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UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TH MEETING

Lake Success, New York
Monday, 16 February 1948, at 3.00 p.m.

Present:

Chairman:	Mr. LISICKY	(Czechoslovakia)
Members:	Mr. Medina	(Bolivia)
	Mr. Federspiel	(Denmark)
	Mr. Morgan	(Panama)
	Mr. Francisco	(Philippines)
Secretariat:	Mr. Bunche	(Secretary)

MEMBERSHIP OF THE PREPARATORY ECONOMIC COMMISSION

The CHAIRMAN inquired whether any further information was available in connection with the appointments to be made on the Preparatory Economic Commission. The SECRETARY stated that a cable had been received from Mr. R. Prebisch, the last person to whom an invitation had been sent to join the Preparatory Economic Commission, saying that he was unable to accept. Nor would Mr. Wood of New Zealand be available because he could not be released by his Government. Another panel of names was being prepared by the Secretariat.

The CHAIRMAN stated that if no economists outside of the Secretariat could be found, the appointments could be made from within the Secretariat.

In that connection, the SECRETARY pointed out that a French national was about to join the Secretariat in a high-ranking economic post and might be available.

The CHAIRMAN noted that a tentative date should in any case soon be fixed for the economic consultations.

The SECRETARY stated that it might be desirable to have a Spanish-speaking economist on the Preparatory Economic Commission and asked whether any of the Members could suggest any names. It was pointed out that the Pan-American Union might be able to give the name of a suitable economist.

THE ADVANCE PARTY TO PALESTINE

The CHAIRMAN observed that in view of the [letter dated 16 February](#), which had now been received from Mr. Fletcher-Cooke regarding the proposed dispatch to Palestine of an advance party of the Secretariat, in which the Palestine Government was not insisting on its previous position that one person be sent to Palestine in advance of the advance party, the Commission had to reconsider the decision taken at the [thirty-ninth meeting](#). It was, therefore, agreed that the matter would be left to the Secretariat, which would inform the Palestine Government of whatever plan it decided upon. It was understood, however, that should the Secretariat send one person ahead of the advance party, that person would be one of the proposed four members of the advance party and not an extra person.

CABLE FROM THE JEWISH AGENCY CONCERNING ARAB ARMED RESISTANCE

The CHAIRMAN called the attention of Members to the cable dated 13 February sent by Mr. Ben Gurion of the Jewish Agency for Palestine concerning Arab armed forces. As the above cable was not considered as containing any new important information, it was decided that a mere acknowledgement was all that was necessary.

COMMUNICATION BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN stated that he had to absent himself to keep an appointment with the Secretary-General.

It was agreed that consideration of the draft Note for Sir Alexander Cadogan would be postponed until the return of the Chairman. The Chairman left the meeting and Mr. Medina (Bolivia), the Vice-Chairman, took the chair.

CABLE FROM THE ACTING MAYOR OF TEL AVIV

With reference to the cable from Mr. Perelson, Acting Mayor of Tel Aviv, protesting against the policy of the Palestine Government aimed at paralyzing the defenses of the Jewish population, it was agreed that an acknowledgement would be sent in which mention would be made of the fact that the aspect in question of the Palestinian Government policy was one of those emphasized in the Commission's [Special Report](#) to the Security Council. The cable would also be referred to the Mandatory Power for its information.

COMMUNICATION FROM MR. TRAFFORD SMITH CONCERNING ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS OFF HAIFA

It was observed that the information contained in the above communication was already known to the Commission as it had appeared in the news. The communication would be acknowledged.

COMMUNICATION FROM MR. FLETCHER-COOKE CONCERNING POSTAL SERVICES IN PALESTINE

The SECRETARY pointed out that a paper was in process of preparation by Mr. Stavropoulos (Senior Legal Adviser) on the subject of Postal Services in Palestine, in accordance with the Commission's earlier request that such a paper be prepared.

It was decided to postpone consideration of Mr. Fletcher-Cooke's communication until the Secretariat paper was ready.

COMMUNICATION FROM MR. TRAFFORD SMITH CONCERNING BRITISH MEMBERS OF THE PALESTINE POLICE FORCE

It was noted that the information contained in the above communication confirmed that received earlier from Sir Alexander Cadogan.

The Commission would acknowledge receipt of the communication, saying that it took note of its contents,

CONSIDERATION OF THE INTERIM REPORT ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATION CONCERNING THE REMOVAL OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS FROM CYPRUS TO PALESTINE -

In submitting his report on his negotiations with Sir Alexander Cadogan concerning the above subject, Mr. MORGAN (Panama) stressed that the report should be kept confidential in compliance with the request of the Mandatory Power, which, out of good will to the Commission, was taking action in this matter contrary to its announced policy.

Mr. MORGAN (Panama) noted that his impression of the progress being made in removing immigrants from Cyprus was good and that he believed that the present on-the-spot negotiations between the Mandatory Power and the Jewish Agency were the best method of dealing with the matter.

He stated that he was expecting to receive soon statistical information on the removal of immigrants.

It was agreed that Mr. Morgan's Report would be taken up again when the additional information Mr. Morgan was expecting was at hand. Meanwhile, the Report was for the Commission's information.

Mr. BARNES (Public Relations Adviser) stated that although he took note of the Commission's instructions that Mr. Morgan's Report was to be kept confidential, he could not guarantee that the contents of that Report or any other confidential information would not reach the press, inasmuch as some of the most secret documents of the Commission had recently leaked out to the press.

CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTION OF ARMS EMBARGO

The proposal was made that the Commission request the lifting of the embargo on arms to Palestine in all the countries in which the embargo existed, not in favour of either the Arabs or the Jews, but of the Commission itself.

In opposition to the proposal it was stated that such a step on the part of the Commission would be premature as it might make more difficult the negotiations which Mr. Francisco (Philippines) was carrying on with the Mandatory Power with reference to the formation of a militia in the proposed Jewish State.

The opinion was also expressed that nothing was likely to come of such a request at the moment pending the consideration of the Palestine question by the Security Council.

It was pointed out that the Commission was not, in any case, in a position at the present time either to buy or to ship arms to Palestine.

In support of the proposal it was argued that although it was true that the Commission was not now in a position to ship the arms, a favourable reaction to its request that the embargo be lifted would strengthen the Commission in its efforts to work towards the future shipment of arms. Since the Commission had already agreed that the Jewish Agency for Palestine should meanwhile be permitted to do the preliminary work in the formation of a militia, the Commission should endeavour to be in the position to ship arms at the earliest possible moment. That would also be consistent with the tone of the Commission's [Special Report](#) to the Security Council in which it was stated that, despite all difficulties, the Commission would go ahead with all the steps required for the implementation of the General Assembly's [resolution](#).

An argument advanced against the proposal was that it might impede the Commission's objective regarding the sending of an armed force to Palestine. The Commission's [Special Report](#) to the Security Council had made it clear that without such a force there would be a great deal of bloodshed in Palestine. The sending of arms might be viewed as likely to increase the bloodshed.

It was pointed out, too, that the preliminary steps in establishing a militia were still being negotiated with the Mandatory Power. Those steps were: the designation of cantonment areas, recruitment, training, and equipment. Therefore, until the fourth step had been achieved, there was no point in seeking the lifting of the embargo.

The question was asked whether, in the event that the arms and equipment in Palestine were turned over to the Commission, the Commission would consider itself justified in asking for the lifting of the embargo. It was decided to postpone further consideration of the proposal for the time being.

INVITATION TO MR. CREECH-JONES TO MEET WITH THE COMMISSION

The SECRETARY was authorized to extend an invitation to Mr. Creech-Jones, the United Kingdom Colonial Secretary, who would be arriving in New York shortly to represent his Government in the discussion in the Security Council of the Palestine question to meet with the Commission.

POSTPONEMENT OF THE CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT NOTE FOR ALEXANDER CADOGAN

The Commission agreed to postpone consideration of the Draft Note for Sir Alexander Cadogan, submitted by Mr. Federspiel (Denmark) in order to allow the Members more time to study the questions it involved.

The meeting rose at 4,40 p.m.