

SECRET

UK/64
12 March 1948

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

**Communication Received from United Kingdom Delegation
Concerning Incursions of Armed Arab Bands into Palestine**

The following communication, concerning the incursions of armed Arab bands into Palestine, 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.

SECRET

11th March 1948

My dear Bunche,

I enclose a copy of a note which Sir Alexander Cadogan has sent to the President and to the other Permanent Members of the Security Council, which is, I think, self-explanatory.

You will no doubt bring the information contained in this note to the notice of the Commission.

Yours sincerely,

J. Fletcher-Cooke (signed)

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

SECRET

NOTE

A. INCURSIONS OF ARMED ARAB BANDS INTO PALESTINE

In addition to reports already supplied to the United Nations Palestine Commission, the following information is now available:

- (1) No large incursions of foreign guerrillas took place during the week ending the 21st February, 1948.
- (2) There was evidence to suggest that in order to avoid friction with His Majesty's Government, it had been decided that further reinforcements should cross the frontier in small groups and with greater secrecy.
- (3) A report that a motorised detachment of armed Egyptian volunteers had entered the Gaza District was dismissed as probably incorrect and it was suggested that the report might have arisen from confusion with a Red Crescent Unit whose admission had received the consent of the Government of Palestine.
- (4) On the 21st February, the number and disposition of foreign guerrilla forces was believed to be somewhat as follows: -

(a) Galilee	1,000 in groups of 50 to 100 under a central command
(b) Haifa	About 200 - 300
(c) Samaria	3,000 to 4,000
(d) Jerusalem City	Some hundreds
(e) Jerusalem District	Possibly 500
(f) Jaffa Town	About 200
(g) Gaza District	About 100 believed to be Egyptians.

As regards the week ending 28th February, 1948, there were no further reports of large-scale Arab infiltrations and it is believed that the present policy is for volunteers to be sent into the country in small parties. It was reported that there had been no major clashes between these Arab bands and the Security Forces during the week under review.

In the Daily Incident Report for the 28th February (sent to the Commission) there was a reference to the fact that during an attack by some 1,500 Arabs on the Jewish colony of Maanit which was repulsed by British Security

Forces using artillery, four Arabs believed to be Iraqis were wounded.

B. DISPOSITION OF THE ARAB LEGION

1. Arab Legion Units in Palestine are employed on static guard and escort duties and not in dealing with communal disorders.

2. The plan for withdrawal to Trans-Jordan by stages of the Arab Legion has been worked out by the military authorities. Of the twenty-one Units in Palestine, four were scheduled to leave by the end of February, a further four by the end of March and the remainder by the 15th April.

3. Incidents have occurred in which personnel of the Arab Legion are alleged to have fired unprovoked on Jewish convoys passing their camps. These allegations have all been investigated and in no instance has it been established that the Arab Legion fired first.

United Kingdom Delegation

11th March, 1948