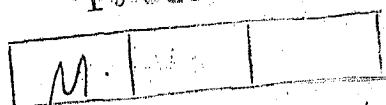


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COMMITTEE ON JERUSALEM

SUMMARY RECORD OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,
THE FATHER CUSTOS OF THE HOLY LAND, AND THE
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GREEK CATHOLIC, COPTIC,
ABYSSINIAN AND ARMENIAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES
(EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE)

held in the Old City, Jerusalem on 7 April 1949

Present: Mr. Benoist (France) - Chairman
Mr. Halderman (U.S.A.)
Dr. Serup - Legal Adviser, Secretariat
His Paternity Alberto Gori, Father Custos of the Holy Land
Father AbuSaada, Greek Catholic Patriarchal Vicar
Archbishop Jacobus, Representative of the Coptic Patriarchate
The Abyssinian Abbot
Father Jean Kouyoumdjian, Acting Vicar of the Armenian Catholic Church

The Committee devoted its eighteenth meeting to visits to the abovementioned persons. It also called on the representatives of the Syrian Catholoc Church, who however were absent from Jerusalem.

At the commencement of each visit, the Chairman introduced the Committee, apologised for the absence of the Turkish delegate and briefly explained the purpose of the Committee's visit.

1. The Father Custos of the Holy Land stated that he had nothing to add to the statement made to the Committee on 6 April by Monsignor Testa concerning Jerusalem and the Holy Places. He informed the Committee that an official invitation to attend High Mass on Easter Sunday at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre would be transmitted to the Commission.

/2. The Greek

2. The Greek Catholic Patriarchal Vicar wished to support the views put before the Committee by Monsignor Testa and declared that the internationalization of Jerusalem would provide the best solution to the problem of the future status of the city. In his opinion, the partition of Jerusalem between Jews and Arabs might prove a source of serious friction in the future. The Patriarchal Vicar added that in advocating internationalization he wished it to be understood that he had no complaints to make regarding the treatment of Christians by the present Arab authorities in Jerusalem.

In reply to a question he stated that the Greek Catholics in Jerusalem now numbered 500; the majority of the community had taken refuge in Damascus and Cairo.

The Patriarchal Vicar urged that certain roads leading out of Jerusalem should be re-opened in order that the normal economic life of the City might be resumed. He was anxious to know in particular what would be the fate of the Arab districts of Jerusalem now under Jewish occupation.

3. The Representative of the Coptic Patriarchate urged that the whole of Jerusalem be placed under a joint trusteeship, to be exercised by Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Transjordan.

In reply to a question, the Archbishop stated that the total number of Copts in Palestine was in normal times 10,000 to 12,000, 2,000 of whom lived in Jerusalem. The present number of Copts residing in Jerusalem was approximately 1,000.

4. The Abyssinian Abbot explained that he did not wish to speak on the political aspect of the problem of Jerusalem. He stated that the Abyssinian Church had enjoyed certain rights and privileges in the Holy Land since the days of the Caliph Omar and that it hoped and expected that these privileges would be fully maintained.

5. The Acting Vicar of the Armenian Catholic Church urged that Jerusalem should be internationalized and stated that he fully

/supported

supported the statement made to the Committee by Monsignor Testa.

In reply to a question he said that the Armenian Catholic population of Jerusalem had formerly numbered 1,000 persons of whom 400 now remained in the City.

The Armenian Catholics were, however, gradually returning to Jerusalem.