

RESTRICTED
M/10
10 March 1948.

JEWISH DETAINEES IN EXILE,
Special Camp, Gilgil, Kenya.

Gilgil, 3rd March 1948.

His Excellency,
The Governor of Kenya,
Government House,
N a i r o b i .

Your Excellency,

On the 9th February 1948 we have sent to your Excellency a Memorandum in which we have asked, inter alia, to be informed of the date of our repatriation to Palestine. In reply we received a letter signed by the Camp Commandant, Col. H. P. Rice, paras a) & d) of which state: "a) The matter of the return of all the detainees to Palestine has already been referred to the relevant authorities in London, with a request for an early reply";... "d) As soon as a reply is received, it will be communicated to them".

Three weeks have already passed since the submission of our a/m Memorandum, but we have not yet received any official statement as to our repatriation.

2. In the meantime the B.B.C. has announced in three of its news-bulletins on Saturday the 28th February 1948, that: "the UNO Palestine Commission understands from the British Government that the political detainees in Kenya will be returned to Palestine before the Mandate ends". We have also heard the statement announced on that evening over the Near East Arabic Broadcasting Station of Jaffa.

In addition we have received on the 1st of March 1948 two cables from Palestine, both dated 29th February 1948. The first cable is signed by the Chief Rabbi of South Africa, Professor L.I. Rabinowitz, who is now in Palestine on a special mission which includes intervention in favour of our repatriation. His cable reads: "Anniversary of your deportation to Kenya brings official declaration by UNO that with British agreement your return home before May 15th assured". The other cable is from Mr. Sh. Eben-Zohar, who is the chairman of Laassireinu, the official Jewish Welfare Society for political prisoners and detainees, which deals primarily now with the problem of our repatriation. This cable reads as follows: "Palestine Telegraphic Agency officially reports from Lake Success quote Britain will cooperate with Implementation Commission in repatriating Kenya detainees before May 15th unquote".

3. May we also draw Your Excellency's attention to the official statement made yesterday in UNO Security Council by the Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs, Mr. Creech-Jones, who strongly reemphasized Great Britain's decision to terminate the Mandate over Palestine not later than May 15th.

4. According to the a/m UNO Palestine Commission's official declaration we have to be back in Palestine before the 15th of May 1948. Taking into consideration the many technical arrangements needed for our transfer, and the relatively short period which still remains until the 15th of May, it is very difficult for us to find any explanation for the rather strange fact that as far as we know the Government of Kenya was not yet notified of the decision which has been announced by the B.B.C. relating to a matter which is of direct concern to this country.

5. You will

5. You will undoubtedly realise that tension among the detainees has increased considerably because of the fact that even now, some ten weeks before the termination of the Palestine Mandate, there is still no official statement on a matter so urgent and vital.

6. We therefore ask Your Excellency to inform us officially as soon as possible of the exact position as to:

- a) our repatriation to Palestine,
- b) the date of our departure from Kenya,
- c) the means of our transfer from Kenya to Palestine; and
- d) which government will be directly responsible for our safety during the voyage from Kenya to Palestine.

Awaiting your early reply and thanking you in anticipation,

I have the honour to be,

Excellency,

Yours respectfully,

/s/ Shmuel M. Katznelson

Shmuel M. Katznelson,
Camp Supervisor.