

RESTRICTED

A/AC.25/SR.187
3 November 1950

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE

ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held in New York,
on 19 October 1950 at 10 a.m.

Present:

Mr. Tevfik Rustu Aras	(Turkey)	Chairman
Mr. Claude de Boisanger	(France)	
* Mr. James Barco	(United States of America)	
Mr. Pablo de Azcarato		Principal Secretary
Mr. Howard Kennedy		Executive Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

* - Alternate

Mr. KENNEDY (Director of UNRWA) said that he had read the draft of the Commission's Supplementary Report to the Secretary-General and thought it was an excellent summary of the situation. He had, however, one criticism to offer, concerning the reference to the Report of the UNRWA in the next to last paragraph of the draft. In view of the fact that the Commission and the UNRWA separately had reached substantially the same conclusions, he was of the opinion that it would be preferable for the Commission not to refer to the Report of the UNRWA, as such a procedure might give rise to the impression that there had been "collusion" between the two bodies in arriving at their respective recommendations.

The CHAIRMAN remarked that the two bodies had reached the same conclusions because they had both studied the situation from an objective standpoint. He thought that the distinction between the two bodies might be brought out if the Commission did make a reference to the UNRWA Report.

He suggested that the paragraph in question might be improved if, instead of referring to "UNRWA", they used a phrase such as "...recommendations of the agency which is charged with improving the economic situation in the Middle East".

Alternatively, for his part he would not object to deleting this passage altogether.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) could see that there were arguments against the Commission's mentioning the UNRWA Report in its own Report. However, in view of the fact that the UNRWA Report had been published before the submission of the Commission's Supplementary Report, and that it was therefore obvious that the Commission had read the conclusions of UNRWA, he felt that it would be desirable for the Commission to express its agreement with these conclusions. He suggested the following solution: Instead of mentioning this matter in the Supplementary Report itself, the Commission might include a suitable paragraph in the covering letter to the Secretary-General to the effect that it had read the Report of the UNRWA and was in agreement with the conclusions drawn therein.

Mr. KENNEDY (Director of UNRWA) stated that he had no objection to such a procedure.

/Mr. BARCO

Mr. BARCO (United States of America) felt that the important factor was that the two bodies had in fact reached the same conclusions separately. He thought this fact should give them more weight.

The CHAIRMAN agreed that this matter could be dealt with in the accompanying letter, in which it might perhaps be made clear that the Commission had already prepared its own report before seeing that of UNRWA, and had arrived at similar conclusions.

The question was raised as to how the debate in the Ad Hoc Political Committee was likely to develop when discussion of the various aspects of the Palestine question began. Mr. de BOISANGER (France) said he understood there was some feeling in the Assembly's General Committee that the various items on the agenda concerning Palestine should be discussed together, with the exception of the question of Jerusalem.

Mr. BARCO (United States) stated that he understood that the feeling in his delegation was that the Palestine question as a whole should be discussed at the same time.

Mr. KENNEDY (Director of UNRWA) said that he had the impression that the Arab States intended to exercise great pressure in the Assembly in favour of a decision on the refugee problem.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) wondered what Mr. Kennedy's views were as to the possibility of the Assembly's taking a decision on the points raised in the UNRWA Report, without at the same time taking a decision on those in the Commission's Report. He personally did not see how the two could be separated.

Mr. KENNEDY (Director of UNRWA) thought it might possibly be done. The UNRWA was, in fact, recommending that relief be continued for another year, and that there be a change in the attitude towards works projects. In other

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words, the UNRWA proposed that only works projects which would lead to resettlement or reintegration of refugees be undertaken. He thought that it would be desirable for the Assembly to take a final decision as to the principles involved, but that it was not absolutely necessary for such a final decision to be taken at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN felt that from the standpoint of a delegation to the General Assembly it would appear necessary to pass a single resolution on the issues raised in the two reports.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) remarked that the distinction between the two bodies dealing with the Palestine question, and the necessity for the continued activity of both, were obvious. On the one hand, there was the technical agency which must of necessity remain on the spot; on the other hand, there was the political organ which sometimes, for political reasons, might find it preferable to remain out of the area.

The Commission could well understand the viewpoint of the Director of the UNRWA. That Agency did not wish to continue costly programmes of public works which did not bear any direct relationship to the settlement of the problem of the refugees, but wished to insist on works projects which would be of permanent advantage to the refugees. He considered that it would be impossible for the Assembly to take a decision in favour of the recommendations of UNRWA and at the same timetake a decision which would be unfavourable to the Commission's conclusions. This would, in his opinion, render the task of UNRWA impossible. Either the Assembly would have to take a decision in favour of the recommendations of both these bodies, or it would have to reject both the reports submitted to it. It therefore seemed to him that even if the discussion of the two reports could be separated, at the conclusion of these discussions a single resolution would have to be passed.

Mr. BARCO (United States), while in agreement with the reasoning of Mr. de Boisanger, pointed out that this was in a sense an academic question, since they could not predict in what way the debate would develop.

Mr. KENNEDY (Director of UNRWA) said that his Advisory Commission was in a better position than he to discuss this matter. However, he thought it was possible that the Governments mainly concerned in this question might feel

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that it was better to wait another year before a final decision was taken on the principles involved; thus, the Conciliation Commission might be asked to continue to seek a final solution, while the Works Agency would carry on with the programme it had outlined. He personally was, however, in agreement that it would be desirable to have a final and definite decision taken as soon as possible.

The CHAIRMAN was happy to note that the views of the UNRWA as to the best solution of the problem coincided with those of the Commission, as the two bodies were pursuing the same goal.

Mr. BARCO (United States of America) agreed with the Chairman that it was gratifying to find that there was such close agreement between the two bodies. He also felt that it was time that the issues involved were clearly stated to the Assembly, although, as they knew, it was always difficult to find someone to express views which might perhaps not be welcomed in some quarters.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) said that he was not sure that the recommendations of the Commission and those of the UNRWA would be viewed in a bad light by the Arab States. He thought that privately the Arab Governments agreed with these conclusions, although they were not in a position to say so publicly. They realized that these recommendations were the only practical ones. He felt that discussions with the Arab delegations before the debate would perhaps yield good results.

Mr. KENNEDY (Director of UNRWA) reminded the Commission, in conclusion, that it must not be forgotten that, even if an agreed solution on the lines envisaged were obtained immediately, it would take some years to put into effect.

Mr. Kennedy thanked the Commission for the opportunity to see the draft report. He repeated that he was in complete agreement with everything that the Commission had said therein, and was glad that the facts had been stated so clearly.

The CHAIRMAN expressed the Commission's appreciation of Mr. Kennedy's visit and of the opportunity they had been afforded of discussing matters with him.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

4/11 p.m.