

RESTRICTED
UK/89
26 March 1948

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

**Communication Received from United Kingdom
Delegation Concerning Arab Legion in Palestine**

The following communication, concerning the position of the Arab Legion in Palestine, 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.

24th March, 1948.

My dear Bunche,

May I refer to the letter of the 19th March addressed to the chairman of the Palestine Commission by the Director of the New York Office of the Jewish Agency for Palestine regarding the position of the Arab Legion in Palestine.

2. As the Commission will appreciate, the Arab Legion is being employed in Palestine as part of the Security Forces under the command of the General Officer Commanding. In order that the Arab Legion may be in a position effectively to carry out its task of assisting in the maintenance of security, it has, of course, to be supplied with arms and equipment as required. I am, therefore, authorized to confirm the statement made in paragraph 2 of the letter referred to above, namely, that on or about the 9th March certain items of equipment to meet Arab Legion requirements were moved from Tel el Kebir in Egypt to Raffah in Palestine.

3. As regards the suggestion in paragraph 4 of the letter referred to above that units of the Arab Legion had entered the Hebron District in Palestine "under the authority of the Arab League", I would invite attention to my letter of the 23rd March, from which you will observe that this is incorrect and that those elements of the Arab Legion serving in Palestine under British command who have recently been posted to the Hebron area have moved there under the orders of the General Officer Commanding.

4. As regards the last paragraph of the letter referred to above, I would invite your attention to paragraph 3 of Section B - Disposition of the Arab Legion, of the note furnished to the President and other Permanent Members of the Security Council, a copy of which was sent to you under cover of my letter of the 11th March. From this paragraph, it will be observed that all allegations that personnel of the Arab Legion have fired unprovoked on Jewish convoys passing their camps have been investigated and in no instance has it been established that the Arab Legion fired first.

Yours sincerely,

(signed) J. FLETCHER-COOKE
(J. Fletcher-Cooke)

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