

V/K/8

5 February 1948

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

Communication from the Delegate of the United Kingdom Providing Supplemental Information on the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force.

The following communication has been received on 5 February 1948 from Mr. Fletcher-Cooke of the United Kingdom Delegation.

4th February 1948

Dear Dr. Bunch,

You will remember that when the United Kingdom Delegation met the Commission on Friday, 30 January, I undertook to obtain from Jerusalem certain information relating to the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force. I have now received this information, which is as follows:

(1) The strength of locally enlisted personnel on 18th December, 1947, was 2,653 against an establishment of 2,894. Since that date discharges have reduced the figure to 2,483.

(2) Only two British officers are employed on contract to the Government of Palestine for service with this Force and the remainder of the British officers are posted or seconded from the British Army, to which they will revert on disbandment of the Force.

(3) Breakdown of personnel of the Force by nationalities is as follows:

Palestinian	1,463	
Trans-Jordanian	749	
Syrian	130	
Egyptian and Sudanese	113	
Lebanese	24	
Others	4	Total: 2,483

(4) Disbandment of the Force will take place at Zerka in Trans-Jordan. Trans-Jordanians will be discharged there and will not enter Palestine. Palestinians, Egyptians and Syrians will be discharged at Samakh in Palestine. It is the Government of Palestine's intention to repatriate to their countries of origin all non-Palestinians.

(5) The Force was originally recruited in Palestine and Trans-Jordan.

(6) As regards the sources from which expenditure on this Force is met, you will remember that I informed the Commission that the Government of Palestine's contribution was limited to IP£2,797 per annum (which was the cost to Palestine in 1935/36), and that the bulk of the expenditure which amounts to about two million pounds per annum is paid by His Majesty's Government.

(7) The incidence of the cost of retiring benefits and gratuities as between the Government of Palestine and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom has still to be settled.

(8) The immoveable assets of the Force are being disposed of by Army Disposals Service subject to the agreement of the Government of Palestine to each contract of sale. Division of the proceeds of these sales as between the Government of Palestine and His Majesty's Government is being further considered and the decision taken will depend upon whether assets were acquired before or after His Majesty's Government assumed financial responsibility for the Force.

(9) Moveable assets will be treated as equipment of His Majesty's Forces and disposed of by the War Department. The value of the equipment taken over by the War Department in 1941 will, however, have to be taken into account in the final settlement of accounts between the Government of Palestine and His Majesty's Government.

Yours sincerely,

J. Fletcher-Cooke

Dr. Ralph J. Bunche  
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Commission on Palestine  
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