

RESTRICTED
UK/66
15 March 1948

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

**Communication Received from United Kingdom Delegation
Giving Answers to Questions Received by United Kingdom
Delegation from Four Powers.**

The following communication, giving the text of answers to questions received by United Kingdom Delegation from the Four Powers, has been received by Mr. Lisicky from the United Kingdom Delegation.

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With the compliments of the
United Kingdom Delegation to the United Nations

URGENT
CONFIDENTIAL

12th March, 1948.

My dear President,

As I promised in my letter of March 10th, I have now obtained from London and Jerusalem answers to the questions in the list furnished to me by Senator Austin on behalf of the Four Permanent Members of the Security Council at our meeting on March 9th.

The memorandum which I transmit to you herewith contains answers to all these questions with the exception of No.8, on which I made my position clear at the meeting on March 9th.

In addition to answering the specific questions listed by Senator Austin, I have included such information as is available to me on supplementary points which arose during our discussion of the questions. A further such point which was put to me was whether His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have entered into any conversations with the Governments of Arab States bordering on Palestine in regard to incursions of Arab irregulars. In this connection I am authorised to inform you that His Majesty's Government have protested to the Governments of Syria and Transjordan against the incursions of Arab irregular forces into Palestine from the territory of those States, and have asked them to use their best endeavours to prevent similar incursions in future.

I am sending copies of this letter and enclosure to my United States, French and Soviet colleagues, to the Chairman of the Palestine Commission and to the Secretary-General for his personal information.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) V.G. LAWFORD.

(for Sir Alexander Cadogan)

Dr. Ting-Fu Tsiang,
President,
Security Council,
United Nations.

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

QUESTION 1:

Have any incursions by armed elements from outside Palestine occurred in addition to those already reported to the Palestine Commission by the Mandatory Power?

ANSWER 1:

The following information is now available in addition to that already supplied:

- (a) On or about the 24th February, between 500 and 1,000 Iraqis, Lebanese, Syrians, Egyptians and Transjordanians entered Samaria and Galilee across the Jordan and the Palestine-Lebanon frontier.
- (b) A band of up to 500 Yugoslavs presumed to be Bosnian Moslems were reported en route to the Lydda District during the first week of March.
- (c) On the 5th/6th March, a small party under Fawzi Bey Kawukji entered Palestine. Kawukji's present whereabouts and intentions are unknown, and no report of his having established a permanent headquarters has been received by the British authorities.
- (d) Numbers of Egyptians have entered Gaza District in parties of up to 100 at a time. It is possible that other smaller contingents have entered unreported.

QUESTION 2:

Has the Mandatory Power been able to identify personnel involved in such incursions?

ANSWER 2:

The information of the Palestine authorities regarding the origin of personnel involved in these incursions is derived from common knowledge available locally and from intelligence reports. As regards the character of these forces, they consist of irregular formations and not organised units of any national armed force.

QUESTION 3:

Are these incursions privately organised by individuals or unofficial groups, or are they supported or encouraged by Governments outside Palestine?

ANSWER 3:

H.M.G. have no special information on this point other than that given in the answer to question 2.

March 15, 1948

QUESTION 4:

Are arms now flowing into Palestine from outside sources to individuals or groups unauthorised by the Mandatory Power to possess arms?

ANSWER 4:

Both Arabs and Jews in Palestine are now receiving illicit consignments of arms from outside sources. While the Palestine Government have no exact knowledge of the quantity and description of arms possessed by either side, it is their opinion that the Jews are better armed than the Arabs. In this connexion it will be recalled that there have recently been instances of the seizure in the United States by United States authorities of large consignments of high explosives destined for Jewish organisations in Palestine.

As regards the possibility which has been suggested of illicit importation of arms by aircraft landing in the desert, the Palestine Government consider this unlikely. Such clandestine importation by air would, however, be easier for the Jews than for the Arabs, in view of the better facilities possessed by the former for wireless communication and for distribution of arms after receipt.

QUESTION 5:

What measures, military and civil, by the Mandatory Power are now in effect to prevent the movement of hostile elements into Palestine from outside Palestine?

ANSWER 5:

The principal points of entry by land are guarded by troops or police, but owing to the length of the frontier and the difficult nature of the terrain, it is impossible for frontier control to be one hundred percent effective. As regards the sea frontier, the measures taken by the Mandatory authorities to prevent the entry of Jewish illegal immigrants are well known.

QUESTION 6:

To what extent are disorders inside Palestine due to participation by armed elements from outside Palestine?

ANSWER 6:

The present series of disturbances began in December last against a background of Jewish inspired disorder which had been going on for 2½ years. The Arabs implicated in this series of disturbances were originally all Palestinians.

Since then both Palestinian and non-Palestinian Arabs have been engaged.

QUESTION 7:

To what extent are disorders inside Palestine attributable to incitement to violence from outside Palestine?

ANSWER 7:

As far as the Palestine Arabs are concerned, their

opposition to partition is spontaneous and universal.

Inflammatory material has appeared in the press of the neighbouring Arab countries, although the situation in this respect has recently improved. On the Jewish side, widespread propaganda has of course been conducted for some time in the press of the United States and other countries by persons and organisations inciting the Jewish community to violence and terrorism principally against the Mandatory Power.

UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATION TO THE UNITED
NATIONS

12th March, 1948.