

UNITED NATIONS CONCILIATION COMMISSION FOR PALESTINE

GENERAL COMMITTEE

RESTRICTED
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6 July 1949
ORIGINAL: English

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING

held in Lausanne, on Wednesday,
6 July 1949, at 10.15 a.m.

Present: Mr. de la Tour du Pin (France) - Chairman
Mr. Eralp (Turkey)
Mr. Wilkins (United States of America)

Mr. Milner - Committee Secretary

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Consideration of questions arising from the meeting with the
Arab delegations held on 5 July (Note prepared by the
Secretariat)

The CHAIRMAN proposed that the views of the Arab delegations on certain specific matters which had been stressed by them in the previous day's meeting, should be conveyed to the Israeli delegation in the course of the meeting to be held with the latter delegation later that day. He thought it essential, with regard to point 1, to make it clear to the Israeli delegation that representatives of the Arab States attached great importance to the question of establishing responsibility for the deterioration of the groves.

Mr. ERALP thought that point 3, concerning absentee property, could be raised with the Israeli delegation in conjunction with point 1 as the Arab delegations had raised the legitimate point that, if the custodian had adequately fulfilled his responsibility in taking the necessary precautions to ensure protection of the orange groves, they would not have fallen into such a state of dereliction. He agreed with a suggestion made by the Chairman to the effect that Mr. Roch's request for exact and detailed information on the state of the groves should be transmitted to the Technical Committee and not to the Israeli delegation, but suggested that the Israeli delegation should be informed of the Arab offer to send owners of orange groves or their representatives to Israel in order to help the Technical Committee in its work. Referring to
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point 2, he thought the Israeli delegation should be asked for information on the 30 pounds monthly limit on withdrawals which Mr. Roch had understood existed with regard to accounts held by Arabs resident in Israel, and as to whether accounts transferred by absentees to persons resident in Israel were at the unrestricted disposal of the beneficiaries so designated.

The CHAIRMAN, turning to point 5, considered that it would be sufficient for the present to explain to the Israeli delegation the Arab concept of family life as it had been described at the previous day's meeting without as yet going into the details of what both parties understood by the term "minor children".

With regard to point 6, he said that he would request information on the use to which mosques and churches were being put by the Israeli authorities and would inform the Israeli delegation that the Committee was waiting for further details from the Arab delegations. He noted that the Committee was in agreement that it would be far beyond the Technical Committee's scope to visit all the mosques and churches in Israel in order to ascertain whether they were available for purposes of worship.

In connection with point 8, he pointed out that the comparison between the Father Custos of the Holy Land and the Supreme Moslem Council as authorities which should be entrusted with the control of religious property, was scarcely a valid one since the latter was an ex-enemy of the Israeli Government and the Father Custos was an Italian. He agreed to the suggestion made by Mr. Wilkins that the matter should be referred with a request for information to the Committee on Jerusalem. He felt that in its study of the question that Committee might make particular reference to the situation which existed under the British Mandate.

Information from the Technical Committee (Memorandum from the Secretariat)

The COMMITTEE SECRETARY informed the Committee that a further telegram had been received from the Technical Committee which indicated that its first report would reach the Committee either on or before Monday, 11 July.

The CHAIRMAN stated that, in the absence of the members of the Commission, the General Committee would of course

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study that report. Concerning the information received by cable from the Technical Committee, he agreed with Mr. Wilkins who pointed out that the Technical Committee had been requested merely to obtain detailed information and was not therefore competent to set up a special body to conduct investigations, and that the Technical Committee was itself supposed to be the "impartial group" which it was not proposing to constitute.

The COMMITTEE SECRETARY pointed out that the Principal Secretary had already reminded the Technical Committee of the precise instructions cabled by the Commission in that regard and had requested a report at the earliest possible date.

Action to be taken with regard to Mr. Bulos' letter dated 30 June (document ORG/24)

The COMMITTEE SECRETARY drew the Committee's attention to a further letter from Mr. Bulos in reply to the letter dated 30 June from the Principal Secretary in accordance with the Committee's decision (document ORG/22). Mr. Bulos requested action with regard to funds for the resettlement plan and had also asked the Commission to approach the British Government directly on the question of the release of sterling assets.

Mr. WILKINS suggested that the Secretariat should draft a reply to be considered by the Committee reaffirming the stand already taken by the Commission.

The Committee agreed that, since a formal acknowledgment had already been sent, further action in the matter would be deferred for the moment.

Meetings of the Committee during the period 11-16 July

The CHAIRMAN requested Mr. Wilkins to replace him as Chairman as from the following day, since he himself would be absent during the final week of the recess. Mr. Benoist would act as representative of France on the Committee.

Mr. Wilkins enquired whether, in the absence of any representative of Syria such as had been the case at the last meeting with the Arab delegations, the Committee would be able to hold further meetings with the Arab delegations.

The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Commission had taken the view that certain meetings might be held at discretion with the Arab delegations separately. In any case, the

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other Arab delegations had been willing to hold the previous meeting in the absence of the Syrian representative.

It was agreed that the Committee should meet to consider the report of the Technical Committee as soon as it was available.
