

UNRESTRICTED

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UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

**Statement Received from United Kingdom Delegation
Concerning the Security Situation in Palestine.**

**The following statement, concerning the present security situation
in Palestine, has been received from the United Kingdom Delegation.**

UNITED KINGDOM INFORMATION

TO THE

UNITED NATIONS

The following statement was issued by the Palestine Government at 1200 Palestine time, March 1st.

The Government has stated on many occasions its intention to do all in its power to maintain law and order without partiality towards either community in Palestine and this is still its policy. The issue of the following statement in the light of yesterday's outrage at Rehovoth must therefore not be taken as implying in any way a change in this policy. On the 3rd February 1947 the Government invited the Jewish Agency and the Vaad Leumi to call upon the Jewish community for their assistance in bringing to justice the members of terrorist groups who had been guilty of murder and other crimes over a considerable period. It was then pointed out that what was demanded was the recognition of the ordinary legal and moral duty to cooperate against crime which belongs to the citizens and institutions of any civilised state. The invitation was declined by the Agency on the ground that it was contrary to Jewish political interests.

Since that time the outrages committed by these groups have not only continued but have increased in numbers and barbarity. It is unnecessary to catalogue the enormities perpetrated by these people in the past year, and it is perhaps sufficient to recall such incidents as the murder by hanging, in every circumstance of brutality, of two innocent members of the security forces; the numerous occasions on which members of these forces have been treacherously shot dead from behind; the deliberate demolition of buildings with the certain consequence of death and injury to women and children; the planned killing of certain foreign nationals; the intentional shooting of British wounded in hospital; armed robberies and extortions; and finally the outrage committed

/yesterday

yesterday in which 26 British soldiers have lost their lives.

The leaders of the Jewish community have felt themselves unable, for political reasons, to take any steps to bring to justice the persons responsible for these crimes and have thus facilitated the spread of lawlessness and disorder to a point at which the community itself is threatened with destruction by elements within itself. In this neglect of its responsibilities the Jewish Agency has attempted to excuse itself by resort to calculated immoderate falsehoods and propaganda directed against British members of the Security Forces who are in fact every day protecting Jewish property and saving hundreds of Jewish lives, even at the risk of their own. This propaganda has already discredited its authors, and that not only among those who are acquainted with the facts. It has also the serious consequence that it must henceforward be clearly more difficult for British troops to look upon members of the Jewish community as persons who are entitled, as they are, to protection.

In spite of official denials, the Jewish Agency has repeated that it was a British Army convoy that was responsible for the Ben Yehuda Street outrage. Nobody outside Jewish circles believes this, and there can be no other purpose in repeating it than to stir up racial hatred. The fact is that the vehicles responsible for this outrage were no more a British Army convoy than the vehicles stolen from time to time by Jews and used by them on numerous occasions for the murder of many more people than were killed in Ben Yehuda Street.

The Agency's recent statement that it stands for law and order, whereas the government does not, must be judged in the light of the fact that for many years this international body has been breaking the laws of Palestine and of other countries in which it has operated. A recent illustration is its refusal to put forward any Jewish witnesses to give evidence in the official inquiries into Haseolel Street and Ben Yehuda Street incidents, coupled with an invitation to the Police to furnish evidence themselves to the self-constituted committee of inquiry which the Agency has set up.

Last November the Agency undertook to establish within ten days civil guard force (known as the Mishmar Force) to deal with the terrorist groups centered in this area. In consequence of this undertaking, British police and troops were withdrawn in order to avoid interferences with the activities of this force. But today it is still not in being and in this area the terrorist groups openly and freely continue to murder and rob the Jewish inhabitants themselves. No explanation has been given by the Agency of the breach of this undertaking.

The Government recognises that the Haganah have from time to time foiled these terrorist groups, but there still remains no method of dealing effectively with these people except the use of the machinery provided by law.

The Government mindful of the duty of the Security Forces to maintain law and order and confronted with the deliberate policy of the Jewish Agency to render their task as difficult as possible, desires now to bring once more to the serious attention of the Yishuv the fact that the continuance of indiscriminate murder and condoned terrorism can lead only to the forfeiture by the community of all right in the eyes of the world to be numbered among civilised peoples.