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CABLEGRAM DATED 18 MAY 1948 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL ADDRESSED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF EGYPT, AND REPLY THERETO SUBMITTED BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF EGYPT AT THE THREE HUNDRED AND FIRST MEETING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

THE SECURITY COUNCIL AT ITS 295TH MEETING HELD ON 18 MAY DECIDED TO ADDRESS TO YOUR GOVERNMENT FOLLOWING QUESTIONS QUOTE

- (a) ARE ARMED ELEMENTS OF YOUR ARMED FORCES OR IRREGULAR FORCES SPONSORED BY YOUR GOVERNMENT NOW OPERATING (1) IN PALESTINE; (2) IN AREAS (TOWNS, CITIES, DISTRICTS) OF PALESTINE WHERE THE JEWS ARE IN THE MAJORITY?
- (b) IF SO, WHERE ARE SUCH FORCES NOW LOCATED AND UNDER WHAT COMMAND ARE THEY OPERATING, AND WHAT ARE THEIR MILITARY OBJECTIVES?
- (c) ON WHAT BASIS IS IT CLAIMED THAT SUCH FORCES ARE ENTITLED TO ENTER (1) PALESTINE; (2) AREAS (TOWNS, CITIES, DISTRICTS) OF PALESTINE WHERE THE JEWS ARE IN THE MAJORITY, AND CONDUCT OPERATIONS THERE?
- (d) WHO IS NOW RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EXERCISE OF POLITICAL FUNCTIONS IN THE AREAS OF PALESTINE WHERE THE ARABS ARE IN THE MAJORITY?
- (e) IS SUCH AUTHORITY NOW NEGOTIATING WITH JEWISH AUTHORITIES ON A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN PALESTINE?
- (f) HAVE THE JEWISH FORCES VIOLATED YOUR FRONTIERS AND PENETRATED YOUR TERRITORY?

/REPLY

REFIN

On behalf of His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, I would like to transmit to you and to the Security Council, the answers which I have received for this purpose to the questions addressed to the Government of Egypt pursuant to the decision of the Security Council on the 18th of May, 1948.

A. On the termination of the British Mandate in Palestine, instructions were given to forces of the Egyptian Army to enter Palestine for the objects previously outlined by the Egyptian Government in their Memorandum transmitted to the Powers and the United Nations on May 15th.

The Egyptian Regular forces are proceeding with their operations inspired by the principles of International Law for the realization of the aforesaid objects without discrimination between areas, Towns or Districts the entry into which is necessitated by these operations.

B. Egyptian Forces are now operating in the south of Palestine. They are proceeding with the task of restoring security and order in Palestine under Egyptian military command.

The Egyptian Government have from the outset declared that their military operations are not directed against Palestine Jews but against terrorist Zionist bands who are armed with the latest and most destructive weapons and who have built up in the Jewish settlements scattered throughout Palestine, fortifications and strongly fortified pillboxes as springboard to attack neighbouring Arab villages and their peaceful inhabitants.

The Egyptian Government have no other object in view except to put an end to this state of anarchy and to restore security and order in Palestine with a view to enabling its people to set up a United Palestinian state under which all inhabitants of Palestine, Arabs and Jews alike, may live side by side in harmony and peace enjoying the same rights and having the same obligations and under which sacred places are protected and the freedom of access to them insured.

C. The Egyptian Government have declared that their regular forces have entered Palestine with the object of putting an end to the massacres perpetrated by the terrorist Zionist bands against Arabs and against humanity and of safeguarding the lives and property of the inhabitants. Had the Arab states not intervened with their armed forces when Britain relinquished the Mandate, these well trained Zionist bands spread all over Palestine would have annihilated hundreds of thousands of Palestine Arabs who form the vast majority of the inhabitants. This is borne out by the continuous flow of thousands of Arabs, men, women and children, who sought refuge in all neighbouring Arab countries in quest of safety and to escape from the Zionist tyranny and oppression.

The neighbouring Arab Governments who are members of the Arab League consider themselves responsible for the maintenance of security and order in their area as a regional organization in conformity with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. These Arab Governments are capable of maintaining security and peace in that area.

The Egyptian Government are confident that if other powers would not intervene in Palestine, the presence of Arab regular armies there will in no way disturb international peace; on the contrary it will help by putting an end to the prevailing state of anarchy to pave the way for finding an equitable solution to the problem of Palestine.

D. Arab armed forces have now taken over control and authority by Britain of the mandate and the consequent vacuum in the Governmental following the relinquishing/and administrative machine-to restore the progressive functioning of this machine in every area entered by them with the object of establishing a permanent government based on the will of the population and their representatives and in conformity with the United Nations Charter. For the time being, this political authority will exercise the conduct of public services and the affairs of a United Palestinian State, in the interest of all the elements of the population Arabs and Jews alike.

/E. The declaration

E. The declaration of a Jewish State in an undetermined part of Palestine and the terrorism preceeding this declaration and preparing for it have blocked the way to any understanding between Arab and Jewish representatives for finding a solution to the problem.

F. No outward violation of Egyptian frontiers by "Jewish Forces" or precisely by terrorist Zionist bands has been made, nor have they penetrated into Egyptian territory.

Nevertheless, the declaration - which was accompanied by violence and terrorism - of a Zionist State next door to Egypt and situated in the midst of Arab Nations where feeling was already running high, undoubtedly constitutes a menace to the security of Egypt and other Arab states neighbouring to Palestine.

Moreover, Egyptians do not regard Palestine Arabs as strangers, since they are from time immemorial strongly bound to them by many ties. Any aggression against Palestine Arabs and more particularly in the horrible and atrocious manner adopted by Zionist bands has its direct repercussion among the people of Egypt.

Egypt is a member of the Arab League which is a regional organization responsible for security in its area; and whereas Palestine forms a part of this area, Egypt, just as any other Arab state, regards the terrorist activities of the Zionist bands inside Palestine as a direct menace against security and peace in this area as a whole.