

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

DAILY NEWS SUMMARY - 9

6 February 1948

(Sources: New York Times and New York Herald Tribune)

Jerusalem, Feb. 5 - Northern Palestine was the center of activity today, with shooting going on at a number of points in the Safed area. Tiberias was under curfew until further notice. (Brewer, N.Y. Times)

Sixteen persons were killed during the day in widely scattered incidents. An unofficial tabulation showed that 1,071 persons have been killed since 29 November. (A.P., N.Y. Herald Tribune)

Damascus, Syria, Feb. 5 - Haj Amin el-Husseini, exiled Mufti of Jerusalem, and Fawzi el-Kawukji have been overshadowed in current Arab plans to oppose the partition of Palestine, it was indicated today.

After two full days of conferences a considerable measure of agreement is reported to have been reached on how the campaign is to be run and who is to run it.

Neither Fawzi el-Kawukji nor the Mufti appears to have obtained all he expected but informed sources say that the frequently reported differences between the two have been ironed out for the time being.

General Taha Pasha el-Hashimi, former premier of Iraq, is apparently accepted as overall commander-in-chief of the Arab volunteer armies. Fawzi-el-Kawukji is now variously reported as field commander for all forces in Palestine, or field commander of the northern sector. Other reports designate Ismail Safwat, former deputy chief of staff of the Iraqi army, as top field commander in Palestine. Abdul Kadir el-Husseini and Sheikh Hassan Salamah are referred to as field commanders in the Jerusalem and Haifa areas.

The Mufti's idea for forming a "Palestine administration" -- a sort of government-in-exile with himself as head -- has been shelved in favor of a "military administration" to function under the authority of field commanders wherever Arabs are in control in Palestine. This, it was reported, began to function last week in some parts of the wild hill country around Hebron from which British forces have withdrawn.

Syrian leaders argue that to form anything resembling a "government", even before the Jews have done so, would provide the Jews with moral justification for doing likewise and would be the height of political unwisdom. The Mufti is belloved

in Syria has begun to assume more importance than his own activities, although he still appears to wield tremendous influence. (Schmidt, N.Y. Times)

London, Feb. 5 - Clifton Daniel (N.Y. Times) reports that Emir Feisal al-Saud, Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, has deferred indefinitely his trip to London for treaty talks with the British Government. Arab diplomatic quarters attribute his decision largely to the unfavorable atmosphere created by the Iraqi Government's recent rejection of a new pact with Britain.

It is understood that the British were proposing a joint defense board on the same pattern as that of the rejected Iraqi treaty. However, the action of the new Iraqi Cabinet has made other Arab states wary of entering negotiations at this uneasy moment and may upset the British scheme for a series of Anglo-Arab alliances to buttress the defenses of the Middle East.

Nevertheless, Trans-Jordan's treaty delegation and the Foreign Office are proceeding with their negotiations, a principal point of discussion reportedly being the provision of military and air bases for British forces.

The British Government, according to informed sources, has agreed to continue her annual subsidy to the Arab Legion, Trans-Jordan's national army, and to assure the legion of a steady supply of modern arms.