

19 February 1948

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

Note for Sir Alexander Cadogan

(As revised and approved at the forty-first meeting, 17 February)

1. In connection with a number of points of detail referring to the transfer of authority from the Palestine Administration to the United Nations Palestine Commission, it was agreed, that before proceeding to a discussion of the separate items, the position of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom with relation to the Palestine Commission should be clarified.
2. It is submitted that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom has recognized that Palestine is a concern of the United Nations. By a letter of 2 April 1947, the United Kingdom Government indicated its intention to ask the Assembly to make recommendations concerning the future Government of Palestine.
3. At the twenty-fifth meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question, the United Kingdom Representative, in making clear the extent to which the role assigned to his Government by the Report of Sub-Committee 1 was compatible with the declared intention of his Government not to participate in the implementation of a plan of partition, stated: "If a scheme of partition were approved and a United Nations Commission set up, the Palestine Government would, when the time came, hand over its authority to that Commission".
4. On the adoption by the General Assembly of the Resolution on the Future Government of Palestine, on 29 November 1947, the United Kingdom Representative declared that he had been instructed "to express the hope that the United Nations Commission will get into communication with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in order that arrangements may be agreed for the arrival of the Commission in Palestine

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and for coordination of its plans with those of the Mandatory Power for the withdrawal of British Administration and British Military Forces". Subsequently, liaison was instituted between the United Kingdom Government and the Palestine Administration on the one side and the Commission on the other.

5. In the Commission's view, the above statements and the procedure established imply that the United Kingdom Government is not contemplating the possibility of any other authority in Palestine than the Commission immediately following the termination of the Mandate. It is to be noted that the Resolution of the General Assembly establishes the Commission as the authority possessing governmental power in Palestine during the period between the termination of the Mandate and independence. It would appear contrary to the meaning of the Mandate if the Mandatory Power terminated the Mandate without previously having made arrangements for a timely transfer of authority.

6. The Commission would appreciate receiving at an early date the United Kingdom Government's views on the subject, and in the meantime, has the honour to request the United Kingdom Government and the Palestine Administration to take no unilateral steps prejudicial to a final settlement of this question, especially with regard to budgetary arrangements for the fiscal year commencing April 1, 1948 and to the granting of benefits to servants of the Palestine Administration, on the termination of the Mandate.