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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SIXTY-THIRD MEETING

held in Lausanne on Friday,
27 May 1949, at 10 a.m.

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

Dr. Azcarate - Principal Secretary

* Alternate

Technical Committee on Refugees

The CHAIRMAN observed that a further cable had been received from the Secretary-General announcing the appointment of the French, United Kingdom and United States members of the Technical Committee. The Chairman had the impression, in view of the terms of paragraph 12 of the resolution of 11 December 1948, that it was the function of the Commission to make the appointments; however, he did not think it would serve a useful purpose to discuss the question. He proposed a cabled reply informing the Secretary-General that the Committee could not function until the fourth member had been appointed; the cable might reproduce the terms of the message received, and state that "in view of the extreme urgency of the refugee problem and the importance of proceeding without delay to implement the resolution", the Commission now requested the immediate nomination of a Turkish member, in order that the Committee might begin its work the following week. If the Secretary-General took responsibility for making the appointments, the responsibility for the delay in constitution of the Committee must also be his. The cable should be despatched over the signature of the Chairman of the Commission.

Mr. ETHRIDGE and Mr. YENISEY supported the Chairman's proposal. Mr. Ethridge thought it should be pointed out that the Commission had been aware of the urgency of the matter for forty-eight days.

Mr. YENISEY thought the Secretary-General's right to appoint the members should not be recognized; in any case, his delegation would not accept the appointment by the Secretary-General of a candidate not nominated by the Turkish Government.

The CHAIRMAN observed that the terms of the cable should stress the fact that the Secretary-General should nominate a Turkish member in agreement with the Turkish Government.

Report of the General Committee

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to an extract from the summary record of the General Committee's meeting the previous day with the Israeli delegation (Com.Gen./SR.8), setting forth the proposal made by that delegation concerning Israel's frontiers with the Hashemite Jordan Kingdom and the "Triangle".

At an informal meeting the preceding day, the Chairman had pointed out to Mr. Sasson that a proposal from the Israeli delegation based on armistice lines as such was not in accordance with the terms of the Protocol; the proposal should be re-phrased taking the Partition map as its basis, before it could be transmitted to the Arab delegations. The Commission could not put itself in the position of inviting criticism from the Arab delegations for transmitting proposals not based upon the agreed document.

The Chairman requested the Chairman of the General Committee to approach the Israeli delegation that afternoon and suggest that at its next meeting with the Committee the delegation of Israel should present its proposals again in the form he had described. At its forthcoming meeting with the Arab delegations, the Committee might state that exchanges of views were proceeding with regard to the frontier with the "Triangle", and that as soon as the proposals had been made firm they would be transmitted to the Arab delegations.

Mr. ETHRIDGE said that in the opinion of the Arab delegations they had made a contribution to the Commission's work in forwarding their memorandum of 21 May, and point 3 of that memorandum constituted a definite proposal which the Israeli delegation must either accept or reject. They considered that proposal as affording a possible introduction to broader discussions; but unless Israel answered the nine-point memorandum with certain concessions and gave a direct reply to the memorandum of 21 May, the Arab delegations would not proceed further with discussions. Mr. Ethridge

thought it essential that the Commission should endeavour to elicit such direct replies from the Israeli delegation.

He pointed out that certain questions had not been satisfactorily covered in the proposals thus far advanced by the Israeli delegation: the proposal regarding central Palestine must be made more specific; there had been as yet no reference to the Jerusalem area; and there had been no definitive answers regarding the refugees. The Israeli delegation must be pressed to make its position fully clear on all those points.

Mr. YENISEY thought the Israeli position had already been stated on the points mentioned by Mr. Ethridge. Mr. Sasson had told the General Committee that he referred to the "Triangle" as including the Hebron region to the south and bounded by the present armistice lines. Concerning Jerusalem, he had stated that the question was separate from the present discussion and that the Commission had a mandate to carry out in that connection. As regards the refugees, Dr. Eytan had made certain definite statements during the recent informal meeting, as to the commitments which Israel would make if it obtained possession of the "Gaza strip".

Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN (Chairman, General Committee) had been informed by Mr. Amoun of the Lebanese delegation that the Arab delegations were engaged in drafting a letter to the Commission containing certain explanations regarding point 3 of the memorandum of 21 May. They preferred that that memorandum should not be discussed in the General Committee until after the Commission had seen the letter.

The CHAIRMAN recalled that Dr. Eytan had promised to prepare a summary of the statements he had made during the informal meeting with the Commission, which could be transmitted to the Arab delegations. The Chairman felt, however, that those proposals would still be very far from satisfactory to the Arab delegations.

Mr. ETHRIDGE believed that fuller statements might still be expected from the Israeli delegation on the refugee question, according to indications given by Dr. Eytan. The Commission could accomplish little at the present stage until Dr. Eytan's statement had been received, and until replies were forthcoming from Tel Aviv regarding the nine-point memorandum.

The CHAIRMAN agreed with Mr. Ethridge's view that the Commission must wait for further information from the Israeli delegation; however, the Arab delegations should also be pressed to formulate proposals

regarding frontiers. He agreed with Mr. Ethridge that the Arab delegations would not consider any proposals by Israel to be complete until they included mention of the refugee question; however, he did not feel that Israel could be pressed too urgently regarding the refugees unless the Arabs agreed to state their position concerning frontiers. He hoped that if definite proposals regarding the eastern frontier and the "Triangle" were forthcoming promptly from the Israeli delegation, the Arab delegations could then be persuaded to offer counter-proposals or independent suggestions of their own.
