

GENERAL
ASSEMBLYASSEMBLEE
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ENGLISH ONLY

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH MEETING
OF THE UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

Lake Success, New York

Monday, 2 February 1948, at 4.00 p.m.

Present:

Chairman: Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia)

Members: Mr. Medina (Bolivia)
Mr. Federspiel (Denmark)
Mr. Morgan (Panama)
Mr. Francisco (Philippines)

Secretariat: Mr. Bunche (Secretary)

In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Medina (Bolivia) took the chair.

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE COMMISSION

The CHAIRMAN asked Mr. Reedman to make a report on the question of a candidate for the Preparatory Economic Commission to take the place of Mr. Perez Guerrero, who was not available.

Mr. REEDMAN (Senior Economic Adviser) stated that Mr. Raul Prebisch had been suggested to him as a very suitable person. Mr. Prebisch, an Argentine national, was formerly Manager of the Central Bank of Argentina and had been largely responsible for the successful organization of that bank. Mr. Robert Triffin, formerly of the Federal Reserve Board and at present with the International Monetary Fund, who had worked with Mr. Prebisch, spoke very highly of him.

The Commission instructed Mr. Reedman to get in touch with Mr. Prebisch.

The SECRETARY informed the Commission that no reply had yet been received to the letter addressed by the Commission to the United Kingdom delegation on 27 January (document A/AC.21/SR.23).

The SECRETARY submitted two communications which had been received, one from the Jewish Agency for Palestine concerning alleged activities of ~~Rebasse~~ Officers and the other from the Chairman of the Association of Government Wartime Departments Officers, Jerusalem.

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/The Commission

The Commission requested the Secretary to transmit these communications orally to the United Kingdom delegation for their observations, and to try to obtain some information concerning the Association of Government Wartime Departments Officers.

The SECRETARY had received from the United Kingdom delegation a correction to the memorandum concerning the sending to Palestine of an advance party of the Secretariat (document A/AC.21/8). The last sentence of paragraph 5 should read: "Aqir is situated in an area which it is proposed should form part of the Jewish State..."

With reference to paragraph I of the communication received from the United Kingdom delegation on 29 January relating to questions posed in the Commission on various security matters, the Secretary had now been informed by the United Kingdom delegation that the number of rifles stolen by Arab deserters, which had been left blank, was 471.

CONSIDERATION OF STATEMENTS MADE TO THE COMMISSION BY SIR ALEXANDER CADOGAN AT ITS TWENTY-SEVENTH MEETING, 30 JANUARY 1948

The CHAIRMAN suggested that Sir Alexander Cadogan's replies to the Commission's questions should be considered point by point.

A short general discussion took place, during which it was remarked that the crux of the matter was that the Provisional Councils of Government could not be established nor militia formed without the co-operation of the United Kingdom.

It was observed that the essential date to be borne in mind was 15 May - the date on which authority would pass from the Mandatory Power to the Commission. It was urgent that the Commission should consider whether, by that date, it would have been able to establish Provisional Councils of Government which would be ready to take over when the Mandate terminated. It was unlikely that the Mandatory Power would agree to the formation of militia prior to that date; and it was questionable whether it could reasonably be asked to do so in view of the number and variety of military forces already in Palestine (Palestine Police, British Army, Trans-Jordan Frontier Force, Arab Legion).

It was pointed out that Section B of Part I paragraph 4, of the General Assembly resolution did not specifically decree that the Provisional Councils of Government must be set up by 1 April.

The Commission proceeded to consider Sir Alexander Cadogan's replies one by one.

With reference to the reply to question two, some doubt was felt as to whether the attitude of the United Kingdom was tenable in law. The State of Palestine would not cease to exist; there would merely be a transfer of authority. On the other hand, Government employees might claim /that they

that they had signed contracts with the United Kingdom Government and not with the Palestine Administration.

Mr. LISICKY took the Chair during the discussion of this question.

The CHAIRMAN considered that the solution of this problem would depend on the answer to the larger question of the means of enforcement and the establishment of an international force. The United Kingdom Government maintained its view that the Commission could enter into its functions only after the termination of the Mandate. Sir Alexander Cadogan's replies had made it clear that there would be no compromise on this point.

With reference to questions seven and eight, it was emphasized that the United Kingdom Government should be asked not to issue its directive to the General Officer Commanding without first showing it to the Commission.

It was observed that in his reply to question nine, Sir Alexander Cadogan had clearly referred to attacks against British troops, not against the area occupied by them.

It was pointed out that according to the reply to the first question in Section III, a gradual transfer of authority would be affected, beginning at the date of the termination of the Mandate. There was a conflict between the terms of the resolution and the interpretation of the United Kingdom Government. It was the Commission's duty to see that the terms of the resolution were implemented.

The CHAIRMAN considered that the resolution was not explicit and that the attitude of the United Kingdom Government had been consistent throughout. They would evacuate their troops gradually, beginning even before the termination of the Mandate. On 15 May the responsibility for the areas from which British forces had been withdrawn would devolve on the Commission. Areas still occupied would be under the authority of the General Officer Commanding.

It was pointed out that if there were no militia in those areas the Commission would have no means of enforcing its authority.

The SECRETARY observed that the Commission had been told previously that the whole of Palestine would be under its authority subject to the overriding control of the General Officer Commanding. It now appeared that after the termination of the Mandate British troops would remain in certain areas for the purpose of protecting their withdrawal and lines of communication. It was not clear on whom the responsibility would rest for the ordinary processes of civil administration and the maintenance of law and order in areas occupied by British troops in process of evacuation.

The Commission requested the Secretary to draft a letter to Sir Alexander Cadogan stating that in its considered opinion an interval of

/two weeks

two weeks between its arrival in Palestine and the termination of the Mandate was insufficient.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.
