

UK/1.

26 January, 1948

My dear Bunche,

You will remember that at our recent session with the Commission, the Philippine Delegate raised the question of the supply of arms by His Majesty's Government to the Arab States.

In this connexion, you may like to have the following copy of a question and answer recently given in Parliament on 18th December. This confirms the provisional reply I gave at the meeting that the continued supply of arms to various Middle East states is in accordance with long-term treaty obligations.

Yours sincerely,

(SGD.) TRAFFORD SMITH.

Mr. Ralph J. Bunche,
Palestine Commission Secretariat,
United Nations,
Lake Success.

Parliamentary Question and Answer of December 18th

Mr. Hoy asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps have been taken to ensure that arms and supplies furnished to the Arab States under current Treaty arrangements will not find their way to Palestine.

Mr. Mayhew: His Majesty's Government have treaty obligations with various Middle East States to supply them with war material needed for international security and defence tasks. In view of the possibilities of trouble in the Middle East it was decided recently that all orders for war material from Middle East countries would be very carefully scrutinised. In deciding whether such orders are to be accepted, His Majesty's Government will naturally take into account the possibility of war material concerned being used in Palestine. Import of arms into Palestine itself will continue to be controlled by the Palestine Government while the Mandate continues. Thereafter it will be the responsibility of the United Nations Commission.