

GENERAL
ASSEMBLYASSEMBLEE
GENERALEA/AC.21/8
30 January 1948

ENGLISH ONLY

UNITED NATIONS PALESTINE COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM TRANSMITTED BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THE SENDING TO
PALESTINE OF AN ADVANCE PARTY OF THE SECRETARIAT AND
THE MOVEMENTS OF THE COMMISSION.

The following memorandum has been received on 30 January 1948 from the representative of the United Kingdom Government for transmission to the Commission.

"No. P(NY)6.

Palestine DistributionMEMORANDUM

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of Palestine have no objection to the arrival in Palestine, as soon as may be convenient, of one or two members of the Commission's secretariat staff.

2. It is suggested that the purpose of this advance party's visit should be

- (a) to make arrangements for the reception of the Commission (i.e. accommodation, transport, etc.)
- (b) to consult with the Government of Palestine as to the departmental staff which the Commission will require for the purpose of taking over the administration of Palestine, and to consider measures to be taken regarding the arrival of this staff in Palestine and its consultations with existing departmental heads
- (c) to do whatever is possible before the Commission's arrival as regards establishing contacts with Jewish and Arab organizations.
- (d) to make whatever other preliminary arrangements may be possible.

3. As regards (a) above, the Government of Palestine can, if desired, arrange transport and security for the Commission's journey from Lydda to Jerusalem; but the advance party will no doubt wish to make detailed arrangements in consultation with the Government of Palestine for the Commission's accommodation and security.

4. The Government of Palestine appreciate the Commission may wish to proceed to Jerusalem at an early stage. They feel obliged, however, to draw attention to the danger that the Commission's arrival there may constitute a disturbing element in an already inflammable situation.

5. In view of this consideration, and since the choice of, e.g., Tel Aviv as headquarters might be regarded as undesirable by the Commission, the Government of Palestine suggest for the consideration of the Commission their possible accommodation at Aqir. This is a large Royal Air Force Station with a first-class airfield, at which, after evacuation of Royal Air Force personnel, there will be accommodation for at least 1,500. In this connection the Commission should know that there is a strong prospect of Lydda Airport being unusable after May 15th. Aqir is situated in an area which it is proposed should form part of the Jewish area allotted to the Jewish State, about three kilometres south of Rehovoth, but it is easily accessible to the Arabs, being only about seven kilometres from Ramleh.

6. Tenders for the purchase of Aqir and other possible suitable military camps are now being considered by the military authorities in Palestine and stripping of these camps is beginning. If, therefore, the Commission are interested in the possibility of Aqir or any other camp, the Government of Palestine will require immediate information.

29th January, 1948."