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UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTIETH MEETING (Closed)

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 30 April 1952, at 10.30 a.m.

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<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. de BOISANGER	France
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. PALMER	United States of America
	Mr. MENEMENCIOGLU	Turkey
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. CHAI	Acting Principal Secretary
	Mr. BERNCASTLE	Land Specialist

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN ON HIS CONVERSATION WITH THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ISRAEL

The CHAIRMAN reported that, as directed by the Commission, he had had a conversation with members of the Israel delegation. He had given them a general outline of the Commission's recent activities in New York, informing them that they would be receiving a letter on the subject from the Commission, and mentioning Mr. Palmer's prospective conversation with Mr. Eban in Washington. He had notified them of the Commission's decision to send Mr. Berncastle to Palestine to take up, at the technical level with the competent Israel authorities there, the question of the global evaluation of abandoned Arab property. He had told them that if circumstances permitted, Mr. Berncastle would subsequently set up a technical mixed Israel and Arab committee for that purpose, the matter of individual claims being left open for consideration at some later date. He had pointed out that the Israel Government had always shown readiness to discuss the question of compensation, that it would be to its own advantage to do so and that the Commission assumed it could count on Israel's co-operation to facilitate Mr. Berncastle's mission. Though he could not report that their answer had been a positive one, they had said that they would inform their Government. He gathered that no objections would be raised and that Mr. Berncastle would receive the Israel Government's co-operation.

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) hoped that his forthcoming conversation with Mr. Eban would serve to reveal the Israel Government's latest attitude on the question of blocked accounts.

The CHAIRMAN added that he had received the impression that the Israel delegation had already reported to its Government that the question of blocked accounts was being raised again.

/DRAFT

DRAFT LETTER TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to consider the draft letter requesting the Secretary-General to authorize Mr. Berncastle to proceed on his assignment to Palestine.

After some drafting changes to the English and French texts, the letter was approved.

INSTRUCTIONS TO MR. BERNCASTLE

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to consider the text of the letter of instructions to Mr. Berncastle concerning his mission in Palestine.

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) suggested several drafting changes. He also thought the letter should be addressed to Mr. Berncastle as the Land Specialist of the Commission's Refugee Office, and the text altered so as to avoid giving the impression that Mr. Berncastle was going out to represent the Commission, for in fact the Commission had deemed it wiser to leave the question of a representative in Jerusalem open for the time being.

The CHAIRMAN and Mr. MENEMENCIOGLU (Turkey) agreed.

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) wished to emphasize his Government's view that for the time being any further consideration of the question of individual assessment of the value of Arab property abandoned in Israel territory should be confined to ascertaining reactions on the official level. After hearing from Mr. Berncastle, the Commission, if it thought fit, could instruct him to contact individual refugees later. Mr. Palmer suggested that the official contacts ought to include consultations with UNRWAPNE and UNISO; the former in particular would be able to supply information on the refugees' probable attitude towards methods of approaching the question of individual compensation.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN felt sure the Commission would agree with Mr. Palmer's suggestion and proposed that the Secretariat be requested to advise UNWRAPNE and UNISO of Mr. Berncastle's mission.

It was so agreed.

Mr. MENEMENCIOGLU (Turkey), referring to the first sentence of paragraph 3 of the letter, wished to make clear that his Government should not be held to have expressed any opinion on the part of the working paper which dealt with representation of the refugees. He noted, however, that Mr. Berncastle was also to be guided by the Commission's subsequent discussions.

He also suggested that "group of experts" would be a better term for the body which Mr. Berncastle was to aim at setting up to consider compensation, as it had a less official and representative meaning than the word "committee".

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) agreed with Mr. Menemencioglu, but concerning the reference to the working paper, felt that the reservation "as qualified by subsequent discussion..." made it clear that Mr. Berncastle was not only to be guided by the working paper.

Mr. BERNCASTLE (Land Specialist) noted the Commission's views, with which he agreed.

The CHAIRMAN said that Mr. Berncastle would accordingly have for guidance his letter of instructions, the working paper on compensation (A/AC.25/W/R.78) and the views expressed by the Commission on the subject. It was understood that Mr. Berncastle would report periodically to the Commission and in particular that he would consult it before taking any step in the matter of refugee representation. The Chairman agreed with the Turkish representative that that was a difficult problem and felt that the Commission would have to give it further consideration at a later stage.

After making some further drafting changes, the Commission approved the letter of instructions to Mr. Berncastle.

DRAFT PROGRESS REPORT OF THE COMMISSION TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The CHAIRMAN invited the Commission to consider its eleventh progress report. He himself suggested some drafting changes.

Mr. MENEMENCIOGLU (Turkey) said certain passages in the report should be changed so as to bring it into line with the final draft of the letter of instructions to Mr. Berncastle.

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) suggested some additional drafting changes.

The CHAIRMAN thought that the fact that Mr. Berncastle was to be instructed to maintain contact with UNWRAPNE and UNTSO should also be mentioned.

The eleventh progress report, as amended, was adopted.

DRAFT PRESS COMMUNIQUE

The CHAIRMAN invited comments on the draft press communique prepared by the Secretariat.

Mr. MENEMENCIOGLU (Turkey) pointed out that it contained no mention of any Arab views; as the Arab countries had made one positive approach in Paris in the matter of blocked accounts, he suggested their approach should be mentioned.

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) agreed, but thought reference to that point might be interpreted as meaning that the Commission was raising the issue of the blocked accounts in Iraq. His personal feeling was that it would be better to avoid giving any such impression at the present juncture.

The draft press communique, with minor amendments, was approved.

/OTHER

OTHER BUSINESS

The CHAIRMAN said that the permanent delegations of the countries represented on the Commission would remain in contact with Mr. Chai, the Acting Principal Secretary who could, in consultation with the Chairman, convene the Commission whenever necessary. In accordance with the normal procedure of rotating chairmanship, the Commission's next meeting would be presided over by the Turkish representative. A meeting would have to be called to consider Mr. Berncastle's first report from Palestine.

Mr. MENEMENCIOGLU (Turkey) raised the question of the aide-memoire which he understood it was proposed to send to the envoy maintained in the area by Governments represented on the Commission to assist them in approaching the Israel Government with a view to further progress on the question of blocked accounts and compensation.

The CHAIRMAN thought the Commission's intention had been to ask the Secretariat to prepare the aide-memoire after Mr. Palmer's report of his conversation with Mr. Eban of the Israel delegation had been received.

Mr. PALMER (United States of America) thought the understanding had been that the aide-memoire would relate to the subject of blocked accounts only. The time had perhaps come when some further action could be taken on that subject, and he hoped that his conversation with Mr. Eban would show whether that was the case. He did not think that any action could be taken on compensation at present, except at the technical level.

As he was about to discontinue his connexion with the Commission, he took the opportunity of expressing his pleasure at the associations he had had with successive Turkish and French representatives. His place on the Commission would probably be taken by Mr. Ross.

The Commission had suffered many disappointments in its work but he

/was sure

was sure no one could question the earnestness, sincerity and correctness which its members had always displayed.

He also thanked the members of the Secretariat for their services. With the Commission's permission he would like to send a special letter of appreciation to Mr. Hamilton Fisher, who was in a sanatorium.

It was so agreed.

Mr. MENEMENCIÖGLU (Turkey) thanked Mr. Palmer and conveyed his good wishes to him for the future.

The CHAIRMAN also thanked Mr. Palmer and associated himself with the latter's remarks concerning the Turkish representatives on the Commission. He himself did not expect to be serving again on the Commission and he understood that his place was to be taken by Mr. Ordonneau.

He also thanked the Secretariat and voiced the Commission's confidence in Mr. Chai as acting Principal Secretary.

He thought the Commission's decision to meet in New York was a wise one, and in sending Mr. Berncastle to Palestine, it was confident that he would do everything possible at present to further the Commission's objectives.

Mr. CHAI (Acting Principal Secretary) thanked the Commission for its kind words concerning the Secretariat, and reciprocated the Chairman's and Mr. Palmer's good wishes.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.