

RESTRICTED  
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ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWENTY FOURTH MEETING

held in the King David Hotel, Jerusalem,  
on 17 March 1949.

Present: Mr. Ethridge (U.S.A.) - Chairman  
Mr. de Boisanger (France)  
Mr. Yalchin (Turkey)  
Mr. Azcarate - Principal Secretary

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY informed the Commission of the reply of Mr. Griffis to the Commission's invitation that he should participate in the Beirut meetings. Mr. Griffis had replied that he was unable to accept as he had been called to Lake Success by the Secretary-General. He was, however, prepared to release Mr. Tallec to the Commission for the duration of the meetings.

The CHAIRMAN informed the Commission of the contents of a cable received from the United States Department of State stating that Mr. Dillon Myer was unable to accept the Commission's offer.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY remarked that a cable had been sent by him to United Nations Headquarters asking them to take all necessary steps to make Mr. Myer available to the Commission. No answer had been received as yet.

Discussion of a Working Paper concerning the Refugee Problem.

The Commission proceeded to a study of a working paper submitted by the Principal Secretary regarding the meetings to be held between the Commission and the Arab Governments beginning in Beirut on 21 March 1949.

Before proceeding to a study of the working paper, the CHAIRMAN informed the Commission that a technical paper on the resettlement of refugees promised by the Government of Israel

for 4 March was now promised for 17 March. Mr. Comay had informed the Chairman that the basic difficulty and cause of the delay was that the Israeli authorities themselves did not know the extent to which they could commit themselves and feared that if they were pressed for a statement at the present moment, they might find themselves unable to fulfil their promises when the time for their execution came. The Chairman had replied that the question of the refugees had been one of long standing and that consequently the Israeli authorities should have had the time to make the necessary studies. Mr. Comay had replied that certain studies had been made but they were not sufficient. He had further stated that in the paper promised to the Commission, the Israeli Government would go as far as it could in stating how many or what percentage of refugees it would be prepared to accept.

The Chairman informed the Commission that a cable had been sent to the Secretary-General of the United Nations informing him of the situation and requesting him to supply the Commission with all available information regarding the steps that the United Nations intended to take in connection with the refugee question.

The Commission then proceeded to an examination of the working paper paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraph I A was accepted without comment.

With regard to sub-paragraph (a) of Paragraph I B, the CHAIRMAN pointed out that reference had been made to this subject in his opening statement regarding the paper promised by the Israeli Government.

With regard to sub-paragraph (b) it was agreed that the Commission should go as far as possible towards the solution of the problem and decide, after the Beirut meetings, whether it would be necessary to report to the General Assembly.

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With regard to Paragraph I C, items 1 and 2, it was decided that Mr. Tallec or the agencies operating in the Arab refugee camps should be requested to make an attempt, through sample surveys, to obtain information concerning the refugees. This information might include estimates on the number of able-bodied men, occupational skills, place of origin whether urban or rural, the extent to which family units were intact, the average size of families, the number willing to return to Israel, the number desiring resettlement elsewhere, and the place of preference for this resettlement.

Sub-paragraph (a) of the above paragraph was accepted without comment.

With regard to sub-paragraph (b) of the above paragraph, Mr. YENISEY expressed his opposition, stating that the settlement proposed would be disadvantageous to and against the interests of the refugees, especially since effective United Nations supervision was doubtful.

It was agreed to postpone discussion of this question.

With regard to sub-paragraph (e) of Paragraph I C, the CHAIRMAN pointed out that there were two stages in the solution of the refugee problem: the first was the interim stage, after the relief funds of the United Nations had been exhausted; the second was the absorption of the refugees. He suggested that the Commission should approach the Arab States with a view to convincing them of the necessity of undertaking projects that would absorb the refugees during the interim period.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY remarked that putting the refugees to work would be a first step towards absorption and could be considered as a transition measure from relief to resettlement.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that such steps would further aid in

preparing the Arab population to accept the refugees.

Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN suggested, and the Commission agreed, that the discussion of such a question would naturally come at the end of the Beirut meetings.

With regard to sub-paragraph (d), it was suggested that its contents were part of the preceding paragraph and it was agreed that, for tactical purposes, the Conciliation Commission should approach the Arab representatives at the outset of the meetings, with a view to finding out their attitude regarding the contents of sub-paragraph (c), in order to judge what their attitude would be to the contents of sub-paragraph (d).

With regard to sub-paragraph (e) of Paragraph I C, the CHAIRMAN informed the Commission that cables received from the United States Department of State had given him the impression that the Arabs were reluctant to request technical assistance. He pointed out that it was part of the Commission's job to make them accept technical missions of the United Nations. The Prime Minister of Transjordan had informed him that Transjordan was preparing plans calling for technical assistance from the United Nations. It was possible that other Arab countries might follow suit. This would make it easier for the Commission to make them accept the necessity of such technical missions and to convince them that they would have to absorb a certain number of refugees. The Secretary-General's answer to the Commission's cable would clarify the question of whether the Conciliation Commission or the United Nations would send such technical missions.

With regard to item 3 of Paragraph I C, Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN expressed the opinion that the discussion of such a question would be premature. It was also remarked that it was uncertain whether indemnities would be paid at all. It was pointed out,

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however, that the principle of the right of the refugees to receive compensation and indemnification had been accepted, though perhaps unclearly, by the Government of Israel.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that there were two categories of indemnities, the one being war indemnities and the other indemnification of the refugees. He agreed that the problem, though a very important one, could not be settled at present, but stressed the necessity of keeping it in mind. The question of whether the refugees would receive any compensation for losses sustained if the indemnities were to be paid from Government to Government, should also be considered. The Commission agreed with the remarks of the Chairman.

Paragraph I D was accepted without comment.

With regard to Paragraph I E, Mr. YENISEY pointed out that any negotiations between the Arab States and Israel should be held under the auspices of the Commission.

Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN remarked that the General Assembly's resolution gave the Commission complete freedom to act in this respect and that the Commission should decide as it saw fit when the actual question arose.

The CHAIRMAN suggested, and the Commission agreed, that this point should be discussed with Messrs. Yalchin and de Boisanger.

With regard to Paragraph II A, the Chairman agreed that, under the circumstances, the tactics suggested in this paragraph were advisable.

Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN cautioned against the Commission going to the other extreme and insulting the Arab representatives most of whom would be high political personages, by giving the impression of hearing Jewish comments that it was reconstructing the Arab League.

/The Chairman

The CHAIRMAN remarked that the tone to be adopted by the Commission was important, especially as far as newspapermen were concerned, since if the Commission were to give the impression of holding a formal conference the newspapermen would press for major accomplishments and if these were not forthcoming, would charge the Commission with failure. The Chairman suggested, and the Commission agreed, that if Mr. de Boisanger had not already prepared a statement, his advisers, in collaboration with the Secretariat, should prepare an opening statement to be read by him and to be distributed.

With regard to Paragraph II B, the Commission decided to delete item 3. The rest of the text of this paragraph was accepted without comment.

Paragraphs II C, D and E were accepted without comment.

The notes included in part III of the paper were accepted without comment.

The CHAIRMAN asked the Principal Secretary to prepare for the benefit of Messrs. Yalchin and de Boisanger a parallel paper to the one studied by the Commission in which the comments and the actions of the Commission would be shown in the form of marginal annotations.

#### The Question of Jerusalem.

Mr. HALDERMAN (Chairman of the Jerusalem Committee) proposed that the representatives of Israel and Transjordan, collaborating with the Committee, should be asked whether they were willing to proceed with the demarcation of permanent boundary lines in the Jerusalem area with the collaboration of the Consuls of France and the United States. It had been urged by the above Consuls that this task be undertaken to avoid further deterioration of the section. Mr. Comay had raised the question himself and had expressed

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his willingness to proceed on such an undertaking. Mr. Halderman suggested that the Conciliation Commission, as a first step, should ask Messrs. Neville and Burdett to act on its behalf as its experts in this measure during their absence in Beirut.

Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN, although accepting Mr. Halderman's suggestion in principle, raised two objections for the time being. The first was that a discussion of the boundary lines in Jerusalem might prejudice discussions on the same subject but on a military level taking place at Rhodes. The Jerusalem press, he remarked, had been giving these discussions a political significance and although the Commission denied such an interpretation, any action of the Commission on the subject might complicate matters. The second objection was that as long as the Jerusalem Committee had not decided on an international statute for Jerusalem and had, in fact, not even decided on the direction that the solution of the Jerusalem problem would take, it could not very well proceed to such a specific undertaking as the demarcation of front lines.

Mr. HALDERMAN pointed out that the fact that Mr. Comay had raised the question himself showed that he did not feel that it would prejudice the Rhodes negotiations. His own intention had been not that the lines should be drawn immediately, but that initial steps should be taken that would be completed after the Rhodes talks had ended.

It was pointed out that the French Consul would also like to consult Mr. de Boisanger before proceeding on such an undertaking.

Mr. YENISEY agreed that such steps would be premature before the conclusion of the Rhodes and Beirut talks and required also that the Turkish Consul be included among the group of experts.

The CHAIRMAN suggested, and the Commission agreed, to postpone a decision on the matter until the Commission went to Beirut.

The Beirut Meetings: Administrative Arrangements

Mr. BARNES informed the Commission of certain administrative arrangements made for the transportation and accommodation of the members of the Commission and Secretariat.