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REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE
UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY
FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST*

**Eighteenth progress report of the United Nations
Conciliation Commission for Palestine**

(1 September 1959-11 November 1960)

Note by the Secretary-General: The Secretary-General has the honour to communicate to the Members of the United Nations, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 512 (VI) of 26 January 1952, the eighteenth progress report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine.

1. As indicated in its previous reports, the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, during the last few years, has directed its efforts principally to the programme of identification and valuation of Arab refugee immovable property holdings in Israel and the release of Arab refugee bank accounts and safe deposits blocked in Israel.

2. Since its seventeenth progress report (A/4225 and Add.1), the Commission decided to accelerate the completion of the valuation programme. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 1456 (XIV) of 9 December 1959, the Commission also has been exploring during the past ten months possible ways by which it might contribute to the implementation of the principles enunciated in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948.

3. As the identification of Arab individual holdings in Israel is not practically complete, the work of valuation has commenced both in urban areas and in rural districts. The work at present comprises the analysis of the prices realized in sales which took place in the year 1946-1947. This analysis is an essential preliminary to the application of values to individual holdings. The analysis entails the study by trained valuation personnel of the various factors determining the prices for any particular parcel of land and/or buildings and is the accepted method of arriving at a basic level of value for particular types of land in particular areas. Owing to the large number of factors involved, analysis takes a considerable time even for trained personnel. Early this year the Commission decided that the work on the programme of valuation should be speeded up and that the Secretary-General be requested to recruit the required additional personnel in order that the work of analysis may be completed by August 1961.

4. In connexion with this technical preparation concerning repatriation-compensation planning, the Commission is also considering the problem of accurate identification of Palestine refugee claimants.

5. In regard to the release of Arab refugee bank accounts blocked in Israel, as at 30 June 1960 a total of £2,783,433 of the accounts have been released. In the addendum to the seventeenth progress report of the Commission (A/4225/Add.1), it was stated that, on 11 November 1959, the representative of Israel had informed the Commission that the Government of Israel had decided to release the bank accounts blocked in Israel in banks other than Barclay's and the Ottoman Bank and that it would be glad to formulate, in consultation with the Conciliation Commission, technical arrangements for their release. On 7 November 1960, the Permanent Representative of Israel informed the Chairman of the Commission that his Government and Barclay's Bank, Ltd. had concluded an agreement whereby the Bank undertook to deal with the claims respecting

the Arab refugee accounts blocked in banks other than Barclay's and the Ottoman Bank by procedures similar to those which had been employed for the previous release of other blocked accounts. The Commission's Liaison Officer in Jerusalem had been instructed to ensure that the technical arrangements envisaged for such release are established as soon as possible.

6. As at 30 June 1960 the present position in regard to the transfer of valuables is as follows:

*Safe custody dossiers released during period
1 July 1959 to 30 June 1960*

Total dossiers released (of which Palestine Government	
Bearer Bonds: 6).....	8
Safe Deposit Lockers.....	Nil

7. In order to facilitate the work of the Commission in connexion with resolution 1456 (XIV), the Secretariat was requested to prepare working papers on both the questions of compensation and repatriation. These papers constitute a historical survey of steps taken by the Commission to carry out the mandate contained in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), which relates to the question of repatriation and compensation, together with respective positions held by Governments of Israel and the Arab States. The paper on repatriation also contains a summary of consideration of the refugee questions since 1952, including proposals and less formal suggestions such as those that may be found in the available records. These working papers will be ready in the near future.

8. On the basis of an examination of the facts set out in the two working papers prepared for it, the Commission, in response to the terms of resolution 1456 (XIV), is giving careful consideration to possible courses of action which might be open to it in its endeavours to facilitate progress towards promoting agreement between the parties concerned on steps to be taken to secure the implementation of the provisions of paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) regarding repatriation and compensation. The Commission remains at the disposal of the Governments concerned for any assistance it can render.