

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER No 7.

September and October 1947

It is regretted that it was not possible to publish a News Letter at the end of September when the Battalion was in TRANS JORDAN. This letter, therefore, includes the news for both September and October.

1. PALESTINE BEFORE THE UNITED-NATIONS.

September opened with the publication of the long awaited report of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine. It was not surprising that the Committee did in fact produce two reports — a majority report and a minority report. The majority report recommended the division of Palestine into two independent States — one Arab and the other Jewish — with Great Britain, meanwhile, to remain the administrative authority. The minority report favoured an independent federal state.

Reading the reports it was not surprising to find that the reactions to the majority report were that the Jews had cause to be pleased whilst the Arabs had reason to be dissatisfied.

The publication of the reports was at once followed by an announcement by the Palestine Arab Higher Committee stating that "any attempt to carry out either the majority or minority proposals would set Palestine and the Arab East on fire".

On the 21st Sep, Mr. Creech Jones, Secretary of State for the Colonies told the United Nations Committee on Palestine that the British Government were ready to assume responsibility for giving effect to any plan agreed to by the Jews and the Arabs, but were not themselves prepared to impose a policy in Palestine by force of arms. He said that the Government's policy was based on the assumption that they must lay down the Mandate and announced, that in the absence of a settlement the Government would plan for an early withdrawal of their forces and administration.

On the 12th Oct, a much delayed statement by the United States was made by Mr. Herschel Johnson who expressed American support for the partition of Palestine. He stated that the United States did not intend to send any troops to Palestine but suggested that a police force might be recruited by the United Nations on a voluntary basis to maintain order during the transition period.

On the 31st Oct, the United Nations put forward a further suggestion that the British Mandate should cease on the 1 July 1948 and that Britain should