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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWELFTH MEETING

Held at the Palais de Chaillot, Paris,  
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(discussion continued).

Joint Draft resolution on Palestine Refugees, submitted by Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States (A/C.3/315)  
(discussion continued).

Paragraph 3 of the resolution.

Chairman:	Mr. G. PEREZ CISNEROS	Cuba
	Mr. J. HOUARD	Belgium
	Mr. ANZE-MATIENZO	Bolivia
	Mr. CHA	China
	Mr. HAMMAD	Egypt
	Mr. de FOLIN	France
	Mrs. S.L. MENON	India
	Mr. COSTERHUIS	Netherlands
	Mr. W.B. SUTCH	New Zealand
	Mrs. A. LIONAES	Norway
	Mr. H. ALTMAN	Poland
	Mr. BORISOV	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mr. HOWARD	United States of America
	Mr. E. PLAZA	Venezuela

Secretariat: Mr. KATZIN

PALESTINIAN REFUGEES: PROGRESS REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS MEDIATOR FOR PALESTINE: ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES (A/648, A/689, A/689/Add.1, A/689/Corr.1, A/C.3/315, A/C.3/316, A/C.3/318, A/C.3/SC.2/2, A/C.3/SC.2/4, A/C.3/SC.2/5, A/C.3/SC.2/6, A/C.3/SC.2/W.1) (discussion continued) JOINT DRAFT RESOLUTION ON PALESTINE REFUGEES, SUBMITTED BY BELGIUM, THE NETHERLANDS, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES (A/C.3/315) (discussion continued)

Paragraph 3 of the resolution

The CHAIRMAN said that the Sub-Committee had to examine various amendments proposed to paragraph 3 of the joint draft resolution: the joint French and New Zealand amendment (third paragraph of document A/C.3/SC.2/4), the Norwegian amendment (A/C.3/SC.2/5) and the Venezuelan amendment (A/C.3/SC.2/6), which was an addition to the amendment proposed by Venezuela in document A/C.3/318. Before discussing the order in which the various amendments should be examined, the Sub-Committee would hear a statement by the representative of the Secretary-General.

Mr. KATZIN (Secretariat) noted that the Sub-Committee's aim was to provide the Secretariat with sufficient funds and supplies for the implementation of the relief programme. That was also the Secretary-General's view. The Secretariat wished however to draw the Sub-Committee's attention to certain technical details apparently disregarded by the authors of some amendments.

The whole discussion hinged upon the figures given in the Acting Mediator's report. They were the outcome of a very careful estimate of certain requirements in foodstuffs, clothes, housing accommodation and transport. Even though the Committee agreed on a specific sum, that sum must be such as to cover existing needs; and it was difficult to ascertain whether the advance from the Working Capital Fund really represented the necessary amount and whether the whole of it could be supplied in dollars. Moreover, some States might not be able to supply the required goods at all, or might be able to supply them only in insufficient quantities. They would then offer other goods which would not necessarily be utilizable to the same extent. Some States however would undoubtedly have to be allowed to make their contributions in some other form than that arranged. For instance, the Arab States could more easily provide transport payable in local currencies rather than foodstuffs.

The Secretary-General thought, therefore, that logical though it was to try to specify the exact amount of the necessary relief,

/both in

both in currency and in kind, such an attitude might be harmful and might impede the smooth working of the relief programme.

The CHAIRMAN thanked the Secretary-General's representative and opened the discussion on the order in which the Sub-Committee should examine the various amendments to paragraph 3 of the joint draft resolution.

Mr. HOUARD (Belgium) pointed out that the Norwegian amendment and the amendment put forward by France and New Zealand were rather in the nature of additional texts, whereas Venezuela proposed changes in the original proposal.

Mr. de FOLIN (France), agreeing with the Belgian representative, stated that he would like to define the latter's view more closely. The Venezuelan amendment only proposed a change of detail in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, and could therefore be examined together with paragraph 3 itself. The Norwegian amendment and the third paragraph of the joint amendment proposed by France and New Zealand introduced new ideas and might constitute additions to paragraph 3, whether in its existing or in some other form.

The main aim of the third paragraph of the amendment put forward by France and New Zealand was to enable Member States to pay their contributions "in currencies other than the United States dollar". If the wording of that proposal were to be slightly changed by the deletion of any reference to contributions in kind, it could be regarded as a mere addition worded as follows: "These voluntary contributions could be paid by members in currencies other than the United States dollar in so far as the work of the relief organization can be ensured by payments in these currencies".

The CHAIRMAN admitted the soundness of the observations just made but feared it would be unwise to ignore the usual procedure. According to the rules of procedure, the Sub-Committee should examine first the amendments to the document which it had been agreed to take as the basis of discussion.

Although the Norwegian amendment and the amendment proposed by France and New Zealand could no doubt be included in additional articles, they were amendments nonet. The joint French and New Zealand amendment stressed the notion of voluntary contributions while the Norwegian and Venezuelan amendments implied a certain degree of compulsion. According to the rules of procedure, the French and

/New Zealand

New Zealand amendment, which was the nearest to the original proposal, would have to be examined last.

Furthermore, the French delegation had just made some changes in the original text of its amendment and had presented them in the form of an additional article. Other delegations would be entitled to ask for a translation and the Sub-Committee's work would be delayed for twenty-four hours.

Mr. de FOLIN (France) made it clear that the joint French and New Zealand amendment was intended to be inserted in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution; it did not constitute an additional article. Furthermore, it involved only drafting changes and there was no need, therefore, to respect the twenty-four hour period allowed for translation.

Mr. WARREN (United States of America) thought that paragraph (b) of the Venezuelan amendment was the only one that entailed changes in the wording of paragraph 3 of the draft resolution. It would have the effect of replacing the words "as soon as possible" by "before 1 March". That was the only real amendment to paragraph 3; all other texts were merely additions.

The Sub-Committee, therefore, could examine paragraph (b) of the Venezuelan amendment first. It would then be able either to adopt or reject paragraph 3 of the draft resolution and examine the proposed additions afterwards.

The CHAIRMAN noted that the view of the United States representative coincided with those expressed by the Belgian and French representatives. If all members of the Sub-Committee were agreed, that procedure could be adopted; though contrary to the letter of the rules of procedure, it would be justified in present circumstances. The Sub-Committee would in the first place examine paragraph (b) of the Venezuelan amendment, then paragraph 3 of the draft resolution and then all other amendments.

It was decided accordingly.

Amendment proposed by Venezuela (A/C.3/SC.2/C.6, paragraph (b)) to paragraph 3 of the draft resolution (A/C.3/315)

Mr. PLAZA (Venezuela) explained why his delegation proposed that the words "as soon as possible" should be replaced by the words "before 1 March".

He felt that the first paragraph of the preamble to the draft resolution was incompatible with the last sentence of paragraph 9. The first paragraph of the preamble quoted the Acting Mediator when it stated that

"the choice



"the choice in between saving the lives of many thousands now or permitting them to die". Consequently, it stressed the urgency of the need for assistance. Further, paragraph 9 stated that the contributions to repay the \$5,000,000 advance from the Working Capital Fund should be paid before the end of the period specified in paragraph 2. Paragraph 2, however, referred to 31 August 1949.

If the sum of \$29,500,000 were spread over nine months it would give a monthly average of over \$3,000,000; thus the \$5,000,000 advance would be exhausted before the end of February.

Venezuela feared therefore that some countries might await the end of August before paying their contributions, and proposed that these should be paid before 1 March 1949. In any case, the date was purely optional, since the paragraph began with the word "urges".

The resolution would thus produce a greater psychological effect; its tone would be made more urgent and it would constitute an answer to the Acting Mediator's pressing appeal, which stressed the approach of winter and the danger of epidemics.

The delegation of Venezuela was prompted by purely humanitarian considerations, and he was prepared to amend his proposal so as to render it acceptable to all.

Mr. DAVIES (United Kingdom) expressed a different opinion regarding the psychological effect to be expected from the resolution. By fixing a time-limit, the Sub-Committee might provoke delays rather than hasten the payment of contributions. The expression "as soon as possible" was much more urgent in tone, and he was convinced that many Member States would announce the amount of the contributions they proposed to make before the end of the General Assembly. There was no doubt that the sum of \$29,500,000 would be raised rapidly.

Furthermore, it would be difficult to impose a time-limit on States which, on account of peculiarities of their constitution, were bound by parliamentary procedure in committing themselves to new expenditure. Such States might be unable to pay their contributions before 1 March.

Mr. de FOLIN (France), while appreciating the sentiments of the delegation of Venezuela, was resolved to vote against the amendment.

His attitude was not inconsistent with that adopted by the French delegation in the draft resolution it had submitted jointly with New Zealand. That draft resolution also had fixed the time-limit of 1 March, but that time-limit referred only to the payment of the additional contribution to cover the \$5,000,000 advance and not to the whole of the

/voluntary

voluntary contribution.

He added a practical consideration to the arguments he had put forward before, namely that contributions in kind were expected. Many of those contributions would depend on crops which, in the northern hemisphere at least, were not yet available in March.

Mr. WARREN (United States of America) agreed with the representatives of France and of the United Kingdom. Repeating the argument of the United Kingdom representative, he added that if some States could not, on account of their constitution, pay their contributions before 1 March, they might think that those contributions were no longer required after that date.

Mr. PLAZA (Venezuela) thanked the representatives of the United Kingdom, France and the United States for the constructive objections they had submitted.

Nevertheless, if the Sub-Committee feared that some countries might wait until the expiration of the time-limit before paying their contributions, it should fear even more that they might wait until 31 August, the date mentioned in paragraph 2 which was referred to in paragraph 9. True, 31 August was the date set as a time-limit for the payment of additional contributions to repay the \$5,000,000 advance from the Working Capital Fund, but it might be interpreted as a time-limit for the payment of all contributions.

He did not think that the objections of a constitutional nature were valid. The word "urges" stressed the optional character of the contribution. Moreover, governments could surely be trusted to pay their contributions, even after the time-limit if they had been unable to do so before?

The French representative alone had put forward a valid objection. It was true that in many countries crops would not be available on 1 March.

He did not press for the adoption of his amendment.

The CHAIRMAN thanked the Venezuelan representative for the spirit of co-operation which he had just shown. He would consider withdrawn the Venezuelan delegation's amendment to paragraph 3 of the draft joint resolution (A/C.3/315).

Amendment submitted by the USSR delegation: General discussion.

The CHAIRMAN announced that the USSR delegation had just submitted an amendment to the same paragraph. The amendment was in Russian and was at that moment being translated by the Secretariat. According to the rules of

/procedure

procedure, and in accordance with the request of the General Committee, amendments had to be submitted in one of the two working languages. He hoped, however, that the Sub-Committee would be good enough to consent to hear the remarks of the USSR representative regarding his amendment, although the members had neither the English nor the French text as yet.

Mr. BORISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thanked the Chairman for the opportunity of making a few comments on his delegation's amendment.

In the first place the amendment in no way changed the principle underlying the text of paragraph 3 of the draft resolution (A/C.3/315), the principle concerning voluntary contributions by all the Member States. Nevertheless, the USSR delegation considered that it was right and necessary to make the text more explicit. The USSR amendment would consist of inserting in the first sentence<sup>of</sup> paragraph 3, after the words: "urges all States Members of the United Nations", the following clause: "particularly those which suffered no destruction as a result of the German occupation during the war period".

Mr. Borisov thought that the terms of that amendment were quite clear; its essential idea was to appeal firstly to countries which had suffered least in the last world war; he considered that to be perfectly fair.

The CHAIRMAN stated that he found the USSR amendment clear and very brief. He did not consider that the members of the Sub-Committee need wait for its translation into the two working languages. If they were in agreement, and if the USSR representative was satisfied with the translation of his amendment as given by the interpreters, he would open a general discussion on the USSR amendment.

The USSR representative having expressed his approval of the translation, the general discussion was opened.

Mr. DAVIES (United Kingdom) pointed out that, in accordance with the terms of the amendment, the United Kingdom would be one of the countries to which the first appeal would be made to contribute to the scheme for assistance to refugees. Whilst the United Kingdom intended to make a large contribution to that scheme, he wished to stress that the principle underlying the USSR amendment was a somewhat debatable one. According to that principle, enemy occupation was the criterion for calculating the damage suffered by a country during the war. That assumption might give rise to serious mistakes. He gave his own country as an example; it had not been occupied, but had nevertheless suffered extensive damage and

heavy losses in material and in human lives through air bombardment. To-day the United Kingdom was in a very difficult economic and financial situation owing to the damage it had sustained. The same applied to many other countries. It was therefore wrong to use only the simple fact that a country had been occupied as a basis for reckoning what damage that country had sustained during the war.

Moreover, every State was free to decide the amount of its contribution to the relief programme and the date on which it could be made. The Mediator had stressed the urgent necessity for help to the Palestine refugees. It was the States themselves which would ultimately decide upon the extent of their contribution to such help.

For the foregoing reasons, the United Kingdom representative would vote against the USSR amendment.

Mr. HOUARD (Belgium) pointed out that until then the Sub-Committee had strictly respected the terms of reference laid down by the Third Committee; in particular, it had always avoided examination of the political aspect of the matters submitted to it. He was sorry to note that the USSR amendment had introduced a new element, a political element, into the discussion.

Examining the amendment, Mr. Houard observed firstly that some countries had been occupied by armies other than the German armies; in particular, some States had been under Japanese occupation, which had been extremely injurious. Further, like the United Kingdom representative, he considered that the different States should have absolute freedom to decide to what extent they would contribute to the relief programme.

Mr. PLAZA (Venezuela) was opposed to the USSR amendment for several reasons. First, it tended, in his opinion, to set up distinctions between the countries, which was contrary to the spirit of the United Nations Organization. All the Member States of the United Nations had taken part in the war according to their means. Their geographical situation should not be used as a basis for discrimination. Moreover, the terms of the USSR amendment did not seem to him precise enough. To call "in the first place" upon those countries which had not been under German occupation might mean that such countries would have to make larger contributions than others to the relief programme for Palestinian refugees. According to Mr. Plaza, the contributions of the various countries should be equal.

Mr. ALTMAN (Poland) thought that all the Member States had the moral duty of participating in the relief programme for Palestinian refugees. The USSR delegation's amendment did however express a very just

/idea.

idea. It was necessary to stress the special position of those countries which had been under German occupation during the war; some of them had sustained terrible damage, and in spite of the progress made toward rehabilitation they were still in a very difficult situation.

The Polish Government in particular had heavy responsibilities as regards social assistance, and aid to orphans and to wounded and deported persons. There was no doubt that the countries which had suffered German occupation during the war wished to contribute to the relief of the Palestinian refugees, more especially because they had a very lively sense of international solidarity. But it was only fair that those States which had suffered in a lesser degree during the war and were consequently in a less difficult economic situation should make a larger contribution to the programme.

Lastly, unlike the Belgian representative, Mr. Altman saw no political element in the USSR amendment, and for that reason he would vote for it.

Mrs. LIONAES (Norway) stated that for the reasons expressed by the United Kingdom representative she would vote against the amendment of the USSR.

Further, in the hope of securing the widest possible participation of all States in the relief scheme for Palestinian refugees, the Norwegian delegation would propose a new amendment to the draft joint resolution (A/C.3/315), consisting of the insertion in the first sentence of paragraph 3, after the words: "Members of the United Nations", of the following words: "and appeals to all non-member States".

Mr. COSTERHUIS (Netherlands) reminded the Committee that his country had sustained enormous war damage. Nevertheless, he would vote against the USSR amendment because he considered it a matter of duty to contribute to the humanitarian objectives set forth in the draft resolution.

Mr. de FOLIN (France) recalled that at the previous meeting the French representative had stressed the universal nature of the moral obligations which were incumbent upon all Member States in connexion with the problem of assistance to Palestinian refugees. He noted that it was the first time that a motion such as the amendment put forward by the USSR had been introduced, and he considered that if adopted it might create a dangerous precedent.

France also had suffered greatly in the last world war, but she would nevertheless make as large a contribution as possible to relief for Palestinian refugees. His delegation would vote against the USSR amendment,

/believing



believing that the idea of taking the occupation of a country as a basis for calculating the damage suffered by that country was not a sound one. For instance, France had not only been occupied by the Germans; she had also been pillaged by them, and had suffered from many air raids. But a country such as the United Kingdom, although it had not been occupied, had sustained an equal amount of damage. Thus, to take the criterion of German occupation as a basis for establishing damage suffered would be tantamount to practising regrettable discrimination among the various States.

Mr. BORISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that he wished to give some further details.

He believed that the substance of his amendment had not been fully understood by the members of the Sub-Committee. It was not intended to exclude the participation of certain States. It merely constituted a realistic approach to the problem. He had noted that certain delegations did not seem to wish for the participation of all the Member States in the relief work for the refugees. Otherwise, those delegations would have adopted a more objective point of view; in particular, they would have taken into account the special conditions existing in countries which had been occupied by the German armies. The United Kingdom representative had alluded to the damage done to his country by air bombardments, but Mr. Borisov did not think that there could be any common measure between damage done by air raids and damage suffered through occupation. Occupied countries had not only been bombed; they had also been pillaged and depopulated by the invading armies. They had suffered far more than other countries; that was an elementary consideration which should be recognized.

In reply to the Belgian representative, Mr. Borisov stated that it was a mistake to read any political principle into his delegation's amendment. As regards the occupation of certain countries by Japanese troops, Mr. Borisov was quite prepared to include mention of that in his amendment.

The representative of France had tried to discern discrimination against certain States in the USSR amendment. According to Mr. Borisov, there was no such discrimination. The object of the USSR amendment was to call first upon those States which had suffered least. That was perfectly fair, because those States were in a position to contribute more to the aid to refugees. The USSR amendment was not inconsistent with the substance of paragraph 3 of the draft resolution; it merely made it more specific.

In conclusion, Mr. Borisov said that all the objections raised to that amendment were unfounded and he regretted to note that they were imbued with sentiments contrary to the spirit of compromise.

/The CHAIRMAN



The CHAIRMAN put the USSR amendment to paragraph 3 of the draft resolution (A/C.3/315) to the vote.

The amendment was rejected by 10 votes to 2, with 1 abstention.

The CHAIRMAN proposed that discussion of the amendment submitted by the Norwegian delegation should be postponed until the next meeting

That proposal was accepted.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.