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UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION
Communication Received from United Kingdom Delegation
Concerning the Explosion at the Jewish Agency Building, Jerusalem

The following communication, concerning the explosion at the Jewish Agency Building in Jerusalem on 11 March, has been received from Mr. Fletcher-Cooke of the United Kingdom Delegation.

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

13th March, 1948.

My dear Ralph

May I refer you to my [letter of 12th March](#) with which I enclosed a brief note about the recent explosion at the Jewish Agency Building in Jerusalem. We have not received further information about this incident which will be found in the enclosed note.

Yours ever
J. Fletcher-Cooke (signed)

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

COPY/ks 15 March 1948

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

(Explosion at Jewish Agency Building on the 11th March, 1948)

The following account of the explosion at the Jewish Agency Building in Jerusalem on the 11th March, 1948, is based on information obtained as a result of police investigations carried out on the 11th and 12th March.

(a) At 9.46 a.m. on the 11th March, a heavy explosion occurred at the Jewish Agency Headquarters Office is King George V Avenue, Jerusalem. Fire broke out immediately afterwards and the casualty figures reported by 8.0 p.m. On the 12th March are as follows: -

- 13 Jews Killed
- 33 Jews seriously injured
- 51 Jews slightly injured.

(b) Due to the refusal of Jews at the scene of the incident to allow British or Jewish Police Officers access to the Buildings or facilities to make a proper examination of the remains of the vehicle understood to have carried the explosive charges or to interrogate witnesses, it has been difficult to obtain an authoritative version of what took place. (Some of the difficulties with which the authorities have been faced in conducting this investigation are set out later in this Report).

(c) It appears that a saloon car bearing United States Consular registration plates and possibly flying a United States flag, drove up to the Jewish Agency Building.

(d) According to some witnesses (not yet interrogated by the Police), the car was driven by its usual chauffeur, a Christian Arab, who was in blue Consular uniform and who was known to the Jewish guards at the entrance.

(e) The Jewish guards, therefore, allowed the vehicle to enter the courtyard where it seems to have been parked close to the Karen Hayesod wing of the building.

(f) The explosion occurred a few moments later.

(g) What happened to the driver is not yet known.

(h) It has been established that a car, the description of which corresponds to that of the vehicle used in this attack, is missing from the United States Consulate General; The chauffeur left the Consulate General at 9.0 a.m. to collect newspapers from a shop in Mamillah Road but according to employees at this shop, neither he nor any other person collected newspapers for the Consulate General.

(i) Neither the vehicle nor the driver have yet been accounted for.

(j) Owing to the difficulties placed in the way of the authorities investigating this incident, details of damage to the building have not yet been obtained but a British Broadcasting Corporation correspondent, who was held under arrest in the Building by Jews shortly after the explosion, was later released and allowed to inspect the damage.

(k) This correspondent is understood to have said that the top floor of the Keren Hayesod wing had been sliced off and that the walls facing the courtyard were tottering and charred by fire is further stated that every office in the building had suffered blast damage and that eight or ten Jewish Agency trucks and other

vehicles standing in the yard at the time of the explosion had been extensively damaged.

2. The following facts have been reported from Jerusalem relating to the manner in which Police investigated this outrage have been obstructed:

- (a) Immediately following the explosion the British Deputy Superintendent of Police, Jerusalem, issued orders for all British personnel to keep out of the area until he had visited the scene. At the same time, he ordered an investigating party consisting of Jewish Police to proceed immediately to the Jewish Agency.
- (b) The Deputy Superintendent of Police then went to the area accompanied by a Jewish Assistant Superintendent of Police.
- (c) At Zone B Gate, he met a British Army Officer who stated that immediately after the explosion he had entered the area with a party of soldiers, stretchers, and an ambulance. After removing five injured Jews, the soldiers were roughly handled, cursed at, and spat upon by Jews who were in a hostile mood, blaming the British and the Arabs for the outrage. The British Army Officer immediately withdrew his party.
- (d) The Deputy Superintendent of Police then sent the Jewish Assistant Superintendent of Police to the Jewish Agency to make contact with the investigating party and to commence investigations. The Jewish Assistant Superintendent of Police was twice refused admission to the building and was eventually sent to a Jewish Agency official with a message asking for assistance in making contact with witnesses of the incident.
- (e) The Deputy Superintendent of Police himself endeavored to enter the Jewish Agency building but was stopped by four members of the Haganah, one of whom said "Get back, you British pig".
- (f) Shortly afterwards, two members of the Jewish Police investigating party came to speak to the Deputy Superintendent of Police but were obstructed by four Haganah men.
- (g) After a delay of ten minutes, one of the Jewish policemen was allowed to pass. He stated that the United States Consulate driver was suspected of having deposited the explosive and added that the Police were not being allowed to record statements of witnesses.
- (h) Three-quarters of an hour later, at 12.15 p.m., the Jewish Assistant Superintendent of Police returned and reported that no progress was being made in the police investigations and that he had not been permitted to examine what was believed to be the United States Consulate vehicle.
- (i) The Jewish District Officer, Jerusalem, who was also present, was asked to assist and he said that he would see what he could do but that the situation was extraordinary.
- (j) At 1.0 p.m., the Deputy Superintendent of Police left the scene as there was no change in the Jewish attitude towards the Police.
- (k) At 1.30 p.m., the Jewish Assistant Superintendent of Police was given a list of supposed Witnesses by the Jewish Agency official.
- (l) It was not until 3.30 p.m. that Jewish Police personnel were permitted to enter the Agency and examined the vehicle believed to have been used in the incident.
- (m) While one Jewish Police Corporal was taking a statement from a witness, members of the Haganah intervened, seized the statement and removed the witness.

13th March, 1948.

United Kingdom Delegation
(initialled JFC)

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