

RESTRICTED  
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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-THIRD MEETING

held in Lausanne on Thursday,  
 16 June 1949, at 10.30 a.m.

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

Question of a press statement concerning the work of the Commission

Mr. de BOISANGER drew attention to misleading articles on the Commission's work which had appeared in the press, the most recent example being provided by the "New York Times". He considered it advisable to counteract such information by a press-conference to be held either by the Press Officer or by the Commission itself. Such a press-conference should stress four points. (1) It should be pointed out that there was nothing abnormal in the slowness of the Commission's progress, in view of the delicacy and far-reaching implication of the questions covered by the negotiations. In that connection it would be well to forewarn the press that a stage would be reached when the conference would be adjourned to enable delegations and members of the Commission to consult their governments. (2) The rumours of dissension within the Commission, which had been echoed by the "New York Times", should be categorically denied. (3) It should be made clear that there was no basis for a comparison or contrast between the methods of Mr. Bunche and those of the Commission, in view of the totally different problems involved in the two cases; that whereas Mr. Bunche's remarkable work had been preceded by a precise request for an Armistice, first by the Egyptian and then by other Arab Governments, no Arab delegation had shown any desire to negotiate peace and the Commission had had to take the initiative in bringing the two parties together. (4) It should be stressed that the Commission had always wished the two parties to reach a direct understanding, and that in acting as intermediary, in accordance with the latitude allowed by the Assembly's resolution, it had taken the only course possible under the circumstances.

The origin of the reports in the "New York Times" had not been traced. He had pointed out to Mr. Sasson the harmful effects of the publication of Dr. Eytan's four points, since certain of them, in particular the suggestion of separate sub-committees to deal with the territorial and refugee problems, might have been adopted, and would now be likely to encounter Arab opposition as emanating from the Israeli delegation. Mr. Sasson and Mr. Hirsch had denied responsibility for the article in question, but Mr. Hirsch, the Press Officer of the Israeli delegation, had informed him that the "New York Times" correspondent had submitted it, without its conclusion, to Dr. Eytan over the telephone. Dr. Eytan had not attempted to prevent its publication. Its publication was most regrettable and could only impede the Commission's work.

Mr. HARE agreed with Mr. de Boisanger. It was particularly important to rectify the false story of dissension within the Commission. He wished to hear Mr. Grand's views on whether the rectifications could be made incidental to a positive statement on the Commission's work. A further point was that, since what transpired in supposedly secret sessions was invariably divulged almost at once in distorted form, Mr. Grand might be authorized to be more liberal and prompt in releasing information.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that it would be impossible to prevent the publication of inaccurate information, which constituted part of a deliberate campaign on the part of certain people who found an obstacle to their ambitions in the Commission's work. All that could be done was to seek to enlighten neutral public opinion to the greatest possible extent. Mr. Grand could be asked to use more dynamic and aggressive tactics in order to forestall attacks. He invited him to give his views.

Mr. GRAND, Press Officer, thought a press conference on general lines preferable to an explicit rectification of false reports in which only the "Jewish Telegraphic Agency" and, in the most recent instance, the "New York Times" had been concerned. He believed that two-thirds of the hostile rumours circulated had the deliberate aim of provoking reactions in Washington and Tel Aviv in an effort to discredit the Commission's work, and was parallel to the effort which was being made to procure the dissolution of the Commission through reference of the problems before it to the Security Council.

There was no way of preventing press campaigns of that kind.

Mr. de BOISANGER recommended that the rectification of false statements should be implicit in a general outline of the Commission's work. Some reference to an eventual adjournment should also be made, well in advance, at any rate informally.

The CHAIRMAN felt that it was too early for such a reference.

Mr. de BOISANGER and Mr. HARE preferred a press conference held by the Press Officer to one held by the Commission, nothing having transpired to explain such a new departure.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY emphasized the usefulness of a positive, carefully considered exposé, summing up the present position, and showing no anxiety over hostile campaigns. It might be possible to refer to adjournment in a week or ten days' time. In regard to responsibility for the "New York Times" reference to Dr. Eytan's four points, Dr. Eytan had telephoned him the previous day, denying Israeli responsibility but saying that he, personally, had seen no objection to their publication - an attitude equivalent to having encouraged it.

It was agreed, on Mr. HARE's proposal, that the publication of the Commission's report should be made the occasion for a press-conference by the Press Officer on the lines agreed.

The CHAIRMAN, in reply to a question from Mr. Hare, said that the Press Officer could make no statement on Dr. Eytan's proposals till they had been examined by the Commission.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY suggested that the Press Officer should in the meantime say merely that they were under examination.

Mr. de BOISANGER pointed out that pending the proposed press conference, the Press Officer would be able to take action, bearing in mind the points raised.

#### Next meeting with Arab delegations

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY read a letter just received from the Arab delegations requesting a meeting with the Commission for the purpose of hearing the Commission's views concerning the Arab memoranda of 18 May and 21 May, as well

as on the Israeli violation of the neutral zone of Government House in Jerusalem.

In the opinion of Mr. de BOISANGER, it was not required of the Commission to state such views until the Arabs had given further explanations on certain points in the memorandum of 21 May, as they had been requested to do in the meeting on 1 June (see SR/LM.16). The Arab delegations should also be pressed further to enter upon a discussion of territorial questions; he drew attention to the Commission's request to that effect, given in the last paragraph of the Commission's letter of 31 May to the Arab delegations (AR/14).

The CHAIRMAN agreed with a suggestion made by Mr. Hare that the Commission should, in a discussion with Dr. Eytan, clarify its own ideas regarding the four most recent proposals of the Israeli delegation before discussing those proposals with the Arab delegations.

It was decided that the Principal Secretary would reply to the letter of the Arab delegations, inviting them to meet the Commission the following morning for the purpose of continuing the discussion of the two Arab memoranda.

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