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UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

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Letter dated 13 June 1949 addressed by Mr. Nassib Bulos, Delegation Secretary, Arab Refugee Congress, to the Principal Secretary of the Conciliation Commission.

Sir,

With reference to my letter dated June 3rd, and our meeting of June 8th, I have communicated to my Delegation the result of our conversation and informed them of the decision that the Commission could not reply in writing to specific or general questions raised by my Delegation on the refugee question, but that such relevant information as might be available could be furnished to us informally. Nonetheless my Delegation regards the position as unsatisfactory, and has instructed me to raise the question once again and to ask for a formal decision by the Commission.

My Delegation takes the view that as the representatives of one-third of the total Arab population of Palestine, they are entitled to expect formal answers or information in writing from the Commission on matter (a) raised specifically by my Delegation and (b) affecting the status and present or future interests of refugees.

My Delegation quite clearly does not expect nor desires to be kept informed of the political, geographical or other discussions arising between the Commission and the respective Arab and Jewish Delegations. Equally, while it is admitted that the present negotiations are a matter principally for the Commission and the respective Arab and Jewish Governmental Delegations, yet the results of such negotiations principally affect the people of Palestine. Furthermore, in so far as the Palestine Conciliation Commission is concerned, none of the present parties to the discussions can be said to represent the Arabs of Palestine. Consequently it is our view that greater consideration should be given to such Palestinian Arab representative organisations as do exist. It must be evident that any agreement which may be reached between the Arab and Israeli Delegations will be illusory unless it is acceptable to the Palestinian Arabs, or in other words, unless it is acceptable to the Arab refugees, for they constitute the overwhelming majority of the Arab population of Palestine.

I should therefore be most grateful if you would invite the Commission to take a formal decision on the matter, and that such decisions may be formally conveyed to us.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

(S) Nassib Bulos
Secretary,
Delegation,
Arab Refugee Congress.