



UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

Questions on which further Joint Committees under the chairmanship of a Commission representative might be formed

(Working Paper prepared by the Secretariat)

I.

1. In a Note on Direct Negotiations dated 9 February and in Working Paper W/37, concerning the creation of Mixed Committees to study specific problems, it was stated that the General Committee is seized of a number of questions susceptible of forming the subject matter of discussions - initially on a more or less technical level - in such ad hoc committees. These committees were described as organs composed of a representative of Israel and of a representative of the Arab State or States concerned under the chairmanship of a representative of the Conciliation Commission. The questions falling within the above category are the following:

- a) Cultivation of lands situated in the Tulkarm area in Israeli controlled territory and belonging to Arabs resident in Jordanian-controlled territory; and
- b) extension of the formula governing the return of separated refugee families to Israel.

2. It will be recalled in connection with the question of the cultivation of Arab lands in the Tulkarm area that in Lausanne the General Committee had instructed the Principal Secretary upon his return to Palestine to seek the best method of solving this problem in consultation with the authorities directly concerned. The Principal Secretary had secured the agreement of both parties to take up discussion of this question in the Special Committee set up by the Israel-Jordan armistice agreement which was to be revived for this purpose. The Special Committee was to report the progress of its negotiations to the Commission. The Commission has now been informed by its Secretariat in Jerusalem that negotiations between the parties on this question have reached a deadlock showing no prospect of success in the near future. The General Committee would therefore be justified in attempting to ascertain the views of the Jordanian and Israeli delegates on the possibility of creating a Joint Committee in Geneva to discuss this and other related questions. There is no valid reason why, beginning from this subject, the Committee should not gradually permit and even encourage the negotiations to extend themselves to such territorial and other questions as access to Mount Scopus, the Bethlehem road, the Latrun pumping station, etc. The fact that these questions have been wider discussion by the Special Committee set up by the Israeli-Jordan Armistice Agreement in no way removes them from the Commission's mandate to assist the parties to achieve a final settlement of all questions outstanding between them.

3. Negotiations on the reunion of separated families might equally serve as the basis for the creation of an ad hoc committee but in this case with representatives of all the delegations sitting round a table under the chairmanship of a representative of the Commission. Such a step would become much more acceptable to the Arabs if two of their number had previously had direct contacts with the Israelis under the auspices of the Commission. The General Committee could also canvass the delegations on their views in this connection.

II.

4. Among the other questions which might be discussed in the ad hoc committees but which are not on the General Committee's agenda are the following:

- a) The supply of foodstuffs from certain Arab States for the use of Arab refugees in Israel;
- b) access of the Parties to certain ports and aerodromes;
- c) joint use of land communication and telecommunication facilities; and
- d) joint use of natural resources such as the Jordan river, etc.

5. The above questions can further be subdivided into those that interest Israel and only a single Arab State and those that may interest more than one Arab State and which therefore offer the alternative of being treated in Committees with the Arab representatives sitting singly or collectively. The questions of the lands around Tulkarm and of access to certain ports and aerodromes seem to be of interest to Jordan alone among the Arab States. Whereas the remaining five questions would appear to concern more than one of the Arab countries

and in most cases all four of them.

6. It is suggested that as a first step the General Committee be seized by the Commission of those of the above questions which are not already on the Committee's agenda, for the purpose of carrying out a preliminary study in consultation with the interested parties, of the best way in which these and other questions can be treated and submitting its recommendations to the Commission.

7. With regard to those questions of an economic or technical nature enumerated in paragraph 4 above, it should be decided by the Commission whether an effort should be made to introduce them at the appropriate time on to the agenda of the existing Joint Committees or whether Special Committees should be set up to deal with them.

8. In the first case the introduction of foodstuffs from Egypt and Jordan into Israel could be linked with the feeding of the refugees returning to Israel from these two countries and could be discussed separately in the two Joint Committees, Similarly, in connection with the joint use of communication facilities, the question of, for instance, the reopening of the Cairo-Haifa railroad could eventually be discussed in the Israeli-Egyptian Committee while, for example, the joint use of the port of Haifa and the Lydda aerodrome could be discussed in the Israeli-Jordanian Committee. The same would apply to discussions connected with the joint use of natural resources. Once these questions had formed the subject of discussions in the two existing Joint Committees a precedent would have been established for the creation of Mixed Committees with Lebanon and Syria to discuss these questions to the extent that they concern these two countries.

9. In the second case the creation of ad hoc committees would be envisaged to discuss these questions. Thus in the first, of these questions the Arab State would have to agree collectively to permit the sending of foodstuffs to Israel for the use of the Arabs resident in Israel. In the second, if one were to take the question of railroad communications as an example, the problem to be discussed would not be the opening of the Cairo-Haifa segment but of the whole railway network which of course would concern all four Arab States.

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