

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TENTH MEETING
OF THE UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

Lake Success, New York

Friday, 16 January 1948, at 3.00 p.m.

Present:

Chairman:	Mr. Lisicky	(Czechoslovakia)
Members:	Mr. Medina	(Bolivia)
	Mr. Federspiel	(Denmark)
	Mr. Morgan	(Panama)
	Mr. Salazar	(Philippines)
	(Observer for Mr. Francisco)	
Secretariat:	Mr. Bunche	(Secretary)

CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING THE PREPARATION OF A LIST OF QUESTIONS TO BE PUT TO THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT.

The CHAIRMAN remarked that as the four questions concerning immigration were in their final form, they could be forwarded to the representative of the United Kingdom Government at once, together with a request for a preliminary statement of the problems which that Government intended to put before the Commission. This suggestion was accepted by the Commission.

The Commission then continued its examination of Section III of the list of questions prepared by the Secretariat, dealing with the Commission's discharge of its administrative responsibilities.

Draft question 11 was approved in an amended form, the words "as stated by Mr. Creech Jones" being replaced by the words "without any reservations". Draft question 11 was thus modified to read as follows:

"On the appointed day for the termination of the Mandate, is it the Mandatory Power's intention to turn over to the Commission 'the whole complex of governmental responsibilities for the whole of Palestine' without any reservations?"

Draft question 12 was amended to read as follows:

"Does the Mandatory Power intend to take preliminary steps in

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/consultation

consultation with the Commission, prior to the termination of the Mandate, to partition the functions and personnel of the Palestine Government Departments in order to facilitate a smooth and orderly transfer of authority?"

Draft question 13 was approved, without amendments, as follows:

"What are the numbers and rank in each Department of the Palestine Government of

- (a) British
- (b) Arab
- (c) Jewish

personnel?"

Draft question 14 was approved, without amendments, as follows:

"Is the Mandatory Power prepared, in view of paragraph 12 of Section B, Part I of the Assembly resolution, to include in the assistance which it may render to the Palestine Commission the temporary secondment to essential posts in Palestine of any of the personnel in the Palestine administration for service under the Commission during the transitional period?"

Draft question 15 was approved, without amendments, as follows:

"After the termination of the Mandate, what functions or responsibilities will be discharged by British forces in the areas still occupied by them, with respect to:

- (a) maintaining public services,
- (b) civil administration?"

Draft questions 16 and 17 were deleted from the list of questions on the understanding that the Chairman would discuss those subjects with the United Kingdom representative.

A proposed new question concerning the transfer of the Palestine police force and its equipment was deleted, as the subject was already covered in another question provisionally approved by the Commission.

A second proposed new question concerning movable assets was approved without amendment, as follows:

"The Resolution (Part I, E.2, page 14) provides that:

'During the period between the appointment of the United Nations Commission and the termination of the Mandate, the Mandatory Power shall, except in respect of ordinary operations, consult with the Commission on any measure which it may contemplate involving the liquidation, disposal or encumbering of the assets of the Palestine Government, such as the accumulated treasury surplus, the proceeds of Government bond issues, State lands or any other asset'.

Has the United Kingdom Government any proposals as to the method to be followed for such consultations and as to the date of starting such consultations?"

/The Commission

The Commission then proceeded to consider draft questions 18 to 24 inclusive, dealing with economic matters. After a brief discussion it was decided that questions 18, 19 and 20 required preliminary study, and would be considered by the Commission at a later date.

Draft question 21 was approved, without amendment, as follows:

"Is the delegation of the United Kingdom in a position to give the Commission an account of the present food situation in Palestine, and particularly of any arrangements for the importation of essential food during the next few months?"

Draft question 22 was approved, without amendment, as follows:

"Has the Mandatory Power prepared any plans which would ensure that in the transfer of responsibility to the United Nations Commission the essential measures of the Palestine Administration for securing sufficient food supplies for all the population of Palestine can continue in operation?"

Draft question 23 was deleted, as the subject had been covered in a previous question.

Draft question 24 was approved, without amendment, as follows:

"What measures are planned by the Mandatory Power to preserve and turn over to the Commission the records of land surveys and land settlement in the archives of the Palestine Government?"

The CHAIRMAN stated that the Commission would have another opportunity to consider the final form of the questions approved, with the exception of the four questions on the subject of immigration.

The senior public relations officer read an informal working paper containing thirteen specific questions on public information.

After a brief discussion, the following general question on the subject of public information was approved:

"Is the United Kingdom Government prepared to enter into consultation with the Commission at an early date with regard to the measures to be taken to ensure the continuation of the machinery of public information, essential to the fulfilment of the Commission's tasks?"

It was decided that the technical questions proposed in the working paper on public information would be discussed during the consultation envisaged in the general question adopted by the Commission.

DISCUSSION OF THE RECRUITMENT BY THE PROVISIONAL COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENT OF ARMED MILITIAS AND OPERATIONS OF THE LATTER UNDER CONTROL OF THE COMMISSION (document A/AC.21/W.9).

The Secretary read the working paper on the subject of militias (document A/AC.21/W.9) prepared by the Secretariat.

/It was pointed out

It was pointed out that with reference to the fact that, under the General Assembly's resolution, an armed militia was to be recruited "from the residents" of each State, it would be possible for Arabs to join the militia of the Jewish State, and thus acquire arms and equipment.

The CHAIRMAN remarked that the problem concerned the Provisional Council of Government. In reply to a question, he stated that in the event an Arab State could not be established, the situation would have to be brought by the Commission to the notice of the Security Council. He suggested to the Commission that relations between the Hagana and other organizations such as the Irgun Zvai Leumi were the concern, not of the Commission, but of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

The opinion was expressed that, should the impossibility of establishing one State cause the matter to be referred to the Security Council, it would still be within the Commission's competence to set up a provisional government in the other State. It was also urged that the Arab Higher Committee should be informed by the Commission of each step taken to implement the decision of the General Assembly.

The CHAIRMAN informed the Commission that no reply had yet been received by the Arab Higher Committee to the telegram sent by the Secretary-General on 9 January 1948, pursuant to the Resolution adopted by the Commission at its first meeting. He suggested that a further communication, in the form of a registered letter, incorporating the first telegram, should be addressed to the Arab Higher Committee.

This proposal was approved without objection.

The CHAIRMAN called attention to several points in the Secretariat working paper on militias which required careful consideration. They were: preparation of detailed plans regarding recruitment, organization, composition, armament, equipment and control of the militia; temporary provision for the security of the city of Jerusalem; the role of the Commission in determining the over-all size and organization of the militia; possibilities of acquiring arms and equipment; and the financing of the acquisition of arms and of the maintenance of the militia.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.