

GENERAL
ASSEMBLYASSEMBLEE
GENERALE

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A/AC.13/SR.41
9 August 1947

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FORTY-FIRST MEETING (PRIVATE)

Held at the United Nations Building, Geneva,
on Monday, 28 July 1947, at 9:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sandstrom (Sweden)

Mr. Hood	(Australia)
Mr. Rand	(Canada)
Mr. Lisicky	(Czechoslovakia)
Mr. Garcia Granados	(Guatemala)
Sir Abdur Rahman	(India)
Mr. Entezam	(Iran)
Mr. Blom	(Netherlands)
Mr. Garcia Salazar	(Peru)
Mr. Fabregat	(Uruguay)
Mr. Simic	(Yugoslavia)

SECRETARIAT : Mr. Hoo (Assistant Secretary-General)
Mr. Garcia Robles (Secretary)

The CHAIRMAN called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Adoption of the Agenda

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India) opposed item 2 of the agenda, dealing with a report on the visit to Amman, on the ground that some members had gone there in their individual capacities.

The CHAIRMAN said he had only intended to give the Committee a brief account of the visit to Amman, together with the written statement submitted to the visiting members by the Trans-Jordan Government.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) maintained that the Chairman should merely inform the Committee of the visit to Amman, but that the information should not be in the form of

/a report

a report.

DECISION: The Committee agreed to change the wording of item 2 to read "Information by the Chairman about the visit of some of the members to Amman."

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India) stressed that members who had made the visit had done so in their individual capacities.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) moved that the question of the delegates' per diem allowance be put on the agenda.

DECISION: The Committee agreed to add to the agenda an item dealing with the members' per diem allowance.

The agenda was adopted as amended.

Information by the Chairman on the Visit of some of the Members to Amman.

The CHAIRMAN, supplementing the information contained in the programme of the visit to Amman, said that the written statement by the Trans-Jordan Government did not differ much from the views expressed by the Arab States. The Trans-Jordan Foreign Minister, in his private conversations with members, had appeared to be less intransigent than the Arab representatives heard in Beirut.

The Chairman further explained that members had objected to the wording of a telegram concerning a public meeting which had been arranged by the Trans-Jordan authorities and at which the Prime Minister was to have made a statement. Members had declared themselves willing to attend the meeting on the understanding that it was not to be a Committee meeting, and that they would only pass on to the Committee what they heard.

During the same discussion reference had been made to the telegram^{*} which had given an explanation as to why the Trans-Jordan Government had not sent a representative to Beirut. The Foreign Minister of Trans-Jordan had declared

^{*} See Verbatim Record of the Thirty-Ninth Meeting (Document A/AC.13/PV.39, page 33).

that no such telegram had been sent from Trans-Jordan, and careful search had failed to reveal any trace of it. A Lebanese official, when told of the denial, had stated that the telegram had been signed by the King himself.

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia) added that the telegrams had also expressed the Trans-Jordan Government's approval of all the statements made by the Arab countries.

DECISION: The Committee agreed that notes on the conversations with the Prime Minister and the King of Trans-Jordan should be communicated informally to members.

Proposed Visit to Displaced Persons' Camps

The CHAIRMAN recalled the previous discussion on the question of a visit to the displaced persons' camps, and considered that the time had come to take a decision.

Mr. Garcia ROBLES (Secretary) referred to the various communications received by the Committee on the subject, including a telegram received at Geneva from the Central Committee of Liberated Jews in the British Zone, in which the Committee was urged to visit the camps.

The CHAIRMAN was in favour of such a visit, on condition that it would not upset the Committee's work at Geneva. They had first to decide the question of principle -- whether to visit the camps or not. He did not believe that the matter had a great bearing on the main problem before the Committee; at the same time the question of the Jews in the displaced persons' camps had a certain connection with the Palestine question. Accordingly, he invited members to express their views.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India) opposed visiting the displaced persons' camps. The Committee should not be carried away by sentimental considerations. Its duty was to find a solution to the problem of a particular country. If Jews

/were found

were found to have a right to build a national home without any limitation, the question of displaced persons would not arise.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Committee had to take into account the urge of the Jews to go to Palestine. One of the main reasons for that urge was that Jews were in those camps. The Committee was justified in going to the camps, because the question had a certain bearing on the Palestine problem.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India) maintained that the urge of some persons to go to a given country did not necessarily give them the right to go there. On the contrary, the wishes of the people living in that country should receive foremost consideration.

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala) reminded the delegate of India that the core of the main problem of Palestine was immigration, to which the Arabs were strongly opposed. According to the memorandum by the Prime Minister of Trans-Jordan, the urge of the Jews to go to Palestine was due to the propaganda of the Jewish Agency. He considered that a visit to the camps would enlighten the Committee on that point.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) maintained that a visit to the camps would be unnecessary. The problem of refugees and displaced persons was now in the hands of the IRO, and he wondered whether a visit to the camps by the Committee would not interfere with the work of the IRO. Moreover, he felt that a visit to the camps, even if undertaken by a sub-committee, would delay the Committee's work.

The CHAIRMAN reminded the delegate of Iran that the one condition he had laid down for a visit to the camps was that the Committee's work should proceed without disturbance.

/As for the

As for the IRO, his view was that the Committee should not make any detailed recommendation regarding the displaced persons, but merely a recommendation for the speedy solution of the problem.

Mr. HOOD (Australia) said that although it could still be maintained that there was no basic connection between conditions in the camps and the political problem in Palestine, he had come to the conclusion that there was a connection between the state of opinion in the camps and the state of opinion in Palestine, particularly as regards the motives inspiring the extremist movement in Palestine. The knowledge of the plans by the IRO for the movement of displaced persons might affect the outlook of some of them. He therefore would not oppose any proposal for a visit to the camps.

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia) explained why he was opposed to the visit to the camps. The question had to be considered in the light of the time available and the work which the Committee had to do. He pointed out that the subject matter of the Committee's investigation was the Palestinian problem in all its aspects. That problem, as well as the question of displaced persons, had an international aspect; hence the two were in a certain measure interdependent. However, the desire of Jews among the displaced persons to immigrate into Palestine was already common knowledge. He felt, therefore, that any visit on the part of the Committee would be superfluous.

The CHAIRMAN suggested sending a sub-committee or sub-committees consisting of alternates to visit the camps.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay) said he would vote in favour of a visit to the displaced persons' camps. Only by direct examination of the facts would the Committee be able to gather the necessary information for its report. He believed that the problem of the displaced persons' camps was related to the problem of Palestine and that a visit to the camps was within

the Committee's terms of reference.

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala) declared that the first Committee of the General Assembly had adopted an amendment containing the understanding that the Committee should visit the displaced persons' camps, and that the General Assembly expected such a visit to be made. From information that he had since received from the United States and Latin America he gathered that public opinion in those countries favoured a visit by the Committee to the camps. He therefore considered that one or several sub-committees should make the visit.

The CHAIRMAN said that although the terms of reference gave power to the Committee to visit the displaced persons' camps, he had no indication that it was the general expectation of the General Assembly that the Committee should do so.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) endorsed the Chairman's view.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India) considered that after its refusal to visit the Cyprus Camps, the Committee would be inconsistent if it now decided to visit the displaced persons' camps in Europe. Furthermore, the Committee, by going to the camps, would be encroaching on the work of another Committee of the United Nations, whose task was to find accommodation for the displaced persons.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Committee's decision not to visit the Cyprus camps had been taken on the understanding that it would not prejudice the question of a visit to the camps in Germany.

Mr. RAND (Canada) stated that he would not oppose a request on the part of any member to visit the camps. He pointed out that many of the political arrangements suggested to the Committee involved increased immigration to Palestine, and the Committee would want to know all the facts connected with the camps in order to be in a position to make any

/recommendation

recommendation concerning further immigration of Jews into Palestine.

Mr. SALAZAR (Peru) opposed the proposal to visit the camps. It would be extremely difficult to solve the question of Palestine if the Committee were to relate that question to the Jewish problem in general. There was no analogy between the Anglo-American Committee: the former had been specifically instructed to study the question of the displaced persons, while the task of the latter was to find a practical solution of the Palestine problem.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India) contended that the question of whether or not Jewish immigration into Palestine should be permitted would have to be examined by the Committee. He could not see how the condition of the displaced persons would influence the Committee when it came to decide the question.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands) maintained that it would be difficult to oppose visiting camps when members were in favour of such a visit.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia), asked by the Chairman to express his views on the matter, said he could not understand the exact purpose of a visit to the camps. He felt that the connection of the Jews among the displaced persons with the problem of Palestine would become clearer when the Committee's views had reached a stage of greater development.

Mr. HOOD (Australia) suggested that, before a formal decision was taken, the Committee should consult in private with a representative of the IRO in Geneva, in order to learn from him the plans of that organization for the movement of displaced persons, as well as the general background of the problem.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands) and Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) supported the proposal of the delegate of Australia.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN asked whether members agreed with Mr. Hood's proposal.

DECISION: The Committee approved the proposal of the delegate of Australia to postpone a decision on the visit to the displaced persons' camps until the Committee had consulted with a representative of the IRO.

Hearings in Geneva

The CHAIRMAN asked members to express their views on the question whether a representative of the Mandatory Power should be asked to testify before the Committee. He himself wished to know the Mandatory Power's view on its obligations towards the Jews and Arabs, and its reactions to the various proposals for a solution of the Palestine problem.

Mr. RAND (Canada) pointed out that the United Kingdom Government had already intimated that it would not commit itself in any way. He thought that the Committee could not properly ask the Mandatory Power what particular view it favoured, and therefore the Committee should not make the request.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands) said it would be of value to the Committee to have explanations from a representative of the United Kingdom Government on the Morrison and Bevin Plans, and whether it still maintained the views expressed in the White Paper of 1939.

Mr. RAND (Canada) considered that that kind of information could be found in the records. As regards the interpretation of the Mandate, he maintained that the Committee should assume the responsibility of judging on the voluminous material in its possession.

The CHAIRMAN felt that in order to complete its investigation, the Committee should hear the views of the Mandatory Power.

/Mr. RAND (Canada)

Mr. RAND (Canada) considered that the Committee's Procedure in the matter should be similar to that followed in regard to the Arab States, that is, the United Kingdom Government should be informed that its representatives could make a statement if they so desired.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) pointed out that if the Committee wished to hear the United Kingdom Government it should first decide on what particular aspect of the problem a statement was desired.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) enquired whether in that case the Committee could proceed in the same informal way as it had done in respect of the Arab States, namely, first to ask the United Kingdom Government whether it wished its representatives to appear before the Committee and state their views.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) suggested that questions on which the Committee desired elucidation could be put to Mr. MacGillivray, the liaison officer of the Mandatory Power. He could be told that if the United Kingdom Government wished to make any statement the Committee would be ready to hear it.

The CHAIRMAN reiterated that the Committee's investigation would be incomplete if it did not hear some representative of one of the most interested parties in the conflict.

Mr. RAND (Canada) maintained that if the United Kingdom Government did not intimate its desire to be heard, the Committee should not take any action in the matter.

Mr. HOOD (Australia) supported the proposal of the delegate of Iran that any question should first be addressed to the liaison officer.

The CHAIRMAN proposed postponing a decision on the question until a later meeting.

/DECISION:

DECISION: The Committee postponed its decision on the question of whether a representative of the Mandatory Power should be asked to testify.

Mr. Garcia ROBLES (Secretary) referred to the request for a hearing by the Alliance Israélite Universelle of Paris and by the Anglo-Jewish Association of London, on both of which the Committee had postponed a decision until its arrival in Geneva.

DECISION: The Committee decided not to grant a hearing to the Alliance Israélite Universelle of Paris and the Anglo-Jewish Association of London.

Mr. Garcia ROBLES (Secretary) recalled the request for an oral hearing by Dr. Solomon Grinberg, on which matter also the Committee had postponed its decision.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that a decision on Dr. Grinberg's request should be postponed until the Committee had decided upon the visit to the displaced persons' camps.

DECISION: The Committee agreed to defer the question of hearing Dr. Grinberg until a decision had been taken on the visit to the displaced persons' camps.

Per Diem Allowance.

The CHAIRMAN informed members that a copy of the letter from the Palestine Administration on the question of the cost of living in Jerusalem would be circulated.

Mr. HOO (Assistant Secretary-General) gave a report on the various communications on the matter of the per diem allowance which he and the Chairman had sent to Mr. Pelt, Acting Secretary-General.

DECISION: The Committee decided to send a personal telegram to the Secretary-General in Oslo and to call Lake Success by telephone, on the subject of the per diem allowance.

/Work Programme

Work Programme for Preparation of Report.

The CHAIRMAN stated that in order to avoid a lengthy and general discussion he had thought of submitting to the Committee a memorandum which would permit it to proceed by orderly steps in its debates on the subject-matter of the report. He invited other members to submit similar memoranda, which would be distributed to the Committee. After explaining his own memorandum, he invited an expression of views.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) moved the adjournment in order to enable members to have private consultations among themselves.

Mr. SIMIC (Yugoslavia) seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.