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11 February 1948

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

Note received from Mr. Fletcher-Cooke,  
United Kingdom Delegation, on Recent Development in Palestine

The attached Note on Recent Developments in Palestine, received  
from Mr. Fletcher-Cooke of the United Kingdom Delegation, is circulated  
for the information of the Members of the Commission.

UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

NEW YORK 1, N. Y.

9th February, 1948.

Dear Bunche,

I enclose for the information of the Commission a Note on  
Recent Developments in Palestine.

yours sincerely,

(signed)

(J. Fletcher-Cooke)

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

## NOTE ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PALESTINE

A report has been received from Jerusalem to the effect that it is now definitely established that a second party of some seven hundred guerrillas (believed to be under the command of Fawzi Bey al Kaukji) entered Palestine via the Djamiyeh Bridge on 29th/30th January. It is understood that this band dispersed rapidly among the villages of Samaria and that there is now in that district a force of not less than 1400. Although this force has dispersed, it remains cohesive and is increasingly exercising considerable administrative control over the whole area. As an instance of this, the force has of its own accord and in collaboration with Arab National Committees, already dealt with local bandits and other petty crimes. The presence of this force, which exhibits a surprising degree of discipline, has been warmly welcomed by the inhabitants of Samaria. It appears anxious to avoid becoming involved with the British Security Forces. The secrecy which cloaked the entry of the second contingent is due to a deliberate and successfully imposed policy of silence.

It is understood that Fawzi Bey al Kaukji has now been assigned the command of the Liberation Army in Samaria as well as of that in Northern Palestine.

Individual attacks by Arabs on British troops and police have increased. These are due partly to a desire to obtain arms even at the price of murder, and partly to nervousness, particularly in rural areas, caused by the frequent use by the Jews of British uniforms in order to facilitate offensive action. Train robberies have been continuing, though with steadily decreasing success due to action by the Army. Road travel is still regarded as precarious though in many areas this is due as much to the personal fear of travellers as to the actual state of security obtaining.

The most important clash between British Security Forces and Arabs took place near Tabgha when a military patrol went to the rescue of a Jewish truck which had been ambushed by a party of Arabs. In subsequent engagements, the military forces captured six Syrians originating from the Aleppo region and drew off the remainder.

The perpetrators of the outrage which occurred in Jerusalem on 1st February when the offices of the "Palestine Post" were gutted by an explosion are still unknown. Investigations are continuing. It is reported that this incident has so alarmed the Jews that they have at once increased both barriers and Hagana foot patrols round important Jewish areas and buildings in Jerusalem.

Jewish mobilisation has been intensive and males between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three are now liable to be called up for active service. Great efforts are being made to reinforce settlements with men and material, while information available to the Government of Palestine indicates that future immigrant ships will carry a high proportion of youngsters destined for the Jewish forces. A side-light on the completeness of the Jews' military programme is a series of urgent requests by various Jewish bodies for permission to use existing military air strips and to construct others in a country-wide strategic network.

All available evidence indicates that illegal immigration is unlikely to stop or even to decrease. As suggested above, the accent in future will be on able-bodied youths.

The first batch of 750 infants and sick persons out of approximately 7,000 to be transferred from Cyprus have arrived in Palestine without any noticeable reaction among the Arabs.