

GENERAL
ASSEMBLYASSEMBLEE
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5 August 1947

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FORTY-SECOND MEETING (PRIVATE)

Held at the United Nations Building, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 30 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

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala) wished to make a proposal with regard to the three boats carrying refugees, off Port-de-Bouc, near Marseilles.

The CHAIRMAN said an opportunity would be given later in the meeting for discussion of the question.

The agenda was adopted.

Question of Per Diem Allowance (Item 4 of the Agenda)

Mr. HOO (Assistant Secretary-General) said a reply had been received from the Acting Secretary-General on the question of the per diem allowance. The Advisory Committee had reviewed the correspondence and was doubtful whether the rate should be increased: it suggested that the journey should be regarded as a whole, the heavier expenses incurred earlier being counter-balanced by the probable lower ones in Geneva.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN felt that the Committee could not accept such a principle, which would result in the delegates receiving a lower rate in Geneva than the delegates of other bodies meeting there. He suggested that he should write to the Secretary-General and urge his intervention.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) considered that the question should not be discussed at the present meeting. He agreed with the Chairman's proposal and said he himself would take the matter up in Committee V.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands) supported the Chairman's proposal.

DECISION:

It was agreed that the Chairman should write to the Secretary-General on the question of the per diem allowance.

Statement of Deputy Chief of the Refugees Section of the United Nations Secretariat

The SECRETARY read to the Committee a working paper prepared by Mr. Sommerfelt, Deputy Chief of the Refugees Section of the United Nations Secretariat, on the subject of the Preparatory Commission of the IRO and the problem of Jewish refugees and displaced persons.

The paper stated that as from 1 July 1947 the Preparatory Commission of the IRO had taken over repatriation and resettlement of displaced persons from UNHRA and the Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees. On that date some 675,000 displaced persons, including 175,000 Jews, had become the responsibility of the Preparatory Commission.

It had become more and more apparent that the solution of the problem of resettlement would have to be on a manpower basis, and resettlement of refugees in the countries of Western Europe was at present taking place on a purely selective basis, priority being given to miners, farm hands, textile workers, etc. Little consideration was given to the race or religion of the immigrants. It would be easily understood that few Jews would be found among those non-urban categories of workers. The agreements concluded with countries in South America and with Canada and Australia also stressed the priority to be given to non-urban populations. The United States of America was at present virtually closed to immigrants from Eastern Europe, owing to the

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quota system.

Discussing the budgetary difficulties of the Preparatory Commission, the paper said one effect of the deficit, and the consequent limitation of the Commission's operations, had been that in Italy and Austria and Jewish assembly centres were to a great extent run by the Joint Distribution Committee, which was providing for their care and maintenance from its own resources.

The Jewish Agency estimated the total number of Jewish refugees for Europe at 370,000. The main part of the Jewish refugees were Polish Jews.

Under an agreement reached at the Paris Conference on Reparations in 1946 a fund had been set up to assist non-repatriable refugees, some ninety per cent of it having been earmarked for the rehabilitation and resettlement of Jewish refugees. The Preparatory Commission had assumed responsibility for administering the assets obtained for the fund as per 1 July 1947, but an earlier agreement had assigned distribution of those assets to the Jewish Agency and Joint Distribution Committee. So far some 700,000 dollars' worth of non-monetary gold and 50 million Swedish crowns had been transferred to the fund. It was not, however, envisaged that much of the fund would go towards meeting resettlement expenses outside Palestine.

For the resettlement of displaced persons in general in overseas countries, the difficulty of obtaining necessary funds for transport was nearly as great as that of obtaining entry permits from the countries concerned.

The CHAIRMAN requested Mr. Sommerfelt to answer questions from members of the Committee.

(In accordance with the Committee's desire for information on the work of the Preparatory Commission of the IRO, the questions and answers are reproduced for the most part in extenso).

CHAIRMAN: I might perhaps ask whether, among the people settled in rural areas overseas, Jews are to be found.

Mr. SOMMERFELT: Up to date very few have been settled overseas. The main groups which have left Germany for overseas settlement have been Baltic people and a certain number of Poles and Yugoslavs. But I do not see, as I

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said in the memorandum, that they have been recruited on the basis of race or religion. I think it would be difficult to get accurate statistics as to whether any were Jews.

CHAIRMAN: Have you any idea whether, if Jews were offered resettlement overseas, they have refused, especially on the ground that they want to go to Palestine,

Mr. SOMMERFELT: We have no reports to that effect. The prevailing intention among the Jews is generally stated to be that ninety per cent of those staying in camps have as their objective Palestine. On the other hand, if offered opportunities to go elsewhere, as a general rule they accept. Between twenty and twenty-five per cent of the people in displaced persons' camps are Jews.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Are you aware whether any efforts are being made by the Jewish Agency, or otherwise, to persuade the people to say they must try to go to Palestine?

Mr. SOMMERFELT: I travelled in German occupation zones in September last year and visited a number of displaced persons' camps, and there was definitely certain propaganda inducing the people to go to Palestine.

CHAIRMAN: Propaganda carried out by which people?

Mr. SOMMERFELT: As a rule, in all Jewish displaced persons' camps there was a representative of the Jewish Agency or the Joint Distribution Committee working with UNRRA in administering camps and taking care of the education of the children - for example, having small schools - and there were also priests and rabbis taking care of the religious education.

CHAIRMAN: You have reason to believe there was propaganda going on from these representatives of the Jewish Agency to induce them to go to Palestine?

Mr. SOMMERFELT: Yes. Also there were posters on the walls in the camps showing what a bright future there was for Jews going to Palestine in comparison with, for example, those going to the United States.

CHAIRMAN: Were these posters put up on behalf of a certain organization?

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Were they signed, for example, with the name of an organization?

Mr. SOMMERFELT: No.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): Do I understand you to mean that they were being dissuaded from going to the United States, for example?

Mr. SOMMERFELT: According to these posters they were, yes. I will describe one. It was divided into two halves; one half showing a young Jew strolling happily along a beach in Palestine, and the other showing a Jew standing in front of a skyscraper in New York looking very miserable, with a little handbag in his hand.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): I should like to ask whether Jews are assembled in special assembly centres; or is no division made?

Mr. SOMMERFELT: The majority of Jews are in separate assembly centres. As I said in the memorandum, partly because of financial difficulties quite a number of these assembly centres are actually being run by the Jewish Agency or the Joint Distribution Committee.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Am I right in supposing there has never been any, let us call it, referendum on the preference of the Jews for foreign countries?

Mr. SOMMERFELT: No, but as soon as you enter a camp in Germany you feel in the atmosphere that there is a definite intention of going to Palestine. The people in the camps are to a great extent young and very fit.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): The ninety per cent you mentioned was an estimate?

Mr. SOMMERFELT: Yes. As I said, if they were offered entry to another country I think a great majority would accept.

CHAIRMAN: Do you know if there has been carried out an objective investigation into the preference of the Jews for one or the other scheme?

Mr. SOMMERFELT: No, I do not think so. It has of course been difficult too because the Jews would answer: "But where else can we go?". There are not many places where they can go.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Has there ever been a quota for immigration into a certain country with the condition that no Jews would be included?

/Mr. SOMMERFELT:

Mr. SOMMERFELT: I do not think so specifically - no. The quota system in the United States today is on the nationality basis. I believe in certain South American countries it has been on an occupation basis, but I do not think there is any definite exclusion of certain religious groups.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran): I should like to ask if you believe that a short visit to displaced persons' camps would really teach us something new, apart from what we have heard here, which is based on long experience?

Mr. SOMMERFELT: I would ask your permission not to answer that. I believe it should be left to the Committee to decide.

Hearing of Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission of IRO (Item 2 of the Agenda)

The CHAIRMAN stated that Sir Arthur Rucker, Assistant Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission of the IRO, had been asked to attend the meeting and would be accompanied by other experts of that body.

Sir Arthur RUCKER explained that in view of the importance of the task he had asked Mr. Altmeyer, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission, to take charge.

(The questions and answers are again reproduced for the most part in extenso).

CHAIRMAN: Is the Preparatory Commission of the IRO a comparatively new organization?

Mr. ALTMAYER: It came into existence in February and was intended to be a planning organization preparatory to bringing into effect the IRO. The IRO comes into existence when a certain number of member States finally accept the constitution. That number has not yet accepted the constitution. Therefore, prior to that date, the Preparatory Commission voted to assume operating responsibility as of 1 July 1947.

CHAIRMAN: Have you been preparing long-range schemes for the settlement of displaced persons in other countries?

Mr. ALTMAYER: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: In these schemes do you make special provisions for Jews,

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or do you just treat them as other displaced persons?

Mr. ALTMEYER: As other displaced persons.

CHAIRMAN: You have already, I understand, settled a number of people elsewhere.

Mr. ALTMEYER: As regards the Preparatory Commission, you can only refer to the period since 1 July of this current year, and we do not have the complete figures as to what has been done since 1 July by way of resettlement. The figures may run to about three or four thousand. We do not know.

CHAIRMAN: And before that date?

Mr. ALTMEYER: Let me say this, that when we were invited to come here we were not told what you wanted to know, and before we get into a great deal of detail if you would explain to us what you want we shall be able to assemble the data.

CHAIRMAN: What we are faced with for the moment is really only a question of whether we shall visit the displaced persons' camps in Germany and Austria. To decide this question we should want to have some facts about the work already done by other organizations. We are of course anxious not to do any over-lapping work. On the other hand, there might be facts which are of importance to us, and it is rather with a view to getting at the treatment which has already been meted out to the Jews in the displaced persons' camps that we have asked you to come here.

One matter which is of course of special importance to us is to see whether there is a special desire on the part of the Jews to go to Palestine, or if they are happy being sent to other places.

Mr. ALTMEYER: Going back to your last question, how many were resettled prior to 1 July, we have to distinguish between those who were formally transported under the aegis of international organizations and those who went of their own accord, either with the assistance of voluntary organizations or on their own individual responsibility. It is impossible to furnish you with any figures as to the people who moved either of their own accord or through the help of voluntary organizations. There are no statistics on that sort of

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movement that you can possibly get.

The movement of those who have been assisted through inter-governmental organizations is just getting under way in large numbers. We anticipate that during this next year perhaps as many as a hundred thousand or a hundred and fifty thousand may be resettled either in adjacent countries or overseas. That is aside from the number that will be repatriated during the coming year and the number that may decide to become a part of the local economy of the country in which they are at present. The number resettled through the only international organization that was in existence prior to 1 July - namely, the Inter-Governmental Committee - has been very small up to date. It runs below ten thousand altogether, I would say. But within the last few months there has been an increasing interest on the part of the countries of the world in receiving refugees, and we are very optimistic about the possibility of resettlement during this coming year.

CHAIRMAN: You have not resolved upon special treatment or provision for the Jews among the displaced persons?

Mr. ALMEYER: There is a constitution of the I.G.C. under which we are now operating. It has some language that is especially significant for the Jews so far as being protected in their rights is concerned, and being recognized as refugees or displaced persons. But so far as resettlement is concerned there is no distinction in the constitution as regards Jews or non-Jews, and we have made no distinction in that regard.

CHAIRMAN: Do you know of any investigations having been carried out as to the wishes of the Jews themselves in regard to the land of resettlement?

Mr. ALMEYER: There have been no official investigations or inquiries or surveys made.

CHAIRMAN: Have you, without such investigation being carried out, any knowledge of their wishes?

Mr. ALMEYER: I think you get into a rather uncharted and, if I may say so, unchartable sea when you get to the question of human motivations. What people will choose to do is largely dependent upon the visible alternatives before them. At the present time the alternatives are at best

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very indifferent, and in the near future perhaps relatively unobtainable. It depends too upon the way in which you put your question. That is to say, people in these assembly centres - like you and me - would like many things in a certain order of preference and in the light of availability before they would finally make their choice.

CHAIRMAN: Do you know of any propaganda or agitation going on among the Jews as to the choice of country?

Mr. ALTMAYER: I would hesitate to say that I knew. I think there again it is impossible to form an opinion as to how much propaganda is going on among the Jews.

CHAIRMAN: You yourself, I suppose, have many times visited these camps.

Mr. ALTMAYER: Yes, I have.

CHAIRMAN: You are very familiar with them?

Mr. ALTMAYER: Somewhat familiar.

CHAIRMAN: Have you not seen any posters put up in the camps recommending a choice of Palestine for the Jews?

Mr. ALTMAYER: I do not recall seeing anything about Palestine. You will see in the clubrooms of the centres pictures of Palestine on the walls. Undoubtedly, great numbers - perhaps the majority - of the Jews are hopeful that they may some day in the near future get to Palestine.

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala): Could you tell me whether, in order to receive immigrants, a country must necessarily be a member of the IRO - that is, have signed the Charter - or do you make arrangements with other countries that have not ratified the Charter?

Mr. ALTMAYER: We are only too glad to make arrangements with any country whether it is a member or an intending member of IRO. Your country happens to be a member, but nevertheless, being such a wonderful country, we would have tried to make arrangements to send people there.

Mr. Garcia GRANADOS (Guatemala): Do you see a chance in the near future of the Jews being settled in countries outside of Palestine - in a mass settlement, I mean?

Mr. ALTMAYER: No, I do not.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): May I know if you came across anything in these camps which would show that Jewish organizations have been trying to provide facilities to the Jews for escaping, either privately or otherwise, from displaced persons' camps into Palestine?

Mr. ALTMAYER: I personally have not, and it is a difficult thing to find out. I have asked many people who have been in very close touch daily with camp management, and I have never been able to find out anything definite one way or the other.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): By whom have those posters been put in the club rooms? By the rabbis or the Jewish Agency?

Mr. ALTMAYER: Many times they are painted by the people in the camps.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): At whose instance are they put on the walls?

Mr. ALTMAYER: The camps are organized on a self-governing basis as much as possible and the officials in charge of the camps are only too glad to permit the persons in the camps to make life as interesting as possible, and one of the ways is to have these little club-rooms. I do not at the moment know where they get the things with which to decorate the rooms.

Sir Abdur RAHMAN (India): What I mean is, have the Jewish organizations any hand in organizing the clubs and providing for the entertainment, etc.?

Mr. ALTMAYER: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: If it were a question of settlement in Palestine, would you have to take into consideration the opposition which such a settlement would encounter from the side of the Arabs?

Mr. ALTMAYER: Do you mean if we entered into an agreement with the Government?

CHAIRMAN: If you enter into an agreement with the Government I think the question is settled.

Mr. ALTMAYER: Yes, we engage in no resettlement activity except upon prior agreement with a government.

CHAIRMAN: It is always a prior agreement?

Mr. ALTMAYER: Yes.

/CHAIRMAN:

CHAIRMAN: Then my question is rather without any meaning.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): Has any order of priority been settled regarding the removal of displaced persons? I mean priority by categories of displaced persons.

Mr. ALTMEYER: No. The governments indicate a priority, but the IRO as such does not set up any priority. The priorities are sometimes as regards nationality, and generally as regards occupation, age and sex.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): There is nothing in the Charter to prevent you from fixing a priority as regards nationalities?

Mr. ALTMEYER: I think there is. I think the whole spirit of the Charter is not to make a distinction between one eligible refugee and another but to treat them on the basis of their need, if it is care and maintenance, and upon their desire and their need for resettlement or repatriation.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): What I am trying to get at is that there must at some point be a decision on the part of somebody as to who shall go first or second.

Mr. ALTMEYER: As I say, the decision is made by the governments, not by the IRO. Your Government, for example, has just signed an agreement with IRO, and has indicated the sort of persons they prefer to have settle in your country.

CHAIRMAN: Do the governments also make individual selections?

Mr. ALTMEYER: Yes. However, there is a pre-sifting. They indicate the characteristics, occupations, or age and nationality, and they do not have to spend so much time interviewing individuals. Thus they can go to certain assembly centres and then select from the groups interviewed previously those whom they want to invite to their country as immigrants.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): Has anything been done so far by the organization to spread knowledge of what it plans to do in the camps themselves?

Mr. ALTMEYER: Yes. That is not the limiting factor. The limiting factor is spreading knowledge among the countries of the world as to the capacity of the displaced persons. We have in the assembly centres now around six hundred and fifty thousand persons whom we think would make fine

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citizens and contribute a great deal to the economic, social and cultural life of any country. The limiting factor is to convince the governments of the world of that fact, and as I say, in the last few months we have become much more encouraged as to the attitude of the governments of the world towards receiving these people. We of course try to keep the persons in the assembly centres fully informed as to the possibilities of resettlement and repatriation. We feel that as an organization we are obligated to enable them to make intelligent choices in the light of possible opportunities, rather than to undertake to compel them to do one thing or the other.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran): If I am not mistaken, according to the Charter, as you have explained it, in order to establish the displaced persons a prior agreement with the country involved is necessary. I wonder if there is any necessity of an agreement on the part of neighbouring countries to the country of resettlement?

Mr. ALTMAYER: No, there is not.

CHAIRMAN: There is in Annex I, paragraph 1 (g), a certain reference to contiguous countries.

Mr. ALTMAYER: That problem has not come up yet, and that is why I hesitated about replying to the question. Paragraph 1 (g) on page 25 of Annex I, which is a part of the constitution, reads as follows:

"The Organization should endeavour to carry out its functions in such a way as to avoid disturbing friendly relations between nations. In the pursuit of this objective the Organization should exercise special care in cases in which the re-establishment or resettlement of refugees or displaced persons might be contemplated either in countries contiguous to their respective countries of origin, or in non-self-governing countries. The Organization should give due weight, among other factors, to any evidence of genuine apprehension and concern felt in regard to such plans in the former case by the country of origin of the persons involved, or in the latter case by the indigenous population of the non-self-governing country in question."

That does not call for an agreement with the country that is

so far have not come up against a situation where this paragraph might be applicable.

/Mr. HOOD

Mr. HOOD (Australia): Assuming a hypothetical recommendation by this Committee that a special appeal be made to Members of the United Nations to facilitate the work of the Organization; would that in your opinion assist your own efforts in any marked way?

Mr. ALTMEYER: I do not know whether to say yes or no for this reason: there is a great deal of misunderstanding about the racial composition of these refugees, and certainly in my country, the United States of America. Many people believe that the vast majority are Jews. That is completely erroneous, of course. Not more than twenty-five percent of the total number are Jews. I am fearful that if a special appeal is made on behalf of the Jews it might accentuate a misunderstanding, and they might feel that all these people are Jews. That is why I hesitate to say yes or no. Any appeal ought to be, it seems to me, in such a form as to provide perspective as regards the racial composition of these refugees. Further, we feel that any country ought to take Jews as well as non-Jews, certainly in proportion to their numbers in the total refugee population which we serve. But we would hesitate, I think, to urge any country to take only Jews. I think that that would be unfortunate from the standpoint both of the Jews and non-Jews.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): May I ask if there is any definition of the term "displaced persons"? What is the exact point at which a man is considered to be a displaced person and falls under the supervision of the IRO?

Mr. ALTMEYER: Annex I deals with definitions: they are spread over many paragraphs and are not, I must confess, in a very logical order. Each paragraph must be analysed in the light of other paragraphs to arrive at a decision whether or not a person is a refugee or displaced person in the meaning of the Charter or Constitution of the IRO.

CHAIRMAN: It is page 26, I think.

Mr. ALTMEYER: Yes, but it would get you into a very involved discussion, I am sure, if you undertook to interpret it.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Well, may I ask what is the total number of people now considered, as far as the present data go, as refugees in the sense of this constitution?

/Mr. ALTMEYER:

Mr. ALTMAYER: We estimate that we have about 675,000 persons for whom we are providing care and maintenance. How many more are outside camps or assembly centres and are eligible for some service, whether it is legal protection or other service than care or maintenance, we do not know. The estimates of the total run as high as 1,350,000. That includes the 675,000 for whom actual care and maintenance is being provided at the present time. And if you are interested in knowing how many of those 675,000 are Jews, we estimate 175,000, or 25 percent.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran): If the Commission were to recommend some special dispositions with respect to resettlement of Jews alone, would this facilitate your task of general resettlement or, on the contrary, would it be an impediment to such a resettlement?

Mr. ALTMAYER: I do not know whether I get the distinction between this last question and a similar question that was asked before by the representative of Australia. If you are going to concentrate on the Jewish problem, and make special recommendations concerning the resettlement of Jews, I do not see that that in itself would act either as an impediment or a help to us. If your specific recommendation was that preference be given to the Jews by the countries of possible reception, then again it is difficult to say whether that would be a help or a hindrance to the Jews and the non-Jews. All I can say is this: I think since you are dealing specially with the problem of the Jews you ought not to be deterred in making your recommendation as to any repercussions one way or the other on the total refugee problem. Perhaps I should say more exactly that it is going to be difficult at best for you to reach a decision within your frame of reference, and to undertake to appraise the total effect on the refugee problem would make it still more difficult. Therefore my feeling is that as a practical matter you will have to make your decision within your frame of reference rather than try to take into account the whole refugee problem.

CHAIRMAN: Suppose we put the question in this way: If we made a strong recommendation in favour of a speedy settlement of the whole displaced persons problem, do you think that would be of any value for the solution of your problem?

Mr. ALTMAYER: I think it would have value if you placed emphasis on the positive. If you pointed out the characteristics of these people, what they are capable of

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doing, the contributions they can make, and put the Jewish problem in perspective as regards the whole refugee problem, that would be very helpful to us. If you stay within your terms of reference, as you may decide to do as a practical measure and concentrate solely upon the Jewish problem, I would not want to advise you one way or the other as to what your recommendation should be, because the repercussions on the whole refugee problem are so difficult to assay that it is impossible to advise you.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran): But would not such a recommendation, in your opinion, be in a way an intervention in your work? I mean specially for the Jews.

Mr. ALTMAYER: I would not, personally, consider it an intervention.

Mr. HOOD (Australia): If a Jewish displaced person were offered resettlement by you in, for example, Colombia, or some other country, and he refused on the ground that he would rather wait for the chance of going to Palestine, would you regard that as an unreasonable refusal, thereby making him ineligible?

Mr. ALTMAYER: Under the Constitution, if a person unreasonably refuses, he is no longer a person who is the concern of the IRO. You would have to determine what the individual situation is as regards that person. But if there were no peculiar individual circumstances and if the opportunities opening up in a country, so far as could be appraised, were equal to those in Palestine, it might be considered an unreasonable refusal. But I might say that is an assumption contrary to the facts as they exist today. The opportunities for Jewish immigration to countries at the present time are very limited. The requests from the countries are very small now, but we are hopeful that they will grow larger. However, the characteristics of the persons whom they request, agricultural workers, mine workers, heavy workers of one kind or another, result in a very small proportion of the total immigration being Jewish.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands): Do you have any medical or psychological reports on the state of mind of Jews in the displaced persons' camps?

Mr. ALTMAYER: No, we have not. However, from my latest visits to Jewish camps and non-Jewish camps I see no significant difference between the attitude of mind of the Jews and the non-Jews. I think under the distressing circumstances under which they are obliged to live they have shown a tremendous resilience, a great spirit, and it is a very fine experience, I think, for anyone to go to these assembly centres and see how these persons under such adverse
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circumstances have been able to maintain a state of mind which enables them to carry on hopefully as regards the future.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): Are these displaced persons being provided with facilities for food, drink, clothing, and other things so as to make them free from want?

Mr. ALTMAYER: Yes. Anybody in need of care and maintenance comes within the definition of the IRO and is entitled to food, drink, clothing and shelter. We have very limited resources and if the load increases in the future because of the fact that the definition of refugees and displaced persons in this constitution is broader than the definition applied in the past, we might reach a point where our limited resources would not be able to cover the needs of all persons who are eligible.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India): But are they not in fact being provided with extra rations?

Mr. ALTMAYER: Oh, yes. In many cases they are being provided with additional rations beyond the basic rations that are provided by the IRO.

Question of a Visit to Displaced Persons' Camps (Item 3 of the Agenda)

The CHAIRMAN said that what he had heard on the subject had strengthened his view that a visit ought to be made to the displaced persons' camps. It would be of value to hear opinions prevailing among the Jewish displaced persons, and to see whether there was propaganda to induce them to go to Palestine. Such a visit, however, must not hamper the work on the Committee's report.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) considered that no useful purpose would be served by a visit to the displaced persons' camps.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the question had already been discussed at length: all that remained was to put it to the vote. He favoured doing so in the form of a proposal to set up one or several subcommittees of alternates to visit the camps.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands) drew attention to an earlier suggestion that representatives from the different displaced persons' centres should be heard in one place.

The CHAIRMAN felt that such a proposal entailed the danger that the repre-

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sentatives might be chosen by an organisation and would reflect its views.

Visits to the camps would yield more real results.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) agreed with the Chairman in opposing the proposal to meet representatives from the displaced persons' centres in one place. The Committee must first concentrate on whether or not a visit to the camps was essential.

Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala) disagreed with the use of the word "essential" by the delegate of India: it might be held that much of what the Committee had done was not essential. He felt that the proposal should be put in the form: Shall we go to the displaced persons' camps or not?

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN had no objection to the proposal's being put in that form.

Mr. RAND (Canada) did not consider the two proposals contradictory, and was prepared to vote for the visit by either the Committee or the alternates.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that his own proposal made it a condition that the alternates be sent.

After further discussion, the CHAIRMAN asked for a vote, firstly, on the question whether the proposal should take the form: Shall a visit be made to the camps?

DECISION: It was agreed (eight votes in favour) that a vote should be taken in that form.

The CHAIRMAN called for a vote on whether or not a visit should be made to the displaced persons' camps.

DECISION: It was agreed by six votes to four, with one abstention, that a visit should be made to the displaced persons' camps.

The CHAIRMAN invited discussion on the way in which the visit should be made.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) suggested that the visit should be made in secret, and if possible without divulging the identities of persons interviewed.

The CHAIRMAN considered that that point might be dealt with at a later stage. The Committee should first determine by which members the visit should be made.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) proposed that the Committee should go as a whole.

The CHAIRMAN said he himself was proposing that the visit should be made by one or several subcommittee of alternates.

Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala) said that under a previous decision any member of the Committee might ask to be a member of a subcommittee.

/Mr. RAND

Mr. RAND (Canada) moved that any such rule be suspended in so far as the question under debate was concerned.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands) felt it should be decided that Committee meetings would go on during the visit to the camps.

The CHAIRMAN said it had first to be decided whether Rule 38 of the Rules of Procedure should apply in the present instance.

The SECRETARY read Rule 38, regarding amendment or suspension of the Rules of Procedure.

The CHAIRMAN said there was no formal rule to the effect that any member of the Committee might ask to be a member of a subcommittee, but it was in the Record.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) remarked that it was a "gentleman's agreement": more than a rule.

Mr. RAND (Canada) maintained that the inapplicability of the rule had already been provided: he felt strongly that meetings of the Committee should proceed during the visit to the camps.

Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala) considered that, provided a delegation was represented on the Committee, delegates should not be debarred from making the visit.

Mr. HOO (Assistant Secretary-General) said that what had been termed the "gentleman's agreement" did not apply to the present case. If, say, three delegates were appointed to a subcommittee, others might join; but in the present instance the Committee would decide whether or not delegates would compose the subcommittee.

The CHAIRMAN proposed taking a vote on whether the visit to the displaced persons' camps should be made in such a way that the Committee would be enabled at the same time to work on its report.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) considered that his own proposal, that is, that the Committee should visit the camps as a whole, should have priority.

Mr. HOOD (Australia) proposed that as there were certain objections to a group of alternates proceeding on an investigation without a delegate sharing the responsibility, the Committee should dispatch a team of five alternates /under the

under the direction of a delegate.

The CHAIRMAN said he would like to have three subcommittees, consisting mainly of alternates. He could, however, accept a proposal that there should be some delegates as well. A vote could be taken first on the question whether the Committee should go as a whole.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) said even if it were decided that the Committee as a whole should make the visit, individual delegates were not obliged to go, but might ask their alternates to do so.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India), replying to the Chairman, said his proposal was that the Committee as a whole should make the visit, but it would be for each delegate to decide whether he or his alternate would go.

He informed the delegate of Guatemala that under his proposal the visiting group might divide into subcommittees.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the proposal that the Committee as a whole should visit the displaced persons' camps.

DECISION: The proposal was rejected: four votes in favour, five against, and two abstentions.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands) asked whether the decision just taken meant that the meetings of the Committee would continue in Geneva during the visit to the camps.

The CHAIRMAN replied in the affirmative.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay) wished to explain his vote. He had voted in favour of the proposal of the delegate of India. He still believe that the question under debate was linked with the problem of Palestine. As the proposal of the delegate of India had been refused, he would vote in favour of the Chairman's proposal; but the delegation of Uruguay reserved its right to decide whether the chief delegate or the alternate would go on the visit to the camps.

Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala) said he had voted for the proposal of the delegate of India because he considered that more authority would attach to the whole Committee. He would vote for the Chairman's proposal with the same reservation as had been made by the delegate of Uruguay.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) felt that it would be for each representative to determine whether he would send his alternate or go personally. It was a constitutional matter which the Committee, as such, could not decide.

/Mr. ENTEZAM

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) agreed with the delegates of Czechoslovakia, Uruguay, and Guatemala. Each delegation should be free to decide whether the principal delegate or his alternate would go and, whatever the decision, the work of the Committee must continue in Geneva with either the delegate or the alternate present.

The CHAIRMAN asked whether delegates could at present decide whether they or their alternates would be on the visiting subcommittees.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands) considered that such a decision could not be made forthwith, but it would depend upon the time of the visit, its duration and other factors.

Mr. RAND (Canada) said he could say at once that his delegate would go.

The CHAIRMAN said he would not go himself.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) felt it unfair to ask delegates to decide at once: they had a right to defer making their choice until all the circumstances were before them. He agreed with the contention of the delegate of Czechoslovakia that the Committee could not appoint alternates over the heads of the delegates.

In the course of further discussion, the CHAIRMAN said he was anxious to know on which members he could count for continuance of the work in Geneva.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) proposed that the Secretariat should be asked to prepare a plan indicating the probable duration of the journey and which places should be visited. A decision could then be taken on whether the members themselves or their delegates should go, and on the number of the subcommittees.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) pointed out that the Peruvian delegation had no delegate.

Mr. SALAZAR (Peru), replying to the Chairman, said he did not intend to make the visit.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the question whether the Committee's work on the report should go on during the visit to the camps.

DECISION: It was agreed by nine affirmative votes that the Committee's work on the report should go on.

The CHAIRMAN raised the point whether there should be one subcommittee or several.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) considered that there should be one subcommittee: otherwise delegates from some countries might not be on one of the subcommittees.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that there were camps in both Germany and Austria, as well as Italy.

After further discussion, the CHAIRMAN considered that the feeling of the Committee was that only one subcommittee or delegation should make the visit.

The CHAIRMAN invited discussion on how many persons should compose the subcommittee.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) contended that it was the individual opinion of delegates that mattered, and each was entitled to say whether or not he would go. Certain countries could not be deprived by a vote of the majority of the right to make the visit.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the Anglo-American Committee, when it went to investigate the camps, had divided up into subcommittees.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) said the constitution of the Anglo-American Committee had been very different from that of the Committee. If certain countries were not represented on the subcommittee, they might not be bound by the report of those making the visit.

Mr. RAND (Canada) did not agree with the conception of the delegate of India that the members were acting on the Committee as delegates of their own countries. He did not look upon himself in that way: he was a member of a committee of the United Nations and accountable only to the United Nations. He saw nothing to prevent the Committee from acting or obtaining information by means of a subcommittee.

The CHAIRMAN observed that under its Rules of Procedure the Committee could appoint subcommittees.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) maintained that if it were decided that one subcommittee should visit all the camps, all countries on the Committee should be represented. He had opposed the visit to the displaced persons' camps in the first place because the Committee had available the records of the Anglo-American Committee and other records, on which it could decide the question.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) proposed that the subcommittee should be composed of as many representatives as wished to go.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) said there was a substantive rule that a delegated

/authority

authority could not be further delegated. Delegates could not further delegate their authority to a subcommittee of which they were not members. He would not accept the findings of such a subcommittee; and the question could be raised in the General Assembly that the Committee's report was ultra vires.

The CHAIRMAN proposed adjournment of the discussion until a proposal had been received from the Secretariat as to which camps should be visited and how much time the visit should take.

DECISION: It was agreed to adjourn discussion on the question until the Secretariat had prepared a proposal on those lines.

Work Programme for Preparation of the Committee's Report (Item 5 of the Agenda)

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) pointed out that he had that morning placed before the members of the Committee a memorandum on the proposed programme of work for preparation of the report.

On the invitation of the CHAIRMAN, Sir ABDUR RAHMAN read his memorandum.

In the course of subsequent discussion, Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala) said he saw no opposition between the memorandum presented by the delegate of India and that of the Chairman. He proposed adoption of the Chairman's memorandum as a general programme, taking into account the details given by the delegate of India.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) drew attention to points in which his paper differed from that of the Chairman.

After other delegates had commented upon the papers, the CHAIRMAN invited the delegate of Yugoslavia to read his memorandum on the ^{same} subject.

Mr. SINIC (Yugoslavia) read his memorandum.

After a further exchange of views the CHAIRMAN proposed that preparation of the report should proceed along the lines indicated in the three memoranda, pointing out that they should be considered a sketch which would preclude no one from offering proposals.

Mr. BLOM (Netherlands) suggested that the Chairman and the delegates of India and Yugoslavia should merge their memoranda into one and put before the Committee a workable programme.

DECISION: It was agreed that the Chairman and the delegates of India and Yugoslavia should meet for the purpose suggested by the delegate of the Netherlands.

/Discussion

Discussion on the Immigrant Boats off Port-de-Bouc

Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala) raised the question of the three boats carrying immigrants, off Port-de-Bouc, and proposed that the Committee should send one or more representatives to find out why the immigrants were refusing to take advantage of the French Government's offer to accept them in France.

Sir ABDUR RAHMAN (India) considered that, regardless of whatever human feelings delegates might have, the issue did not concern the Committee, being outwith its terms of reference.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should leave the question to be solved by itself.

Mr. FABREGAT (Uruguay) considered the question part of the problem of immigration with which the Committee was dealing. It was impossible to separate the question of immigration from the general question of Palestine: for that reason he would vote in favour of the proposal of the delegate of Guatemala. He pointed out that he had given the Secretariat a draft resolution expressing the desire that the general problem should be distinguished from the particular problem of children.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) proposed postponing a decision on the matter until the Committee knew more about it.

Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala) asked that the vote be taken by roll-call.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) said that if the delegate of Guatemala was going to ask later, as he had previously done, that the roll-call be published in the Committee's communique, he would oppose it on the ground that it would hamper the Committee's work. If representatives knew beforehand that the roll-call would be subject to publicity the freedom and liberty they should enjoy would be very seriously impeded.

Mr. GARCIA GRANADOS (Guatemala) observed that the records would be published in any case.

The CHAIRMAN put to the vote by roll-call the proposal that the Committee send a subcommittee to Port-de-Bouc in order to investigate why the detainees on three boats did not want to accept the French offer of landing in France.

/DECISION:

DECISION: The proposal was rejected: two votes in favour, seven against, and two abstentions.

In favour: Guatemala and Uruguay .

Against: Australia, Canada, India, Iran, Netherlands, Peru, Sweden.

Abstentions: Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

The CHAIRMAN asked the delegate of Iran whether he still opposed the recording of the roll-call.

Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) explained that he had said he would oppose a request that the roll-call be published; but the delegate of Guatemala was not making such a request.

Discussion on Newspaper Item Relating to Condemned Jews

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) read to the Committee an item in the Continental Daily Mail of Tuesday, 29 July, headed, "Three Terrorists Will Hang This Morning", and alleging that relatives of two British hostages had pleaded with the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine and with the High Commissioner for a respite.

The CHAIRMAN said he knew nothing beyond what was said in the item, and he understood that the Secretariat was in a similar position.

Mr. LISICKY (Czechoslovakia) said he had raised the point only for purposes of information.

The meeting rose at 1 . . . m.