

UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

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COMMITTEE ON JERUSALEM

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SUMMARY RECORD OF A MEETING BETWEEN THE  
COMMITTEE ON JERUSALEM AND ANWAR BEY EL KHATIB,  
MAYOR OF JERUSALEM (ARAB SECTOR)

held in the Municipality, Old City, Jerusalem,  
on 14 March 1949.

Present: Anwar Bey el Khatib - Mayor of Jerusalem (Arab Sector)

Mr. Halderman (U.S.A.) - Chairman  
Mr. de la Tour du Pin (France)  
Mr. Benoist (France)  
Mr. Yenisey (Turkey)  
Mr. Eralp (Turkey)  
Mr. Barnes - Secretary

Mr. Bulos - Transjordan Liaison Officer.

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After an exchange of greetings the CHAIRMAN explained the purpose of the Committee's work and of its visit to the Mayor. He said he hoped the Mayor would give the Committee a frank statement of his opinion with respect to the internationalization of Jerusalem.

The MAYOR reviewed the background of military action in the City of Jerusalem from the end of the Mandate to the present time.

Concerning the question of internationalization, the Mayor said he was willing to discuss it with the Committee apart from the total problem of a peaceful settlement only because he recognized that Jerusalem was the special responsibility of the Committee.

The Mayor said that in his opinion an international regime for Jerusalem was impracticable and impossible of implementation, for a number of reasons:

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(1) The international community was not able to assure an international regime for the City. He pointed out that the second World War had been over for three years and the Great Powers had not yet been able to work out peace settlements.

(2) An international regime would require a large international military or police force, and to this day it had been impossible to create such a force.

(3) An international Jerusalem would give rise to a series of future disputes and troubles.

(4) The interest of the international community was based primarily on the Holy Places. For seven hundred years under Arab rule in the City there had been no major difficulties regarding the Holy Places. They had been justly and properly cared for under the Moslem Arab regime.

(5) Internationalization would have the most important effect upon Arabs, because in the municipal area of Jerusalem two thirds of the property, even in Jewish quarters, was Arab-owned.

(6) To internationalize the City would mean removing the heart of Arab Palestine and dividing the territory into two parts - north and south.

As to the possibility of dividing Jerusalem into two autonomous cities, the Mayor said such a plan was also impracticable, since it would involve a division of streets and even houses. Such a plan would also involve the question of a corridor linking Jerusalem with other parts of Palestine.

The Mayor said the only possible settlement would be to make the Jerusalem area an Arab city. He warned the Committee that it should not be deceived into thinking that the Jewish victories in Jerusalem were permanent and stated that any plan which might be evolved should embody the possibility of a permanent peace and avoid the risk of new hostilities in

/the future.

the future. The Arabs, he said, would be perfectly willing to guarantee full local autonomy within the City under their control.

In response to a question as to his precise meaning, the Mayor replied that the only solution for Jerusalem was to create an Arab regime for the entire area delimited in the Assembly's resolution. The City, he said, would necessarily have to be oriented, politically and economically, towards the adjacent Arab States. He said this was a statement of final position and principle, from which a recession only in minor detail would be possible.

The Mayor was asked if he did not see any advantages to be gained from the plan set forth by the Assembly. He said that he did not see any such advantages and that in his opinion any internationalization scheme would be unenforceable for reasons which he had previously stated.

However, the Mayor stated, in reply to a direct question, that he would be willing to discuss with the Committee any formula which it might evolve after its work had progressed somewhat further.

The Mayor was asked whether he felt that an Arab regime which would include the administration of a City of 90,000 Jews could bring real peace to the Jerusalem area. The Mayor replied that he thought this could be done, but that force might be necessary "here and there".

The Committee discussed briefly the question of water supply, electric current supply and sewage disposal for the Old City and offered its services in trying to obtain an early solution of the questions which had deprived the Old City of electricity and water for some time.

The MAYOR also asked the Committee if it would exercise its good offices in connection with a payment of LP.30,000 which had been made to the Arab Municipality out of funds of the Palestine Government under the Mandate.

The Committee agreed to look into the matter.

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