

UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

RESTRICTED

SR/44

24 April 1949

Original: English

1 DEC 1950

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FORTY -FOURTH MEETING

held in Lausanne on Sunday, 24 April 1949

at 3 p.m.

Present: Mr. ETHRIDGE (U.S.A.) - Chairman
Mr. de BOISANGER (France)
Mr. YALCIN (Turkey)
Mr. Azcarate - Principal Secretary

Negotiations with Arab and Israeli Delegations

The CHAIRMAN gave a brief report on the results of his discussions with Israeli officials concerning the Commission's memorandum on measures to be taken for the refugees. The Israeli Government had shown no disposition to make a statement on the basis of the memorandum; on the contrary, Mr. Comay had been doubtful whether his Government could engage in such activities simultaneously with the consideration by the General Assembly of its application for membership in the United Nations. Mr. Comay had further stated that if there were to be a full debate on the Israeli application, it might be difficult for his Government to carry on peace negotiations. He had hinted that it might be desirable for the Commission to postpone the negotiations, although when directly questioned he had denied that his Government was requesting any such postponement.

Mr. Comay had stressed the importance which his Government attached to the Lausanne negotiations; it was only a

/question of...

question of a possible delay in his Government's participation, depending upon the turn of events in the General Assembly and the effects of a full and open debate on the questions of Jerusalem and the refugees.

The Chairman noted that the Principal Secretary had already placed a telephone call to Lake Success, in an effort to ascertain the present status of the discussion in the First Committee.

In view of the attitude indicated by Mr. Comay, the Chairman proposed that the opening meeting, on Tuesday morning, should be with the Israeli delegation, so that the position of the Israeli Government might be clarified; in the light of that discussion the Commission could then ascertain the views of the four Arab delegations at successive meetings in the afternoon.

The Commission approved the Chairman's suggestion.

Mr. de BOISANGER reported that during his visit to Cairo he had talked with the Prime Minister and with Hassouna Pasha, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; while the former had only repeated the well-known Arab attitude on the refugee question, the latter had expressed the hope that the discussions at Lausanne would cover all outstanding problems, including the question of boundaries.

Organisation of the Technical Mission on Refugees

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY reported that following the Commission's discussion and decision at the forty-second meeting, he had despatched a detailed cable to Lake Success. On his arrival in Geneva he had learned that the Secretary-General had requested the Geneva office to deal with the

/matter...

matter and to make inquiries regarding the implications of the proposed additional staff. The Geneva office was contacting the appropriate organisations in the area concerning the possibility of recruiting technicians in Europe.

The CHAIRMAN felt that this method of procedure by the Secretariat at Lake Success had placed the Commission in an unfortunate position, since the Commission had repeatedly told the Arab States that it was taking action on the refugee question by the establishment of a technical mission. He personally was in favour of lodging a protest with the Secretary-General against the delay, the inefficiency of the Secretariat and its lack of support of the Commission.

In reply to a question from Mr. Yalcin, the Principal Secretary explained that there was no question of authority of the Secretary-General over the Commission. Nevertheless, while it was the responsibility of the Secretary-General to implement the decisions of the Commission, he had the right to choose the procedure for that implementation.

In response to a question from the Chairman, who asked what progress was being made by the Geneva office toward recruitment of the necessary technicians, Mr. COOK said that all appropriate United Nations bodies in the area were being contacted, and that he hoped to receive a list of names by the following day. It would now be his responsibility to set up a manning table for the proposed committee.

The CHAIRMAN observed that the Commission had an emphatic directive, as well as a duty of conscience, as regards the refugees, which it could not carry out until the necessary information was available. It was essential that technicians should be sent into the field at once to obtain the information. He suggested that the results of Mr. Cook's work on

/ the project...

the project should be examined at a Commission meeting Tuesday morning immediately preceding the meeting with the Israeli Delegation.

The Commission approved the Chairman's suggestion.

Mr. de BOISANGER pointed out that there was no indication that any of the Governments represented on the Commission had as yet been consulted with regard to selection of the three technicians.

Mr. COOK suggested that the Geneva office should be asked to contact the Governments directly and the Commission approved his suggestion.

Letter from the Deputy Director, United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees

The Commission agreed that a representative of the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees should be allowed to attend those meetings of the Commission which were expected to involve substantive discussions of the refugee question.

Administrative Questions

Mr. COOK explained the arrangements which were being made regarding official transportation for the members of the Commission and its staff and the granting of diplomatic privileges for purposes of monetary exchange.

In reply to a question from Mr. de Boisanger regarding the provision of certain leading newspapers to members of the Commission, the Principal Secretary explained that Mr. Grand, the press officer, would be in charge of all questions of press and information. He suggested that at the time of the opening meeting the Commission should release to the press a comprehensive statement explaining the organization, composition and past activity of the Commission, since there was little detailed information available in the Swiss press.

/ The CHAIRMAN...

The CHAIRMAN agreed but suggested that the statement should not be released until after the opening meeting.

The Chairman then presented to the Commission two new members of the United States Delegation, Mr. Porter and Mr. Barco; the latter would replace Mr. Halderman beginning on 26 April.
