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From: _____ Report No: RLB-2078 Local File No: _____

No. of Pages: Four No. of Enclosures: None

Report Made By: [Signature] Approved By: [Signature]

Distribution:
 By copy to: Washington (3) Orally to: No-one
E E E (1)
(2)

Subject: Current Letter from GHURI to the Grand Mufti

Source Cryptonym: [Signature] References: See report

Source, Operational Data, and Comments:

This letter was acquired as described on the cover sheet of RLB-2078.

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SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2006

INDEX

SECRET

Classification

11B COPY

[Handwritten: 497343]

SECRET

Subject : Current Letter from GHURI to the Grand Mufti Report Number : HLB-209
Place Acquired : Beirut, Lebanon Date of Information : Current
Evaluation: Documentary Date Acquired : 24 Aug 1950
Source : [] Date of Report: 24 Aug 1950

Source Statement

1. The following is a translation from the original Arabic of a letter from ~~Mail GHURI~~, Arab Higher Committee Chief in Beirut, to the Grand Mufti in Cairo:

- (a). "On the evening of 12 August 1950 a bomb was thrown at the police building in Nablus. The Jordanian Army occupies a part of this building. Immediately after the explosion there was an exchange of fire between the police and Army on the one hand and unknown persons on the other.
- (b). "On the evening of the same day telephone wires were cut near Ramin (202-1085500) ¹⁰¹ a distance of 260 meters. The following day a number of youths from the adjoining villages were arrested.
- (c). "Abd-al-Ghan^{**}KARAMAH is still continuing his contacts with the Jews in Tel Aviv for the purpose of arriving at terms for peace which "ABDULLAH could exploit ~~for~~ persuading the people to accept peace. However, he has not succeeded ¹⁰¹ because of the obduracy of the Jews. On the other hand the King is depending on Azmi al-NASHASHIBI and entrusting him with the task of contacting the Jews from time to time.
- (d). "It is definite that Jamal^{**}BUQAN will come to Beirut to occupy the post of Minister Plenipotentiary of the Jordanian government. The reason for entrusting this post to him is that the position of General Administrative Governor in Palestine has been abolished and the country is now directly attached to the Ministry of the Interior. Another reason is the great need of the Jordanian Government for an active minister to resist the strong opposition of many Palestinians and Lebanese to Jordanian policy.
- (e). "Two weeks ago King "ABDULLAH obtained peace terms from the Jews and showed them to his government. He said,

SECRET

SECRET

- 2 -

RLB-2097
25 August 1950

"I will trample under my feet everyone who opposes peace, whether you or the people of Palestine. By Allah, I will conclude peace!" On the same evening Mr. KIRKBRIDE visited 'ABDALLAH at Raghdan. KIRKBRIDE spoke to him about peace and advised him to exercise caution and to wait, because the international situation was fraught with developments that might be useful to the Arabs. 'ABDALLAH then realized that the Minister Plenipotentiary did not want peace to be concluded on the terms which the King had.

- (f). "On the following morning two Jewish delegates came to 'Amman, accompanied by 'Abd-al-Ghani KARAMAH, for the purpose of continuing the discussions with the King. 'ABDALLAH said to them, "By Allah, I want to conclude peace but the British do not want it." He informed them that KIRKBRIDE had met with him the night before and had made him understand that the British do not want peace. The next day the Jewish press was full of strong attacks against KIRKBRIDE and the British. KIRKBRIDE reproached the King for what he had said to the Jews.
- (g). ~~Archbishop~~ HAKIM arrived yesterday, via Naqura. He will spend a few days there. His Grace is not permitted to enter Syria. Among the duties with which the Archbishop is charged ~~are efforts with the UNRWA~~ ^{to induce the UNRWA} ~~to induce this organization to keep employees who had been helped to get their jobs by the Archbishop and against whom protests have been raised.~~ It is also understood that he is charged with persuading (Shaykh) Muhammad Nimr al-KHATIB to return to Palestine, on the request of the Jews and with their approval, for the purpose of combatting Communism in Palestine.
- (h). "A short time ago a meeting was held at the Foreign Office which was attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Director General, and the British Ministers to Jordan and Lebanon. During this meeting they discussed the efforts of the Military Organization for the Liberation of Palestine and its extensive propaganda. The two Ministers requested the Lebanese Government to pursue the organization and to endeavor to locate its members. The Sûreté Générale has been charged with undertaking this. The Sûreté as yet having been unsuccessful in locating the men, headquarters, and branches of this organization, its efforts have been redoubled.

SECRET

SECRET

RLB-2099
25 August 1950

(i). "It is said that the organization has ceased its activities in Lebanon and made Palestine the center of its work.

(j). "Following the strong rumors to the effect that King 'ABDULLAH is determined to conclude peace with the Jews, 'Abdallah al-RIMAWI, a deputy in the new parliament, requested an interview with the King. When the King granted him audience, al-RIMAWI requested the King to permit him to speak frankly. The King accepted, and the following conversation took place between them:

Al-RIMAWI: "I assure you, my lord, that those who surround you are cheating and deceiving you. The people -- Palestinians and Jordanians -- do not want peace and resent the efforts that are being made to that end. It is my duty to invite your Majesty's attention to this truth."

(The King frowned and grew angry, but soon controlled his anger and replied).

'ABDULLAH: "Thank you for your frankness. By Allah, I do not doubt you, but it appears that you forget elementary but important things. Who am I, O RIMAWI?"

Al-RIMAWI: "His Majesty, King 'ABDULLAH."

'ABDULLAH: "Who is my father?"

Al-RIMAWI: "The late great savior, Husayn Ibn 'ALI."

'ABDULLAH: "Where is he buried?"

Al-RIMAWI: "In the courtyard of the al-Aqsa Mosque."

'ABDULLAH: "Who was my first ancestor?"

Al-RIMAWI: "The lord of the Arabs, the great Prophet."

(The King was silent for a moment and then laughed).

'ABDULLAH: "Do you know, O 'ABDULLAH, that the sons of the Prophet cannot possibly make mistakes or mishandle affairs? Go, my son, and do not forget this truth!"

(k). Al-RIMAWI then left, being surprised at this reply."

SECRET

RLB-2090
25 August 1960

- 4 -
SECRET

Field Notes (by lettered paragraphs):

- (c). KARAMAH has been reported in RLB-2094.
For Azmi al-HASHASHIBI, see RLB-436.
- (d). For Jamal TUQAN, see RLB-2094.
- (g). Archbishop George HAKIM, head of the Greek Catholic Church in North Palestine, has been reported in RLB's-2065, 2091, etc. The Archbishop's arrival is confirmed by a report from Folly/Three, acquired 24 August, which states that he entered Lebanon via Naqura on 18 August.
- (g). We find no trace on Shaykh Muhammad al-KHATIB.
- (h). The "Director General" here is the Director General of Foreign Affairs of the Lebanese Government. This meeting obviously took place in Beirut.
- (j). al-RIMAWI was reported in our only other report on him -- RLB-1953 -- as al-BARAWI.

SECRET