

RESTRICTED

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SIXTY-FIRST MEETING

held in Lausanne on Saturday,
21 May 1949, at 10 a.m.

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

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Draft Letter to all delegations

The CHAIRMAN recalled that during a recent informal conversation Mr. Ammoun of the Lebanese delegation had requested that the forthcoming proposals by the Israeli delegation should not be transmitted formally in writing by the Commission to the Arab delegations. The Chairman had not succeeded in persuading Mr. Ammoun that such transmission would not in any way imply that the Commission endorsed the proposals.

In consultation with the Principal Secretary, therefore, the Chairman had decided that it would be desirable for the Commission to address a letter to all the delegations, indicating that in the future proposals made by one party would be transmitted to the other, but that in following that procedure the Commission would be acting as a simple intermediary, and that no degree of endorsement or approval by the Commission of the document transmitted should be inferred by either party. A draft of such a letter was now before the Commission for its consideration. The Chairman suggested that when approved, it should be despatched immediately to all delegations; the Israeli proposals regarding frontiers should not be made known to the Arab delegations until after they had received the present letter.

Mr. ETHRIDGE supported the principle that either party had the right to make any proposal it desired, and that it was the function of the Commission to endeavour to elicit a response to such proposals from the other party. He thought, however, that the language of the present draft might defeat the purpose of the letter by preventing the Arab delegations from making private communications. He asked for the deletion of the word

"all" before "communications", the equivalent of which did not appear in the French draft; otherwise he had no specific changes to suggest.

After some discussion the Commission approved the text of the draft letter as amended.

Draft reply to memorandum of 18 May from the Arab delegations

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY submitted a draft reply to the nine-point memorandum of 18 May from the Arab delegations, as well as a memorandum setting forth a comparison between the nine points and the steps already taken or being taken by the Commission relative to the refugee question. The memorandum was for the information of the Commission only.

The Commission approved the text of the draft letter for transmission to the Arab delegations.

Unauthorized release of information to the press

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY presented a note drafted at his request by the Press Officer, summarizing the present situation as regards unauthorized release to the press of information concerning the Lausanne talks.

Mr. ETHRIDGE held the view that while the Commission could not prevent publication of such information, it was desirable, as a matter of record, that the Press officer should continue to keep abreast of such publications and to note them in the Commission's files.

Draft Memorandum to the Arab delegations transmitting Israeli proposals concerning frontiers

Mr. ETHRIDGE felt that the memorandum did not fully explain the Israeli position. He suggested that the text should be expanded to include mention of the question put to Dr. Eytan and the explanations given, as reported in the summary record of the meeting (SR/LM/15).

The CHAIRMAN thought that while the Commission's rule against circulation of summary records to delegations other than those present at any given meeting should be maintained, in the present case the summary record might be shown unofficially to the Arab delegations if desired.

Meetings with relief organizations

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY reported that he had talked with Mr. Ballou, representative of Mr. Griffis; if the Commission desired, a meeting could be arranged with representatives of the three distribution organizations in Geneva and of the United Nations Relief to Palestine Refugees.

The Commission agreed that the Principal Secretary should contact all organizations concerned and inform them that a meeting would be arranged within the next fortnight.

Technical Committee on Refugees

The CHAIRMAN had been informed that his Government had approved the Secretary-General's nomination of Mr. Lucas, who was at present on the staff of the Geneva office, as the French member of the Committee; he now submitted Mr. Lucas's candidacy for the approval of the Commission.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY reported that in the course of a telephone conversation with Lake Success the preceding day, he had been informed that the designation of the French member, Mr. Lucas, and of the United States member, Mr. Kunde, had been confirmed by the Secretary-General; it now remained only for the Commission to approve their appointment. The Secretary-General had also proposed, subject to the consent of the Commission, that the Committee should include a member from the United Kingdom; if the suggestion was approved, the Secretary-General would submit the name of a candidate. As regards the Turkish member, a final decision had not yet been communicated by the Turkish Government. The telephone conversation would be confirmed by cable and, pending its receipt, the information transmitted should be considered as provisional.

Mr. YALCIN questioned whether as a matter of procedure, the Secretary-General had the right to offer suggestions concerning the constitution of the committee.

Mr. ETHRIDGE thought that the proposal for a United Kingdom member had not originated with the Secretary-General, but as a result of conversations held in Lake Success and in Washington. He considered the proposal a good one since a United Kingdom member would be helpful in obtaining necessary information on certain development projects in the Middle East.

Replying to Mr. Yalcin, the CHAIRMAN observed that the Secretary-General had evidently interpreted the Commission's

instructions as authorizing him to accept or reject candidates proposed by the Governments.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY read the information received from Lake Success concerning the qualifications of the suggested United Kingdom candidate, Mr. Southam.

The Commission approved the United States and French candidates, accepted the suggestion for the addition of a United Kingdom member, and approved the candidate proposed for that post by the Secretary-General.

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the desire expressed by the Arab delegations that the Technical Committee should begin its work at the earliest possible moment. He hoped that the Committee would be constituted in the course of the following week.

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