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Jewish Agency, United Nations Special Committee on Palestine
meeting minutes, 1947 undated.

(THIS IS THE FIRST INSTANCE DURING THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE WHERE DELEGATES EXPRESSED THEIR ^{POLITICAL} VIEWS, NO RECORD WAS KEPT BY THE U.N. OF THIS MEETING, GERALD HAS THE ONLY ONE GIVEN HIM BY MEMBER OF UN STAFF, EVEN DELEGATES DO NOT HAVE A COPY OF THIS)

Minutes of UNSCOP's private meetings on August 7, 1947

On the agenda the question: "Shall Palestine be a unitary Arab or unitary Jewish State?"

Rand objected to setting up Palestine as an Arab State saying that the Arabs testified either in Beirut or in Amman that an Arab State would need the United Nations assistance, that it could not stand by itself. Rand added that, on the other hand, an Arab State would mean the betrayal of the Jewish people and a violation of international agreements.

Chairman: It was my understanding that what was said was that the Arab State would expect assistance from the United Nations but only in the same sense that any member state would expect assistance if necessary.

Entezami: That was my understanding, too.

Rand: No, as I remember it, it was pointed out that an Arab State would need assistance for reasons of security.

The Chairman made other explanations, but Rand held to his objection. He said he was not in favour of either an Arab or a Jewish State in all of Palestine.

Grenados: There has never been an Arab State in Palestine. The Arabs cannot say that they are trying to reconstitute an Arab State there. Yet there is an Arab population in the majority and also a Jewish community; and since both communities have certain spiritual or cultural roots in Palestine, it is quite impossible to accept the idea of neither an Arab or a Jewish state.

Simitch, Hood, Blom and others were in full agreement with this point of view.

Entezami: I think the Arabs certainly have a right to claim independence but I think for reasons of a political nature, as well as for reasons of security, any possibility of forming an Arab or a Jewish state in all of Palestine is precluded.

Chairman and Abdour Rahman both agree to this.

Rahman: The Arabs of Palestine were given an international offer of independence. The Arabs received their promises at a moment of great difficulty for the Allied Powers. It is true that there has not been any Arab State in Palestine; but the movement for Arab independence has been going on even against the Turks. It is a natural right of the Arabs. What the Arabs did at the time of the war was simply to take advantage of an international offer. Surely there is no reason to question Arab rights in Palestine simply because there has never been an Arab State in Palestine. On the other hand, the Jews also received certain international offers, which were incorporated in the Mandate - in my opinion not rightly, not justly, not legally - and the Arabs never accepted such a declaration as just. However, we cannot assume that neither the existence of an Arab

culture or a Jewish culture is sufficient to lead to an extreme solution. I reject such an extreme solution. I favour a reasonable one.

Chairman: The promise given to the Arabs were interpreted by them in a certain way. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the promises given to the Arabs did not have an international sanction, whereas the promises to the Jews did have such an international sanction.

Committee's conclusion: It unanimously rejects the idea of an Arab or a Jewish State in all of Palestine.

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Question: Bi-nationalism.

Rand: I reject this. It will lead to a deadlock in the function of government. But even more important is the fact that it would deny to both peoples their claims to a country of their own. The idea of a holy land in which both Jews and Arabs will live together peacefully is I am afraid a possibility beyond the masses of Arabs and Jews. The ideal itself is not sufficient to make the masses live together peacefully.

Rahman: If a bi-national state means parity, then that is no practical solution. I oppose a bi-national state precisely because it is so idealistic. Rahman then spoke of a unitary state with proportional representation of different peoples in the country; but other members of the Committee then pointed out that this meant in effect an Arab State. Rahman denied this; he offered to explain his point more in detail at a later date.

Granados: I envisage a bi-national state as one in which two peoples live in a country and both have a share in its sovereignty, with the same rights to both, free immigration, etc. I admit that idea has its difficulties. There should be some way to overcome these difficulties. Since I have an open mind on the question, I am ready to consider any binational scheme which can be acceptable or, if that is not possible, I am ready to consider any other scheme.

Simitch: I favour a bi-national state, on the basis of a scheme I propose to submit to the committee later. I think it will meet most of the common objections against bi-nationalism.

Lisinsky: I am doubtful about bi-nationalism. However, I should like to be enlightened as to the scheme of Mr. Simich.

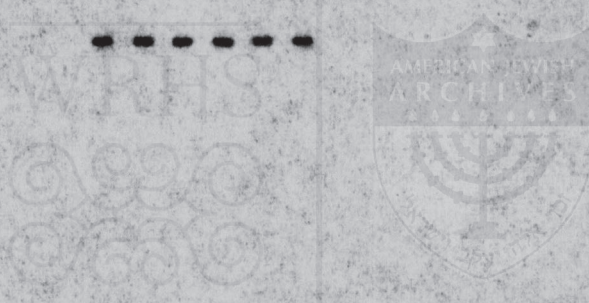
Salazar: I am doubtful about bi-nationalism also. I don't believe any acceptable scheme can be worked out. I am rather prepared to consider partition.

Hood: I think the bi-national device is a highly artificial one. I see many difficulties in its implementation. The only way to implement it is on a basis of a clear cooperation between the two peoples. I don't see any such cooperation.

Blom: I am ready to consider any reasonable solution, but for the moment, I too think that a bi-national state would be highly artificial.

Entezam: A bi-national state might be based on the hope of a change of attitude between Jews and Arabs. I am still optimistic as to this possible cooperation. I see many difficulties in the scheme, but I think we can find ways and means to defeat such difficulties. I feel that perhaps a provisional solution of bi-nationalism might be recommended, and that after some time the people, being trained in a common way of life and cooperation, without the interference of foreign powers, could decide what kind of a government they wished.

Fabrizat: I am against bi-nationalism. It means a definite solution imposed upon these two people. I don't think we have the right to make such a definite solution. Rather, we should make a provisional solution in order to allow that at some later date these peoples may decide for themselves. I have a plan I will propose to the committee - a partition scheme with certain parts of the country (the Negev) under a mandate administered by the Jewish State, the Arab State, and a third state appointed by the UN. My position is not an intransigent one. I am ready to look at a better plan.



- A -

30-31st of August

~~Now let us see the~~ actual verbatim picture of how the report was written and agreed upon.

Sir Abdur Rahman: The phrase, "its memories of the Arab terror of 1936-39"; I do not accept that.

Mr. Garcia Granados (Guatemala): Well, will you accept the "Jewish terror" which appears on the next page?

Sir Abdur: When we come to the next page, we will talk about it.

Chairman: Can we change the word, "Terror" to "revolt"?

Fabregat (Uruguay): No, "revolt" is not "terror".

Granados: Was it a revolt against the Jews?

Sir Abdur: No. You might say "the Arab rising".

Chairman: All right. We'll make it read, "The Arab rising of 1936-39."

Sir Abdur: In Paragraph 17 I object to the words, "immigration could, therefore, be considered the lifeblood of the potential National Home." I think that "lifeblood of the potential National Home" has a special color about it which I do not like. I think it should be changed to read, "While immigration was regarded to be essential for the growth of the National Home."

Chairman: I do not think we need to say "regarded" because only 84,000 Jews were settled in Palestine.

Sir Abdur: But in my estimate, 84,000 Jews were ample to make a National Home. Not one more was required to make a National Home.

That is finally settled.

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Next item.

Chairman: Any observations on Paragraph 25?

Granados: Now I suggest the same thing that Sir Abdur has suggested. I accepted the word "terrorist" but since he did not accept it for one party, I will not accept it for the other party.

Sir Abdur (icily): The Arabs never terrorised.

Chairman, to Granados: Why are you so touchy about that word? If you have read the newspapers about the Zionist Congress in Zurich, you will find that it is referred to as "terrorist action."

Granados: I had accepted that. However, both things are facts -- that the Arabs have terrorism and the Jews have terrorism.

Sir Abdur: Excuse me. The Arabs have risen. It was not terrorism.

Granados: In Hebron they killed women and children. It was terrorism. If we speak of Jewish terrorism we should speak of Arab terrorism as well, or not speak of it at all.

Entezam (Iran): Do you know what "terrorism" means? You cannot see the man who acts.

Granados: You cannot rise against a people who are not the Government. It is not a rising.

Chairman: Mr. Granados, the Jews themselves use the word "terrorism?"

Granados: I do not care. The Arab action was terrorism and in order to be fair I ask to suppress the word here. If "Arabterrorism" is to be changed then the other change should be made.

Entezam: How about "underground activities".

Chairman: No, that does not give the meaning of it.

Vote taken. Word "terrorist" kept in.

Then came a long heated discussion on the Mufti; how was he to be treated in the report? This was important, because in the event of an Arab state being set up, whether alone or with a Jewish state, the Mufti, as Chairman of the Arab Higher Committee, was in line to be the first president of that Arab state.

Sir Abdur: I wish to delete the phrase that it was "on account of war time association with the Axis," that the Mufti was not permitted to return to Palestine. He was not permitted because of internal administration.

Grenados: I oppose that.

Assistant secretary: A British memorandum gives this as an explanation of why he was not able to return. In the questioning of the Anglo-American Committee it was given as the reason why he was not allowed to return.

Sir Abdur: There is nothing in our records showing that this is a statement of fact.

Salazar: Could we put in the word "alleged" in wartime association with the Axis.

Sir Abdur: It was not proved.

Grenados: It was proved. He was in communication with Berlin and was trying to organize another army.

Sir Abdur: That is not the reason why he was not permitted into Palestine. It was because of internal trouble in the country. We can give it, however, as someone else's reason rather than ours.

Chairman: Of course the power who had the right to allow him to return to Palestine says that it was because of wartime association with the Axis. It is not a statement of ours.

Sir Abdur: It is with very great respect a statement of ours.

Chairman: We will check the reason given, but if it is given as a reason I do not know why we should change it.

Sir Abdur: You might give it as a reason given by so and so.

Granados: If the Mufti is not a Nazi, the Irgun is not a terrorist organization.

Sir Abdur (ignoring him): If it is given by the British Government, say so.

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Next paragraphs -- no observations. Then a moment later:

Sir Abdur: I should like to draw your attention to something in Paragraph 39. It says, "In times of crisis, as in 1936-38, such pressure (by the Arabs) has taken the form of intimidation and assassination." The Arabs never intimidated.

Granados: Only assassinated?

Sir Abdur (again ignoring him): There was a rising by the Arabs, but there was no intimidation. I have read almost all the literature on the subject and I did not find in any place such a statement.

Salazar: I move that these portions be deleted, Mr. Chairman, because we have no proof in the record of those affirmations.

Chairman: We will leave it out then. It is proposed that it should be deleted. Who are for deleting it?

(Four votes for)

Granados (promptly): It is maintained then.

Antezan (equally promptly): It is refused then. You have to maintain a text. We are trying to vote Paragraph 39 and four votes is not enough to have a majority.

Granados: You are trying to delete it. According to the rules, the amendment is to delete it.

Antezan: Point of order. We have a draft here, a working paper. We have to vote on each paragraph. If Paragraph 39 is neither accepted nor rejected, it means that it does not exist. Therefore, it is refused.

Finally, vote, 4 against, 7 maintain.

[n.2.]

- RESERVATIONS -

Chairman:

I ask the members of the group of seven to declare whether they agree with this scheme or agree with the reservations they wish to make.

Canada: I agree with the plan.

Czechoslovakia: Before signing the report I wish to renew the reservation which I made at the 46th meeting with regard to the final attribution of Galilee and especially of Western Galilee. You will remember that at that meeting I stated in my opinion this matter requires a further study, that we had neither time enough for this study nor the necessary technical means, and that both parties had not been heard on this specific point. I stated that in my view this question should not be decided finally by us, as a final proposal, but should be left to the Assembly after the representatives of both parties had been heard.

I do not wish to make any special reservation in this respect in the appendix, in order not to impair the unanimity which -- and I think rightly -- was considered by my colleagues of the group as a highly desirable feature.

Therefore, I am limiting myself to this declaration which I consider will be put on record. I wish to reserve the position of my Government on this question in the Assembly.

I wish to state that generally I do not feel bound by all particular provisions of the plan called partition with economic union, to which I adhered. There are some particular provisions^{on} which I must reserve the position of my Government. I mention, for instance, the provision about the transitional period. My colleagues will remember that in our informal talks I insisted on the political necessity of fixing this transitory period for not more than a year. However, in the deliberations of the informal group on the constitution, this transitory period was extended to two years. I am

afraid that this extension for another year may create undesirable political complications when this question is discussed in the Assembly.

The continuance of the present Mandatory power to carry out the administration in the transitory period which was not to exceed one year would probably have been accepted on the grounds of expediency.

I am not sure if this same consideration will apply to a transitory period of two years for obvious political reasons which I do not feel it is appropriate to insist on at this moment. Therefore, in this question too, I feel it necessary to reserve the position of my Government in the Assembly.

Guatemala: I agree with the plan.

Netherlands: Mr. Chairman, I agree with the plan for partition with economic union, but I would like to add a few points. I should like to deal with the transitional period. I have more than once stated that there were many factors which are unknown to this Committee which would have weight in the decision in this respect. There are factors also with regard to the enforceability of the solution. We did not make very specific proposals on this point, though it is very important, but we were not able to do so, in my opinion. Therefore, there is a certain element of uncertainty left in this respect, but in my opinion the Committee could not go further than it did.

I would like to make one other reservation with regard to boundaries in the sense that I do not agree with the general trend of the boundaries we propose, but in my opinion it could well be that further study in detail might prove that some other arrangement in this respect would be better than the one we propose. The same applies not to the principle but to some of the specific provisions we have inserted in our scheme for the arrangement of the relations between the Jewish and Arab states.

I agree with the plan.

Peru: I agree with the plan.

Uruguay: I agree generally with the plan of partition. I will write my reservations and state my opinion in relation to Recommendation 12 in Chapter V in the declaration on boundaries, the declaration on limitation, and the declaration on religious interests in Palestine. At the time I will state my reservations and opinions in relation to these points, but I agree now and I will sign this report which is before us.

Chairman: I agree with the plan.

Guatemala: Mr. Chairman, when you asked me if I agreed, I said yes. But after hearing the explanations of the representatives of Czechoslovakia and the Netherlands, I wish to state that although I agree, and I will sign the report of the Committee in my role as delegate to this Committee, in my character of chief delegate of the Government of Guatemala, to the Assembly, if the question is reopened there I feel that my Government could give me instructions to enter into any other arrangement that could be suitable for the Assembly.

I think that the plan has been the result of the good will of most of the delegates. I consider it the general expression of our feelings and our best work. Nevertheless, I wish to state that it is possible that if the question is reopened I could take a different stand although I hope that the question will be settled definitely in the Assembly and that I will not have to do that.

Uruguay: May I add, Mr. Chairman, that I am in the same position. The Government of Uruguay may give some instructions to the delegation before the General Assembly when the question is reopened there.

Peru: I must state that I appear not as a plenipotentiary of my Government but as a delegate to the Committee, and that my Government is not bound by any act of mine now.

Chairman: In regard to all these statements, perhaps I had better state that I am in the same position as Mr. Salazar.

Canada: And I may add that I am, too.

Yugoslavia: I can also add that I am, too. It is quite natural, Mr. Chairman, that we are representatives not of our Governments, but members of an international committee, and it is as such that we give our position.

