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MASTER

21 DEC 1950

RESTRICTED
SR/LM.23
28 June 1949

Original: English

SUMMARY RECORD OF A MEETING BETWEEN

THE CONCILIATION COMMISSION AND THE DELEGATION OF ISRAELheld in Lausanne, on Tuesday,
28 June 1949, at 10:30 a.m.

Present: Mr. de Boisanger (France) - Chairman
Mr. Yalcin (Turkey)
Mr. Hare (U.S.A.)
Dr. Azcarate - Principal Secretary
Dr. Walter Eytan)
Mr. Elias Sasson) - Representatives of
Mr. Reuven Shiloah) Israel
Mr. Gershon Hirsch)

The CHAIRMAN wished to make it quite clear that the Conciliation Commission would reassemble in the event of an emergency during the recess until 18 July and that, moreover, representatives would be available for consultation during that period. He took it that there would be no objection on the part of the delegations to a recess since that time would be employed by members to consult their respective Governments and would afford an opportunity for the members of the Committee on Jerusalem and the General Committee to study certain questions.

He had wished to draw Dr. Eytan's attention to the fact that the Commission had received either no answer or by no means complete ones to the questions the Commission had addressed to the Israeli delegation. That very morning, however, he had received a letter from Dr. Eytan (document IS/31) on certain points which he, as Chairman, had intended to raise during the present meeting. He would, if the Israeli delegation saw no objection, communicate that letter to the Arab delegations and to the General Committee.

He had not yet had an opportunity to discuss that letter with other members of the Commission but wished nevertheless to make certain comments on it in a purely personal capacity.

With reference to point 1 of Dr. Eytan's letter, he considered it most useful for the Technical Committee to contact the Israeli Government on the question of the state of the orange groves and said that instructions to that effect would be sent immediately.

He pointed out that the statement that the Israeli Government did not favour the re-admission of Arab refugees, except in the context of a peace settlement, was not likely to give satisfaction to the Arab delegations. He thought that point 2 of the letter contained interesting suggestions on the question of frozen assets which would be studied carefully by the General Committee. Point 3, which would also be studied further by the General Committee, confirmed the previous stand taken by the Israeli Government. Turning to point 4, he thought that it would not be accepted as a satisfactory answer by the Arab delegations. Point 5 was the part of the letter which surprised him most since it would seem to differ from the original position adopted by the Israeli Government on the question of separated families. In support of that, the Chairman quoted from Dr. Eytan's letter of 9 May 1949 (document IS/15) which stated that the Israeli Government would give favourable consideration to a plan to reunite separated families, but that only true relatives "with a close degree of consanguinity" would be allowed to benefit under it. He also recalled a passage from the summary record of the meeting held on 9 June 1949 (document SR/LM.19) to the effect that the Israeli Government had accepted the principle of reuniting Arab families separated by the war and would proceed to a census of the Arabs remaining in Israel in order to ascertain how many people would be affected, and he contrasted that statement with Dr. Eytan's letter of 27 June which said that his Government had announced its readiness to consider favourably the application of Arab breadwinners, lawfully resident in Israel, for the re-admission of their wives and minor children, and that other compassionate cases would also be considered. That letter would seem to restrict the scope of the Israeli proposals. He hoped that the Israeli Government would not object to the Technical Committee's discussing the matter further with them and obtaining more detailed clarification.

He had no further remarks to make on the other points contained in Dr. Eytan's letter which he thought could be examined in more detail by the General Committee.

Dr. EYTAN referred to the Chairman's remark that certain points in his letter should be studied in detail by the General Committee, and suggested that before the letter was transmitted to the Arab delegations a further meeting should take place between the General Committee and the Israeli delegation for the purpose of clarifying some of those points. If the Commission agreed to such a meeting, he would confine his present remarks to comments of a general nature, reserving the full discussion for the General

Committee.

With regard to point 1 of his letter, he reiterated that there would be no objection on the part of his Government to the Technical Committee's informing itself on the situation. He wished to inform the Commission that his Government had appointed Mr. Lifshitz, Dr. Meron and Mr. Comay as liaison officers with the Technical Committee. Those three officials had already contacted the Committee in a first meeting, and had received instructions to facilitate the Committee's work in every way possible. He had already assured the Commission that his Government would cooperate fully with the Technical Committee, and took this opportunity of confirming that position.

With regard to point 2, he thought it was clear that in certain circumstances an arrangement agreeable to all parties could be worked out. There had never been any objection in principle to the blocked funds being made available to their owners, nor had there been any question of official appropriation or confiscation of such funds; it was simply a question of surmounting certain difficulties of exchange, etc.

Concerning points 3 and 4, he regretted that he was forced to make a negative reply; however, a certain state of affairs existed, there had been requisitioning of property (not all of it Arab property), which had been put to certain uses, and his Government could not contemplate undoing the work which had been done.

As regards point 5, he could not entirely agree with the Chairman that the reply constituted a restriction or limitation of the position he had previously stated; it was rather an interpretation of that position. He had originally communicated to the Commission his Government's agreement in principle to consider favorably the re-admission of relatives of a close degree of consanguinity. Three weeks after that statement, he had expressed his delegation's disappointment that no reaction had been forthcoming from the other party with regard to any of the proposals put forth by his delegation, including the statement in question. At the present moment there had still been no comment from anyone, nor had any views been expressed as to the possible scope of the plan. Since ample time had been allowed for such comment, his Government was now putting forward its own ideas concerning the scope of such a plan. The sentence which mentioned "other compassionate cases" obviously left the way open to other methods of reuniting families. He had already stated to the Commission that his Government's agreement to consider the question was based on the assumption that

no serious economic problems would be raised, and that it would be a question of extending existing economic units rather than creating new ones. He saw no reason why the Technical Committee should not approach the Israeli Government with a view to defining more precisely the scope of the project. He drew attention to his statement in the present letter that administrative arrangements to implement the policy were at present being worked out, and informed the Commission that shortly after the statement of its agreement in principle his Government had appointed two experts to work out a plan for effecting the actual physical return of the refugees concerned.

Dr. Eytan declared that the delay in replying to the nine points raised by the Arab delegations had not been due to neglect, but simply to the fact that the points had been studied with care and in detail. Taking the replies as a whole, and with the exception of points 3 and 4, he did not feel that the Arab delegations had serious cause to claim that their desires had not been considered carefully and met insofar as it was possible to meet them.

The CHAIRMAN affirmed the Commission's willingness that the Israeli delegation should discuss the matter further with the General Committee before the letter was transmitted to the Arab delegations; he suggested, however, that that meeting should take place as soon as possible. The Commission was prepared to do its best to enlist the cooperation of the Arab delegations in the steps proposed by Israel. The Commission would also instruct the Technical Committee by cable to approach the Israeli Government with a view to obtaining more detailed information on the treatment of the question of separated families.

Dr. EYTAN agreed that the letter should be transmitted to the Arab delegations at the earliest possible moment, and expressed his delegation's willingness to meet the General Committee at whatever time it desired.

The CHAIRMAN then informed the Israeli delegation of the outcome of the meeting held on 23 June between the Commission and the Arab delegations. The latter had not made any further territorial proposals and the Commission was therefore acting on the understanding that the Arab States supported the boundary lines shown on the map attached to the Protocol of 12 May as a basis of discussion.

He suggested that the Israeli delegation should consult its Government further on the subject before the Commission re-examined the question in order to see whether it would not be possible for it to submit new proposals.

Mr. HARE explained the Arab position on the refugee problem to the Israeli delegation, saying that the Arabs continued to maintain that it was not a subject for negotiation but that it demanded imperative action following the General Assembly's resolution of 11 December. The Israeli delegation would be interested to know that the Arab States were ready to examine the question of the resettlement in Arab countries of those refugees who did not wish to return to Israel, on the clear understanding however that the refugees were given a perfectly free choice as to whether they wished to return or not. He wished to emphasize the fact that the Arab delegations would most definitely stipulate that such a scheme would not apply to any Arab refugees who were prevented from returning to their homes by any limitations imposed by the Israeli Government.

Dr. EYTAN thanked the Commission for communicating the views of the Arab delegations which were duly noted by his delegation.

He expressed the hope that when the commission reassembled, it might be possible to resume work along the lines his delegation had originally suggested, i.e., with five sub-committees, which appeared to him to be the most useful way for the Commission to deal with the concrete details of the problem.

He wished to thank the Commission for the courtesy it had always shown his delegation and also expressed his appreciation for the work of the Secretariat.

The CHAIRMAN said that he understood that the recent suggestions made by the Israeli delegation would be studied by the Commission at its next meeting in two weeks' time.

He expressed the hope that, after the recess, the work of the Commission would progress more favourably.
