

UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

RESTRICTED

A/AC.25/SR.189
19 November 1950

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINTH MEETING

held in New York on 30 October 1950, at 10.30 a.m.

Present: Mr. ARAS	(Turkey)	- Chairman
Mr. de BOISANGER	(France)	
Mr. PALMER	(United States of America)	
Mr. de AZCARTE		- Principal Secretary

Report by the representative of the United States on his conversation with members of the Israel delegation

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) informed the Commission that he had gathered from conversations he had had with Mr. Eban and Mr. Shiloah of the Israel delegation that the reaction of their Government to the Commission's Supplementary Report would not be unfavourable. Although there were certain passages which they would have preferred not to see included, they seemed to consider that on the whole the report was a fair one.

Mr. Eban had told Mr. Palmer that, in view of the fact that his Government was now unable to agree to take back even as many refugees as they had previously offered to accept, it would, in his opinion, be inadvisable to allow the refugees to continue to believe that some of them would be repatriated. The retention of such a hope might prevent them from co-operating in schemes for resettlement.

Mr. Palmer had stressed to the Israeli representatives the advantages which their Government would gain from making a declaration regarding their attitude on the principle of repatriation. However, it did not appear that they were prepared, at the present time, to make such a statement.

Statement to be made by the Chairman of the Commission before the Ad hoc Political Committee

The Commission discussed the Chairman's speech to the Ad hoc Political Committee.

It was recalled that the Commission had previously decided that mention might be made in the speech of two points which had not been included in the Supplementary Report: the Commission's view that direct negotiations between the parties should preferably be bilateral or multilateral; and the recognition by the Arab States of the full rights of citizenship of those refugees whom they might accept for resettlement in their countries.

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) doubted whether it would be advisable for the Chairman to be too explicit ^{in his reference} to the recognition of citizenship

/rights of refugees

rights of refugees. It would be preferable merely to say that the Commission had given thought to the question of the status of refugees, which would appear to be a suitable point for negotiation between the Commission and the Governments concerned. If the question were brought up by one of the delegations to the Ad hoc Committee, then it could be stated more specifically, but it would be difficult for the Commission itself to say too much in this connexion.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) felt that it was important for the Chairman's speech to make a specific mention of the need for granting full rights of citizenship to the refugees, as the point had not been clearly made in the Commission's Supplementary Report. If the refugees did not receive assurance in that regard it would be difficult to obtain their agreement to resettlement plans.

It would be a delicate matter for the Commission to discuss with the Arab Governments, and he wondered whether, in fact, the Commission might not be going beyond its role in doing so. The aim should be for some reference to the question to be included in a resolution passed by the General Assembly. If the Commission were then to find that the refugees were not being granted full rights, it would be in a position to take the matter up with the Arab States.

Mr. de Boisanger suggested that the Chairman's speech should also point out that the Commission had reached the same conclusions as those expressed in the report of UNRWA.

The CHAIRMAN agreed that mention should be made of the granting of rights to the refugees, but thought that the suggestion should be put forward as showing the Commission's concern for the welfare of the refugees. In that way there could be no objection on the part of the Arab States to such a reference.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY pointed out that the drafting of the Chairman's statement would depend on whether it was to be made during the debate on points (b) and (c) of the Ad hoc Committee's agenda, or at the beginning of a debate on the Commission's report.

/It was decided

It was decided that the Secretariat should draft a brief speech, which could then be adapted according to the circumstances in which the speech was to be delivered.

Committee of Experts on Compensation

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY drew the Commission's attention to a letter from the British Embassy in Washington, suggesting two candidates for the post of expert on land and property problems in Palestine on the Committee of Experts on Compensation. The first candidate proposed was a Mr. I. N. Camp, whose curriculum vitae was before the Commission.

The Commission felt that, as Mr. Camp had excellent qualifications and considerable experience of land problems in Palestine, it would be desirable to take immediate steps to secure his services, in view of the Commission's desire to see the Committee of Experts in operation as soon as possible.

The Principal Secretary was therefore instructed to inform the Secretary-General that the Commission had accepted the candidature of Mr. Camp for the post of expert on Palestine land and property questions on the Committee of Experts on Compensation, and had requested that the necessary administrative steps be taken to offer this post to Mr. Camp.

Concerning the appointment of the economic expert, the Principal Secretary stated that the Department of Economic Affairs was endeavouring to find a suitable member of the Secretariat and would inform the Commission as soon as a candidate had been found.

Blocked Accounts

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY reminded the Commission of recent developments in the negotiations for the unfreezing of Arab refugee accounts blocked in Israel.

He recalled that, following the difficulties which the Commission had experienced in finding an Institution which would be willing to act as Trustee and which would be acceptable to all the Arab States, the Commission had decided,

/ before

before leaving Geneva, that the best way to reach a satisfactory arrangement would be through bilateral negotiations between Israel and each Arab Government concerned, beginning with Jordan. Mr. Servoise, the Commission's economic adviser, had followed the matter up in Jerusalem. It had been found that the Jordan Government had not been kept informed by the Arab representative on the Mixed Committee of the work of that Committee, and therefore knew nothing about the developments which had taken place. Mr. Servoise had presented a memorandum to the Finance Minister of Jordan on 26 August, summarizing the work of the Mixed Committee and the situation at that time. After studying the memorandum, the Jordan Finance Minister had declared himself in principle in agreement to negotiate on the practical possibilities of putting the plan into execution. He had immediately raised the question of the date of reimbursement, and had insisted that that date should be fixed before the start of the operation. Mr. Servoise had discussed the matter with Israeli officials, who maintained their previous position that reimbursement should be made "at the time of the peace settlement."

The Finance Minister of Jordan had finally agreed to send Jordan experts to discuss with experts of the Government of Israel practical measures for putting the plan into operation, and particularly the fixing of a date for reimbursement.

Another difficulty had been encountered by Mr. Servoise when Mr. Horowitz of the Israel Government had told him that he wished the meeting of experts, after studying the question of blocked accounts, to proceed to deal with other questions having a bearing on the re-establishment of economic relations between Israel and Jordan. The Jordan Finance Minister had agreed to send experts to discuss only the putting into operation of the plan for the unfreezing of blocked Arab refugee accounts. Mr. Servoise, after consulting the Principal Secretary by cable, had endeavoured to obtain the agreement of Israel to limiting the agenda for the meetings to the question of blocked accounts. Mr. Horowitz had personally agreed to this, but the official confirmation of the Israel Foreign Ministry was still awaited. The Principal Secretary indicated that it was very probable that the decision of the Israel Foreign Ministry would coincide with the opinion expressed personally by Mr. Horowitz. Confirmation was expected within a few days.

/ The Principal

The Principal Secretary stated that the immediate opening of negotiations between financial experts of the Governments of Israel and Jordan to study the putting into operation of the plan for unfreezing blocked accounts, as summarized in the memorandum of 26 August, was therefore now probable.

As Chairman of the Mixed Committee of Experts, he had wished to inform the Commission of the developments which had taken place and to ask what instructions should be given to the Commission's economic adviser.

The Commission decided to instruct Mr. Servoise to place himself at the disposal of the parties to assist in the negotiations.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) thought that the question of fixing a date for the reimbursement, which was on the agenda for the meetings, was rather outside the province of the technical experts. He doubted whether the Jordan Government would ever agree to leaving it as: "at the time of the peace settlement."

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY pointed out that there were numerous technical matters which would have to be settled between the experts of the two Governments. It would be desirable for the technical side of the question to be disposed of first, leaving the setting of the date until later.

It was agreed that Mr. Servoise should be instructed to inform the Commission if difficulty were encountered in setting a date for reimbursement, and in the meantime to try to arrange for all the technical questions to be dealt with first. The Commission could then suggest a formula to assist the parties in reaching agreement on the date.

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) suggested that the Commission might give some thought to the type of resolution which would ^{be acceptable} to the parties and at the same time be most likely to facilitate its future work. The members had already seen some draft resolutions and he would like to be able to tell
/ his delegation

his delegation what the Commission's opinion was as to the points which should be brought out in any resolutions which were proposed concerning the Palestine question. He felt that if the Commission could crystalise its ideas on the subject it would be in a better position to give its opinion to any delegation which might request it.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) hoped that in its resolution the Assembly would invite the parties to undertake direct negotiations, if possible giving a date limit for the start of discussions. The resolution should also be precise on the question of refugees in the sense already indicated by the Commission. However, he wished to point out the delicacy of the Commission's position in discussing the drafting of resolutions. He felt that it was desirable for the Commission to remain as far as possible in the background at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN agreed that, while the Commission should not put its views forward in any way, it was necessary for the members to give consideration to the question of how the resolution should be drafted, so that they would be in a position to advise their delegations.

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) referred to the possibility that a resolution would be passed dealing only with the UNRWA/ ^{report, from} a purely financial point of view, perhaps to be followed later by another resolution which would lay down the principles which the General Assembly might decide to follow. He personally would have liked to see a single resolution dealing with all aspects of the Palestine question, but it was not possible at the present time to foresee what decisions would be taken.

Mr. de BOISANGER (France) hoped that the resolution concerning UNRWA would contain a clause to the effect that UNRWA and the Conciliation Commission should work in close collaboration. Although such a mention might appear unnecessary, it would not only enable the two bodies to divide the task in the most appropriate way but would obviate any misunderstanding on the part of the Governments concerned as to their respective functions.

It was agreed that the Commission would consider the question further at a later meeting.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.