

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY SECOND MEETING

Held at Government House, Jerusalem,  
on Saturday, 12 August 1950  
at 4.30 p.m.

Present:

Mr. PALMER (United States)

Chairman

Mr. de BOISANGER (France)

Mr. ARAS (Turkey)

Mr. de AZCARATE

Principal Secretary

1. The Commission's visit to the Government of Jordan.

The CHAIRMAN thought that the Commission, which had just come back from a visit to the Egyptian Government in Alexandria, would prefer to have unofficial exchanges of views before discussing officially the results of its visit and drawing the necessary conclusions. He therefore suggested that the Commission begin by discussing its forthcoming visit to the Government of Jordan. Mr. de BOISANGER (France) and Mr. ARAS (Turkey) agreed with the Chairman's suggestion.

The Chairman explained that during its visit in Amman, the Commission envisaged holding meetings with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister and with H.M. King Abdullah. In this connection he thought that it would be necessary to prepare a written statement similar to the one he had delivered before the Egyptian Government. He would limit himself to expressing the Commission's pleasure at the opportunity of meeting the Government of Jordan.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) pointed out that the Foreign Minister might wish to be informed of the results of the Commission's conversations with the Egyptian Government; he wondered whether it would not be useful to inform the Minister of these conversations.

The CHAIRMAN thought that, should the Minister raise the question, it would be possible to summarize briefly, for his benefit, the Commission's interview with the Egyptian Minister for Foreign Affairs and with Azzam Pasha, Secretary of the Arab League; the Commission could, at the same time, stress the fact that it had been pleased to note that the Arab States, while intending to maintain their position as regards the right of the refugees to return to their homes, recognized the necessity of finding a solution of this serious problem without delay, and of taking adequate steps in that direction as soon as possible. The Commission might also say that it had gathered the impression that the Arab States were satisfied with the work accomplished by U.N.W.R.A. and were showing a greater interest in a solution based on the payment of compensation to the refugees. This solution, as had been stressed by Azzam Pasha, would considerably improve the situation of the refugees from a humanitarian point of view, and, as had been stressed by the Chairman, might also bring about a political improvement of the situation.

These few remarks might be made in Jordan, since it was in Jordan that the U.N.W.R.A.'s works programme would be most important, and since probably the largest number of refugees entitled to compensation were located in that country.

Mr. ARAS (Turkey) recognized the pertinence of the Chairman's remarks but deemed it necessary to state that the Egyptian Foreign Minister -- while hoping that the other Arab States shared his views -- had spoken only in the name of his own Government.

The CHAIRMAN explained that his remarks were based particularly on a meeting he had held with Azzam Pasha, who had spoken in the name of the Arab League. He also thought that once the members of the Commission had met the representatives of the Jordanian Government and the representatives in Jordan of their respective Governments they would be in a better position to gauge the situation.

## 2. Blocked accounts.

After taking note of the report drawn up by the Economic Adviser on his visit to Amman on 10 August, concerning the partial unfreezing of Arab accounts in Israel, the Commission asked the Economic Adviser for further clarification. The latter gave a detailed account of the situation and indicated that the  
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Commission could be certain of the wholehearted support of Sir A.S. Kirkbride, United Kingdom Minister in Amman, in this matter. It was, however, difficult to foresee the reactions of the Jordanian Government.

The CHAIRMAN noted that the indications given in this report were hardly encouraging. On the one hand, due to the state of its Treasury, the Jordanian Government would show little readiness to grant advances of funds; on the other hand it appeared that, given the smallness of the sum on which the operation would bear, the Government of Jordan would refuse to enter into an official agreement with Israel.

The solution, therefore, would be to obtain from the Government of Israel an unconditional release of these funds; if this were done, however, it was to be feared that Israel would exploit this gesture beyond its true proportions and thus create an embarrassing situation which would not facilitate the Commission's task.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) considered that the operation should be examined primarily from the point of view of its immediate material advantage for the refugees; one should not be hampered by the idea of possible reactions.

The CHAIRMAN shared the feelings of the French representative and also considered that everything should be done to improve the condition of the refugees without delay.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY also thought that the ideal solution would be to obtain from the Government of Israel the unconditional release of the funds, and the Commission could usefully work to this end. He did not think it advisable, however, for the Commission to inform the personalities whom it would see in Jordan of its intentions. It would, indeed, be preferable, to say nothing which might induce the Arab States to withhold their cooperation. If, on the other hand, the Commission failed in its efforts with Israel, it would be necessary to avoid giving the Arab States an opportunity to exploit this failure.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN thought that the Principal Secretary's remarks were well forwarded and that when the question came to be studied from a technical angle the Commission could, if necessary, express the wish that Israel should release the funds unconditionally.

In reply to a question from the Chairman, Mr. SERVOISE (Economic Adviser) indicated that, according to Sir A.S. Kirkbride, the Jordanian Government seemed ready to cooperate with the Commission and that it would therefore be interesting, in broaching the question, to link it with all the problems to be berraised. This would not prevent the Commission from exerting pressure on the Government of Israel with a view to obtaining an unconditional release of the funds. In response to a question from the Chairman, he added that the Minister for Finance was absent from Amman at the time.

After an exchange of views on the advisability of taking up the question, if not with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, at least with the Prime Minister, and asking him if necessary to support the Commission's viewpoint with the Minister for Finance, the Commission decided to follow this procedure, which would be defined more precisely after discussion with Sir A.S. Kirkbride, in Amman.

The CHAIRMAN inquired whether further information had been received concerning the Committee created by the Jordanian Government to study all questions concerning the Arabs of Palestine. After some observations by Mr. Quimper (Secretariat) the Chairman remarked that the question might arise whether the Commission, which usually negotiated at Government level, could agree to meet with this Committee. After some discussion, it appeared that if this Committee were composed of Cabinet members the Commission might possibly agree to study with it questions concerning the Palestine Arabs; it would, however, refuse to receive protests which might otherwise be acceptable if they were presented in writing.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) remarked that the Commission had not been officially notified of the existence of this Committee. The Commission could therefore state that it would be ready to meet the Committee during a later visit to Amman.

3. Further plans of the Commission.

After hearing the remarks of the PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, the Commission decided on its visit to the Government of Israel, in Tel-Aviv, where the Commission intended to proceed after its visit to Amman, in order to devote the following week to visits to the Governments of Lebanon and Syria and to a meeting in Beirut with the representatives of U.N.W.R.A. It further envisaged going to Ankara to visit the Government of Turkey. It appeared from the existing plan of work that this visit could take place towards the end of the month, before the Commission's departure for Geneva.

The Principal Secretary was therefore requested to inform the Secretary General officially of the Commission's intention to visit Ankara and to return to Geneva where it would draft the second part of its report.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.