish citizens of Palestine which, we are confident, will serve the best interests of both countries. You have won a place of distinction in Jewish history. May the years ahead find us all moving forward towards the better, freer world which is our common goal."

I also sent telegrams of thanks to many friends in the Congress of the United States who had given us invaluable assistance, to Senators Wagner, Taft, Vandenberg, Barkley, Brewster, Lodge and McGrath. Senator Wagner, in replying to my telegram, wrote: "Thank you for your very gracious and kind wire. The agreement by the United Nations Assembly to the partition of Palestine was truly the consummation of my dream. I am, indeed, a happy man." I sent messages to Congressmen McCormack,

Martin and others. I could not fail to include among those whom I wished to remember on this day, Sumner Welles, Thomas E. Dewey and Bartley C. Crum.

~~In our I was not in on the drafting.~~

On this occasion, the American Zionist Emergency Council issued the following release:

"Today a milestone was reached in the history of the world. In endorsing the plan to set up separate Jewish and Arab states in Palestine, the United Nations has ended two thousand years of national homelessness for the Jewish people. The deep emotion experienced by Jews throughout the world today cannot be conveyed in words, for all the hopes and aspirations of Jewry, growing out of centuries of persecution and humiliation, have been concentrated on this one day of fulfillment.

"On behalf of the entire organized Zionist movement in the United States, which it represents, the American Zionist Emergency Council wishes to share Jewry's profound joy at this moment with the millions of Americans of all races and creeds who have fought side by side with us during the past years to achieve this measure of justice. Without the wholehearted support of American public opinion, this great victory for humanity could not have been brought about. Throughout a long succession of crises and setbacks the American people have remained steadfast in their determination that Jewish national homelessness and persecution must cease.

"Our deep thanks go out to all of the Governments which voted today to set up independent Jewish and Arab states in Palestine. We are particularly

mindful of the great efforts devoted to the achievement of this decision by the delegations of the United States and the Soviet Union, to whom we convey our profound gratitude. We thank also the British Dominions, the European countries, and the Latin American nations who endorsed the creation of the Jewish State.

"The American Zionist Emergency Council is happy to call special attention to the role played by the Zionists of America during the past crucial, often heart-breaking years. The ceaseless efforts and devotion of the local Zionist Emergency Committees constituted a major factor in our political struggle. We send our thanks to the tireless workers of the Zionist rank and file who have reason to be proud of their accomplishments under the leadership of Dr. Abba Hillel Silver. The American Zionist Emergency Council takes particular pride in the fact that its

leader, Dr. Silver, has, in his capacity of Chairman of the American Section of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, led our movement to victory in the United Nations. We express our gratitude for the able and effective work accomplished by Moshe Shertok, head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, and by the leaders of the American Section, who have met the challenge of the past historic months and have achieved for the Jewish people new dignity and respect among the nations of the world.

"Difficult days may yet be ahead of us. We do not wish to minimize the dangers that may confront the Jewish State. We are confident, however, that the citizens of that State can defend their Statehood and that American Public opinion will remain constantly on the alert to safeguard it.

"We send our brotherly greetings to the stalwart citizens of the Jewish State in Palestine and to our less fortunate, but equally heroic, brethren in the Displaced Persons' camps of Europe and on Cyprus, who will soon become citizens of that State. Their suffering and patience has not been in vain.

"Long live the Jewish State!"

This statement, the Emergency Council released on its own. As can readily be seen I was not in on the drafting.

Two weeks later,

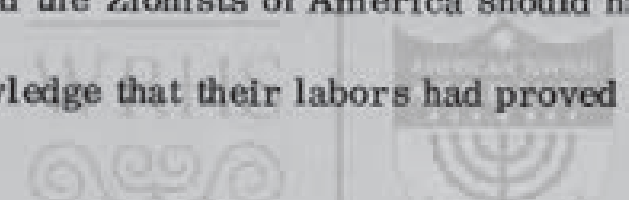
At ~~the~~ ^a meeting on December 11, following the United Nations' decision, I told the members of the Executive Committee of the Zionist Emergency Council that since our last meeting, ^{which was} held a considerable time ago due to the pressure of work in which all of us had been engaged, many great and important things had happened. The greatest of these was the decision taken on November 29th by the Assembly of the United Nations. We are still too close to the event to appraise it adequately. The immediate actions which led to the decision were too numerous and too involved to be reviewed at this meeting. But what took place in the United Nations represented the consummation of what we had striven to achieve all through these years: a realization of the basic program of the Zionist movement.

We did not get, as a result of the decision, all that we had hoped to get. A partitioned Palestine was not the objective of the Zionist movement; it certainly was never the objective towards which the American Zionist Emergency Council had striven. Nevertheless, it represented all that the authorities of our movement believed could be achieved at this time; it represented all that a committee representing the nations of the world was prepared to give us; and it represented for us two tremendous gains: Statehood, recognition of the Jewish nation as a nation on earth, and this marked the end of galuth for our people. With this comes the great opportunity for us to ingather all the dispersed of our people, those who need a new home and have been waiting for it so desperately, and the possibility in a very short time of emptying the DP camps of Europe and giving a home at last to hundreds of thousands of our people. The UN decision is, therefore, of incalculable significance for our people and ^{part of} ~~for the history of~~ mankind. ^I ~~(Dr. Silver)~~ expressed the belief that the Jewish people could build something very great in that little country, as it did a long time ago.

Many people of our own generation share the credit that goes with this achievement, as do the faithful generations which preceded ours. There is enough praise and credit and glory to go round for everyone. Credit is due to those who built the Yishuv in Palestine throughout the years, because without their

concrete achievements in setting up a de facto nation in Palestine, formal recognition probably would not have been forthcoming. But the immediate achievement is traceable to the work of the American Zionist Emergency Council. It is now clear that the UN decision would not have been taken but for the position which the American Government took, and this, in turn, was direct result of the organized activities of the Zionists of America. Our work throughout America--in building public opinion, in canalizing the mass sentiment towards Washington, in bringing it into play quickly and effectively--finally produced the historic American stand in the United Nations, which won the day for our cause...

I feel it proper to make these observations because we have just closed an historic chapter, and the Zionists of America should have a sense of deep satisfaction in the knowledge that their labors had proved decisive in the achievement of our victory.



A little more than a month after the United Nations' decision I left for Palestine. Prior to my departure, a beautiful testimonial dinner was tendered me at the Hotel Astor in New York City on Monday, December 29th. Many old friends and co-workers were there, many who had borne the brunt of the long, hard struggle.

In responding to the toasts which were offered on that occasion, I said:



" It was just a month ago that the decision was taken in the Assembly of the United Nations. It has been a month of unprecedented exaltation for our people all over the world. Their spirits leaped up like a brilliant flame in the glad surprise of the long hoped for and never quite expected victory. Their parched and thirsty souls drank deep of the waters of salvation. The nations of the world had again vindicated our claim to national restoration. By an overwhelming vote -- only two Christian States dissenting -- they decreed that the Jewish State shall be re-established and set the date for its establishment for October 1948.

Thus the messianic drama of Israel which had been unfolding in many lands through long centuries of tragic acts and sorrowful scenes suddenly reached a triumphant climax in the dramatic setting of an international council chamber, where in an atmosphere of unspeakable tension, the nations voted, each in its turn, and when the vote was tallied, they had decreed the end of the Galut! We have rejoiced in the fulfillment of a prophecy that has come true: "When the Lord will bring back captive Zion, we shall be like dreamers! Then will our mouth be filled with laughter and our tongue with song."

Our tired hearts were refreshed and uplifted when we witnessed the fine championing of our cause of liberation by one noble country after another -- by the many countries of South and Central America, by the countries of Western Europe, by all the dominions of the British Commonwealth and by other countries of good will. We were deeply moved by the strong, unfaltering support which we received from the Soviet Union and from Poland and Czechoslovakia. And we were, of course, profoundly pleased and happy with the role ^{which} our own Government came to play in the final hour of decision. Especially gratifying was that rare phenomenon -- baffling

← and disturbing to all those who prescribe cold war as the remedy for an ailing and war-sick world and ^oprescribe all suggestions of amity and reconciliation -- which showed the two greatest world powers working in complete accord and unity of purpose to solve a grave international problem, and reaching a solution.

It ~~should~~^{should} be noted, in passing, that our frank joy in the decision of the United Nations, to re-establish the Jewish State was not prompted by an infatuation with the idea of nationalism as such, or by the idolatry of statehood. We are not chauvinists. Zionists have been denounced as secularists and political nationalists. Of course we are secularists insofar as we believe in the re-establishment of the Jewish State. But this does not exhaust the full content of our aspirations.

Israel's resolution through the centuries to rebuild its national life in its ancestral home was guided by sound instinct and inspired by the same prophetic idealism which twice beckoned our ancestors from exile to national restoration in Palestine. In both instances, at Sinai and by the rivers of Babylon, there stirred a deep, mystic conviction that only in a free national existence, could that which was best and unique in Jewish life find full scope and opportunity, and what was best and unique was always conceived of as transcending the moiety of political independence, or the customary compensations of national status and security. It reached beyond that to a vision of "new things, things kept in store, not hitherto known."..... to a redeemed humanity and a world order reconstructed after the pattern of the Kingdom of God.

I believe that this motif of authentic Jewish lineage has not been wanting in the humble and consecrated labors of the present-day nation-

builders in Palestine, and I am convinced that Palestine will in the days to come become the workshop of our people's highest ideals and aspirations.

Our builders in Palestine will have much to endure and much to overcome, but they will assuredly match their hour. They have still to discover their political eyes. They are children of the crucible. They have come from the four corners of the earth and from all parts of the Galut, and the Galut leaves its mark on everyone. They hail from all cultural zones, and from all political backgrounds. They represent most diverse personal experiences and they must all be fused into an organic whole. They must learn unity in diversity and patience under stress, and the knack of subduing the voices of the partisan, the doctrinaire and the fanatic in the joyous tumult of building.

Our people will live in a land which is not a "fortress built by nature for herself against infection and the hand of war", as Shakespeare sang of England, but in a very open land whose borders are difficult to defend, and whose security must rest on the stout hearts, the political wisdom and the national discipline of its people. What they have gained with courage, they will have to keep with prudence.

But the spirit, the will and the capacity are there, and they will not be found wanting.

The Land of Israel will be small, made smaller by partition, but the people of Israel will make it great. The monumental contributions to civilization have been made by great peoples which inhabited little countries. Mind and creative endeavor will compensate for what our people has been forced reluctantly to relinquish. Generations to come, living in that land of challenge and renewal, will speak great words and do great

5.

deeds, and in the magnitude of their upsoaring, there will tower the majesty of that little land of revelation which, like some precious jeweled clasp, draws three continents together on the shore of the Western Sea. Not in opulence but in eminence will their destiny be fulfilled, and the elixir of their pride will be distilled not out of dominion or far-flung borders, but out of the faithful and skillful building of the good society.

But much remains to be done. November 29th was only the evening and the morning of the first day -- the day when light broke through the darkness of our world. Our great community, providentially spared for this hour, must now shoulder the vast economic burdens involved in the setting up of the Jewish State. Judging by the remarkable demonstration a few days ago at the conclave of the leaders of American Jewry in Atlantic City, our people are fully aware of their new responsibilities and are resolved to meet them. Whatever aid may come from other sources, the primary responsibility is ours.

We shall also have to stand on guard during the next critical period to see that no political conspiracy of evil-doers shall undo or harm the Jewish State, as its builders proceed to lay its foundations. The Jews of America, proud and loyal citizens of this great country who have demonstrated time and again in peace and in war their devotion and patriotism, will in the spirit of American democracy wish to assist this new free and democratic country which will rise on the shores of the Mediterranean, and which will embody those same great Biblical ideals of justice, brotherhood, and peace, which inspired the founding fathers of this Republic.

~~TOP SECRET~~

I left for Palestine early in January, 1948, intending to stay there for at least four months. I returned sooner than I expected, for after three weeks the Zionist Executive requested me to return to the United States. There was need to mobilize sentiment in the United States to defeat what was clearly a conspiracy to frustrate the partition plan which had been adopted by the nations of the world on November 29, 1947 -- a conspiracy in which, it was feared, some members of the American Government were collaborating.

The problem of implementing the partition decision was ^{1/2} before the United Nations. The Arabs had refused to accept it. ~~Soon after the Assembly's decision,~~ The Prime Ministers of the Arab States met in Cairo, on December 17, 1947, and issued an official announcement that "the Arab Governments will take decisive measures which will guarantee the defeat of partition". On January 15, 1948, the Arab League representing seven governments, six of which were members of the United Nations, announced that it had recommended that the Arab nations should occupy the whole of Palestine with their regular armies when British troops leave the country. Several columns of troops actually crossed the frontier and were attacking Jewish settlements.

The Mandatory Power itself refused to cooperate in the implementation of

the United Nations' plan. It refused to arrange for a progressive transfer of authority. It delayed the Commission of Five which the United Nations ^{had} appointed to proceed to Palestine ~~in order~~ to implement the plan until two weeks prior to the termination of the Mandate on May 15, 1948. It refused to permit the formation of an armed militia to preserve order in the face of the disintegrating security situation in the country. The Commission simply could not operate and so informed the Security Council.

In the official circles of our own government revisionist tendencies appeared soon after the United Nations rendered its decision. Hardly ^{had} ~~was~~ the ink ^{dried} ~~dry~~ on the November 29th resolution when those who had been hostile to partition right along began a campaign to scuttle it. Foremost among government officials were the Secretary of Defense James Forrestal and Loy Henderson, ~~Head~~ of the Division of Near and Middle Eastern Affairs. The position which they took was that the vote of the General Assembly for partition amounted merely to a recommendation, not a final decision of the United Nations and that American support of the recommendation was predicated upon the assumption that it would prove "just and workable." The editor of The Forrestal Diaries (The Viking Press, 1951) records:

"Next evening, January 29, Forrestal with some of his assistants met with Dean Rusk, Loy Henderson and others from State to discuss the problem. Henderson took the position that the vote of the General Assembly for partition amounted merely to a recommendation, not a final decision of the United Nations, and that support of the recommendation was predicated upon the assumption that it would prove 'just and workable.' Forrestal asked whether there was not already sufficient evidence 'to support a statement that unworkability of the proposed solution would justify a re-examination.' Henderson thought that there was." (ibid. p. 362)

Secretary Forrestal ^{draw up,} as part of his crusade against partition, ~~draw up~~ a paper on January 21, 1947, which he showed to his friends, in which he stated

that, "It is doubtful if there is any segment of our foreign relations of greater importance or of greater danger in its broad implications to the security of the United States than our relations in the Middle East. On these premises it would be 'stupid' to allow the situation to develop in such a way as either to do 'permanent injury to our relations with the Moslem world' or to end in a 'stumble into war.'"

Harry S. Truman in his Memoirs (1955) states, "Secretary Forrestal spoke to me repeatedly about the danger that hostile Arabs might deny us access to the petroleum treasures of their countries." (p. 162)

"Forrestal saw Lovett (Robert A. Lovett, Undersecretary of State) the same day, January 21, 1947, the Forrestal Diaries continued, and showed him this paper; Lovett 'agreed in general with the conclusions' and then produced a paper from his side which had just come 'from the Planning Staff of the State Department.' This, as Forrestal paraphrased it, concluded that the U.N. partition plan was 'not workable,' adding that the United States was under no commitment to support the plan if it could not be made to work without resorting to force; that it was against American interest to supply arms to the Jews while we were embargoing arms to the Arabs, or to accept unilateral responsibility for carrying out the U.N. decision, and that the United States should take steps as soon as possible to secure withdrawal of the partition proposal."

The clear and simple truth that there was no 'peaceful' solution in sight, and, as Mr. Granados who was a member of UNSCOP pointed out that "the choice before us was never one between a solution leading toward disorder, and one leading toward peace; it was a choice between disorder leading toward a solution, and disorder without a solution"--they simply ignored or evaded in their resolve to sabotage the partition plan.

"The Department of States' specialists on the Near East were almost without exception unfriendly to the idea of a Jewish state." This is the testimony of Truman himself." (Memoirs, p. 473).



Other individuals and forces in Washington ~~began to work~~ ^{were working} early for a reconsideration. Actively propagandizing for revision was Lt. Col. Harold B. Hoskins who had formerly been the head of the American Mission to the Near East and an active foe of Zionism. He wrote letters to the newspapers in which, on top of all the stock arguments which the advocates of revision were using, produced another ~~fresh and contemporary~~ ^{fresh} one--the threat of communism and the danger to the Marshall Plan! This was increasingly employed to discredit the plan. He stated:

"In the opinion of many leaders in the Middle East, the United States, by its vote for Palestine partition, has already undermined its own efforts to prevent the spread of Communist control beyond its present frontiers. It seems very clear to people, especially in Turkey, that in supporting partition we opened a back door for Communist infiltration through Palestine into the Arab world at the very time when we were spending millions of dollars to close the front doors through Turkey and Greece, and to a lesser degree through Iran. All countries bordering on Russia have been seriously shaken in their confidence in the continuity of any American support or in the consistency of any American policies or promises...

"Many Americans, including some of our highest Government officials who accepted the Zionist thesis that the Arabs would readily agree to partition, did not realize that the implementing of partition was certain to stop the flow of Middle East oil, which is counted on to supply at least 50 per cent of the Marshall Plan petroleum requirements of Western Europe. This fact, in turn, furnishes the clue to the real reason for Russian support of partition. It was Russia's expectation that in so voting she was increasing chaos in the Middle East and thus striking a most effective blow at ERP, which Russia is ~~not~~ ^{so} anxious to see fail."

It should be noted how skillfully the oil interests linked up their pro-Arab position with the interests of national security.

The first clear indication of a veering in the American position on partition came on February 24, 1947, when Ambassador Warren R. Austin introduced a resolution in the Security Council calling for the appointment of a Committee of five ~~permanent~~ members of the Council whose functions would be, inter alia, "to consider whether the situation with respect to Palestine constitutes a threat to international peace and security, and to report its conclusions as a matter of urgency to the Council." It also proposed that the Committee should "consult with the Palestine Commission, the Mandatory Power and representatives of the principal communities of Palestine concerning the implementation of the General Assembly recommendation." The purpose of this consultation was to "make every effort to get an agreement on the basis of the General Assembly recommendation for the underlying political difficulty."

This, to all intents and purposes, meant the re-opening of the whole question, as the Russian spokesman, Gromyko, was quick to point out.

The Palestine Commission had reported that without the assistance of an armed force it would be unable to carry out the tasks assigned it by the Assembly's resolution of November 29, 1947, and referred to the Council the problem of providing that arm assistance. The United States representatives took the position that "the Charter of the United Nations does not empower the Security Council to enforce a political settlement whether it is pursuant to a recommendation of the General Assembly or of the Council itself!" Further, "the Council's action is devoted to keeping the peace and not to enforcing partition!"

Addressing the United Nations Security Council on February 27, 1948, Moshe Shertok, head of the political Department of the Jewish Agency, voiced our apprehension about this proposal:

"The purpose of the consultation, we must confess, is not clear and the proposal leaves us greatly bewildered. We fear that it may lead to new delays and complications which may jeopardize the implementation of the whole plan and further exacerbate the situation in Palestine. In the past, innumerable attempts were made by the Jewish Agency and some also by the Mandatory Government--each side, naturally acting according to its own lights--to explore the possibility of an agreed settlement of the Palestine problem. All of these efforts remained fruitless. It was as a result and at the end of this long, laborious and futile quest for an agreed solution that the question was eventually brought before the United Nations for final adjudication and the partition compromise was adopted by the Assembly as a way out of the difficulty. In recommending to



The British Parliament the submission of the question to the United Nations, representatives of the British Government themselves expressed their conviction, based on long experience, that a solution acceptable to both parties was outside the realm of practical politics."

He drew attention to the statement which Ambassador Hershel V. Johnson had made, in the name of our government, on November 26, 1947, prior to the formal vote which was taken by the Assembly on November 29th:

"Much has been said during the course of these debates on the desirability and necessity of presenting to the General Assembly a plan which would command the agreement of both the principal protagonists in this situation. I think there is no delegation here which does not know that no plan has ever been presented, either to this Assembly or to the Mandatory Government during its long years of tenure, or in any other place, which would meet with the acceptance of both the Arabs and the Jews. No such plan has ever been presented, and I do not believe that any such plan will ever be presented. If we are to effect through the United Nations a solution of this problem, it cannot be done without the use of the knife. Neither the Jews nor the Arabs will ever be completely satisfied with anything we do, and it is just as well to bear that in mind."

As regards the need for military assistance, Mr. Shertok declared:

"There is the problem of the enforcement of the Charter and of the prevention of aggression which is essentially a United Nations responsibility. We have never set the formation of an international force as an indispensable condition for the implementation of the plan. In view of the fact of outside aggression, an international force is clearly indicated. Yet if the international force is not established, we shall still be ready to discharge our responsibility but in that eventuality our need for assistance would be correspondingly greater. Whatever happens, however, and even if the worst comes to the worst, the Jews of Palestine will fight in defense of their lives and

of their political rights. Their spirit and their capacity have been revealed by the experience of the last few months."

It was not long before the new policy of our government which had ~~thus~~ been formulating for some time came into full view. On March 19, the United States requested that the Palestine Commission should suspend its work on partition and that a Special Assembly of the United Nations be called to establish a temporary trusteeship for Palestine pending an eventual political settlement. The explanation which was given for this sudden reversal was that the plan could not be implemented by ~~peaceful~~ ^{peaceful} means and that a further opportunity should be given the interested parties to reach an agreement regarding the future government of Palestine.



On the very same day I addressed the members of the Security Council:

"I wish to take this opportunity to give the reaction of the Jewish Agency to the main recommendations contained in Mr. Austin's proposals.

"The proposal of the United States Government to suspend all efforts to implement the partition plan, approved by the United Nations General Assembly last November under the leadership of the United States, and to establish a temporary trusteeship for Palestine, is a shocking reversal of its position.

"Up to the last few days, the spokesman for the United States delegation has told the Security Council that the United States Government firmly stands by partition. Both the President of the United States and the Secretary of State have repeatedly within recent weeks maintained that the position of the United States on partition remained unaltered.

"We are at an utter loss to understand the reason for this amazing reversal which will bring confusion, is likely to lead to increased violence in Palestine and will incalculably hurt the prestige and authority of the United Nations for whose effectiveness the President of the United States pleaded again as recently as Wednesday last...

"It is clear that an attempt is being made to force a solution upon the Jewish people of Palestine which would diminish its sovereignty, territory and immigration such as was provided for in the partition plan. Otherwise no new proposals would now be made by the United States delegation looking towards a new solution. The United States knows full well that the Arabs have opposed and continue to oppose every solution which offers any satisfaction to the legitimate rights of the Jewish people in Palestine.

The Jewish Agency has repeatedly been under the necessity of stating that the partition plan represented the maximum sacrifice on the part of the Jewish people beyond which it cannot go. Any proposals calling for further sacrifices will have to be imposed upon the Jewish community of Palestine by force.

"We hope that the United Nations will not knowingly assume the role of the British Mandatory in an effort to carry out the kind of restrictive, crippling and discriminatory measures under which the country has been administered in recent years.

"We are under the obligation at this time to repeat what we stated at a meeting of the Security Council last week. The decision of the General Assembly remains valid for the Jewish people. We have accepted it and we are prepared to abide by it. If the United Nations Commission is unable to carry out the mandates which were assigned to it by the General Assembly, the Jewish people of Palestine will move forward in the spirit of that resolution and will do everything which will be dictated by considerations of national survival, as well as the considerations of justice and historic rights.

"It is with deep sorrow that we state that the world will not profit by the lesson which is now being read to it by the United States -- that a revision of an international judgment maturely arrived at after prolonged and objective investigation and discussion, can be extorted by threats and armed defiance."

On this same day I opened the meeting of the Executive of the Jewish Agency by saying:

"It is clear that we have lost a major battle. It is also clear that we have not lost the war. Eretz-Israel is there and the Yishuv is there and the Jewish people is there and the resolve of the Jewish people to realize its

historic hope is undefeated and indefeasible. We will have to decide very calmly and deliberately what our next step should be in this fateful hour. We will have to be guided, of course, by what the Yishuv in Palestine wants to have done.

^{do not}
I ~~don't~~ know that it will do us much good here to express our disappointment and discouragement at the action of our government and the manner in which this action was finally taken.

"The first official notice we had of it was around three o'clock yesterday when Mr. Wilkins, speaking for Mr. Rusk, asked to see Mr. Shertok and gave him a piece of paper which contained the American proposal. He was told that America was taking the position in view of the situation in Palestine and in view of the international situation. This is the extent of the good-will cooperation which exists between our government and the Jewish Agency in the matter of Palestine.

"The decision of the United States to abandon partition has come as a terrible shock to the Jewish community in Palestine and to the D. P's in camps and to the Jewish people here. One of the problems which we have to consider is the problem of morale, which at a moment like this, is a very important one. What must be done to sustain the morale of Jewry? We shall also have to decide what position to take when the subject is discussed at the Security Council, on Wednesday. So far, what we have before us is a proposal by the U.S. government. This has not yet been acted upon by the Security Council. What representation shall we make to the Security Council on this proposal and if the Security Council calls a special meeting of the Assembly, what shall be our position in the special Assembly?

The reversal of the American government struck the Jewish world like a thunderclap. It was shocked and outraged. The reversal was bitterly resented and sharply criticized by men of good will everywhere. It was felt to be both unjust and profoundly humiliating. The American press attacked it almost with one voice. Characteristic of the reaction of many eminent figures throughout the world was that of Thomas Mann who declared: "This reversal, this undignified surrender to brazen Arab threats, is the most humiliating and shocking political event since the democracies betrayed Czechoslovakia in 1938."

The Former Undersecretary of State, Sumner Welles declared: "The official explanations of the reversal of our policy in Palestine at least make two points wholly clear. There is no shadow of justification for this reversal; and the position which the United States now occupies is profoundly humiliating."

The reversal was greatly resented by the United Nations Secretary Trygve Lie who later threatened to resign if the reversal were sustained. Mrs. Roosevelt was so upset over the Administration's actions that she offered to resign as a delegate to the United Nations.

Jews throughout America observed a day of protest, prayer and intercession. More than a million messages were sent to President Truman assailing the Administration's reversal.

On Sunday, April 4, 1948, 50,000 ex-servicemen, many of them in uniform and all wearing their service caps, paraded in New York City to protest at the United States' about-face on Palestine. This meeting was called by the Jewish War Veterans of the United States. The sidewalks of Fifth Avenue were lined solidly by a group estimated by the police at 250,000. The streets surrounding the speaker's stand in Madison Square Park were packed so tightly that many of the parade

spectators could not crowd in.

I addressed this mass rally of indignant citizens:

"Time and again in the history of nations, yielding to a temporary expediency, has resulted in incalculable damage to long-range and fundamental purposes and functions. Let any American inquire today among the members of the United Nations, and he will learn to his great humiliating how badly the position of the United States has slumped as the result of its amazing reversal, which it has sought to justify by so much legalistic abracadabra and such fallacious arguments. It is not yet too late for our beloved country to undo the mischief for which certain officials in Washington are responsible. Neither the Congress of the United States nor the American people will approve of these machinations. Why should a little group of men be permitted to lead our great country into a morass of duplicity, undermining our prestige in the world, shaking the very foundations of the United Nations, and doing grievous wrong to a people which has been struggling to regain freedom and independence in its ancient homeland."

A special meeting of the Administrative Council of the Zionist Organization of America was called on March 19, 1947[†] in New York City. Two hundred and fifty Zionist representatives from all parts of the country attended. In addressing them I stated:

"If the international trusteeship is established, I prophesy that Great Britain will be there, either alone or with one or two other countries. No matter what uniforms are worn, American, Chinese or French, the Jews will fight immigration barriers.

"If the trusteeship is anything like the White Paper, the American government will be forced into a position of fighting the Jews in Palestine. It is unthinkable; but I have seen many unthinkable things happen in this crazy world. However, by the time they think out the terms of this trusteeship the enthusiasm for the plan may cool off considerably.

"The logical thing to do is to proclaim the Jewish State. We are now waiting to hear from the Jewish people in Palestine; their earnest, considered judgment will be binding on us.

"We have lost a major battle, but we Zionists ought to be toughened to these blows. We have no other choice but to continue our fight. We will carry on with all the energy in our souls until the Jewish State is established--tomorrow!"

At the request of the Columbia Broadcasting System I delivered an address on March 31, 1947; to the American people in which I gave the reaction of our people to the startling reversal of the U.S. Government. In part I said:

"The United States Government has requested a Special Assembly of the United Nations to reconsider the Palestine problem. To what end? What can another Assembly do that the last Assembly failed to do? What new facts are available now that were not previously known? This problem and this little country of Palestine have been investigated by more commissions in recent years than any other problem or any other spot on the face of the globe.

"What new solutions can be pulled out of the bag? There are none, and the Palestine problem cannot be solved by postponements and procrastinations. That way lies continued strife and growing chaos....

"An international trusteeship will require as much force, if not more, to maintain itself as would the partition plan. Where is the force to come from? Is the United States prepared to send troops into Palestine to impose a trusteeship upon that country when it is unwilling to make such a contribution in troops toward a final and permanent settlement? Palestine has lived under a trusteeship (the British mandate) for twenty-five years. If, through this long period, a trusteeship has not been productive of any agreed solution for Palestine, why are we now to expect a solution to result from another and temporary, trusteeship?...

"Relying upon the collective judgment and authority of the United Nations, the Jewish people of Palestine has been moving forward in the spirit of that decision. It has notified the Security Council that it must oppose any proposal designed to prevent or postpone the establishment of the Jewish State, and that

it rejects any plan to set up a new trusteeship regime.

"It informed the Security Council that upon the termination of the mandatory administration, and not later than May 16 next, a Provisional Jewish Government will commence to function in Palestine. This decision of the organized Jewish Community of Palestine was taken after the most searching and serious deliberation. It may involve a measure of conflict after May 15. It still hopes that there may be no need for prolonged conflict in Palestine.

"The Jews of Palestine hope that the Arabs of Palestine will come to accept the United Nations decision and thereby put an end to the scourge of strife and bloodshed which can only do incalculable hurt to both peoples. But in the face of the mounting threats and the incursion of armed bands across the frontiers from neighboring Arab States bent on war, the Jewish people of Palestine is compelled to make all necessary preparations for self-defense.

"It asks that it be permitted to organize and equip its own militia. This is an elementary moral obligation of the United Nations in view of the decision which it took. It is likewise an elementary moral obligation on the part of those nations who have approved the plan, to remove all embargos on the shipment of arms to the Jewish people of Palestine who have accepted the decision, and to deny such arms to those who are violently resisting it.

"The Jews of Palestine wish first and foremost to defend themselves, but their hands must not be tied. They plead with the United Nations to remove all obstacles in the way of their self-defense. They are carrying out the purposes of the United Nations. They should not be penalized for doing so.

"They appeal to the United States, the greatest democracy on earth, whose people have, through the years, manifested deep understanding and sympathy for the historic right of the Jewish people to rebuild its national life in its ancient homeland. Do assist from a course of action which is calculated to do them grievous wrong, prolong strife in the Holy Land and discredit the United

Nations as an instrumentality for solving grave international problems and making its decision stick. They appeal to the people and the Government of the United States to help them in their desperate struggle toward freedom and independence. "



On March 24, 1948, I submitted to the Security Council the Declaration which was made by the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the Vaad Leumi:

"At this moment I have the honor to submit to the Security Council a statement which was adopted by the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the National Council of the Jews of Palestine, the Vaad Leumi, on March 23, 1948. This statement is as follows:

"The Jewish Agency for Palestine and the Vaad Leumi have learned with regret and astonishment of the attitude adopted by the United States representative in the Security Council concerning the United Nations decisions on Palestine.

"The Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi declare:

"1. The Jewish people and the Yishuv in Palestine will oppose any proposal designed to prevent or postpone the establishment of the Jewish State.

"2. We categorically reject any plan to set up a trusteeship regime for Palestine, even for a short period of time. A trusteeship would necessarily entail a denial of the Jewish right to national independence. It would leave Palestine under a foreign military regime.

"3. The failure and disintegration of the mandatory administration, the continuation of which was unanimously rejected by the United Nations, necessitates the early arrival in Palestine of the United Nations Palestine Commission. The Provisional Council of Government of the Jewish State should be recognized without delay by the United Nations Palestine Commission so that authority may be transferred to it as envisaged in the United Nations decisions.

"4. Upon the termination of the mandatory administration and not later than May 16 next, a Provisional Jewish Government will commence to function in cooperation with the representatives of the United Nations in Palestine. In the meantime, we shall do our utmost to minimize the chaos created by the present government, and we shall maintain, so far as lies in our power, the public services neglected by it.

"5. The Jewish people extends the hand of peace to the Arab people and invites representatives of the Arab population of the Jewish State to take their rightful place in all its organs of government. The Jewish State will be glad to co-operate with the neighboring Arab States and to enter into permanent treaty relations with them to strengthen world peace and to advance the development of all the countries of the Near East."

A second special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations opened ~~on~~ April 16, 1947. The United States submitted on April 20, 1947 to the First Committee its plan for a temporary trusteeship in the form of a working paper. An important general debate followed in which the spokesmen of many delegations took part.

On April 22, 1948, I addressed the Political Committee in the course of which I announced the determination of the Jews of Palestine to proclaim a Jewish state on the day following the termination of the Mandate.

"Mr. Chairman and Members of the Political Committee: I am profoundly grateful for the privilege which has been extended to the Jewish Agency for Palestine to participate in these discussions. I had the honor to represent the Jewish Agency for Palestine at the first Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations just a year ago. It was in high hope and confidence that we appeared before the Assembly at that time. We are frank to acknowledge to a sense of bewilderment which we experience today when we appear before the Second Special Session which is considering not the consummation of a work which was so nobly begun a year ago, but ominous proposals aimed at reversing a course of action which had been thoughtfully and courageously pursued.

"A variety of explanations have been given by those who are responsible for convoking this Special Assembly. An air of unreality pervades all these explanations. It is maintained that the past few months have demonstrated that the plan which was adopted last November could not be implemented by peaceful means and that, therefore, a new solution must be found. This argument has been fully met by spokesmen of several delegations who have expressed themselves here, notably by the very incisive and eloquent statement of the distinguished representatives of New Zealand. I have very little to add to what has already been said in this regard except to point out that the spokesman of the United States Delegation, Ambassador Herschel V. Johnson, in his first statement before the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question, on October 10, 1947, declared that the problem of internal law and order during the transition period 'might require the establishment of a special constabulary police force recruited on

-4-
-2-

a volunteer basis by the United Nations.' It was generally understood that some degree of force would be necessary in view of the repeated assertions by spokesmen of Arab countries that they would resist by violence any plan not to their liking which might be adopted by the United Nations. In spite of these repeated threats and in full realization of the possible consequences of their action the members of the United Nations overwhelmingly adopted the partition plan. They adopted it because they had come to realize that it was the most practical and feasible plan which could be worked out and which came closest to doing substantial justice to both peoples of Palestine. The Assembly assumed, as it had every right to assume under the terms of the Charter, that the Security Council would discharge its responsibilities and would utilize all its powers to prevent a breach of the peace and enable the authorized agencies of the United Nations to carry out their functions in the implementation of the Assembly resolution.

"It was further assumed that the Mandatory would, in the interim period, maintain law and order, more especially since it insisted that that responsibility belonged exclusively to the Mandatory Power until the termination of the Mandate.

"It was also assumed that, in accordance with the provisions of the plan, there would be established armed militias, recruited from the local populations, which would, in due course, take over responsibility for public security in their respective states.

"But the Security Council failed lamentably to carry out its responsibilities. It refused to determine that a breach of the peace existed in the country despite the report submitted to it by the United Nations Palestine Commission, which declared: 'Powerful Arab interests, both inside and outside Palestine, are defying the Resolution of the General Assembly and are engaged in a deliberate effort to alter by force the settlement envisaged therein.' The Security Council

walked away from its clear and bounden responsibility.

"The Mandatory Power not only refused to cooperate in the implementation of the scheme but failed utterly to discharge its elementary duty to maintain law and order in the country, a duty which it repeatedly refused to share. One need but read the report of the United Nations Palestine Commission submitted to this Assembly to realize the extent to which the refusal of the Mandatory Power to cooperate has obstructed the plan and has rendered the execution of the Commission's task so difficult....

"Nor were the militias allowed to be established. The Jews of Palestine were prepared from the outset to provide the necessary manpower for the preservation of the public security and for the faithful execution of the decision of the United Nations. But every conceivable obstacle was placed in their way. Such forces as they had were denied legal status and indispensable equipment. Paradoxically, in their efforts to protect the population and to carry out the mandate of the United Nations, they were compelled to go underground.

"There is, therefore, no ground whatever for the assertion that the plan of partition had to be abandoned because it was unworkable or because it could not be peacefully implemented. The truth is that the agencies which were relied upon to ensure the security of the country either failed to cooperate or were prevented from cooperation....

"Mr. Chairman, the basic facts in the situation are terrifyingly simple. The Arabs proceeded to carry out the threat which they had made at the sessions of the Assembly last November. They resorted to mob violence from within Palestine and organized invasion forces from without. In the face of these acts of violence and organized aggression to alter by force the decision of the United Nations, the Security Council faltered and retreated. Confronted by defiance, it capitulated.

"It is now proposed to adopt another plan, which seemingly would not meet with resistance on the part of the Arabs. In other words, it is now proposed

that the United Nations as a whole shall capitulate. This is the real meaning of the new proposal to substitute trusteeship for partition. It is designed to appease violence and reward aggression. It sweeps aside all considerations of equity and law. It sacrifices the results of collective judgment and constructive statesmanship to terrorization. But for all this the world does not need a United Nations. This proposal summons before the bar of this high tribunal the victim of aggression and exacts from him a penalty for loyal compliance with its decision.

"All of us here, I am sure, must realize that this is not a new or unique experience in international affairs, an experience which has brought so much sorrow and calamity to our world. The distinguished representative of China must surely recall the year 1932 when the big powers prevented the League of Nations from taking collective action to defend his country against shameless and wanton aggression. He, and all of us, are aware of the tragic consequences, not alone for the League of Nations, but for the whole world, which resulted from that act of grave moral abdication.

"So also must our distinguished friend from Ethiopia recall the year 1936 when the head of his State, standing before the League of Nations, nobly but vainly appealed to the conscience of mankind to arrest the brutal aggression of and arrogant dictator bringing death and ruin to his country. Then, too, the great powers refused to permit effective sanctions to be imposed upon the aggressor, who, not long thereafter, helped to plunge the whole world into the abyss of war.

"Nor, I am sure, has anyone forgotten Munich!

"Is it not clear that this international community is now in danger of repeating the tragic mistakes of the past few years? Is it not evident that world-wide disillusionment, caused by such a moral defeat and bankruptcy of

principle, is even now corroding the foundations of this great institution upon which such high hopes of mankind are centered?

"Mr. Chairman, the Jewish Agency has submitted to the United Nations Palestine Commission and to the Security Council two memoranda on Acts of Arab Aggression. It is needless here to review the facts therein recounted. They are largely a matter of public knowledge. Suffice it to call attention to the summary statement of the Palestine Commission itself, which declared: 'Armed Arab bands from neighboring Arab States have infiltrated into the territory of Palestine and together with local Arab forces are defeating the purposes of the resolution by acts of violence.'

"Seated around this table are representatives of Arab States whose governments pledged themselves to observe the letter and the spirit of the Charter and who have, by their own admissions, called for violent resistance to the decision of the United Nations, armed and equipped bands of their nationals who proceeded to cross the frontiers into Palestine to carry death and destruction to the inhabitants of that country. They are at this very moment preparing for even large military action upon the termination of the mandate, if not sooner.

"This clearly is not merely non-acceptance of a General Assembly recommendation. This is brazen and contemptuous violation of the United Nations Charter, which calls upon its member states to refrain from the threat or the use of force in international relations.

"The representatives of these states, who have flaunted the United Nations, are here today counseling this international organization, whose authority and prestige they have trampled underfoot, to sanction their aggression and to reward their violence by repudiating a decision which had been overwhelmingly adopted and to substitute for it a solution which would be entirely acceptable to them. This indeed is an incredible spectacle--astounding, sinister, ominous.

-8-
S. H. 23

Undoubtedly the Arab States have been emboldened to embark upon this career of violence and aggression by the attitude of the Mandatory Power and by the temporizing and vacillation of other powers who have special interests in that part of the world. So far as the Mandatory Power is concerned, the measure of its responsibility for what has transpired in Palestine since November 29th is fully indicated in the report which was submitted by the United Nations Palestine Commission to this Assembly. We do not wish to enlarge upon the record or to engage in further recriminations. There is but one urgent request which we would address to the Mandatory on the eve of its departure from Palestine. It is a request, I am sure, in which the members of the United Nations would wish to join; that its departure from Palestine should be attended with a minimum of disorganization, and that it should not further contribute to the chaos and destruction to which that country is exposed. Above all, we request that it should not make available the means of aggression--arms and military equipment--to the aggressor states, and that it should remove the British led, trained and financed Arab Legion from Palestine and ensure its non-intervention in the affairs of Palestine in the future. Having been unwilling to implement the decision of the United Nations, it should at least refrain from abetting, however indirectly, the tragic conflict in the country.

"As to the new proposal for Palestine which has been suggested by the United States Delegation, we should like to make the following observations: It is too late in the day to impose a trusteeship on the ^{people} of Palestine. They have lived under the tutelage of trusteeship for a quarter of a century. They fretted under it. They now seek their independence. They are entitled to it. They will have it."

Where was President Truman in all this? It is inconceivable that he was unaware of what the United States delegation was proposing in the United Nations or that he disapproved of it. He had been too much involved in all the steps which had led up to the decision of November 29th to permit this radical move of reversal to be proposed by the American delegation without his knowledge and consent.

In fact, on March 20th, Secretary of State Marshall declared that he recommended to President Truman that the United States revise its position on Palestine and the President approved. On March 25th, President Truman himself at his press conference explained and justified the new American policy of putting aside the partition plan for the time being. This country, he stated vigorously supported the plan for partition with economic union but it had become clear that the partition plan could not be carried out at this time by peaceful means.

But all this was well known when the partition resolution was adopted...

The trusteeship proposal was not in his mind a rejection of partition, but rather "an effort to postpone its effective date until proper conditions for the establishment of self-government in the two parts might be established... The suggestion that the mandate be continued as a trusteeship under the United Nations was not a bad idea at the time. However, there were strong suspicions, voiced by many, that the diplomats thought of it as a way to prevent partition and the establishment of the Jewish homeland." (p. 163)

Only the diplomats?... Everyone who followed the issue knew it to be a way to prevent partition and to postpone the establishment of the Jewish State indefinitely!

Mr. Truman recounts a meeting which he had with Dr. Chaim Weizmann on March 18th. His personal friend Eddie Jacobson had interceded with him to see Dr. Weizmann. Here is the story of this meeting in Mr. Truman's own words:

"When Eddie left I gave instructions to have Dr. Weizmann come to the White House as soon as it could be arranged. However, the visit was to be entirely off the record. Dr. Weizmann, by my specific instructions, was to be brought in through the East Gate. There was to be no press coverage of his visit and no public announcement.

"Dr. Weizmann came on March 18, and we talked for almost three quarters of an hour. We talked about the possibilities of development in Palestine, about the scientific work that he and his assistants had done that would someday be translated into industrial activity in the Jewish state that he envisaged. He spoke of the need for land if the future immigrants were to be cared for, and he impressed on me the importance of the Negeb area in the south to any future Jewish state...

"I told him, as plainly as I could, why I had at first put off seeing him. He understood. I explained to him that the basis of my interest in the Jewish problem was and that my primary concern was to see justice done without bloodshed. And when he left my office I felt that he had reached a full understanding of my policy and that I know what it was he wanted. (p. 161)

"That this was so was shown the following day. That day our representative in the United Nations, Ambassador A⁺ustin, announced to the Security Council that the United States Government would favor a temporary trusteeship for Palestine pending a decision on Palestine's permanent status. Some Zionist spokesmen branded this as a reversal of American policy. Dr. Weizmann, however, was one of the few prominent Zionists who did not choose this opportunity to castigate American policy. He knew, I am sure, what the direction of American policy really was. The following morning Judge Rosenman called to see me on another matter. As he was leaving, I asked him to see Dr. Weizmann and tell him that there was not and would not be any change in the long policy he and I had talked about. (p. 162)

One wonders whether in the three quarters of an hour of conversation President Truman took occasion to inform Dr. Weizmann that on the very next day March 19th, Ambassador Austin would announce in the Security Council the new American proposal for a temporary trusteeship, and whether Dr. Weizmann raised no objection to it!...

A week later on March 25, 1947, Dr. Weizmann issued a statement to the press in which he stated:

"Now some people suggest that the partition decision be shelved because it has not secured the agreement of all parties! Yet it was because the Mandatory Power itself constantly emphasized that the prospect of agreement was nonexistent that it submitted the question to the United Nations. . . . Whatever solution may be imposed will require enforcement. . . . I have spent many years laboring at this strenuous problem, and I know there is today no other practical solution, and none more likely to achieve stability in the long run--certainly not the Arab unitary state which the conscience of the world has rejected, or the so-called federal formula which is in fact nothing but an Arab state in another guise, or an impossible effort to impose trusteeship and arrest the progress of the Palestinian Jews toward their rightful independence."

And in a letter to the President on April 9, 1947 Dr. Weizmann wrote:

"The clock cannot be put back to the situation which existed before November 29. I would also draw attention to the psychological effects of promising Jewish independence in November and attempting to cancel it in March. . . ."

Dr. Weizmann recounts in his Trial and Error (p. 472) that on the occasion of his visit with the President on March 18, "the President was sympathetic personally, and still indicated a prior resolve to press forward with partition. I doubt, however, whether he was himself aware of the extent to which his own policy and purpose had been balked by subordinates in the State Department."

Was the President really taken in by his subordinates and was Weizmann taken in by the President?....

When the President reversed his policy a second time, two months later, and without warning recognized the State of Israel, eleven minutes after the State was proclaimed, he was surprised, he writes, at the fact that certain people were surprised.

"I was told that to some of the career men of the State Department this announcement came as a surprise. It should not have been if these men had faithfully supported my policy.

"The difficulty with many career officials in the government is that they regard themselves as the men who really make policy and run the government. They look upon the elected officials as just temporary occupants. Every President in our history has been faced with this problem -- how to prevent career men from circumventing presidential policy. Too often career men seek to impose their own views instead of carrying out the established policy of the administration".... (page 2)

But in what way did the career men circumvent his policy?.... In view of all the mutations can it be truly said that there was an established policy of the administration?

The "career men" may have pressured him to adopt their proposal for a temporary trusteeship which, astute student of national politics that he was, he soon realized to have been a colossal political blunder for him and his party and he set about rectifying it. But these "career men" certainly did not circumvent his policy....

We were all profoundly grateful to President Truman for recognizing the State of Israel, but to this day some of us are left wondering how much the aroused and indignant American public opinion which was voiced against his policy of reversal and how much the "pressure" of Zionist "extremists", of whom he complained so much, and the advice of the political leaders of his party had to do with the reversal of his reversal....

Consistency is only a minor virtue in the leader of a nation, nor are the factors which finally determine his action of lasting importance. Making the right decision in the decisive moment is the only true test of effective leadership. Mr. Truman made the right decision.



During the next few weeks, our friends inside and outside of Washington intensified their activities to persuade the President to abandon the Trusteeship plan which, merit quite apart, was not winning adequate support in the United Nations. They informed him of the fact that on May 15th the Jews of Palestine will, without fail, proclaim an independent Jewish State, and that there were important governments including the Soviet Union, which were prepared to give it recognition, once it is proclaimed. Would it not be tactically a blunder to permit, say, the Soviet Union to be the first to recognize the new Jewish State, especially in an election year! Partition in fact already existed in Palestine, the Chairman of the advance party of the Palestine Commission had reported, and that only legal recognition was missing. By the end of April, the Jewish forces had succeeded in relieving the besieged city of Jerusalem, in defeating the army of Fawzi el Haukji in the Valley of Esdraelon and in capturing the cities of Haifa, Jaffa, Tiberias and Safed. Practically the entire area which the United Nations had allotted to the Jews by the partition plan was in Jewish military control.

The State Department made last desperate efforts to keep the Jewish Agency from proceeding with the proclamation of the state. They pressed for a temporary postponement, a new "truce" conference. They offered to fly our representatives in the President's own plane to some designated spot in the Near East to meet with Arab representatives to work out a temporary trusteeship agreement. One heard threats and of reprisals which would be resorted to in case the Jewish Agency refused to yield. Some of the members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency were cooperating in this project. Dr. Nahum Goldmann acted as a willing intermediary and guide for the proposed journey into another trusteeship.

I knew all this to be a dangerous trap, disguised to postpone indefinitely the establishment of the Jewish State and, if accepted, would precipitate severe disturbances in the Yishuv. A meeting of the American Section of the Jewish Agency was held on May 10th. At this meeting I said:

"I will tell you what I think about this business. The American government is resolved not to have us proclaim the provisional Jewish Government on the fifteenth. They are very determined about it. The conversation that Sheertok had with Marshall, Lovett and Rusk the day before yesterday clearly indicates that they do not want to see the Jewish State established. They do not want it established today or in ninety days because, in spite of the questions that were asked of them as to what would happen after ninety days, whether they would be prepared to recognize the Jewish State then, there was no answer. They want a postponement of the matter to the next Assembly and in the meantime, they will propose that both peoples should be asked not to proclaim their states. If such a resolution passes and we proclaim our state after its passing, it will be flying in the face of the U.N. Consequently, the question that has been in my mind is whether we should not proceed at once and proclaim the state before the U.N. acts. I cannot see that any action which would emanate now from the U.N. that would not be hostile to us. Therefore, proclaim the state now! Announce to the world that the Jews have established their state and that they are going ahead."

There had been prolonged debate and a good deal of tension on the question of accepting or rejecting the last-minute proposal of the State Department to delay the proclamation of the State until we and the Arab leaders worked out an agreement. The majority of my colleagues in the Agency supported my position. The proposal

of the State Department was voted down. Our friends in Israel were informed of our stand and were advised to proceed with their plans, without delay.

The proclamation of the State in Tel Aviv was actually made a day earlier than was contemplated on May 14th while the U.N. was still debating the American proposals.

A straw in the wind that the American Government might be considering another reversal in its position was the appointment on April 28th of Major-General John H. Hilldring as Special Assistant for Palestine Affairs to the Secretary of State. General Hilldring had been a loyal and understanding friend of our Movement right along.

By May 13th recognition was already "in the works".

On May 14th the State of Israel was proclaimed in Tel Aviv. On the same day I addressed the United Nations and made the announcement:

-4-
~~SECRET~~

"At ten o'clock this morning the Jewish State was proclaimed in Palestine. The hour was advanced out of respect for the sanctity of the Jewish Sabbath. The statement—and I read only one sentence of that statement—is as follows:

We, the members of the National Council representing the Jewish people in Palestine and the Zionist movement of the world, meeting together in solemn assembly, by virtue of the natural and historic right of the Jewish people and of the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations, hereby proclaim the establishment of the Jewish State in Palestine, to be called "Israel."

"Thus, what was envisag^{ed} in the resolution of the General Assembly, which was overwhelmingly adopted by the United Nations last November, has been, as far as the Jewish State is concern^{ed}, implemented. Thus, too, there has been consummated the age-old dream of Israel to be re-established as a free and independent people in its ancient homeland.

"The Jewish State is grateful to the United Nations for having placed the stamp of its approval, and the stamp of the approval of the world community, upon the historic claims of Israel, and for the efforts which it made, in the face of opposition, to achieve that which the Jewish people have accomplished. The Jewish State, in setting out upon its career, is conscious of the many grave problems, foreseen or unanticipated, with confront it. It prayerfully appeals, therefore, to all freedom-loving peoples, and especially to those who gave their fullest endorsement to the establishment of the Jewish State a few months ago, to give a full measure of their support and of their strengthening to ~~this~~ newest republic established by this, the most ancient of peoples. The Jewish State will strive to be worthy of the confidence which has been placed in it by the nations of the world, and will endeavor to realize, as far as it is humanly possible, those prophetic ideas of justice, brotherhood, peace and democracy which were first proclaimed by the people of Israel in that very land.

"The new Jewish State is being threatened--threatened by neighboring states, threatened with invasion. Invasion will mean war. The Jewish State will be compelled to defend itself. And the world community may be faced with a widening

and dangerous areas of conflict, which everyone deplores,

"It is not yet too late to avert such an eventuality. The Jewish State of Palestine seeks peace with all peoples, and will dedicate itself, under Providence, to the ways of peace and to the friendliest cooperation with all peace-loving peoples."

The next day, towards evening, while Mr. Philip C. Jessup of the American delegation was still arguing for the trusteeship proposal on the floor of the Assembly, a flash from Washington electrified the Assembly with the announcement that President Truman had extended de facto recognition to the State of Israel.

There was great rejoicing in all the habitations of our people. Celebrations were held in every city in the land. Thousands of messages poured in from all corners of the earth. A telegram which especially moved me was from the Central Committee of the Deportees on the island of Cyprus. It read:

"Twenty-four thousand Maapilim (illegal immigrants) detained in Cyprus Camps extend greetings occasion Jewish State Day. After many years of wandering we are happy to have privilege of being first immigrants to enter Jewish State."

A victory celebration was held in Madison Square Garden on the evening of May 16, 1948. The hall was packed and tens of thousands of people stood outside in the rain listening to loud-speakers. On the platform were many leaders who had taken part in the historic struggle. Among the speakers were Senator Robert Taft, Governor Herbert Lehman and Dr. Emanuel Neumann.

Two months later, on July 19, 1948, my own community of Cleveland

tendered me a heart-warming Testimonial Dinner which was attended by Jews and non-Jews from all walks of life and from many parts of the country.

