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LETTER FROM THE JEWISH AGENCY FOR PALESTINE DATED 29 MARCH 1948,
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING
A MEMORANDUM ON ACTS OF ARAB AGGRESSION

Sir,

The Jewish Agency for Palestine has welcomed the opportunities afforded it under Article 39 of the Charter to supply information and present its views to the Security Council on the Palestine question. Under this arrangement representatives of the Jewish Agency have made oral submissions on February 27, March 5 and March 24.

We are anxious to avoid making excessive demands upon the time of the Security Council whose agenda is filled with so many important problems. Accordingly, the Jewish Agency desires to communicate the following written information for official distribution as S/documents, later to be included in the Official Records of the Security Council:

Memorandum on Acts of Arab Aggression, December 1947-January 1948

Supplementary Memorandum on Acts of Arab Aggression, February-March 1948.

We are aware that members of the Security Council may have had occasion to receive both these documents; but we attach importance to their official distribution and subsequent inclusion in the Official Records since they are essential to the understanding of the case which we have endeavored to outline.

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) Moshe Shertok

Jewish Agency for Palestine

APR 26 1948

MEMORANDUM
ON
ACTS OF ARAB AGGRESSION TO ALTER BY FORCE THE
SETTLEMENT ON THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF PAL-
ESTINE APPROVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
UNITED NATIONS

submitted to the
UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION
by the
JEWISH AGENCY FOR PALESTINE

LAKE SUCCESS, NEW YORK

FEBRUARY 2, 1948

SUMMARY

The Jewish Agency for Palestine submits that a situation has arisen in Palestine whose continuance is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security. This situation is due to an attempt by the Arab League and by the Governments represented therein in concert with the Palestine Arab Higher Committee to alter by force the settlement envisaged by the General Assembly's *Resolution on the Future Government of Palestine (November 29, 1947, A/516)*—an attempt which, according to Part A of the Resolution, should be determined “as a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression.”

This aggression is taking three forms:

A. *A campaign of threats, incitement and propaganda* officially sponsored by the Arab League and the Governments represented therein, which is “designed to provoke and encourage a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace and acts of aggression,” in violation of the Resolution unanimously adopted by the General Assembly with reference to *Propaganda and the Inciters of a New War (October 28, 1947, A/428)* and of *Article 2, Paragraph 4 of the Charter*.

B. *Direct acts of aggression* recently organized and sponsored by the Governments of Syria and Lebanon against the Jewish population of Palestine in a manner inconsistent with the *Purposes and Principles of the United Nations (as defined in Article 1 of the Charter)* and in violation of *Article 2*.

C. Threats and preparations for aggression in Palestine now being made by all or several Governments represented in the Arab League in violation of *Article 2 of the Charter*, relating to the “threat or use of force in international relations” and in a manner inconsistent with the *Purposes and Principles of the United Nations*.

INTRODUCTION

In April 1947 the United Kingdom Government as the Mandatory Power requested the General Assembly (under Article 10 of the Charter) to make a recommendation on the future Government of Palestine. The General Assembly, accepting the view repeatedly expressed by the United Kingdom Government that the United Nations had jurisdiction to define the form of government in the territory of the Palestine Mandate, took steps to study and investigate all matters bearing upon the situation in that country. A Special Session of the

General Assembly held in April and May, 1947, appointed a Special Committee of the United Nations to investigate all aspects of the Palestine question and present a Report to the General Assembly. On September 1, 1947, after a careful investigation conducted in Palestine and Europe, the Special Committee presented its Report¹ which the General Assembly referred on September 23, 1947, to an Ad Hoc Committee. This Ad Hoc Committee appointed two sub-committees, of which one presented a Resolution for a settlement by Partition and Economic Union, and the other, composed of Arab and Moslem states, submitted a Resolution for a unitary Palestinian State. The former Resolution was adopted in the Ad Hoc Committee by 25 votes to 13. The latter was rejected by 29 votes to 12. Accordingly, on November 25, 1947, the Ad Hoc Committee presented a Resolution to the General Assembly involving a settlement of the Palestine question by Partition and Economic Union. This was adopted by the General Assembly with 33 votes in favor and 13 votes against.

2. The General Assembly appointed a 5-power Commission to implement its recommendation; allotted certain functions to the Trusteeship Council and the Economic and Social Council respectively, in carrying out parts of the plan; and requested the Security Council to take action under Articles 39 and 41 of the Charter if the situation in Palestine constituted a threat to the peace. The General Assembly further requested the Security Council to determine as "a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace or an act of aggression any attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged by this resolution." The General Assembly finally appealed "to all Governments and all peoples to refrain from taking action which might hamper or delay the carrying out of these recommendations."

3. The Resolution adopted on November 29, 1947, was thus the result of a prolonged attempt by the United Nations to seek a solution by inquiry and negotiation. The Arab States, as well as the Arabs of Palestine, were afforded ample opportunity to submit their views and proposals to all the organs established by the United Nations to discuss the future government of Palestine. Their representatives did in fact present proposals to the Ad Hoc Committee for a constitution establishing Palestine as a unitary Arab State.² These proposals were examined, discussed and emphatically rejected.

¹ United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, Report to the General Assembly, Volume I.

² Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestine Question. Report of Sub-Committee 2. A/AC, 14/32, November 11, 1947.

4. The following pages will show that the *Arab States in concert with the Palestine Arab Higher Committee are attempting to overthrow by force the settlement which the General Assembly has approved and to impose by force the settlement which the General Assembly has rejected.*

A. PROPAGANDA AND INCITEMENT DESIGNED TO PROVOKE A BREACH OF THE PEACE.

5. In submitting that there is a purposeful attempt by Arab Governments in conjunction with the Palestine Arab Higher Committee to alter by force the settlement envisaged by the General Assembly's Resolution, the Jewish Agency is content to rest on the admissions of those Governments themselves. The Arab League never intended to accept the results of any mediation, arbitration or judicial settlement. When the Report of the United Nations Special Committee was published, the Political Committee of the Arab League meeting in Sofar, Lebanon, on September 16-19, 1947, passed resolutions which included the following threats:

"The Committee will regard the implementation of these recommendations (i.e., the UNSCOP recommendations of the majority and minority alike) as a certain danger menacing security in Palestine, and security and peace all over the Arab countries. Therefore it has determined by all practical and effective means *to resist the implementation of these recommendations.* They—the Palestine Arabs—*will launch a relentless war to repel this attack on their country especially so as they know that all the Arab countries will back and assist them, supplying them with men, funds and ammunition. . . .*"¹

6. Subsequent events in Palestine, when the Arabs did indeed "launch a relentless war" and were "backed by men, funds and ammunition" from the Arab States, make it clear that the League's statement must be regarded as a plan and not as an abstract prediction. The "practical and effective means" contrived and advocated by the Arab States were never envisaged as being limited by the provisions of the Charter; indeed, the Secretary-General of the Arab League was thinking in terms which are quite remote from the lofty sentiments of San Francisco. "This war," he said, "will be a war of extermination and a momentous massacre which will be spoken of like the Mongol massacres and the Crusades."² In his further observations Azzam Pasha outlined three characteristics of the future war—the belief in glorious death as a road to Paradise, the opportunities of loot, and the Bedouin love of slaughter for its own sake.

¹ Al-Ahram, Cairo, September 21, 1947.

² Akhbar al-Yom, October 11, 1947.

7. Azzam Pasha had made his statement to an Egyptian newspaper; Jamal Husseini, for the Palestine Arab Higher Committee, deemed the United Nations a better platform for a call to arms against the Assembly's decision: "The partition line proposed," he said, "shall be nothing but a line of fire and blood."¹

8. At the Sessions of the General Assembly one Arab spokesman after another enunciated his conception of the Arab States' attitude to the settlement of an international problem by international decision. The Assembly was repeatedly told that it must either ratify all Arab demands or be met with fierce and widespread violence in the Arab world.²

9. When the General Assembly set its own impartial judgment above this menacing clamor and refused to subject the entire Jewish population of Palestine to the domination of a unitary Arab State, violent threat became the keynote of all Arab official utterances. It was not a propagandist campaign alone; the aim and effect of these declarations were to incite Palestine Arabs to active violence and the populations of the Arab States to active aggression in their support. On December 1, 1947, Azzam Pasha made a declaration in which he said:³

"By no means shall we permit the implementation of the resolution of the United Nations to partition Palestine. We shall resist and fight off this resolution with all the means at our disposal. *We have prepared an elaborate plan agreed upon by the Arab States in the meetings of the League Council.* This plan is being put into effect for the last two months. . . . The way of operation has been entrusted to a technical Committee. . . . The time is not a time for talk but for action."

It is clear that Azzam Pasha was here referring to the Arab League's decision at Sofar in September 1947 "to make Palestine a unified independent Arab State."⁴

10. The heads of Arab Governments have been as active as the Arab League spokesmen in provoking and encouraging threats to the peace in Palestine. Their utterances in this sense are quite unaffected by their vote in the General Assembly condemning warlike propaganda.

¹ Proceedings of Ad Hoc Committee on Palestine, November 24, 1947.

² Speeches by Syrian Delegate, November 26, 1947, and by Iraqi delegate, November 28, 1947.

³ Al Wahda, Jaffa, December 1, 1947.

⁴ See above, Paragraph 5.

On September 22, the Iraqi Premier told the press, "I have requested you to prepare the Iraqi people, especially the youth, for the actions and sacrifices which may be necessitated by the situation. I now repeat this request."¹ On October 23, he declared that "*the Iraqi army will march and enter Palestine if the United Nations adopt partition.*"² On December 2, the Lebanese Prime Minister stated that "Lebanon had started carrying out the Arab League's decision to make Palestine a unitary Arab State." He went on to say that "the Lebanese Army will play its part when that time comes." On January 12, 1948, the Syrian Premier, Jamil Mardam Bey, declared to youths in Damascus clamoring for arms to fight the Jews that "President Shukri al-Quwatly approves of the movement of Arab youth and of their readiness for Jihad in defense of Arab Palestine."³

11. Efforts are sometimes made to portray the assistance given in Arab States to aggression in Palestine as the voluntary and spontaneous actions of excited citizens and not as formal acts of Governments. Some Arab representatives, however, are too candid for this subterfuge. Thus in the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, the Prime Minister Riad al Solh said, "I am speaking under the dome of this chamber and in this official capacity proclaiming that we shall provide Palestine with all the arms, funds and men we possess."⁴ On December 7 he said, "The Lebanese Army now on the Palestine borders will play its part with other Arab armies in saving Palestine when the proper time comes."⁵

12. The above-quoted statements by Iraqi, Syrian and Lebanese ministers, designed to provoke and assist aggression against the Jews of Palestine, are well matched by similar declarations on behalf of the Governments of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Transjordan. Indeed, all seven Arab States associated themselves through their Prime Ministers with a declaration in Cairo on December 17, 1947, in which they pledged themselves to oppose the United Nations' decision by force. An announcement to the press after their consultations said: "Partition is illegal and the Arab Governments will take decisive measures which will guarantee the defeat of partition."⁶ The same announcement contained a threat by the seven Prime Ministers to throw the full force of their armies into "the battle . . . until victory is achieved." The communique added: "It now behooves the Arabs to

¹ Al-Ahram, September 24, 1947; Beirut, September 23, 1947.

² Reuter's Baghdad, October 23, 1947.

³ Associated Press Damascus, January 12, 1948.

⁴ Al-Ahram, October 1, 1947.

⁵ Associated Press Cairo, December 7, 1947.

⁶ United Press Cairo, December 17, 1947.

prepare for the struggle." The decisions taken at the Cairo meeting were subsequently interpreted in separate declarations by its participants wherein they reaffirmed the attitudes which they had already proclaimed. The Prime Minister of Lebanon then said that the Arab League "had definitely decided to arm Palestine Arabs, reinforce them with volunteers and collect a war fund to finance an all-out fight in Palestine."¹ He went on to say: "We will never sleep until we save Palestine as an independent Arab unified State. We promise you we will supply Palestine . . . with weapons, equipment and men. I hope you will have confidence in the leaders of the Arab League. You shall witness soon the results of their work." The Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia, Emir Faisal al-Saud, declared: "We promise you to save Palestine by our souls, money and sons. . . . I am depending on God and you to maintain Palestine as an Arab independent State."² The Prime Minister of Syria, Jamil Mardam Bey, said that "the time for speeches is past and the stage for action is at hand. We should all be determined to liberate Palestine by our might and money."³ On December 6, 1947, the Yemenite representative in Cairo, Sayyid Ali al Muayyed said: "The Yemenite people are all armed and all are anxious to fight for Palestine."⁴ On the same day the Prime Minister of Transjordan, Samir al Rifai Pasha, said: "My country's forces will be allied with the rest of the Arab world to fight for Palestine."⁵

13. It would be manifestly absurd to contend in the face of these declarations that Arab Governments bear no responsibility for the violence and bloodshed which have been provoked in Palestine by their propaganda and intensified by the participation of their nationals. A few weeks after the Cairo meeting the Arab League evidently deemed it prudent to discard all pretense that violent action was not officially sponsored. As'ad Dagher, Press Officer of the Arab League, convened a press conference at which he disclosed that the Arab League "*had recommended that the Arab nations occupy all Palestine with their regular armies when British troops leave Palestine.*"⁶

14. The Arab leaders in Palestine who acknowledge the ex-Mufti's leadership are themselves quite conscious that they may rely on the support of neighboring Governments in their efforts to submerge the peace of Palestine in a rising tide of bloodshed and aggression. The adoption of the General Assembly's resolution was the signal for

¹ AP Cairo, December 15, 1947.

² AP Cairo, December 15, 1947.

³ AP Cairo, December 15, 1947.

⁴ AP Cairo, December 6, 1947.

⁵ AP Cairo, December 6, 1947.

⁶ AP Cairo, January 15, 1948.

attacks on Jewish life and property organized by the Arab Higher Committee through its local committees and groups in towns and village areas. A leading member of the Arab Higher Committee, Emil Ghoury, informed three American journalists on December 31, of the Higher Committee's resolve to organize bloodshed in Palestine under the direction of the Arab League's military committee at Damascus headed by General Taha al-Hashimi, former Iraq War Minister.¹ Mr. Ghoury continued: "Arab forces will also include volunteers from other Arab countries . . . and the war will start at the convenient opportunity."

On the basis of these and similar official declarations the Jewish Agency submits that the seven States represented in the Arab League are responsible—together with the Palestine Arab Higher Committee—for conducting propaganda which is designed to provoke and encourage a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace, and acts of aggression within the terms of the General Assembly's Resolution of November 29, 1947, in violation of the Resolution unanimously adopted by the General Assembly with reference to *Propaganda and the Inciters of a New War (A/428 October 28, 1947)* and in a manner inconsistent with the *Purposes and Principles of the United Nations* as laid down in *Article 1 of the Charter*.

B. DIRECT ACTS OF AGGRESSION.

Attacks organized by Syria and Lebanon against Jewish villages in North Palestine on January 9, January 14 and January 21.

15. On the morning of Friday, January 9, 1948, Arab forces from Syria attacked two Jewish villages in northern Palestine, Kfar Szold and Dan, both located near the Syrian border some twenty-five miles north of Lake Tiberias.²

A study of Arab statements in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine during the days preceding this attempted invasion reveals the concern of Arab leaders at the scanty results of the violence which they had organized in Palestine. On December 31, Mr. Emil Ghoury of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee had informed press correspondents that "his only criticism of attacks by the Arabs was that they are not enough."³ Dr. Hussein Khalidi, General Secretary of the Committee, had stated that the world "would soon see evidence of Arab military skill." Reliable observers had noticed an increase in the number of "Palestine Liberation Committees" in Syria and Lebanon. In the Qatana camp near Damascus, allotted by the Syrian army to volunteers for aggression in

¹ New York Herald Tribune, January 15, 1948.

² New York Times, New York Herald Tribune, January 10, 1948.

³ New York Times, January 1, 1948.

Palestine, hundreds of Arabs from Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt and Palestine were receiving training for immediate operations.¹

16. The invaders on January 9 numbered about 400: they came across the frontiers in motor trucks and attacked the Jewish villages in two waves. They were equipped with modern automatic weapons and wore uniforms similar to those of the Syrian army. A battle between them and the Jewish settlers led by Haganah commanders, raged for three and a half hours before British troops supported by artillery and Royal Air Force Spitfires intervened to bring the situation under control. Three Jews were killed and eight were wounded; the Arabs left some 25 dead.

17. The objects of the attack were varied. According to reliable reports there was a desire to test the effects of this frontier violation on United Nations opinion; and it is significant that the aggression coincided with the first meeting of the United Nations Implementation Commission. Another object was to provide cover for the infiltration of Syrian volunteers into Palestine territory. According to a well authenticated report from Damascus,² "nine hundred men commanded by Akram Kaurani moved by truck through Lebanon and crossed into Palestine near Beit Jebil. Another six hundred commanded by Abed Shisbekli entered Palestine by the bridge known as Jisr Banat Yaqub." The same source is probably correct in defining the main object of the attack as an effort to sustain Arab morale which "needed . . . some sensational victory, such as the capture of a town that would electrify the Arab world and stir the doubting into action."³

18. On January 12, the British Foreign Office announced that the British Minister in Damascus had "called for information from the Syrian Government and . . . had expressed the concern of the United Kingdom Government over the attack and asked that action be taken to prevent the situation from being aggravated."⁴

19. No secret was made of official Syrian and Lebanese complicity with these attacks. On January 10, a Palestinian Arab daily⁵ reported that the Syrian Defense Minister, Ahmed Sharabati, had arrived in Lebanon on Thursday, January 8, with a convoy of thirty lorries carrying 700 Arab recruits from Syria on their way to Merj Ayun on the Palestine-Lebanese frontier. The British station broad-

¹ New York Times, January 19, 1948.

² New York Times, January 18, 1948.

³ New York Times, January 18, 1948.

⁴ New York Times, January 13, 1948.

⁵ Al-Sha'ab, Jaffa.

casting in Arabic from Jaffa (Sharq al-Adna) stated that the Lebanese Defense Minister, Majid Bey Arslan, had similarly gone to Merj Ayun for "an important meeting of the Palestine Defense and Liberation Army."

20. Following a request from the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, the Prime Minister and Defense Minister reported to the Chamber on January 14, 1948, on the progress of current aid to the Palestine Arabs. All Lebanese newspapers carried accounts of these proceedings whose highlights are the following:

The Prime Minister stated that Arab Governments are determined to fight the partition of Palestine with all their force. He emphasized that the Arab States have not recognized and will never recognize the United Nations' decision on Palestine.

The Defense Minister gave what he called "an eye-witness account" of Arab attacks on Jewish villages in Northern Palestine. "These attacks," he said, "would be strengthened and would take the shape of a real war in the near future." He added "that all activities, such as the collection of funds, registration and training of volunteers, assembling of arms, etc., are being supervised by himself and the Syrian Defense Minister in accordance with the resolutions adopted at the recent Premiers' Conference in Cairo."¹

Meanwhile in Damascus, the Syrian Defense Minister, Ahmed Sharabati, made a statement containing his impressions of the engagement at Dan and threatening "a direct frontal attack on Jewish forces in about a month."²

Attack on Dan and Lehavot

21. The attack of January 9 appears to have established a precedent for the free crossing of the Syrian-Palestine border by Arab "volunteers." On January 14, Arabs from Syria again attacked the Jewish settlement of Dan and the younger settlement of Lehavot four miles south of Dan, blowing up the community's water source and damaging its fish ponds. This attack originated at Shuta just across the Syrian border. A British official announcement said that British troops from Metullah drove the Arabs off in a battle which lasted an hour and a half. The Arabs left one dead and withdrew into Syria.³

¹ Speeches in the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, January 14, 1948.

² New York Times, January 10, 1948.

³ AP, January 14, 1948.

Attack on Yehiam

22. On January 21, a force of about 400 Arabs crossed the Lebanon-Palestine border and attacked the Jewish village of Yehiam, 20 miles east of Nahariya in Western Galilee. Nine Jews, including five settlement policemen, were killed. The attack began at 7 a. m. and lasted five hours during which time Arabs cut all the bridges and culverts leading to the village. The battle raged for six hours before British troops arrived. There are 60 adult Jewish settlers at Yehiam.

23. On January 22, a smaller Arab force again crossed the frontier, renewed the attack on Yehiam and was driven off with heavy casualties. These attacks on January 21 and 22 were carried out by well-organized uniformed companies with covering support from mortars.¹

24. Men who infiltrated into Palestine under cover of these attacks have taken part in assaults on Jews in many parts of the country. Syrian and Iraqi units have been observed as snipers in Haifa, in attacks on Ramat Rahel (near Jerusalem), and Kfar Etzion (near Hebron), and elsewhere.²

Aggression by units of the Transjordan Arab Legion

25. The acts of aggression described above have involved the violation of the Palestinian frontier at the instigation and behest of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments in order to commit wanton and murderous aggression against peaceful Jewish villages and to bring about a political settlement which the General Assembly has condemned, by methods which the Charter forbids. Murderous acts against the Jewish population have also been committed by the Transjordan Arab Legion, a foreign army maintained in Palestine under British command. These acts, for which the responsibility falls on the Mandatory Government, will be described in a separate submission by the Jewish Agency.

Summary of Direct Acts of Aggression Already Committed

26. The following Chapter, dealing with preparations for future onslaughts on the Jews in violation of the Charter and in defiance of the General Assembly's decision, will make it clear that the main phase of Arab aggression is still to come. Yet it would be futile to ignore

¹ New York Times, January 22, 23, 1948.

² AP Jerusalem, January 4, 1948, reported "Syrians, Lebanese and Transjordanians have filtered into Jerusalem to swell the ranks of Sheikh Bakhrî" (leader of Arab group in the Old City of Jerusalem).

the fact that aggression has already begun, and that the atmosphere of impunity in which it has been committed must serve as an encouragement to more ambitious violence in the future. The Syrian and Lebanese Governments have already assembled, organized, equipped and despatched Arab forces to commit aggressive acts against peaceful Jewish communities in territory wherein Syria and Lebanon have no right of access or jurisdiction at all. Syria is a member of the Security Council on which the Charter (Article 24) confers "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security." Yet it is on Syrian territory, with the active support of the Syrian Government, that forces have been and are being armed and organized for frontier violation, aggression and attempts to overthrow a decision of the General Assembly by force. The Lebanon, with other Arab States, sponsored in the General Assembly a Resolution on "Illegal Immigration" amidst many eloquent protestations on the inviolability of frontiers. Yet the Lebanese and Syrian frontiers offer free passage for unauthorized entry of men and arms into Palestine under the personal supervision of the Defense Ministers concerned with the avowed object of disturbing international peace and security. In Beirut and Damascus respectively, in close touch and collusion with the Governments concerned, the two main instigators of the present disturbance and warfare in Palestine have their abode: *Haj Amin al Husseini*, ex-Mufti of Jerusalem, and *Fawzi al Kawukji*, his accomplice as leader of the Arab Rebellion in 1936. Since the Report of the British Royal Commission¹ signalled these men out for primary guilt in the organization of bloodshed a decade ago, they have managed to perfect their aggressive techniques and ideologies through long residence during the war in Nazi Germany as allies of the Hitler regime. Through them, this attack on the very soul of the Charter is connected, in an invidious but appropriate lineage, with the "scourge of War" from which the United Nations aspires to "save succeeding generations of mankind."²

27. The Jewish Agency submits that the relatively limited scope of these acts of aggression within the past two months does not absolve the United Nations from the necessity of taking steps to suppress breaches of the peace and acts of aggression. It is submitted that only firm and timely international action can avert the full unfolding of the aggressive design which is now being prepared by certain Member States of the United Nations.

¹ Royal Commission Report, Chapter IV, Paragraph 14.

² Another such link is provided by the Arab commander in Jaffa and Lydda, Sheikh Hassan Salameh, who was described by Mr. Emil Ghoury on December 31, 1947, as one of the most active men in the field (New York Times, January 4, 1948). Sheikh Salameh was dropped in Palestine by parachute as a German Major for sabotage duties in 1944.

C. PREPARATIONS FOR AGGRESSION BY ARAB STATES AGAINST JEWS OF PALESTINE AND UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES.

28. The violent propaganda organized by Arab Governments in recent weeks, the three acts of aggression committed by Syria and Lebanon, and the current infiltration of officially sponsored "volunteers" are merely the prelude for the main phase of Arab aggression which is planned to take place in the near future. The Arab League spokesman, As'ad Dagher, in his statement on January 15 indicated that the end of the British Mandate would be the signal for the occupation of the whole of Palestine by armies of the Arab States.¹ The Syrian Defense Minister, Ahmed Sharabati, however, declared on January 13, on his return from the operations based on Merj Ayun against Dan and Kfar Szold, that "a direct frontal attack against Jewish forces can be expected in about a month from the Arab People's Army. Full-scale training and arming are progressing."²

Recruiting and Training in Syria.

29. According to the Cairo paper, Al-Zaman, of December 17, the Arab League Council entrusted the Syrian Government with the task of organizing "the popular movement for the rescue of Palestine." Damascus, by all accounts, is now the center of a well-organized movement under the direction of the Syrian Ministry of National Defence, Ahmed Sharabati, for the recruiting, training and equipment of Palestinian and non-Palestinian Arabs who are to form a "people's army" for the invasion of Palestine. The Cairo newspaper, Al-Ahram, reported on December 15 that "about 700 Palestinian Arabs are already training in Qatana barracks near Damascus; their number is growing by about 100 a day." Later the recruiting movement in Damascus began to embrace Syrian nationals as well. On December 4, Aref Nakadi, Governor of Jebel Druz, announced the beginning of recruitment in his area especially for Druses "who were made for war and war was made for them."³ The military commander of Aleppo, Jamil al-Burhani, announced that recruiting in the northern provinces would begin on December 8.⁴ On December 7, the Damascus newspaper, Alif-Ba, reported that the Ministry of National Defence had announced that special recruiting offices would be opened to bedouins "who are inclined by nature to draw the sword."

¹ New York Times, January 16.

² AP Damascus, January 13.

³ Al-Jabal, Damascus, December 4.

⁴ Al-Insha, Damascus, December 7.

30. On December 27 it was reliably reported that 38 senior officers of the Syrian army had "resigned" to help train a voluntary corps. On December 19 the Syrian Defence Ministry announced its "acceptance of the resignations . . . particularly of army officers who wish to volunteer for service in Palestine to fight against partition. The number of those resigning was not immediately discussed."¹ The leader of the recruiting movement is Fawzi al-Kawukji, who informed the press on December 9 that 15,000 volunteers were due to complete training at an early date.²

Apart from Syrians, the trainees at the Qatana camp include Palestinians from Jenin, Nablus and Hebron; a group of Lebanese Moslems; a number of young Iraqis who took part in the pro-Nazi revolt under Rashid Ali and a group of young Egyptians headed by their leader, Ahmed Hussein.³

According to information at the disposal of the Jewish Agency, the number of volunteers in Syria is presently as follows:

Damascus	5,700
Aleppo	5,000
Rest of Syria.....	5,000

Of these, 950 volunteers from Damascus and 400 from Aleppo are now under training, in addition to the 420 fully-equipped Palestinian volunteers in Qatana camp.

Recruiting and Training in Lebanon

31. In Lebanon, recruiting preparations are also in full swing. On December 18, the British Near East Broadcasting Station in Jaffa reported that the first group of 500 volunteers who had enlisted for service in the defence of Palestine had been called up for training by the Beirut recruiting office. Earlier in December the Mufti of Lebanon, Muhammed Tawfiq Khalid, made a public "fatwa" (ruling) declaring a holy war in Palestine.⁴ The Egyptian newspaper, Ruz el-Yusuf, reported on December 10 that "Lebanese volunteers have held manoeuvres near Baalbek using a number of batteries which were put at their disposal by the High Command of the Lebanese Army."

Recruiting and Training in Egypt

32. On December 14 the Damascus newspaper, Al-Insha, reported: "Ahmed Hussein, leader of the Young Egypt Party, has arrived in Damascus and entered the Qatana barracks for training.

¹ AFP—Damascus, December 19.

² AP—Damascus, December 9.

³ Qabas, Damascus, December 12.

⁴ Beirut (daily newspaper), December 4.

He began negotiations with Shukri Quwatli, the Syrian President, and Fawzi al-Kawukji about forming a detachment of Young Egyptians to be named after Mustafa al-Wakil, an Egyptian who collaborated with the Nazis during the war and died in Germany. On December 16 the *Journal d'Egypte* reported that the Egyptian cabinet had authorized the establishment of recruiting offices for volunteers. On December 23 the Cairo newspaper, *Al-Ahram*, published a letter from Ahmed Hussein giving full details of the progress of his work in the Qatana barracks. The Egyptian press reflects the impatience of militant elements with what they regard as a cautious attitude of their Government in this recruiting movement. Criticism has been directed against the Government at the party meetings of Young Egypt (*Al-Ahram*, December 19), the Wafd (*Al Musawwar*, December 21) and the Liberal Party (*Al-Ahram*, December 17). It would be a fair description of the position in Egypt to say that while the recruitment of volunteers for aggression in Palestine lacks something of the governmental drive which is freely given in Syria, voluntary activity for these purposes is sponsored by the Egyptian Government and is encouraged by the militant leaders of the Arab League secretariat which has its abode in Cairo. That this movement is gathering strength is clear from the *New York Times*, which reported on January 20: "Members of the Kawukji staff said they had been negotiating with Arab groups in Egypt. They said the Nationalist party and the Moslem Brotherhood in Egypt were contributing most of the men for a force that would cross the Sinai Desert to attack Jewish settlements in the south while the Kawukji force operated from the Nablus area."

Recruiting and Training in Iraq

33. Recruiting offices of the "Committee for the Rescue of Palestine" were opened in Baghdad on December 8.¹ On December 12 a number of Iraqi young men who had participated in the pro-Nazi Rashid Ali rebellion in Iraq of 1941 arrived in Damascus and put themselves at Fawzi al-Kawukji's disposal.²

On January 17, 1948, the Egyptian newspaper, *Al-Masri*, reported that Jamal Husseini had stated after visiting the Iraqi Vice-Premier that a well organized Arab Commando group was being formed in Iraq for special assignments in Palestine.

34. On December 27 Col. Taher Muhammed, a member of the "Palestine Defence Committee," stated that "two regiments of volunteers will be sent to Palestine within a week to fight for the Arabs.

¹ *Al Sa-a*, December 9.

² *Al Qabas*, Damascus, December 12.

They consist of soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers released from the Iraqi Army." The Committee further stated that 100 retired Iraqi Army Officers would proceed to Syria within a week to train Syrian officers.¹

According to reliable reports, at least 1,400 Iraqi volunteers have passed into Syria. Some of the earlier contingents, who arrived in Syria fully armed, have departed for Palestine after brief training at the Qatana barracks.

35. Recruiting in other Arab countries has not at the moment assumed large proportions, although Government statements are on record which give full authority for any such activity that might be undertaken. It is evident that the Arab population as a whole is reluctant, despite official incitement, to embark on hazardous military operations. The masses need the encouragement of military success and the certainty that there will be no strong international reaction before embarking on a general campaign. The Arab News Agency, however, reported from Mecca on December 9 that recruiting offices had only just been opened at Riyadh and other centres. The same News Agency had reported on December 21 that "hundreds of recruits are enlisting daily in Saudi Arabia." On December 8 Azzam Pasha told the press that "Ibn Saud had placed his regular troops at the League's service and had given his blessing to any desert tribe that wished to fight for Palestine."²

36. In describing these recruiting activities, the Jewish Agency has mainly relied on Arab reports. No such reliance appears to be reasonable in regard to the numbers involved. The tendency is to give exaggerated figures, but the fact remains that a widespread recruiting campaign for violence in Palestine is being encouraged and sponsored by Arab Governments. On December 18 the Ministry of the Interior in Damascus "warned correspondents against too detailed reporting on volunteer training and other military preparation in connection with Palestine."³

Arms Purchases

37. Arab Governments who possess State resources and the access to the open markets are in a good position to ensure that sufficient arms are available for creating a prolonged breach of the peace in

¹ AP, Baghdad, December 27.

² UP, Cairo, December 8.

³ UP, Damascus, December 18.

Palestine. On December 18 it was reported from Cairo that "senior military officers of four Arab states have left the country on a mission to purchase arms and ammunition as part of the Arab League plan to prevent the inception of the Jewish State in Palestine. . . . The mission officers . . . from Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon . . . plan to visit Pakistan, India, France, Switzerland, Spain and Czechoslovakia. . . . The Arab armies, it seems, have no arms surplus and such a move on the League's part is necessary to supplement the guerrilla arsenals."¹

38. The Egyptian newspaper, *Al-Masri*, reported on January 20 that the Mufti had asked the Egyptian Prime Minister for permission to transfer to Palestine all arms and ammunition acquired by his agents and envoys in Egypt, the Western Desert and Libya. On January 14 the same newspaper stated that all arms used by Iraqi volunteers in Palestine were modern weapons received from Britain and further that the Egyptian Government was preparing legislation which would enable Palestinian Arabs to acquire arms in Egypt and transfer them to Palestine.

39. On January 28 it was reported from Cairo: "Ahmed Hussein, leader of the Young Egyptian Party, stated that the Egyptian Government had supplied several thousand rifles to Palestine Arabs. He said that they were given to the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem."²

40. In this connection, the Jewish Agency has to draw special attention to the grave and singular feature of Arab arms purchases, which is the availability of British arms to Arab Governments and their potential use by those Governments for aggression in Palestine. This feature of the situation will be referred to in a further memorandum.

Infiltration into Palestine

41. Another stage in the assistance by Arab Governments to the projected plans of invasion and war in Palestine is the violation of frontiers between their own territories and Palestine by the infiltration of volunteers and armies. According to reliable reports and incontestable evidence, this process has been going on for several weeks. As already pointed out, attacks from Syria and Lebanon against Jewish villages in North Palestine served as cover and screen for the infiltration of hundreds of volunteers who are taking up their positions in Palestine in preparation for future aggression. On January 9, the

¹ *New York Times* from Cairo, December 18.

² *AP*, January 28.

New York Times contained the following report from the Associated Press in Baghdad:

“A convoy of Iraqi volunteers—ninety commandos and instructors released by Iraq’s Army—left today en route to Palestine. The contingent, which includes officers, is supplied with light arms, including machine guns and grenades. It will instruct and train volunteers. Other such groups are expected to leave Baghdad soon.”

On January 15 the Associated Press from Baghdad reported that Jamal Husseini, Vice-President of the Palestine Arab Higher Executive, had witnessed the departure of 200 trained Iraqi volunteers for Palestine. On January 25 reports were published of the arrival in Palestine of 750 armed men from Iraq via Transjordan and their concentration in Tubas in the Nablus area. According to the New York Times of January 26 Arab sources stated that these fighters “had been deployed through a wide area.” The Jewish Agency is able to confirm the accuracy of the following two reports published in the New York Times of January 26. The first report from the newspaper’s correspondent in Damascus reads:

“Fawzi el-Kawukji, Commander in Chief of the Arab People’s Army, was reported today to be preparing to leave for Palestine. The number of his men who have crossed the Lebanese and Syrian frontiers to gather in the mountain region around Nablus in Palestine was said to exceed 3,500.

“Mr. Kawukji has organized a ‘general staff,’ which will enter Palestine with him to direct operations. The volunteer army is under order not to become involved in major operations but to concentrate on organization.

“Asked when he would depart, Mr. Kawukji said: ‘Never mind the date, but when I go the whole world will know.’”

The second report comes from the United Press in Beirut on January 25, and reads as follows:

“One thousand well-trained Arab soldiers slipped into Palestine from Lebanon, Trans-Jordan and Syria during the past two nights, reliable sources said today. It was said to have been the third large wave of volunteers to infiltrate into Palestine since the United Nations decided to create Arab and Jewish States.”

42. On January 26, the Jerusalem correspondent of the New York Herald Tribune reported the following details of the arrival in Palestine of Syrian and Iraqi volunteers:

"The 750 Syrians and Iraqis formed the largest contingents of volunteers yet to reach Palestine in preparation for the coming Arab war on partition. Unlike Abdul Kadir's men, who follow the Mufti and concern themselves with local fighting now, the foreigners arrived under the auspices of the Arab League. Reportedly, they were under instructions to confine themselves to training and familiarizing themselves with the country.

"The men traveled in column, accompanied by a mule train to ford the Jordan River and a dozen trucks with supplies. The trucks were allowed to cross the river at Jisr el-Majami, in north-eastern Palestine, where *troops of Abdullah's Arab Legion guard a bridge.*

"Their equipment included radio, Bren and Sten guns, rifles and mortars. British police believed they also had light armored cars and perhaps a few field pieces. They brought their own food and for two days camped in tents pitched in the Arab-controlled valley around Tubas, a town half-way between Jerusalem and the Sea of Galilee.

"A Government spokesman said a full report had been sent to London."

Financial Assistance

43. Direct assistance given by Arab States to aggression in Palestine also takes the form of financial contributions for the recruitment and equipment of armed forces preparing for active violence in Palestine. The Minister of the Interior of Syria announced on December 20 that "the sole body authorized to collect money for Palestine would be a committee to be appointed by him."¹ The Arab League Council had recommended at Sofar "that the League States allocate immediately the requisite funds for this purpose" (i.e. of raising funds for war in Palestine).² It is reported that a subscription of over four million dollars has been made by Arab States for the purchase of arms in aid of the Palestinian campaign. On December 17 the New York Times reported from Beirut that "money for the Arab cause appears to be plentiful. The Syrian Parliament has allocated two million Syrian pounds and the Lebanese Government another million pounds. Another 1,500,000 pounds have been raised from individuals in the two countries."

44. An unsavory feature of Arab attempts to increase the revenue available for arms purchases has been a campaign of extortion from

¹ Arab News Agency, December 20.

² Al-Ahram, October 10.

helpless Jewish minorities in Arab countries. On December 10 the Jews of Egypt were "called upon" to contribute generously to the Save Palestine Fund. The call was published in the organ of the "Moslem Brethren" by the Youth Section of the Al-Azhar University.¹ In Syria (where seven synagogues were burnt in Aleppo by a rioting mob early in December) the Jewish Community Council was forced to collect funds and hand them over to the Arab Committee for the purchase of arms to kill their Jewish brethren in Palestine. The atmosphere existing in Lebanon can best be described through the following extract from a Beirut newspaper:²

"It has been reported that Jews of Saida visited this office in order to complain about the attacks to which they have been subjected (i.e. by Arabs). They have now condemned the partition of Palestine and have declared their willingness to contribute money for Palestine (i.e. for the Arabs of Palestine). We have been informed that the Committee of the Office has reassured the Lebanese Jews that despite personal acts of hostility no future malevolence is intended against them. In the opinion of the Committee, Lebanese Jews can do nothing against the security of Arab peoples. . . .

"Donations can be sent directly to the permanent office in the city."

CONCLUSION

45. In its task of determining whether a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace, or an act of aggression exists, the Security Council may be guided by the view of the General Assembly that any or all of those three situations is created by "an attempt to alter by force the settlement envisaged by this Resolution." The Arab Governments have jointly and severally defined their objective in almost those very words. (See Paras. 5-13 above). Indeed it is axiomatic that a violent revolt against an international judgment cannot fail to threaten international peace and security since it constitutes a defiance of the very organization to whose care the preservation of peace has been entrusted.

46. The Jews of Palestine with the full support of the Jewish Agency will do their part in resisting this aggression against their lives, their future and their internationally sanctioned rights. They regard the General Assembly's Resolution as a compromise reached

¹ Jewish Telegraphic Agency, December 11 reporting article in Al Ikhwan al Muslimun.

² Al-Ittihad al Lubnani, December 22.

by judgment between conflicting claims. This compromise makes heavy demands upon them in terms of sacrificing historic claims—and claims which had previously received international consent. The Palestine Mandate reserved an area of 45,000 square miles from the scope of Arab independence for “the primary purpose of establishing a Jewish National Home.” Transjordan was later excluded from this purpose; and now half the area of Western Palestine is allotted to the Arabs as their eighth sovereign state. Thus on seven-eighths of the area of the original Palestine Mandate two Arab States are to be established for the independence of 1,500,000 Arabs who form 80% of the Arab population in the area of the original Palestine Mandate. The “primary purpose of the Mandate” is expressed, at a time of greatest Jewish need, by the constitution of a Jewish State in one-eighth the area originally set aside for Jewish immigration and development. This restriction of Jewish claims was approved by the United Nations, in an effort to meet Arab interests and in deference to the cause of peace, after prolonged and minute investigation of the problem in the light of the Charter and with a view to seeking the maximum degree of self-determination attainable in present conditions. There is thus no justified sense of unredressed grievance to which the Arabs can have recourse. Indeed they frankly acknowledge that their aim is to deny all Jewish rights of national freedom and establish a monopoly of independence in their own behalf.

47. In their determination to resist any encroachment on the rights which the General Assembly has approved, the Jews are not fighting for themselves alone. What has been outlined in these pages is a total assault upon the principles of the Charter and the authority of the United Nations. The Arab States are taking effective collective measures for the creation of “threats to the peace,” and the encouragement of “acts of aggression” in direct violation of Article 1 of the Charter. In defiance of Article 2 they are employing “in their international relations the threat or use of force.” Regardless of Article 2 Paragraph 5 they decline to “give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter.” They turn a deaf ear to a specific appeal from the General Assembly (November 29) to abstain from “any action which might hamper or delay the carrying out of its Resolution.” They flout a unanimous Resolution of the General Assembly which “condemns propaganda, in whichever country conducted . . . which is designed to provoke and encourage a threat to the peace, breach of the peace and acts of aggression.” They carry their defiance of the United Nations to the point of conspiring against the lives of representatives and officers of the

United Nations carrying out their responsibilities under the Charter. They undermine the basic purpose of the United Nations "that armed force shall not be used except in the common interest" (of the United Nations). The world is thus faced with an attempt to hold up the Charter to mockery and violation in pursuit of ambitions which have been judged and found inadmissible by the highest tribunal of international opinion. The Jewish Agency is convinced that the success of this challenge would spell the everlasting discredit of the United Nations, and is confident that the Jews in defending their own national rights are also defending the most significant and universal of human ideals.

48. The Jewish Agency therefore appeals to the Security Council through the United Nations Palestine Commission to take the action prescribed in Chapter VII of the Charter against a threat to the peace, a breach of the peace and acts of aggression provoked, committed, threatened and prepared by the Arab States, members of the Arab League, in concert with the Palestine Arab Higher Committee.