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UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

Communication Received from United Kingdom
Delegation Regarding German Internees in
Palestine

The following communication, regarding the position of
German internees in Palestine, has been received from Mr. Fletcher-
Cooke of the United Kingdom Delegation.

UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
Empire State Building
New York 1, N. Y.

My dear Bunche,

20th April, 1948.

The Commission will no doubt wish to have the following information regarding the position of German internees in Palestine.

- (1) The latest information is that there are between 270 and 300 German internees who wish to leave Palestine before the end of the Mandate.
- (2) The Security authorities are emphatically of the opinion that their lives will be in real danger unless they are evacuated and past experience entirely confirms this.
- (3) Discussions are proceeding between the Government of the United Kingdom, the Government of Palestine and the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia with a view to the ultimate reception of these internees in Australia for settlement there.
- (4) In view of the circumstances prevailing at present in Palestine, it is considered desirable that these internees should be sent at the earliest moment to a transit camp outside Palestine and discussions are now proceeding with a view to removing these internees, either to Cyprus or to a military camp in Egypt under the auspices of the International Refugee Organisation.
- (5) German funds are likely to be available to cover all expenses.
- (6) The Government of the Commonwealth of Australia have been asked to send a liaison officer to Palestine as soon as possible to make the necessary arrangements for their ultimate shipment to Australia.

2. The settlements at Waldheim and Bethlahem, near Haifa, where these internees are at present confined, were attacked by members of the Haganah at 4.0 a.m. on the 18th April and occupation of the settlements by the Haganah was completed by 6.0 a.m. Two internees were killed and four slightly wounded, but there were no casualties among the British and Arab guards.

3. In view of these developments and of the imminent danger to Germans at Wilhelma, it is hoped to evacuate them either to Cyprus or to Egypt during the current week. The Internees will only be able to take hand luggage with them and will have to leave behind valuable furniture and personal possessions.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Ralph J. Bunche
Principal Secretary to the United Nations
Commission on Palestine,
United Nations, Lake Success.

(signed) J. FLETCHER-COOKE
(J. Fletcher-Cooke)