

9. REPORT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In accordance with the usual procedure the Committee, and subsequently the General Assembly, "took note" of the report of the Security Council.

10. PALESTINE

(a) The Question of an International Regime for the Jerusalem Area and the Protection of the Holy Places

At its third regular session the General Assembly established the Palestine Conciliation Commission, with instructions to present to the fourth regular session "detailed proposals for a permanent international regime for the Jerusalem area which will provide for the maximum local autonomy for distinctive groups consistent with the special international status of the Jerusalem area." The Commission was also instructed to deal with the question of the Holy Places in order that access to them should be guaranteed.

After ascertaining the views of the various parties concerned, the Commission advanced proposals in the form of a draft instrument for a permanent international regime for the Jerusalem area. Under this scheme the United Nations was to establish a permanent international regime for the city and surrounding districts, under which the Jerusalem area would be divided into a Jewish zone and an Arab zone (with the present armistice line as the provisional line of demarcation), and the respective competent authorities of the two zones would deal with all matters not reserved to the competence of a proposed United Nations Commissioner. The principal tasks of the Commissioner would be to ensure protection of, and free access to, the Holy Places (which would be under his exclusive control), to supervise the demilitarization of the Jerusalem area, and to provide for the safeguarding of human rights and fundamental freedoms in general and the rights of distinctive groups in particular. The Jerusalem area was to have been permanently demilitarized in accordance with declarations to be made by the responsible authorities of the two zones.

Shortly after submitting its proposed plan the Commission issued a statement denying that it envisaged a complete separation of Jerusalem from the political life and authority of the adjoining States. It emphasized that the inhabitants of Jerusalem would retain their existing citizenship and nationality and pointed out that its plan was based on the present division of the city, that it left to the Governments of the adjoining States (Israel and Jordan) virtually all normal powers of government within the Arab and Jewish parts of Jerusalem respectively, and made it possible for them to retain or alter the present local administration.