

RESTRICTED  
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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE EIGHTIETH MEETING

held in Lausanne on Tuesday,  
19 July 1949, at 10:30 a.m.

Present : Mr. de Boisanger (France) - Chairman  
\* Mr. Yenisey (Turkey)  
\* Mr. Rockwell (U.S.A.)  
Dr. Azcárate - Principal Secretary

\* Alternate

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Consideration of reports received from the Technical Committee on Refugees ( documents Com.Tech./2, Com.Tech./3, Com.Tech./4 )

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY summarised briefly the various substantive proposals contained in the three reports thus far received from the Technical Committee.

1. Possible provision of land by the Jordan Government for small-scale agricultural settlement ( Com.Tech./2, paragraph 3 ).

Mr. ROCKWELL observed that the decisive point would be the availability of funds; in that connection he pointed out that the United Kingdom Government had already arranged for a loan of one million pounds sterling to the Government of the Jordan Kingdom for exactly such a project. The idea was not a new one, and the project should be part of an overall international plan for the resettlement of the refugees.

The CHAIRMAN felt that in any case, in view of the coordinated plans now being developed with regard to the economic rehabilitation of the Middle East, the United States representative should advise his Government of the present proposal. He suggested that a telegram should be despatched to the Technical Committee requesting further details of the Jordan Government's offer and also details regarding the United Kingdom loan and its relation to the project. The Jordan delegation should also be informed of the Technical Committee's report.

The Commission agreed to the Chairman's suggestion.

Mr. ROCKWELL referred to the figures given by the Israeli authorities of the increased numbers of Arabs now legally resident in Israel, as quoted in paragraph 2 of document Com. Tech./2. The figures seemed to him excessive, and he wondered whether there was any possibility of verifying them or of obtaining fully reliable statistics.

The CHAIRMAN observed that verification was extremely difficult, if not impossible, and that the Commission had no means of obtaining figures which it could consider absolutely reliable. He pointed out that Mr. Sharett in a recent statement had declared that the number of Arabs resident in Israel had increased to at least 155,000; on the other hand the Arab delegations, in their reply of 12 June to a questionnaire on population, had given the total figure as 126,000.

2. Census of refugees ( Com.Tech./2, paragraphs 3 and 7 ).

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY pointed out that the Technical Committee did not favour the proposal of the Jordan Government to conduct a census of the refugees, and that it seemed preferable to have such a census taken by the relief agencies which were caring for the refugees.

In reply to Mr. Rockwell, who felt that the relief agencies should be asked to begin the census even without added staff, the CHAIRMAN explained that the Red Cross did not consider the census to be in reality its responsibility and probably would not be prepared to undertake the work without additional personnel. He pointed out, moreover, that what was needed was not merely the numbers of the refugees, but the significance of those numbers; the refugees must be classified according to occupation, region of origin, etc.

Mr. YENISEY was of the opinion that simultaneously with the taking of the census, the refugees should be questioned as to whether or not they wished to return to their former homes, since the numbers who wished to return must be established by the Commission.

The CHAIRMAN stressed the fact that if such questioning were undertaken, it must also be explained in detail to the refugees that in many cases their homes had been destroyed, that they would be relocated in other parts of Israel, and that they

would have to accept full Israeli citizenship; he thought such a procedure might complicate and delay the census itself. He suggested that a telegram should be sent to the Technical Committee requesting further details regarding the exact number of additional personnel needed by the Red Cross in order to carry out the census and the conditions of their employment. He thought it desirable, also, that the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees should be informed.

The Commission accepted the Chairman's suggestions.

3. Arab-Israeli working group to estimate property damages ( Com.Tech./2, paragraph 3, 4 and 6 ).

Mr. de la TOUR du PIN ( Chairman, General Committee ) explained that in the course of the General Committee's last meetings with the Arab and Israeli delegations, the Arab had put forward the view that the most authoritative opinion on the condition of the orange groves must be that of the proprietors, who should accompany the Technical Committee on its tour of inspection. The Israeli delegation had not put forward any proposal on the matter.

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY was of the opinion that investigation of the possibility of mixed working groups by the Technical Committee would involve that Committee in certain delicate political questions, and that it would be preferable for the matter to be taken up in the first instance by the General Committee, which should obtain full agreement in principle by the Arab and Israeli delegations before the actual technical work was begun.

The CHAIRMAN had no objection to asking the views of the Arab delegations, but he considered that they had no direct interest in the matter; the mixed committees should be composed of Israeli representatives and representatives of the refugee organisations, possibly under the chairmanship of a United Nations representative. He suggested that the Commission should cable the Technical Committee its agreement in principle, stating that it would contact the Israeli delegation in Lausanne and requesting that the Technical Committee should obtain the views of the refugee organisations. Such a telegram could be despatched at once, pending discussion of the question by the General Committee with Mr. Sasson on his return; the Chairman of the General Committee might also discuss the matter informally in the meantime with Mr. Hirsch.

The Commission approved The Chairman's proposal.

4. Definition of categories of refugees ( Com.Tech./2, Conclusions ).

The PRINCIPAL SECRETARY explained that this request by the Technical Committee was evidently for the purpose of distinguishing between bona fide refugees and the many other displaced Arabs who were at present drawing rations from the relief agencies.

5. Admission of contagious and other serious cases to hospitals in the Arab States ( Com.Tech./2, paragraph 8 ).

The CHAIRMAN felt that the procedure advocated would, again, depend on availability of funds. He asked the Principal Secretary to inform the Director of the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees of the suggestion and obtain his opinion.

6. Reuniting of separated families ( Com.Tech./3 ).

After considerable discussion, the Commission agreed that the General Committee would raise the question again with the Israeli delegation, requesting more specific details and making it clear that the Commission considered the Israeli definition of the required close family relationship to be far too narrow, and that that definition should conform more closely to the idea of the family as generally recognised in Palestine.

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