

UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

GENERAL COMMITTEE

RESTRICTED

Com.Gen./SR.42

7 September 1949

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FORTY-SECOND MEETING

held in Lausanne on Wednesday,
7 September 1949, at 10.15 a.m.

Present: Mr. de la Tour du Pin (France) - Chairman
Mr. Yenisey (Turkey)
Mr. Rockwell (U.S.A.)
Dr. Azcárate - Principal Secretary

Report by the Chairman of the Mixed Committee of Experts on
Blocked Accounts.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, speaking as Chairman of the Mixed Committee, had to report that thus far the work of the Mixed Committee had proved disappointing. He had anticipated that work would progress rapidly, since the Arabs were much interested in the subject because of its direct effect upon the refugees, while the Israeli delegation had always expressed the desire to meet and discuss directly with Arab representatives and were being afforded their first opportunity to do so. However, while personal relations between the representatives of the two parties had proved very smooth and cordial, both delegations were showing a certain indifference to the question at issue. The Israeli delegation had, indeed, produced an expert, but it had not yet been possible to begin a full technical discussion of the question, since the Arab member of the Committee had thus far been unable to secure the presence of an expert or even to produce any documents or figures. The Secretariat's economic adviser had prepared a detailed working paper to serve as a basis for elaboration of the technical procedure to be followed; the Committee had discussed the paper, but could take no decisions until an Arab expert was present.

With regard to the future work of the Mixed Committee, the Principal Secretary pointed out that for the time being

any further meetings could be no more than discussions in very general terms. It was possible that upon the return of the Principal Secretary and his staff to Jerusalem, the economic adviser could personally enter into contact with the experts and proper authorities in Cairo and Tel Aviv, and, upon the basis of his inquiries, develop a plan for a working procedure which could be submitted to the General Committee. Such a course, however, would imply abandoning the Commission's first effort at direct negotiations, and returning to the old method of intermediary negotiations by the Commission between the two parties.

Mr. YENISEY suggested that the General Committee's first action should be to convene a meeting with the Arab member of the Mixed Committee and endeavour to elicit from him a clear and definite statement of what could be expected from his Government in the matter.

Mr. ROCKWELL felt that such a meeting should include all the Arab delegations, and that if it were considered impossible to secure the presence of an Arab expert in Lausanne immediately, the General Committee should suggest suspension of the meetings and resumption of work at a later moment in Jerusalem.

In this connection, Mr. Rockwell pointed out that the agenda of such a meeting should also include once more the question of repatriation of members of separated families, since it was apparent that although the Israeli authorities had lists of names prepared, and that Arab representatives had been authorised to receive the lists, neither side had as yet taken the first step.

The CHAIRMAN personally did not wish to address the Arab delegations further on the subject of the separated families, but did not object to including the subject in the agenda of the meeting.

The Committee decided to convene a meeting with the Arab delegations the following morning, to discuss the questions of the blocked accounts and of the separated families.

Mixed Working Group on Arab orange groves

The CHAIRMAN suggested that a letter should be sent to the Israeli delegation, informing them that the Arab delegations

had accepted the draft terms of reference for the proposed mixed working group, with one amendment, and requesting a prompt reply from the Israeli delegation as to whether or not it accepted the corrigendum.

The Committee approved the Chairman's proposal.

Compensation and evaluation of damage

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY explained that the Secretariat was engaged in preparing a working paper on this subject, which would be submitted to the General Committee shortly, and which it was hoped would be of assistance in an eventual study of the question.

The Committee decided to defer consideration of the question for the time being.

International guarantees for the Arab minority in Israel (Com.Gen./W.3)

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY pointed out that the question of guarantees for the Arab minority in Israel would be specifically mentioned in the notes to be sent by the Commission to the Arab and Israeli delegations, and would therefore become a subject of special study by the Commission.

The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Arab delegations had already requested that United Nations observers should go to Israel and report on the conditions under which Arabs at present in Israel were living. He doubted whether the Israeli delegation would react favourably to such a suggestion, and questioned whether the General Committee should raise the question at present with the delegation of Israel.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY drew attention to the fact that if the subject were broached, a delicate question of reciprocity would be raised, and suggested that the General Committee might for the present leave the matter to the Commission, while instructing the Secretariat to continue its studies.

The Committee decided to defer consideration of the question for the time being.

Cultivation of Arab lands beyond the Israeli frontier (document Com.Tech./11 and Com.Tech.11/Add.1)

The Committee agreed to place the question of a frontier agreement for the cultivation of Arab lands beyond the Israeli frontier, on lines suggested by the Technical Committee, on the agenda of the next meeting to be held between the Commi-

and the delegation of Israel.

Wakf property (documents Com.Gen./11 and Com.Jer/W28)

The Committee agreed to a suggestion made by the Chairman that at the next meeting to be held with the Arab delegations a statement should be made to the effect that the problem of Wakf property was still under consideration by the Committee but its discussion had been deferred until questions of greater urgency, still pending, such as the reunion of separated families and the unfreezing of blocked accounts, had been settled.

Other business

The Committee decided to submit a report of its activities and its future plans to the Commission in the course of the following week.