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## CONTENTS

### Agenda item 35:

*Reports of the Commissioner-General of the  
United Nations Relief and Works Agency  
for Palestine Refugees in the Near East  
(continued)* . . . . . 1

*Chairman: Mr. Carlet R. AUGUSTE (Haiti).*

### AGENDA ITEM 35

Reports of the Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (A/5813, A/6013; A/SPC/103) (continued)

1. Mr. COMAY (Israel) observed that for the past seventeen years the annual debate on the UNRWA report had been conducted on two levels. While the Committee was examining the work of a United Nations refugee agency, the Arab States were waging a political campaign against Israel and trying to reopen the so-called Palestine question. Yet Israel's statehood was not on the Committee's agenda. At the beginning the United Nations had been seized by the Mandatory Power of the question of the future government of Palestine but, with the subsequent termination of the Mandate, proclamation of the State of Israel and signing of the General Armistice Agreements between Israel and the Arab States, that question had been disposed of and had ceased to appear on the agenda. Of the two other questions remaining unsettled, i.e. the dispute between the Member States involved, and assistance to refugees, only the latter was on the agenda. The attacks on Israel which had taken up so much of the debate in earlier years were irrelevant to that item, and he hoped that at the current session speakers would be required to confine themselves to the subject of the UNRWA report.

2. He would like to pay a tribute to the Commissioner-General and his staff for their diligence in carrying out their task, and particularly to draw attention to the development of education and vocational training aimed at preparing the younger generation for useful and productive lives. The Assembly should urge the Commissioner-General and UNESCO to ensure that the text-books used in connexion with that programme were free from incitement to hatred. That was a matter which had been raised with them in the past but was still awaiting rectification.

3. In addition to the factual account of UNRWA operations, the Commissioner-General raised in the introduction to the report certain general questions which called for a frank analysis. The remarks in

paragraph 6 concerning certain attitudes attributed to the refugees simply confirmed that the solution to the problem lay not in Israel but in the Arab world. There was not the slightest hint in that paragraph that any refugees wanted to become loyal and law-abiding citizens of Israel. Although it was natural for refugees to wish to return to what the Commissioner-General called their "former homeland", that wish in the current instance was irrational, for in 1948 Palestine had ceased to exist as a territorial entity on the map. Furthermore, the bulk of the former Palestinians had continued to reside within the area of the original Mandate. Thus the legend of a nation exiled from its homeland had no objective basis. In that same paragraph 6 the Commissioner-General drew attention to a development which had grave implications for the future, namely the establishment in 1964 of a Palestine Liberation Organization. The commitment to a renewed military struggle of which that was a manifestation was already confronting the Agency with the paradox of refugees recruited for armed action against a United Nations Member State while they were being supported by United Nations funds. There could be no question about the need to strike the names of such persons from the Agency's rolls. Yet there was no indication in the report that that had been done even in the Gaza Strip, where, according to paragraph 40, substantial progress had been made in checking the ration rolls to weed out ineligible persons. In view of the implications of that development for peace and stability in the area, it was regrettable that the report failed to deal with it, and he hoped that the omission would be rectified.

4. A major positive aspect of the refugees' outlook was their willingness to be absorbed into the economic life of the area if given the opportunity. That was not surprising, since there were no differences of race, religion, language, culture or way of life to isolate them from their present environment, together with the fact that not more than 40 per cent of the refugees were living in the UNRWA camps. Thus although political attitudes remained frozen the real situation was one in which a steady process of spontaneous absorption was taking place. While the underlying political issues could be solved only by a negotiated agreement between the Arab Governments and the Government of Israel, the economic absorption of the refugees would solve the humanitarian problem with which the Agency was concerned.

5. Arab spokesmen were in the habit of saying that all that was required for a solution was the "implementation" by the United Nations of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), paragraph 11. They suggested that that paragraph bestowed on the refugees the right to enter the territory of Israel without the permission

of its Government and without even recognizing its statehood, yet they complained that Israel had not co-operated in implementing its provisions and was guilty of defying United Nations resolutions. The truth of the matter was that paragraph 11 as the Arab world had come to regard it had never existed. The Assembly had never adopted such a resolution, nor would it have been competent to do so. Reviewing briefly the origin of paragraph 11 as it actually existed, he recalled that it had derived in part from the Mediator's progress report of September 1948 (A/648), suggesting that those refugees who wished to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so while those who did not should receive compensation for their property. At that time, when the State of Israel was only four months old and the recently abandoned homes of the refugees stood empty, it had seemed reasonable to hope that the conflict was about to be settled and peaceful conditions restored. In that context of peaceful accommodation with Israel it had been contemplated that some refugees might return as peaceable citizens of the new State, while others might be resettled in the Arab States and receive compensation for their lost property. General Assembly resolution 194 (III), adopted against that background, called upon Israel and the Arab States to negotiate a peace settlement and contemplated that some of the refugees might return to Israel on the understanding that peaceful conditions would be restored and that the repatriated refugees would live at peace with their neighbours. Indeed, the wording of the relevant passage was that they would be "permitted" rather than have the "right" to return. Furthermore, the words "at the earliest practicable date" had been inserted for the purpose of reassuring the Israel representative that normal conditions would first have to be restored.

6. In short, there was nothing in paragraph 11 which contradicted the sovereign right of any State to determine who should be permitted to enter its territory. In any case, however, the paragraph had long since been made obsolete by the course of events. Efforts to achieve a peace settlement had failed, owing to the Arab refusal to recognize the existence of the State of Israel. As early as 1949 it had become clear that the refugee formula in paragraph 11 was wishful thinking and the United Nations had begun to look for a more realistic, long-range approach to the problem. At the end of 1949 it had endorsed the view of the Clapp Mission<sup>1/</sup> that the future of the refugees lay in their integration into the economic life of the Near East as a whole. That new and broader formula had been the real objective of United Nations policies ever since, even if lip service was paid to paragraph 11 of resolution 194 (III) out of deference to the feelings of the Arab States with regard to it. The regional economic approach had been further elaborated in the report submitted by the late Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld, in 1959.<sup>2/</sup> In that same year a fresh attempt had been made to find a meaning in paragraph 11 which might correspond to current realities,

but the efforts of the Conciliation Commission to secure the implementation of the paragraph through discussion with the Governments concerned had failed owing to the impossibility of reconciling the Arab interpretation of paragraph 11 with the sovereignty and security of the State of Israel. The paragraph had thus long since ceased to be a guide-post to a solution and had become a major source of contention in its own right. His Government therefore continued to oppose any reference to that paragraph in the Assembly's annual resolutions on the report of the Commissioner-General of UNRWA.

7. Meanwhile another development had been taking place in the region which had profoundly affected the problem, although scant attention had been given it in the debates in the General Assembly. That was the immigration to Israel of the bulk of the Jewish residents of the Arab States even as the bulk of the Arab residents of the area which became Israel had moved into the neighbouring Arab States. By now, with the process of natural increase, those Jewish refugees from the Arab lands numbered over 800,000, or about one third of the whole population of Israel, whereas the Arab refugees constituted little more than 1 per cent of the population of the Arab world. That twofold migration constituted, in effect, an exchange of minorities between Israel and the Arab States, although not by agreement between them. The Jewish exodus from the Arab world had never been made an item of the agenda of the General Assembly; no United Nations relief agency had assisted those refugees; and no United Nations technical office had made an inventory of the huge amounts of their property and funds confiscated by the Governments of their former countries. The State of Israel had had to mobilize its own energies and resources to absorb those refugees, together with refugees from other lands, and in the process its population and economy had been completely transformed, so that Israel today bore little resemblance to the Israel of 1948. No discussion of the refugee problem which ignored its twofold character could be constructive. The post-war world had witnessed a number of refugee migrations caused by military conflict or political upheaval and they had all followed a certain pattern—the refugees streamed into areas where they had some kinship with the local population and in the course of time they settled down there. That was what had happened with the Jews coming to Israel from the Arab countries and, though more slowly, with the Arab refugees who had moved in the opposite direction. Common sense indicated that it was the pattern which should be accepted and built upon for the future. Israel had absorbed some 45,000 Arab refugees and had paid out about \$10 million in releasing frozen bank accounts. His Government repeated its readiness to participate in an over-all solution of the refugee problem by paying compensation for Arab property, taking into account Jewish property confiscated in the areas of the Palestine Mandate which had remained under Arab rule or in other Arab lands from which Jewish refugees had come to Israel.

8. Turning to the question of eligibility for UNRWA assistance, he said it would appear from paragraphs 17 to 28 of the report that in order to secure the

<sup>1/</sup> United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East.

<sup>2/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourteenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 27, document A/4121.

co-operation of the host Governments in rectifying the ration rolls the Commissioner-General would be willing in principle to abandon the working definition of a refugee used in the past. Point (5) of the proposal set forth in paragraph 17 envisaged the acceptance of a much wider and more elastic criterion for eligibility which would cover three groups of claimants in addition to those persons who might be considered bona fide refugees. The first, described as "other claimants for relief", consisted of non-refugee residents of the host countries who had suffered material loss or damage as a result of the 1948 conflict—mainly inhabitants of certain border villages in Jordan. It should be noted in that connexion that the persons on the Israel side of the border who had suffered such economic losses had been rehabilitated without the help of UNRWA. Those on the Arab side should similarly be helped by their own Governments, with such external aid as was available. The claim for the inclusion for such "economic refugees" was not new. The ration rolls had been inflated from the outset, having been drawn up in a haphazard way so that they had included unemployed and indigent persons who were not refugees, as also Bedouin nomads. It would be recalled that the Assembly in resolution 916 (X) had decided that UNRWA should not be responsible for the "other claimants of relief" but hoped that they would be assisted by voluntary agencies. Although the Commissioner-General was not at the current stage pressing for the inclusion of that group, they were retained within the eligibility framework of the nine points listed in paragraph 17 of the report.

9. The nine points also included a proposal to eliminate the criterion of residence during the period 1946-1948. There had been a sound reason for establishing that criterion. The Arab population of Palestine had not been static. Attracted by the employment opportunities afforded by the relative prosperity of Palestine, large numbers of Arabs had entered from the surrounding countries and there had been a large-scale coming and going across the border. The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine had reported in 1947 that the number of Arabs in Palestine was more than double what it had been at the beginning of the Mandate period and UNRWA's Information Paper No. 6 circulated in September 1962 had noted an influx from surrounding countries and the impossibility of establishing the actual number of refugees. Thus a large number of those who had left the area of the fighting in 1948 and moved into the surrounding territories had actually been returning to their permanent homes. If the 1946-1948 residence requirement was to be waived it might appear that any Arab who had lived in Palestine at any time or for any temporary purpose would now be eligible for UNRWA assistance. The inclusion of such persons and of the "economic refugees" would create the impression that the total number of bona fide refugees was much greater than it really was. That was more than just a financial problem, for the bigger the total the greater the political and propaganda value which could be extracted from it and the easier it would be to foster the legend of a whole people uprooted.

10. The most important issue raised by the suggested new eligibility criteria, however, was that concerning

the third generation, for the Commissioner-General had made it clear in paragraph 26 that he intended to implement that particular proposal. What was more, the word used in paragraph 17 was "descendants" and in other paragraphs "third and subsequent generations", thus opening up the possibility that the descendants of the original refugees would also be classified as refugees for generation after generation and that the problem would then be indefinitely expanded rather than reduced. He had no quarrel with the Commissioner-General's statement of the humanitarian and practical reasons why third-generation children should be assisted when in need, but he felt that each country must assume the primary responsibility for taking care of children born and raised on its soil—with the help, if necessary, of the United Nations or the specialized agencies. It should be possible to work out a practical way of handling such cases on an ad hoc basis. However, the question of refugee status in the future involved fundamental matters of policy and principle on which the General Assembly should pronounce itself.

11. Mr. NUSEIBEH (Jordan) said that his delegation considered the report of the Commissioner-General an impressive document for its detachment, its comprehension and its sympathetic approach to the tragedy of a people whose uprooting and dispersal, with the resulting physical and psychological suffering, lay heavily on the conscience of mankind and placed a unique responsibility on the United Nations to undo a wrong which had been committed largely in its name.

12. He was not unsympathetic to the complaint, in paragraph 30 of the report, about adverse comments on the Agency that appeared from time to time in the Press of the host countries, and he would like to assure the Commissioner-General that, although the fears expressed in those press reports were not entirely unfounded, the comments were not in any way a reflection on the dedicated work carried out by the Agency in the most trying circumstances.

13. It must be borne in mind that UNRWA was an instrument of the United Nations and its action or inaction depended on whatever decisions the General Assembly might see fit to adopt and on the extent of the responsibility which individual Members, particularly the contributing Governments, were willing to shoulder. He felt it his duty to state at the outset that the report did not adequately convey the magnitude of the assistance which the host Governments were providing for the relief of the Palestine refugees. Table 21 of the report showed a total of nearly \$7 million in direct contributions from host Governments for the year ended 30 June 1965. That sum was over and above the contributions made by those Governments to UNRWA's budget and it did not include the exemptions from customs duties and taxes or the opportunities for gainful employment which the host Governments often provided. On top of all that was the crushing burden of defence expenditure, which would never have become necessary if Israel had not been created. The world should know the extent of the sacrifices that had been required of the host Governments, and

it would be most unfair if the impression were created that those Governments were indifferent to the plight of their Palestinian brethren and left them to be supported by international charity. When the refugees eventually returned to their homeland, the host Governments would face the verdict of history with a clear conscience, in the knowledge that they had shouldered the main burden of assisting the refugees in their hour of need.

14. There was a limit, however, beyond which the resources of the host Governments could not stretch, and it was there that the responsibility of the United Nations appeared, for there was no denying that the tragedy of the people of Palestine was a direct consequence of an ill-advised United Nations decision.

15. The people of Palestine had lived in their homeland from time immemorial, a happy, hard-working people who bore no enmity towards any other race or religion. In the First World War, however, the British had arrived and, for purely selfish ends, had promised Palestine to the Jews, against the unmistakable wishes of the people. For thirty years the United Kingdom had imposed a reign of terror to achieve its ends, bringing in vast numbers of troops to crush the constant uprisings of the lawful inhabitants, who had formed the overwhelming majority of the population and had owned nearly 94 per cent of the land. Meanwhile the Zionist minority had been encouraged and helped to arm to the teeth, with the result that, even before the United Kingdom had given up the Mandate, the Zionists had had almost 80,000 armed troops, with the connivance of the Government to whose care the League of Nations had entrusted Palestine. Having accomplished its main objectives, the United Kingdom had left the final death-blow to be dealt to the people of Palestine by a Power which had grown mightier than itself.

16. Thus the national life of the Palestinians had been destroyed and for the past seventeen years they had led the wretched life of refugees, outside the mainstream of normal humanity. If the countries which contributed to the pitifully low subsistence provided for the refugees were becoming impatient as the years went by, how much more reason had the refugees to wonder when the United Nations would fulfil its solemn pledge and restore them to their homeland.

17. The number of Palestinian Arabs had now increased beyond the 2 million mark and it was obvious that the problem was not going to disappear. The natural, just and only solution was to bring their exile to an end. Pending their return, the United Nations was under a moral obligation to ensure that the proceeds of their property in the land occupied by Israel was no longer wantonly plundered by the latter. The appointment of a United Nations custodian of Arab property was now more necessary than ever.

18. In his report the Commissioner-General issued a solemn warning about the dwindling revenues of the Agency in relation to its increasing responsibilities. Indeed, it seemed that by 1966 the Agency would be faced with a deficit of \$4.2 million. Whereas in previous years the deficit had been met by drawing upon the working capital, the latter would have fallen

to barely \$15 million by the end of 1965, a sum insufficient to ensure the continuation of the Agency's operations. Thus the day-to-day relief operations of the Agency were threatened with disruption. The consequences of such disruption would be twofold: first, there was the humanitarian aspect, for surely no country would contemplate a situation in which the refugees were simply faced with starvation; secondly, there was the security aspect, for a starving population could get out of control and constitute a serious threat to the security of the whole area. It was the duty of the United Nations to forestall such a development, for which Jordan, as a host Government, could not take responsibility.

19. Another problem was that of the rectification of the Agency's ration rolls. It had been implied by some that such rectification would considerably reduce the financial requirements of the Agency. He wished to assure the Agency that, while there might be a need for minor rectifications, it was not a question of gross irregularities, as some people would depict it to be. As against a few inaccuracies according to the strict criteria of eligibility, there were thousands of needy children and others who went unaided. Jordan prided itself on its record of integrity in public life and would do all in its power to assist the Agency in its task of continual rechecking to ascertain eligibility on the basis of relative need. There had admittedly been differences with the Agency with regard to methods, for the feelings of the refugees must be taken into account. In view of all the psychological factors involved, his delegation agreed with the proposal in paragraph 17 (5) of the report that verification of eligibility should be carried out jointly by the Agency and the host Government concerned. It also endorsed the proposals in paragraphs 17 (6) and 17 (7).

20. A third point to which his delegation attached great importance was the question of the third generation of refugees. It did not look at that question solely in terms of material assistance but would urge, on grounds of morality, legality and the actual resolutions of the United Nations, that the children and grandchildren of the original refugees should be regarded as refugees. It was surely not possible to accept the inalienable right of a refugee to return to his homeland and deny that right to his offspring; to do so would be to commit the sin of separating families.

21. His delegation endorsed the Commissioner-General's request that the mandate of the Agency should be extended for a period of five years: that was essential if the Agency was to carry out its mission with some assurance of continuity and a minimum of efficiency, and was the more urgent in that the work of the Agency was not confined to relief but included such matters as education, health and social welfare. It was appalling to think that the refugees might have to endure their sufferings for another five years, but in view of all the problems involved his delegation had no alternative but to recommend that the General Assembly should extend the Agency's mandate for a period of five years.

22. Turning to the statement by the representative of Israel that the problem of Palestine had been settled once and for all in 1948, he would remind the Com-

mittee that Israel as at present constituted was in flagrant violation of United Nations resolutions, and it was in possession of far more territory than had been allocated to it. The problem of Palestine had not been settled once and for all, either legally or morally, in 1948; the Committee was familiar with the various United Nations resolutions which Israel refused to respect.

23. The Israel representative had suggested that the Palestinian refugees should be resettled in territories other than their homeland. He failed to see how an Israeli, who might have been born in any other part of the world, should have a more valid title to Palestine than the Palestinian whose family had lived there for thousands of years.

24. In suggesting that the refugees were being recruited for military purposes, the Israel representative did not seem to have any more information than he had himself. It was impossible to foresee to what tactics the refugees might resort in their desperation, but there was one point about which he was absolutely certain: namely, that the only objective of the refugees was to return to their homeland. It was futile to say that because there were many Arab countries the Palestinians could go to one of those countries: Palestine was their land and as such was sacred to them.

25. With regard to the Israel representative's reference to the circumstances that had surrounded the exodus of the people of Palestine from their homes, he would like to assure the Committee that no Palestinian had left his homeland of his own volition but rather at gun-point. The massacres that had taken place had been deliberately planned by the Zionist terrorists as part of their scheme to get the Palestinians out of their homeland.

26. As the Israel representative had referred to the attitude of Israel towards the Conciliation Commission for Palestine, he would remind the Committee that the Commission had been convened in 1949, at the prompting of the United Nations, and had held talks designed to solve the whole problem of Palestine. In fact, a tentative agreement between the Parties during the Lausanne talks had been initialled. It had transpired, however, that Israel had used the conference as a passport to gain admission to the United Nations.

27. The Israel representative had tried to balance the exodus of Jews from the Arab countries with the exile of the Palestinian Arabs. There was, however, one important difference: whereas the Palestinian Arabs had been expelled from their homeland at gun-point, the Jews, who had lived happily in the Arab countries, had not been forced to leave; it was the Zionist organizations which had planned to get the Jews out of the Arab countries in order to fill Palestine and thus make it even more difficult for the Palestinian Arabs to be repatriated.

28. The Israel representative had referred to the confiscation of Israel property and land by the Arabs. The amount of land in the custody of the Arabs in Jordan was minimal. Yet Jordan was meticulous about safeguarding Israel property in Jordan and there was a custodian of enemy property to ensure

that there was no infringement of the rights of the owners. He would like to hear a similar assurance from the Israel authorities concerning the Arab property in Palestine, which constituted almost 94 per cent of all land in Israel. As for the property in the no man's land lying on the demarcation line, he assured the Committee that that land was practically all Arab-owned.

29. The Israel representative's reference to the Clapp Mission brought to mind the attitude of Israel and world Zionism towards the whole problem of the refugees. In the early 1950's there had been a plan to develop the Jordan Valley in order to make it possible for the inhabitants, many of whom were refugees, to make a decent living. An agreement had been signed between UNRWA and the Government of Jordan in 1952, but when Israel heard about it, tremendous pressure was brought to bear upon the United States Government, with the result that the Chief Engineer, who had been the architect of the whole project, had been relieved of his assignment.

30. Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq) said that the Israel representative had tried to give the impression that the question of Palestine no longer existed. He would point out that the question of Palestine was still on the agenda of the Security Council and that there was a chapter entitled "The Palestine Question" in the Annual Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization (A/6001 and Corr.1). In fact, the present discussion concerned only one aspect of the Palestine question.

31. The Israel representative had devoted much of his statement to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 194 (III), in an endeavour to show that that paragraph had little meaning, arguing that its implementation was conditional on the acceptance of the Israel Government and that it could be implemented only if formal peace were concluded between the Arab States and Israel. Yet it was clear from the records of the relevant United Nations meetings in 1948 that the General Assembly had resolved that the right of the refugees to choose between returning to their homes and asking for compensation for the property they had left behind was an unconditional right. Paragraph 11 stated that the refugees wishing to return to their homes should be permitted to do so "at the earliest practicable date". Even were there a question of their return being conditional upon the restoration of peace, hostilities had actually ceased in 1949 with the signing of the last General Armistice Agreement.

32. One example of the unreliability of the Israel representative's statements was his claim that the number of Jews who had moved into Israel from Arab countries now numbered 800,000. It was on record that no more than 200,000 Jews from Arab countries had gone to Israel since 1948 and surely no natural increase could quadruple a population in seventeen years.

33. Again, citing the statement in an UNRWA Information Paper that during the Second World War many immigrants had entered Palestine without their presence being officially recorded, the Israel representative had made the startling assertion that a large

number of those who had left the area of the fighting in 1948 and moved into surrounding countries had in fact been returning to their permanent homes. It was common knowledge that nearly 800,000 Palestinian Arabs had left their homes in Palestine. Surely no one would think it possible that between about 1940 and 1948 even half of those 800,000 could have entered Palestine without the United Kingdom Administration being aware of it. It was obvious that the Israel representative was deliberately trying to mislead the members of the Committee; indeed, his entire statement should be judged on the basis of those two serious distortions of the truth.

34. Mr. COMAY (Israel) said that he did not know where the Iraqi representative had found the figure of 200,000 Jews who had gone to Israel from Arab countries since 1948. The Israel Government kept reliable statistics and he could produce precise figures to substantiate any statement he might make in the Committee. He would merely mention that in one year alone 130,000 Jews had fled from Iraq to Israel. If they had been living happily there as had been suggested, it was surely giving undue credit to the alleged Zionist plot to believe that it could have penetrated into Iraq and uprooted those contented Jewish residents.

35. The Iraqi representative's claim that the Palestine question was still on the United Nations books was a matter of pure semantics. The Palestine question in the sense in which it had been brought before the United Nations by the United Kingdom Government in 1947 had been settled for all time. The fact that, as a matter of administrative convenience, a border clash between Israel and neighbouring Arab countries appeared on the agenda of the Security Council under the general title of the Palestine question, or that the Secretary-General

grouped anything occurring between Israel and the Arab States under that title in his annual report, had no political significance whatever. The term was obsolete and might conveniently be dropped, but in view of the political contention that that might raise, his delegation would acquiesce in its continued use. To suggest, however, that it indicated that the question of Palestine was still before the United Nations was simply an attempt to mislead the Committee.

36. Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq) said that the figure of 130,000 Jews leaving Iraq for Israel was ridiculous, for at that time there had been no more than 110,000 Jews in Iraq. He still maintained that hardly more than 200,000 Jews had left Arab countries for Israel and that the number could not possibly have increased to 800,000 in seventeen years. The important point, however, was that whereas the Jews who so wished had been allowed to leave Iraq and those who had not wished to had been allowed to remain, the Arabs of Palestine had been forcibly expelled from their homes. Moreover, it was a fact that Zionist propaganda and acts of terrorism, which had been proved to have been instigated by Zionist agents against their own people, had provided the impetus for the exodus of the Jews from the Arab countries.

37. He noted that the Israel representative had not replied to his refutation of the statement that a large number of Arabs who had left the area of the fighting in 1948 had in fact been returning to their permanent homes. He would like to hear from him exactly what that large number was.

38. Mr. COMAY (Israel) said that he would merely confirm that he stood by every word of the statement he had made.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.