

RESTRICTED  
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8 March 1948

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

Communication Received from United Kingdom  
Delegation Concerning Accommodations for  
Advance Party.

The following communication concerning accommodation arrangements  
for the advance party, has been received from Mr. Fletcher-Cooke of  
the United Kingdom Delegation.

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

8th March, 1948

Urgent and Confidential.

My dear Bunche:

You will remember that the other day you asked me whether I could give you any information about the arrangements made for the accommodation of the Secretariat advance party in Jerusalem. Urquhart also spoke to me about this on behalf of the Secretary-General, and I am sending him a copy of this letter.

I have now been informed that on 27th February a telegram was sent from Jerusalem to London, informing the Colonial Office that two flats were being prepared for the reception of the advance party and that food could be delivered by the Police to these flats. At the same time, it was made clear that no staff could be found to look after the Secretariat advance party. It was also pointed out that the military personnel in occupation of these flats would not be leaving until the evening of 28th February, and it was suggested that a delay in the arrival of the Secretariat advance party of at least forty-eight hours was particularly desirable.

It is understood that by the time this telegram was received in London, Azcarate had already left for Paris. This information was therefore given to the other members of the party who were still in London, but they stated that they were unable to authorise any change of plan without consulting with Azcarate.

The United Nations Office in London then sent a message to Paris to be communicated to Azcarate, informing him

- (a) that accommodation was not likely to be ready until February 29th and that it would be convenient if the party's arrival could be postponed for forty-eight hours;
- (b) that no domestic staff were likely to be available.

It is, therefore, clear, I think, that the advance party were given ample warning of the difficulties with which they would be faced on arrival in Jerusalem, and in particular it was brought to their notice that no domestic staff was likely to be available.

I have now received further telegram from Jerusalem which was sent off on 6th March and which confirms that the party are cooking their own meals. The hope was expressed that Jewish women servants might start work for them on 7th March. The telegram confirmed that the party are accommodated in two flats containing seven rooms and the usual offices. The Police are providing food, but various accessories are not yet available. It is added that every effort is being made to provide staff and other requirements as soon as possible.

I feel sure that the Government of Palestine would wish me to express to the Commission their regrets for any inconvenience that may have been caused to the advance party, but at the same time I must reiterate that these difficulties were foreseen and were brought to the notice of the Commission before the party left New York; and, as indicated above, further warnings were given before the party finally left London. I feel sure that the Government of Palestine will do everything possible to remedy the existing deficiencies, but conditions in Jerusalem are such that this is not altogether easy.

Yours sincerely,  
(Signed)  
(J. Fletcher-Cooke)

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