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Series I: General Correspondence, 1914-1969, undated.

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American Zionist Emergency Council, riots, Palestine, 1945.

7 November 1945

1. I have to report that it was found necessary to hold yesterday, 6 Nov 45 a further Muster Parade and that I have been required to place the foregoing matters before you. I take this opportunity of your visit to my Company to hand this over personally to you:

The points raised were:

That all Palestinians Personnel be given immediately all the facilities to take an active part in the protection of Jewish life and property in Tripoli. (b) That arrangements be made immediately for the supply of food and clothing to needy Jews by the authorities, as the activities of the Community Organization have been paralyzed. (c) That every possible precaution be taken forthwith, and maintained in the future, to prevent any possibility of recurrence of a disturbance, via:-

1. That an immediate official warning be issued to the Arabs.
2. That a Jewish Section be created in the Police, properly trained, and armed, for the protection of Jewish life and property in an emergency.
3. That henceforth, all subversive Arab activities and elements, local or foreign, be strictly banned.

That an immediate and full investigation be instituted with a view to exposing and punishing severely all those responsible for the riots.

That immediate steps be taken to recover as much as possible of the looted Jewish property.

That fines be imposed on Arab Communities which have participated in the riots, in the way of restitution for the loss of Jewish life and property.

I humbly beg to lay these above before you for your consideration and any action which you may be in position to take.

8 Nov 1945.

1. At approximately 1700 hours 5 Nov. 1945, the non-commissioned officer in charge, informed me that feeling in my company was running high and nerves were taut with regards to recent riots involving atrocities committed by local Arab hooligans against our brethren of the local Jewish community, resulting in loss of life, injuries, destruction of property and general maltreatment through the utterly horrifying savagery of the natives.

2. I immediately ordered a Muster Parade to be held, which I, accompanied by my second in command, attended at 1830 hours.

3. I feel it is my duty both to my men and to you to bring the details of the Muster Parade to your knowledge. The following is a precise of matters which were brought to my notice.

A general lack of confidence in the good-will, efficiency, ability, and intentions of the responsible authorities and the Police Force with regards to recent events and political matters affecting local Jews was expressed. The men pointed to the following incidents which, it was claimed, showed on the part of the Police either lack of will or inefficiency, or inability to discharge their duties in the protection of local Jewish life and property, or a combination of all three factors:

(a) Gangs of Arab rioters were allowed to wander in numerous parts of the town carrying sticks and stones without any interference from policeman who were present, and on the spot at the time.

(b) Shops in Souk El Turk were broken into by the mob and looted completely at a location very near the Police Station. While that went on, there had not been any interference from the police who, it was alleged, were on the spot.

(c) A police cordon thrown at the Piazza d'Italia exit from the Old City considered it sufficient to remove looted property from natives and allow the looters to proceed scot-free.

(d) On Sunday night 4, 5, Nov 1945, Jews were beaten up by the hooligans for 1½ hours before the police did anything about it, (even by way of putting in an appearance).

(e) While the rioters were shooting, using all manner of missiles and sticks, applying arson and looting, the Police were armed with sticks only.

(f) Though Jews were seriously injured at least as early as this morning and the looting had assumed alarming proportions, the imposition of a curfew was not considered necessary.

It was generally stated to me that the alleged facts and many more indications showed an inefficiency impardonable, in that its results were so grave. Furthermore that the rioters, by being practically allowed to do as they pleased with little or no effective interference, had the impression conveyed to them that the local authorities, if not looking with favour on the proceedings, were at least non-chalant.

My men complained that a group of "imported" Arabs (mainly Egyptians), who are in the employment of B. M. A. and semi-official firms, were, allowed to form the organising backbone of local Arab politics, and were commonly known to preach sedition to the local natives on lines so well known from political undercurrents elsewhere.

It was pointed out to me as a clear sign of malavolence that the 'Tripoli Times' was showing a distinct anti-Zionist trend in its mode of publicising political events revolving on the Palestine problem and by the undue prominence given in its columns to the activities of bodies like the Arab League, thereby presenting a one-sided picture to its subscribers.

I was also informed that the torn remains of a Holy Scroll of Law, which has been desecrated by the rioters had been found in the vicinity of 98th Gen. Hospital and my men are greatly upset about this sacrilege, so typical of Tzarist Russia, and Nazi Germany.

I must mention that the bulk of my men, who have emigrated from various countries of the world, to Palestine, have at one time or another in their countries of Exile experienced or witnessed pogroms and massacres of Jews. Some 80 per cent of the men of my unit have lost their families in Europe during this War. They volunteered to serve in His Britannic Majesty's Land Forces in the hope of putting an end to Jew-baiting, persecutions and pogroms once and for all. They feel horrified at the realisation that an occurrence of this nature was allowed to develop under British Military Administration.

They also feel that it is their sacred and irrevocable duty to defend the lives and property of their brethren wherever they are. They feel that the Area Commanders order, declaring Tripoli as an area 'out of bounds' to them is not only a discrimination, but also an insult to their national pride and they pray that it be rescinded.

I was asked to request that a thorough investigation be instituted with a view to exposing the people responsible for organising the recent riot. ~~They~~ Through whose negligence it was allowed to occur and spread and those who actually perpetuated the innumerable crimes, and that they all be punished severely.

At the same time, my men feel that, having overheard Arab employees of your Stores glorying in their intention to participate in the slaughtering of Jews, they cannot continue working with any local Arab, whose hands may have been soiled with Jewish Blood, and they respectfully request, in the interest of the work, that all Arab employees be promptly dismissed.

I consider that the above matters are of too grave a nature to be within my scope to deal with and respectfully beg that this report be given your immediate and serious consideration. I should be grateful for any instructions in the matter which you may deem necessary to give me.

I wish to place on record that throughout provocatively trying to circumscribe the behavior of all ranks of my unit have been magnificent.