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UK/73
18 March 1948

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

Communication Received from United Kingdom
Delegation on the Food Supply Position in
Palestine after 15 May

The following communication, concerning the food supply situation in
Palestine after the termination of the Mandate, 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.

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18th March, 1948

My dear Bunche,

May I refer to your letter of the 5th March with which was enclosed a memorandum from the Commission relating to the food supply position in Palestine.

As stated in paragraph 2 of my letter of the 15th March, the proposals made by the Commission have been conveyed to His Majesty's Government and the views of His Majesty's Government are as follows:-

(1) Up to the 15th May next, His Majesty's Government will continue the present procurement of food supplies.

(2) For the period 15th May to 30th June next (the end of the current International Emergency Food Council allocation period for cereals), His Majesty's Government are prepared to arrange for the procurement, on an agency basis, of those supplies which they at present undertake, i.e. cereals, sugar and some oils and fats, subject to the following financial considerations:-

(a) That the Government of Palestine is unable to advance money to finance these operations.

(b) That the financial obligations undertaken during the period 15th May to 30th June next will be accepted by the Commission possibly through the Export Import Bank, commercial loans or such other similar arrangements as may be found suitable by the Commission.

(3) His Majesty's Government consider that in any event the situation in Palestine demands that immediate steps should be taken to supplement the procurement referred to in paragraph 2 above by the issue of import licences to private traders in Palestine. The overall supplies procured by these means being set off against the programme of the supplies in question.

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(4) Whilst noting the Commission's objections to private importation as likely to weaken central control of supplies and distribution, His Majesty's Government have, in the urgent circumstances now existing, authorised the High Commissioner for Palestine to allow private importation at his discretion forthwith.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

(J. Fletcher-Cooke)

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