

GENERAL
ASSEMBLYASSEMBLEE
GENERALEA/AC.21/SR.39
18 February 1948

ENGLISH ONLY

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE THIRTY-NINTH MEETING

Lake Success, New York,
Monday, 16 February 1948, at 11.00 a.m.

Present:

Chairman: Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia)

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

Secretariat: Mr. Bunche (Secretary)

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE COMMISSION

The SECRETARY drew attention to a communication received on 12 February 1948, from Mr. Fletcher-Cooke of the United Kingdom delegation, passing on the suggestion of the Government of Palestine that, in view of the difficult housing situation from the point of view of security, one member only of the Secretariat should be sent to Palestine in advance of the advance party, to make arrangements for the accommodation of the party.

The Secretary stated that he had had a telephone conversation concerning the communication with Mr. Fletcher-Cooke, who had proposed that if one individual was sent in advance, it should be done secretly. He had explained that, in fact, such secrecy would be impossible.

The Secretary added that he would take the matter up with Mr. Sobolev (Assistant Secretary-General) and Mr. Lie (Secretary-General), with regard to the selection of an individual. Since, however, the communication seemed to constitute a retreat from the position originally taken by the United Kingdom Government regarding the advance party, he suggested that it might be advisable for a member of the Commission, preferably the Chairman, to discuss the question with Mr. Creech-Jones, who had arrived in New York.

A discussion ensued, during which it was pointed out that

/Sir Alexander Cadogan,

Sir Alexander Cadogan, in his communication of 9 February 1948, had stated that "all reasonable facilities" would be given for a nucleus of the Commission's staff to visit Palestine in advance of 1 May. While it could be argued that the later proposal contained in Mr. Fletcher-Cooke's letter constituted all the "reasonable facilities" the Government of Palestine was able to offer, it was felt that some explanation of the apparent change of attitude should be asked for. It was therefore agreed that a letter should be addressed to Sir Alexander Cadogan, under the Chairman's signature, stating that the Commission had discussed the question, and had concluded that the views of the Government of Palestine, as expressed in Mr. Fletcher-Cooke's letter of 12 February, were not in conformity with Sir Alexander's earlier statement concerning "all reasonable facilities". It was also agreed that the Chairman, if necessary, should subsequently take the matter up with Sir Alexander Cadogan and Mr. Creech-Jones.

APPROVAL OF THE FIRST SPECIAL REPORT TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL (Document A/AC.21/9)

The view was expressed that the first paragraph on the title page of the report weakened the whole report. While it referred to the maintenance of law and order and the implementation of the resolution, no mention was made of attempts to alter by force the settlement, or of the need for an international armed force. It was suggested that the paragraph in question should be redrafted to contain a summary of points A, B and C of paragraph 3 of section I. Alternatively, a compromise solution could be found by deleting the latter half of the paragraph, after the words "security in Palestine".

After a short discussion, it was decided that the time factor was of greater importance than the redrafting of the paragraph. It was essential that the report should be in the hands of the Security Council that afternoon, and any change would involve delay.

There being no further objections, the report was approved and signed by all Members of the Commission.

It was agreed that the report could be released to the Press, for publication in the next morning's newspapers.

RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS

It was agreed that a press conference should take place the following afternoon at 3.00 p.m. It should be rather less formal than previous conferences, and should take the form of questions and answers, one member only of the Commission answering each question.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.