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APPENDIX V

PALESTINE : PUBLIC SECURITY

The Present State of Public Security

In Palestine, there is a police and prisons establishment of over 15,000 persons, exclusive of supernumerary police. These police are habitually armed and are conspicuous everywhere. Throughout the country there are over 60 substantially built police barracks, capable of being defended as forts in an emergency. There is a military force stationed in Palestine which is the equivalent of two and a half divisions, and in addition there are a number of Air Force units and also certain naval forces engaged in coastal patrol and other duties. In 1944-1945, over L.P.4,600,000 was spent by the Palestine Government on law and order, as opposed to less than L.P.5,600,000 on all other governmental services not directly attributable to Palestine's part in the waging of the second world war.

The Government, in an effort to preserve order, has assumed extensive emergency powers under authority of the Palestine Defence Order-in-Council of 1937. Emergency regulations, going back under this and previous authorisations to 1936, have granted extraordinary powers to the government and the military authorities and have severely restricted the liberty of the individual.

In 1936, when the Arab revolt was assuming serious proportions, the government enacted regulations authorising the seizure and use of buildings and road transport, the imposition of curfews, the censorship of the press, the deportation of undesirables, and unusual privileges of arrest and search. Detention camps were established for the effective supervision of political suspects. Drastic regulations were issued imposing collective fines as punishments upon areas where unidentifiable inhabitants had committed a crime. In 1937, regulations were enacted allowing the government to detain political deportees in any part of the British Empire and authorising the High Commissioner to outlaw associations whose objectives he regarded as contrary to public policy. Military courts were established for the trial of offences connected with sabotage and intimidation, and with the discharge of firearms at persons and the carrying of arms and explosives, both of which offenses were made punishable by death. In 1938 and 1939, 908 cases were tried by these military courts and 109 death sentences were confirmed.

Recently, in the face of Jewish threats to public security, the Government has again had extensive resort to emergency regulations, some of them already existent and some of them newly issued and revised in 1945 and 1946. Orders of detention may be issued against any citizen on the authority of an Area Commander, and these orders are not reviewable by any court of law. Late in December, 1945, the number of Jews held in detention stood at 554. The High Commissioner's power to deport detained persons was exercised in October, 1944, to deport 251 Jews to Eritrea, and in December, 1945, to send 55 additional Jews to the same destination. The regulations confer on the authorities wide powers of arrest and search without warrant. Searches may be made in the absence of the owner or occupier, provided the mukhtar of the area or two responsible citizens are present. Military courts possess considerable jurisdiction and can impose the death sentence. The principle of group responsibility has been extended, and the authorities are empowered to impose collective fines as punitive measures. The regulations provide also for forfeiture

of property by any person who, in the considered opinion of the High Commissioner, has committed or abetted the commission of certain specified offences.

The Background of Violence

During the early years of the Mandatory regime in Palestine, threats to public order came largely from the Arabs, protesting against Jewish immigration and the withholding of independence. More recently, Jewish opposition to the policies expressed in the White Paper of 1939 has been responsible for unrest and violence.

As early as 1920, Palestine Arab opposition to Zionism and desire for self-government led to a threat to public security. Propaganda for union with an independent Syria led in April of that year to three days of rioting in Jerusalem, in which Arab mobs fell upon Jews with sticks, stones and knives. The Arab police either adopted a passive attitude or joined in the riots. British troops were called out, the police were disarmed and order was finally re-established. As a result of these disturbances, five Jews and four Arabs were killed and 211 Jews and 21 Arabs were wounded.

The opening of Palestine to Jewish immigration late in 1920 contributed to a new outbreak of violence. On May Day, 1921, Arab mobs attacked Jewish residents of Jaffa and stormed the Zionist Immigration Centre, killing 13 persons. Again the military forces had to be summoned to replace the unreliable Arab police. The disorders, however, spread. On the 3rd May, Hebrew colonies at Kafr Saba and Ain Hai were looted. On the 5th May, the village of Petah Tiqvah was attacked by several thousand armed Arabs in semi-military formation, and was saved from destruction only by the arrival of several squadrons of cavalry. On the 6th May, Arabs besieged Haderah and attempted an attack on Rehovoth. In these disorders 47 Jews were killed and 146 wounded, mostly by Arabs, and 48 Arabs were killed and 73 wounded, mostly by police and military action.

The period from 1921 to 1928 was in general one of peace in Palestine. Jewish immigration was relatively slight and the Arab nationalist movement was ill-organised and divided within itself. In 1928, however, a quarrel developed between Jews and Arabs over the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, ground holy alike to Moslems and Jews, and inter-community tension increased as the months passed. Jewish immigration seemed likely to increase and the Zionist movement was being strengthened in Europe and America. Arab political activity revived. On the 15th August, 1929, a Jewish demonstration was held at the Wailing Wall, and on the following day the Arabs held a counter-demonstration. On the 17th August, a young Jew was stabbed to death by an Arab into whose garden he had followed a lost football, and his funeral became the occasion for a serious anti-Arab demonstration. On the 23rd August, Arabs, armed with knives and clubs, invaded the new city of Jerusalem and began a massacre of the Jews. On the following day more than 60 Jews were killed at Hebron, and in the succeeding days a number of Jewish colonies were attacked. The police had to open fire to prevent outrages in Nablus and Jaffa, and Arabs attacked the Jewish quarter in Safad, killing or wounding 45 persons. In all, 133 Jews were killed and 339 wounded, and six Jewish colonies were destroyed. There were 116 reported Arab deaths, many of them as a result of police and military activities.

The period between 1929 and 1936 was marked by periodic violence. In August, 1930, there was a minor Arab outbreak at Nablus. The years 1930 and 1931 saw a series of terrorist murders of Jews. Agrarian crime was endemic and the Arabs attempted to take into their own hands the prevention of illegal Jewish immigration. In October, 1933, Arab demonstrations and riots directed

against the Government, as well as against the Jews, took place in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa and Nablus. In the course of these and related incidents, 24 civilians were killed and 204 wounded. In November, 1935, an Arab armed gang was discovered and liquidated by police action.

The extended Arab disturbances of 1936-1939 in support of demands for the stoppage of Jewish immigration, the prohibition of land sales to the Jews, and the grant of independence were ushered in on the 15th April, 1936, when a band of Arab highwaymen held up 10 automobiles on the Tulkarm-Nablus road and robbed their passengers, killing two persons, who apparently were selected for death because they were Jews. On the following night two Arabs were murdered near Petah Tiqvah. On the 17th April, the funeral of one of the Jews led to an anti-Arab demonstration in Tel-Aviv, and two days later Arabs in Jaffa fell upon the Jewish population and killed three persons before the police, reinforced by troops, managed to disperse them. On the 21st April, a general strike was called by the Arab leaders to protest against Jewish immigration and land transfers. Soon the Arabs refused to pay taxes and violence increased. The Arab Higher Committee intimated to the Government that its members could not use their influence to check what they regarded as a spontaneous expression of national feeling.

During May and June, the Arab strike was made effective through persuasion and intimidation. Jaffa port was closed. There was destruction of Jewish property and sniping at Jewish settlements. Sporadic attacks were made on the railway lines; roads were barricaded and telephone wires were cut. Armed bands, reinforced from Syria and Iraq, appeared in the hills. In the following months these bands increased in strength and were organised under the leadership of Fawzi ed-Din el-Kauwakji. Sabotage and murder of Jews increased. The oil pipeline running to Haifa was repeatedly punctured. Roads were systematically mined and railway tracks were frequently damaged. Towards the middle of August, a few acts of retaliation, committed by Jews against the advice of their responsible leaders, began to occur. In the following month, extensive operations against the Arab gangs by an augmented military force were commenced, but when on the 11th October the strike was called off by the Arab Higher Committee, the British armed forces were not used to their full capacity. The rebels in the hills were in many cases permitted to disperse. No effective effort to disarm the Arab population was made. Sniping, sabotage and assaults continued.

After a lull, while the Royal Commission was in Palestine and during which the military garrison was reduced, public security again deteriorated. During the first five months of 1937, lawlessness was generally confined to the north and to the Jerusalem area, but on the 13th June of that year an unsuccessful attempt was made on the life of the Inspector-General of Police and from that time a campaign of murder, intimidation and sabotage conducted by Arab law-breakers became widespread and occasionally provoked retaliatory acts by Jews. On the 26th September, 1937, the Acting District Commissioner of the Galilee district and his police escort, were murdered at Nazareth by Arabs. Despite a stronger Government policy, which involved the disbanding of the Arab Higher Committee, the arrest of some of its leaders and the institution of military courts, Arab gangs in the hills increased in size, and assassinations, especially of police personnel, Government officials and moderate Arabs in prominent positions increased, as did sabotage of the oil pipeline and telegraph communications.

During 1938, the Arab campaign of murder and sabotage gathered strength. Gang warfare in the hills was developed on organised lines and was accompanied by increased terrorism in the towns. The roads become unsafe and the economic

life of the country was seriously disrupted. Arms and money were smuggled into Palestine from the neighbouring Arab countries, and gangsters and assassins were recruited and equipped in Beirut and Damascus for use in Palestine. Any Arabs who refused assistance to the rebels were subjected to intimidation, abduction and murder. Throughout the first five months of the year the Jews engaged in few acts of retaliation against Arab outrages, but in late June conditions changed somewhat, following the conviction by a military court and execution of a Revisionist youth, who had fired on an Arab bus and was apprehended in possession of bombs and revolvers. Angry demonstrations against the Government took place in Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv. On the 6th and 25th of July, bomb explosions in the Arab fruit market at Haifa caused the death of 74 Arabs and the wounding of 129 others. There were other bomb outrages in Jerusalem and Jaffa, committed by Jewish extremists.

By July, 1938, the Arab gangs had become thoroughly organised. Rebel courts were set up, rebel stamps were issued, and the Old City of Jerusalem became a rallying point of bandits, from which acts of violence, murder and intimidation were organised and perpetrated freely and with impunity. On the 24th August, the Assistant District Commissioner at Jenin was murdered. In September, when the rebel power reached its climax, there was a large increase in abductions and a studied concentration on the destruction of Government buildings and property, and on the seizure of armouries in outlying police posts. On the 9th September, Beersheba was raided by a large gang, and later in the month police and Government buildings there were set on fire and destroyed. The Palestine garrison was reinforced in July and again in late September, and by the end of the year large scale military operations had reduced the gangs to comparative impotence in the field. But terrorism and sabotage continued almost unabated.

During the first eight months of 1939 the Arab rebellion continued, but with gradually diminishing vigour. The large gangs broke up and dissension grew among the leaders. In March Abdul Rahim el-Haj Mohammed was killed in action, and the other principal leaders soon left Palestine. There remained, however, smaller groups of outlaws who proceeded to rob and destroy life and property in the hill villages, while assassins remained active in the urban areas. Though inter-Arab terrorism and brigandage continued on a considerable scale until the end of the year, the outbreak of the second world war was marked by a decrease in crimes of a political nature.

During the Arab revolt, from the middle of 1936 to the end of 1939, there were 1,791 verified deaths and 3,288 cases of injury as a result of the disorders. In addition, it is conservatively estimated that some 2,000 Arab rebels were killed by police and military action.

There has not since 1939 been a recrudescence of Arab disorders. The military authorities stated to the Committee that through recent years the Arabs have been quiescent. Armed to some extent though not organised, they constitute, however, a potential threat to internal security. Recent political and other developments emphasise this danger. In November, 1945, a new Arab Higher Committee was formed, announcing that its purpose was "to assure responsibility for political and national affairs in the name of the Arab population of Palestine." In a wider field the Arab League came into being in March, 1945. The Palestine Arabs now rely upon the League to represent their interest politically, and it may be assumed that, in the event of conflict, they would look to the neighbouring Arab States for armed assistance. On the 24th March, 1945, a large party of Jews hiking in the area west of the Dead Sea was attacked by armed Arabs, one Jew being killed

and three wounded. During August and September, 1945, there was a revival of Arab clubs and societies such as had played a prominent part in 1936-1938 in the furtherance of the Arab rebellion.

Since 1939, however, the immediate threats to public security have come from the Jews protesting against the policy which the Mandatory laid down in the White Paper of that year. In February, 1939, when rumours were current that the British Government intended to grant independence to an Arab-dominated Palestine, there were bomb outrages throughout the country in which 38 Arabs were killed and 44 wounded. The long-present problem of illegal Jewish immigration was also intensified. On the 17th May, simultaneously with the issue of the White Paper, transmission lines were cut, the headquarters of the Department of Migration was set on fire, and Government offices at Tel-Aviv were sacked. On the next day in Jerusalem shops were looted, the police were stoned and a British constable was killed. In the following week a campaign of attacks by Jews on Arabs and the Government was begun, and with a short lull during the second half of July this continued until the outbreak of the war. Time bombs, isolated murders and sabotage of telephone services, the Palestine broadcasting station and police launches were the main features of this campaign. With the outbreak of the war however, the Jews unanimously agreed to put aside their differences with the British policy. Jewish terrorist action ceased completely for a time and an illegal broadcasting station which had been operating for some months was closed down.

The publication of the Land Transfers Regulations late in February, 1940, evoked a general Jewish strike, followed by a week of processions and disorderly demonstrations. In December, 1940, the Government immigration offices in Haifa were sabotaged by bombs in protest over the *Patria* disaster and against the deportation to Mauritius of illegal immigrants. In July, 1942, the Stern group, an extremist band of Jews which had been engaged in terrorist activity since 1940, came into prominence with a series of robberies and murders in the Tel-Aviv area.

Following the allied successes in North Africa in 1942, political considerations began to overshadow the war issue. In November of that year the Biltmore Program was enunciated by the Zionists, and opposition to the immigration, land transfers, and constitutional policies of the Mandatory Power became more vocal. In a speech at Tel Hai on the 20th March, 1943, Mr. Ben Gurion, Chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, stated that the end of the war would not necessarily mean the end of fighting for the Jews, but might, on the contrary, be only the beginning of their fight.

During March, 1943, there was a notable increase in the number and magnitude of thefts of arms and explosives from military establishments, and shortly afterwards there was revealed the existence of a large-scale stealing racket with ramifications throughout the Middle East. Jewish feeling against action by the Government and the military authorities to stop this traffic was aroused by the trial in a military court of two Jews who had taken part in the traffic. The "arms trial," as it came to be called, was preceded by the trial of two British military deserters who were sentenced each to fifteen years' imprisonment for complicity in the thefts. The two accused Jews were convicted at the end of September and sentenced to ten and seven years' imprisonment respectively. In passing sentence the President of the Court stated that the trial had shown "that there is in existence in Palestine a dangerous and widespread conspiracy for obtaining arms and ammunition from His Majesty's Forces" and that the organisation behind the activities of

the two accused " seems to have had considerable funds at its disposal and to possess wide knowledge of military matters, including military organisation." The trial caused considerable bitterness on the part of the Jewish community against the Government, which, they thought, should recognize that the Jews had a moral right to arm. Feeling was aggravated by the facts that the trial was held in public and that Jewish official bodies were mentioned in the course of the proceedings. Allegations were made in the Jewish press that the trial was an anti-Semitic " frame-up " aimed at discrediting the Jewish authorities and the Jewish war effort.

The year 1944 saw an increase of terrorism by the Jewish extremists of the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern group. On the 3rd February, 1944, two Jews were surprised tampering with the wall of St. George's Cathedral. From articles left behind, it appeared that they had been engaged in the installation of an infernal machine at the gate of the Cathedral, through which the High Commissioner usually passed on his way to Sunday service. On the 12th February there were explosions in the offices of the Department of Migration in Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv and Haifa, and considerable damage was done to the buildings. On the 14th February a British police officer and a British constable were shot dead in the streets of Haifa. On the 24th February bomb explosions occurred in police headquarters in Haifa, causing police casualties, and on the 26th February the income tax offices at Jerusalem, Haifa and Tel-Aviv were seriously damaged by bombs. During March there were isolated murders of policemen, and on the 23rd eight British policemen were murdered by shooting and bombs, and serious damage was done to police buildings in the four major towns. Following these last attacks curfews were imposed and the death penalty was reintroduced for the carrying of arms and other crimes. On the 17th May the Ramallah broadcasting station was attacked and an abortive attempt was made to broadcast therefrom. On the 14th July, the District police headquarters and District land registry offices at Jerusalem were attacked and severely damaged by explosives and fire; police casualties were inflicted, and the land registry records were destroyed. On the 8th August an attempt was made by Jewish terrorists to assassinate the High Commissioner while he and Lady McMichael were proceeding by car to a municipal farewell function at Jaffa. A fine of L.P. 500 was subsequently placed on the Jewish settlement of Givat Shaul for failing to assist the police who investigated the crime. On the 22nd August, three police buildings in Jaffa and Tel-Aviv were attacked with loss of police lives. On the 27th September, four police stations were attacked with some casualties to the Palestine police personnel, and on the 29th September, a senior police officer was assassinated on the way to his office. On the 5th October, the Tel-Aviv offices and stores of the Department of Light Industries were raided, and textiles valued at L.P. 100,000 were removed. On the 6th November, this wave of terrorism culminated in the murder in Cairo by two members of the Stern group of Lord Moyne, the British Minister Resident in the Middle East.

On the 10th October, before the assassination of Lord Moyne, the Officer Administering the Government of Palestine and the Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, had issued a joint official communiqué in which it was clearly stated that the terrorists and " their active and passive sympathisers are directly impeding the war effort of Great Britain " and " assisting the enemy." The communiqué called upon " the Jewish community as a whole to do their utmost to assist the forces of law and order in eradicating this evil thing within their midst " and added that " verbal condemnation of outrages on the platform and in the press may have its effect but is not in itself enough; what is

required is actual collaboration with the forces of law and order, especially the giving of information leading to the apprehension of the assassins and their accomplices." The communiqué then demanded "of the Jewish community in Palestine, their leaders and representative bodies to recognise and discharge their responsibilities and not to allow the good name of the Yishuv to be prejudiced by acts which can only bring shame and dishonour on the Jewish people as a whole." After the assassination the Jewish Agency which had heartily deplored the outrages of the extremists, made arrangements to provide co-operation with the Government in a campaign against terrorism, and the measure of assistance thus afforded was forthcoming until comparatively recently.

During the early part of 1945 there was a lull in Jewish terrorist activity, but in May, following threats by the Irgun Zvai Leumi that V-Day for the world would be D-Day for them, there occurred a renewed outbreak. On the 13th May, telegraph poles were damaged by explosives and an attempt was made to attack the Police Mobile Force Camp at Sarona by locally made mortars. There was a recurrence of this attack by mortar fire on the 15th May. On the 22nd May, the oil pipeline was punctured in two places and on the 25th a police patrol was fired on. On the 12th June, mortars aimed at the King's Birthday parade in Jerusalem were discovered, and on the following day a similar battery of mortars was found aiming at the saluting box from which Lord Gort, then High Commissioner, would take the salute at the parade. On the 17th June, substantial quantities of gelignite were stolen by armed Jews from quarries, and on the 13th July, a lorry load of explosives was ambushed and the British constable escort was killed. On the same day a bridge on the Haifa-Kantara railway line was blown up. On the 7th August, L.P. 3,500 were stolen from a Tel-Aviv bank in an armed hold up. On the 13th a large body of armed Jews stole 450 pounds of gelignite and other explosives from the store at Petah Tiqvah of Solel Boneh, Ltd., a Jewish co-operative. On the 16th August, the personnel of a training unit of the Irgun Zvai Leumi was arrested near Benyamina in possession of arms and explosives. On the 20th a Jewish settler who had been of assistance to the police was murdered. On the 2nd September, armed Jews dressed as British police attempted to rob the safe of a Tel-Aviv bank, and shortly afterwards L.P. 5,000 worth of textiles were stolen in Tel-Aviv. On the 28th September, a British constable was fatally wounded in Tel-Aviv while escorting money for the payment of British officials' salaries. On the 11th October, 218 rifles, 15 machine guns and a store of ammunition were stolen from the training depot for Palestinian soldiers at Rehovoth. On the 16th October, a military truck containing L.P. 14,000 was ambushed by armed men, who were beaten off by the Jewish military escort. On the 31st October, sabotage occurred in railway communications. On the 15th and 16th November there were demonstrations of protest in Tel-Aviv against the policy of the British Government as stated by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when he announced in the House of Commons the decision to set up the Anglo-American Committee. These demonstrations culminated in looting and mob violence, during which, in addition to loss of life, Government offices were severely damaged and the District Office rendered unusable. Curfews were imposed and the mobs dispersed by troops and police. On the 24th November, two coastguard stations were extensively damaged. On the 27th December, police headquarters in Jerusalem, police stations in Jaffa and Tel-Aviv and a military depot in Tel-Aviv were attacked by large gangs of armed men. Severe damage was caused to the police buildings by explosives and two British constables, one Arab telephone operator, one British soldier and four Basuto soldiers were killed and others wounded by fire from automatic weapons or explosives.

On the 12th January, 1946, a train was derailed near Haderah and attacked by some 70 armed Jews, and L.P. 35,000 in cash intended for payment of the railway staff was stolen. On the 19th January, attacks were made on the Central Prison and on an electric substation in Jerusalem, the latter resulting in casualties. On the 20th January, an attack, resulting in casualties and damage, was made on a coastguard station. On the 3rd February, a raid was made for arms on a military depot in Tel-Aviv. On the 6th a raid resulting in casualties was made for arms on a military camp near Jaffa. On the 20th damage was done to a radar station at Haifa. On the 22nd attacks were made on police camps, and on the 26th military airfields were attacked. On the 6th March, a military camp was attacked. The total casualties suffered from these incidents in Palestine from the end of the war in Europe to the day of our arrival in Palestine were 45 killed and 278 wounded.

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It seems clear that the threats to public order in Palestine during the Mandatory period have arisen very largely out of the conflict between Arabs and Jews with regard to Jewish immigration viewed in the light of its effect upon the political future of the country. Until 1939, violence came from the Arabs, protesting against continued Jewish immigration. Since 1939, it has come from the Jews, protesting against restrictions upon such immigration. In 1936 the Arab leaders indicated their inability to halt violence. In 1946 the Jewish leaders did likewise.