

UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

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M. SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FORTY-NINTH MEETING

held in Lausanne on Wednesday,  
4 May 1949, at 10 a.m.

Present: Mr. Ethridge (U.S.A.) - Chairman  
Mr. de Boisanger (France)  
Mr. Yalcin (Turkey)

Mr. Azcarate - Principal Secretary

Communications by the Principal Secretary

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY informed the Commission of the appointment and arrival in Lausanne of Mr. Milner, who would serve as senior political adviser to the Commission.

The Principal Secretary then drew the Commission's attention to a letter from the delegation of the General Refugee Congress, requesting a meeting with the Commission.

The CHAIRMAN said he had talked with the Secretary of the delegation and that the latter had not pressed for an early meeting, but merely wished it known that the delegation was available if the Commission wished to consult it. He would maintain contact with the Secretary, but no further action was necessary at present.

The Principal Secretary then circulated copies of a telegram from Mr. Barnes in Jerusalem concerning certain recent incidents at Government House.

The CHAIRMAN expressed the view that the matter was within the competence of the Mixed Armistice Commission rather than the Conciliation Commission and should be left in their hands.

Negotiations with Arab and Israeli delegations

The CHAIRMAN remarked that as a result of a meeting of all the Arab delegations the previous day, it was probable

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that the Commission would shortly receive a formal statement to the effect that the Arab delegations declined to negotiate with the Israeli representatives except en bloc. In the event that such a statement was received immediately, the Commission should take a decision regarding its future procedure. He was in doubt as to what procedure would be the wisest at the present stage, and asked for the opinions of his colleagues. He himself thought it might be desirable to request both sides to submit suggested agendas, even though it was known that the Arab delegations would prefer to have suggestions come from the Commission. He felt it would be unwise at present for the Commission to suggest solutions; the responsibility should if possible be placed upon the delegations.

Mr. de BOISANGER and Mr. YALCIN agreed with the Chairman's proposal. They also felt that many points in Dr. Eytan's statement of the previous day needed clarification, and that at the next morning's meeting with him the Commission should put various precise questions based on that statement and endeavour to elicit precise answers. Mr. de Boisanger also suggested that all questions should be put by the Chairman, in the name of the Commission, rather than by individual members of the Commission.

The CHAIRMAN was quite willing to accede to Mr. de Boisanger's request. He himself had various questions to ask Dr. Eytan, who had still not replied on the substantive points of the memorandum on refugees. The Commission should press for replies on those points, and also for a firm statement regarding Israel's acceptance of the terms of the resolution. He suggested that all members of the Commission should hand to the Principal Secretary a list of the questions they wished to put to Dr. Eytan at the next meeting.

Mr. de BOISANGER agreed to the desirability of requesting agendas from both sides. He thought, however, that there was no need for haste in the matter. The Commission should first endeavour once more to get clarification of the Israeli position from Dr. Eytan; it should then wait to see what initiative the Israeli delegation might itself take, since Dr. Eytan, in his statement to the Press, had indicated the possibility that his delegation might make direct contact

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with the Arab delegations. He did not wish the Commission to take an initiative which might later be criticised by the Israeli delegation.

The CHAIRMAN saw no difference of opinion among the members of the Commission on the matter. The Commission would see Dr. Eytan the following morning and press for replies to its questions. If the expected statement had been received from the Arab delegations, its purport could be communicated to Dr. Eytan; if the Israeli delegation was then able to establish direct contact with the Arab delegations, the Commission would welcome such action. At the same time the Commission could inform Dr. Eytan that it would ask both sides to present lists of points which they desired to have discussed; such a procedure would leave the initiative with the delegations rather than with the Commission, which should not present a draft of its own until all other possibilities had been exhausted.

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