

RESTRICTED
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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SIXTY-SIXTH MEETING

held in Lausanne on Thursday,
2 June 1949, at 10 a.m.

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

The CHAIRMAN gave a brief summary of the activities of the Commission and the General Committee during the past ten days in the absence of Mr. Yalcin. Little progress had been made; the Arab position was still the same, while the Israeli delegation had now extended its territorial proposals to include the frontiers with the Hashemite Jordan Kingdom and the "Triangle". The Arab delegations had not yet replied to those proposals, and the Egyptian representative had indicated to the Chairman, in an informal conversation, that the Arab delegations would prefer to state their views in a private meeting. Before the Commission took a decision as regards its next step, he thought the members would wish to study the summary records of the most recent meetings with the Arab and Israeli delegations.

The Chairman recalled that a meeting had been arranged for the following Tuesday, with representatives of the relief organisations in Geneva. In that connection he drew attention to a document he had received from his Government, which gave a detailed report of a meeting in New York at which Mr. Tuck, Mr. Griffis and others had made statements; Mr. Griffis had explained the activities of his organisation and its relations with the Conciliation Commission. The report was a most interesting and valuable document, and he thought the Secretary-General's attention should be drawn to the fact that copies should have been supplied to the Commission.

Technical Committee on Refugees

The CHAIRMAN regretted that the Technical Committee had not yet been constituted owing to the misunderstanding in

connection with appointment of the Turkish member. He thought it would be useful if the Committee could be in existence, and the other three members present, if not the Turkish member, on the occasion of the Commission's forthcoming meeting with the representatives of the relief agencies. He asked the Principal Secretary to furnish the Commission with details concerning the careers and qualifications of the members of the Technical Committee who had been appointed. He also noted that the terms of reference originally drafted for the Committee would have to be revised in the light of subsequent events.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY reported that the Secretary-General was in close and constant contact with the Turkish Government and there was every reason to hope for an early and satisfactory nomination. In reply to Mr. Yalcin, who expressed certain doubts concerning the United Kingdom member, the Principal Secretary pointed out that the system of nomination by the Governments, selection by the Secretary-General and approval by the Commission constituted a triple safeguard against unsatisfactory appointments.

Report of the General Committee

Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN (Chairman, General Committee) reported briefly on the recent meeting with the Israeli delegation (see Com.Gen./SR.10), at which a map had been presented showing a scheme for an irrigation canal which would run from Lebanon to the Negev slightly to the east of the present armistice line. The implication was that the armistice line itself would not satisfy Israel; certain Arab towns would have to be taken over in order that the entire course of the canal, as well as a strip to the east for defense purposes, should be included within the boundaries of Israel. The frontier should follow the foothills, some of which lay fairly far to the east of the armistice line. The course of the canal would follow the 100 meter line along those hills; in order to ensure the tactical protection of the canal, Israel would have to claim territory rising to the 200 meter line. The map, which was now before the Commission, showed the nature and importance of the territorial adjustments claimed by Israel.

As regards the manner in which the proposals should be transmitted to the Arab delegations, Mr. de la Tour du Pin felt that since the Israeli delegation was not yet ready to define the suggested frontier point by point, it would be desirable to refer to the Protocol and present the proposals as suggested

modifications of the center section of the frontier, perhaps supported by a new map.

Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN replied in the affirmative to a question from Mr. Yalcin whether Israel had other canal projects which might raise territorial problems. There was a hydro-electric canal, shown in purple on the map submitted, which would run from Haifa to the Dead Sea, crossing Transjordan territory and, following the Jordan, cut the Transjordan Kingdom from the Triangle. Such a canal could give Israel control of the Ghor, which could easily be flooded and would also entail a demand for the heights of Amman commanding it.

Mr. Lifshitz had explained that the main irrigation canal should start in the Lebanon at the latitude running to the north of Tyre. To a question whether that would entail an agreement with Lebanon, he had replied that two projects had been worked out by an American engineer, a maximum project drawing upon the mountain waters, especially snow flood water from the Litani River in Lebanon, and a more modest project which would be fed only by the Jordan. What had not been mentioned in the General Committee was that such a scheme presupposed the inclusion of the Jordan in Israeli territory and raised the question of the Israeli-Syrian frontier. If the thalweg were attributed to Syria, it would be impossible to feed the canal from the Jordan waters without the agreement of Syria, while an agreement with the Lebanon would be necessary even if the Jordan fell to Israel.

Mr. YALCIN suggested that the canal scheme would entail dependence on either Lebanon or Syria or their annexation.

Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN added that the map submitted showed various reservoirs to the east of the proposed canal. He had pointed out to Mr. Lifshitz that some of them fell several kilometers to the east of the "Armistice Line", in Arab territory. He had asked whether they were indispensable to the scheme and whether it would be necessary to protect them by command of dominating heights. To those questions, Mr. Lifshitz had not replied.

Mr. YALCIN observed that if the Gaza strip were in Egyptian hands, it would be impossible to continue the canal line.

Mr. ETHRIDGE said it was no secret that Israel intended to open negotiations with the Lebanon in order to tap the Litani. He has been informed in the course of a private conversation that it was intended to start the canal at the bend of the Litani River.

Mr. de LA TOUR DU PIN pointed out that control of the Litani waters would mean control of the city of Tyre, to which the Lebanon was particularly attached for historical reasons.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Israeli proposals would be communicated to the Arabs after the Summary Record of the meeting had been circulated. The Commission would then decide what form the communication should take. The construction of the canal would certainly transform the agricultural situation in the region it served and Israel's anxiety to see it carried out was understandable. An understanding with the neighbouring countries would however be essential. Israeli could not expect to reserve the Jordan for her sole use.

2. Answer of the Israeli Delegation to the Questionnaire on Jerusalem

The CHAIRMAN reported that Mr. Eytan's reply to the Chairman of the Jerusalem Committee in regard to the Questionnaire on Jerusalem had been received the previous day and was of considerable interest. He proposed referring it to the General Committee, which could meet with the Delegation of Israel in order to have a clearer definition of certain points.

He drew the Commission's attention to the last paragraph on page 1 of Mr. Eytan's letter (document Com./Jer./9) regarding restrictions on the authority of neighbouring States over the eventual two zones of Jerusalem . The aim of an international regime was to protect the Holy Places; it would necessarily entail a renunciation of sovereignty over certain points by the neighbouring States. The question was to what extent Israel should have a say in regard to the establishment of the international regime.

Mr. ETHRIDGE said that the Jerusalem Committee was assembling information, but Israel should be prepared to discuss the eventual plan before the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that Israel would ask that the protection and control of the Holy Places should not entail such a renunciation of sovereignty as was anticipated in the plan of the Jerusalem Committee. Such protection however would obviously entail

the demilitarisation of the area, demilitarisation necessarily implying an encroachment on the sovereignty of the States concerned.

Mr. BENOIST said that the Jerusalem Committee, which had not met for some time owing to the absence of Mr. Barco, would have to consider two questions, for submission to the Commission : the fact that Israel's Ministry of Cults had been set up in Jerusalem, and the opening of the Misrara quarter to Jewish civil immigration. To a question whether other Ministries also had not been established in Jerusalem, he replied that the others, five in number, were not full Ministries but merely departments. The Arabs on the other hand were particularly concerned over the plan to establish 6,000 immigrants in the formerly Arab quarter of Misrara, a plan which had also been deplored by the Anglican Bishop since a Christian-Arab quarter was concerned.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY suggested that it would be appropriate for the Commission to prepare a Report to the Secretary General before the departure of the United States representative.

The CHAIRMAN agreed. It was decided that the Report should be drafted forthwith, but, on Mr. Ethridge's suggestion, that its conclusions should be left open till after Mr. Eytan's return from Tel Aviv the following week.

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the question of transmitting the Arab proposals to the Israeli delegation and vice-versa.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, on a suggestion from Mr. Ethridge, that he might make a brief memorandum on the questions left outstanding on both sides, said that the Commission had handed a memorandum to the Israeli delegation noting the questions on which no answer had been forthcoming. The Israeli delegation had replied to the Arab Memorandum of 21 May that the demand for the return of the refugees to the enumerated areas was unacceptable. That reply had not been communicated to the Arabs.

Mr. ETHRIDGE suggested that a memorandum showing the communications sent and the replies received would be useful for the information of the Commission.
