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UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

Summary Record of the 300th Meeting (Closed)

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 25 May 1953, at 12 noon

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PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. BARAN	Turkey
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. ORDONNEAU	France
	Mr. ROSS	United States of America
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. CHAI	Acting Principal Secretary

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

2. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CONNEXION WITH THE RELEASE OF BLOCKED ARAB ACCOUNTS

On the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. CHAI (Acting Principal Secretary) explained that there had been two main developments since the previous meeting of the Commission: (1) A cablegram dated 22 May had been received from Mr. Reedman to the effect that amendments to the draft statement and letter had been submitted by the banks, but that no difficulty was anticipated in obtaining agreement on those amendments if agreement could be obtained on the remainder of the proposals. (2) Other communications from Mr. Reedman informed the Commission that owing to the change of government, the Government of Jordan had not yet taken an official decision on the proposals put to them, although unofficially they were favourably disposed towards the plan. Mr. Reedman felt that he could not wait forever and wanted some kind of instruction from the Commission to strengthen his hand.

Mr. ROSS (United States of America) understood Mr. Reedman's desire to return, but felt that, since only three weeks had passed after the change of government in Jordan and such things took a good deal of time, there was more to be gained by patience. He therefore suggested that it would be better for Mr. Reedman to remain on the spot for the time being and convey to the Jordan Government the continued concern of the Commission in the matter. In his next communication to Mr. Reedman the Principal Secretary might state that in the interest of the refugees themselves, the Conciliation Commission was concerned that a decision had not been taken which would enable the payment of the accounts to the refugees. Mr. Reedman would take the matter up with the appropriate quarters in the Jordan Government. The Commission would thereby indicate that it was following the question, would strengthen Mr. Reedman's hand and encourage the Jordan Government to come to a decision.

Mr. ORDONNEAU (France) and the CHAIRMAN agreed.

Mr. CHAI (Acting Principal Secretary) said that he would send a cablegram to that effect, expressing the Commission's sympathy regarding Mr. Reedman's position.

The CHAIRMAN wondered if it would be possible to approach the Jordan Minister in Washington so as to strengthen Mr. Reedman's position.

Mr. ROSS (United States) said that he would be very glad to refer that question to the State Department.

Mr. CHAI (Acting Principal Secretary) noted that according to the latest cablegram from Mr. Reedman some 500 forms were apparently being held up in Lebanon.

Mr. ROSS (United States) had the impression from the history of the question that Mr. Reedman's feeling was that the Jordan Government presented the most difficult obstacle and that other difficulties could be resolved easily once it agreed.

3. THE QUESTION OF THE DISPOSITION OF PRIVATE ARAB PROPERTY BY THE ISRAEL GOVERNMENT

The CHAIRMAN explained that, apart from the letter he had sent to the delegation of Israel, he had spoken to Mr. Rafael and to Mr. Lourie. Before his departure to Israel, the latter had promised to expedite an answer from his Government. The Chairman had also spoken to Mr. Tov about a week previously and had been told that the Commission would be informed as soon as the Israel delegation had received instructions.

Mr. ROSS (United States) suggested that it would be a good idea to follow the matter up informally. The Principal Secretary might call up Mr. Tov, stating that the Commission had just met and asking if there had been any further developments.

It was so agreed.

4. COMMUNICATION DATED 26 APRIL 1953 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE
LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

The CHAIRMAN noted that the League of Arab States requested copies of the photostats of the registers of Arab immovable property in Israel.

Mr. ORDONNEAU (France) inquired as to how many copies were available.

Mr. CHAI (Acting Principal Secretary) replied that there was only one copy available and that that was being used in the current work. Reproduction would involve physical difficulties and considerable expense. His own reaction was that the question involved a number of difficulties. Was the Arab League going to undertake a similar project? Moreover, the Registers, originally the property of the Mandatory Government, had been handed over to the Government of Israel.

Mr. ORDONNEAU (France) observed that since no copy was available, the Commission should reply accordingly, adding that it did not have the necessary funds and that it could not loan the material which was required for the work under progress.

Mr. ROSS (United States) agreed and suggested that they might also say that the only copy in the possession of the United Nations was in the Secretary-General's charge and was being worked upon actively by a small staff. The reply might also say that the Commission would be glad to consider any small service that would not interrupt the work in progress.

Mr. CHAI (Acting Principal Secretary) pointed out that there were also legal aspects in addition to the physical difficulties.

Mr. ROSS (United States) agreed that those aspects would require examination.

Mr. ORDONNEAU (France) observed that if it was not physically possible to make copies available, that fact would be sufficient.

It was agreed that the Acting Principal Secretary would investigate the technical difficulties involved and draft a reply accordingly.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. CHAI (Acting Principal Secretary) informed the Commission that the Press had been making inquiries about the Commission's meeting.

Mr. ORDONNEAU (France) and Mr. ROSS (United States) suggested that the Press might be informed by the Principal Secretary that the meeting was a routine one to check on the technical details of the release of the blocked Arab accounts.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.

10/7 p.m.