

PALESTINE POLICE RAID HOMES IN SEARCH FOR TERRORISTS; TWO JEWS FOUND DEAD IN JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM, March 26. (JTA) -- Despite raids by Palestine police seeking terrorists on many homes in Jerusalem, during which some arrests were made, the Jewish residents of Palestine passed a fairly uneventful Sabbath, marred only by the discovery of the bodies of two Jews in deserted lanes off Jerusalem's main streets.

The first body discovered was dressed in a British police uniform, which led the authorities to believe that he was one of the participants in the raid on Jerusalem police headquarters on Thursday evening, who had died from wounds suffered during the gun battle with police. The raiders all wore police uniforms. He was identified as Asher Ben-Zion, a watchmaker believed to have been a member of the Irgun Zvai Leumi, underground Jewish military group. The other body, which was tentatively identified as that of a youth named "Benjamin," was found encased in a sack. Police are investigating the circumstances of his death.

Meanwhile, the Jewish quarters of Jerusalem and Haifa, and all of Tel Aviv were under a strict curfew extending from 5 P.M. to 5 A.M. Police announced that the death penalty for possession of illegal arms and other offenses had been revived. It has not been in force since 1940. It is believed that the curfew, which is being enforced strictly, will not be lifted until after March 31, to guard against further outbreaks on that day, when the White Paper ban on Jewish immigration becomes effective.

So rigid is the curfew that even military personnel are barred from the streets after 5 P.M. unless they are on official business. When the curfew was first imposed Friday night, it caught many Jews at services in the synagogues. Some of these were arrested on their way home, but were subsequently released. Throughout most of Jerusalem and in Tel Aviv and the Jewish quarters of Haifa, synagogues were closed today and yesterday for the first time since the curfew during the Arab disturbances in 1937 and worshippers were compelled to remain in their homes. Jews living in the Old City, where the curfew has not been imposed, are not affected, and were even able to conduct the usual Friday evening services at the Wailing Wall.

Jewish Groups Condemn Terroristic Activities

Official Jewish bodies, including the Tel Aviv Municipal Council and the Jerusalem Jewish Community, today issued statements denouncing the terrorists responsible for the coordinated bombing of police stations in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Jaffa and Haifa, causing the death of a number of British and Palestinian police officials and damaging private property to the extent of \$500,000 in Jerusalem alone.

An official communique issued by the Palestine Administration says that three British police officials, including John Scott, Assistant Superintendent of Police, were killed when the bombs exploded in Jerusalem police headquarters. Two British policemen were found dead when demolition squads began removing debris from the completely demolished southern wing of the Jaffa police headquarters. Three policemen were also killed in the Haifa explosion. One policeman died of wounds in Tel Aviv. A number of police and civil officials were injured in the Jerusalem explosion and it took three hours to dig them out from the debris of the demolished police headquarters building.

The police also announced the arrest of Jacob Solomon Freyman, a resident of

near Rachel's Tomb when an automatic pistol with twenty-four rounds of ammunition were found on him. Three unexploded bombs were also discovered in the Arab cemetery at Mamillash Road, in the center of the city, not far from the American Legation.

Main Street in Jerusalem Looks Like London During "Blitz"

The most spectacular of the series of blasts set off by the terrorists occurred in the heart of Jerusalem. The city's shopping district looks like London during the height of the Blitz. Within a radius of 200 yards from the Russian Compound, a section in the center of the city, hardly a plate glass window was left intact. Shop signs had been blasted away, several stores were completely gutted and the streets were covered with a blanket of shattered glass.

Along Jaffa Road and Princess Street, not far from the demolished police headquarters, proprietors, shop clerks and laborers were occupied sweeping up glass fragments and splinters, cleaning up stock knocked about by the blast and trying to put their establishments in shape to resume business. Hundreds of gaping spectators cluttered up the streets inspecting the evidences of the force of the explosions. Many merchants not protected by riot insurance will not be able to obtain compensation. There is an acute shortage of glass in Palestine, particularly plate glass, and replacement will be most difficult.

The approaches to the Russian Compound, in which the wrecked police headquarters is located, remained cordoned off, British police diverting all traffic from the vicinity while a search was made for further unexploded bombs. Two gaping holes in the thick concrete walls of the headquarters building furnished grim proof of the force of the explosions, which also did considerable damage within the building as well as to other buildings in the Compound.

Jerusalem Headquarters Raided by Terrorists in Police Uniform

The raid on the police headquarters in Jerusalem was the most daring operation undertaken by the terrorists, whom the authorities identified as members of the "Stern Gang" which is fighting for the abrogation of the White Paper and for free Jewish immigration to Palestine. The terrorists, wearing police uniforms, gained access to the building through a ladder. They killed a senior police officer who was on duty and who attempted to resist them, and they placed the bombs which subsequently exploded wrecking the building and rattling the windows in the center of the city for a mile around.

In Haifa, the bombs exploded in the local police headquarters about the same hour when the explosions took place in Jerusalem. In Jaffa four sacks of geleignite were found stacked up against the wall of the local police headquarters which were immediately evacuated. Later, however, a series of explosions wrecked three floors in the southern end of the building. A police patrol challenged three suspects who opened fire, wounding one constable. Two of the suspects are believed to have been wounded.

Police and Terrorists Battle in Tel Aviv

In Tel Aviv, the bombing of the police station was preceded by a series of attacks against British police officers which resulted in the fatal shooting of one. Two others were critically wounded. The attacks in Tel Aviv took place in different

3/27/44

sections of the city within the same half-hour. A Jewish resident, Zvi Leberstein, who was shot during the skirmishes, was taken to the Hadassah Hospital.

The Jewish press today carries editorials condemning the terrorists. "These outrages are not part of the Yishuv's fight for national upbuilding and there is nothing that can justify them," the leading Hebrew newspaper Davar writes. Other papers published editorials in a similar vein.

The Council of the Histadruth which is now meeting in Tel Aviv, unanimously adopted a resolution sharply condemning the perpetrators of the outrages and demanding that "the public take strong measures against those staining the honor of the Yishuv and endangering its cause."

Weizmann Scores Terror; Says All Palestine Jews Will Suffer as Result

LONDON, March 26. (JTA) -- Dr. Chaim Weizmann, World Zionist leader, today sharply condemned the outbreaks in Palestine, declaring that "we will have to pay for them, although we abhor them."

Addressing the annual conference of the British Mizrahi Organization, Dr. Weizmann discussing the terroristic disturbances said that "I am extremely sorry and disquieted. We strongly condemn such un-Jewish methods and the Yishuv joins with us in our condemnation. We will have to pay for them, although we abhor them as much as anybody else." Rabbi Jacob Fishman, Mizrahi leader, who is in London as one of the three-man Jewish Agency delegation, told the meeting that the terrorists were "criminals, but the Palestine Administration has caused their desperate mood."

Reporting on the general political situation in regard to Palestine, Dr. Weizmann said that it is not likely that the British Government will make any decisions on the question in the near future. He stressed that the Biltmore Declaration, which asks the reconstitution of Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth, was not a new policy.

6,000 GESTAPO AGENTS ASSIGNED TO DEAL WITH JEWS IN HUNGARY; JEWS-ARRESTED IN ROMANIA

STOCKHOLM, March 26. (JTA) -- Six thousand Gestapo agents have arrived in Budapest for the purpose of starting an intensified anti-Jewish drive along the same lines as in other Nazi-occupied countries, the Swedish newspaper Aftonbladet reports today.

The German Transocean news agency reports that mass-arrests of Jews have been started in Rumania. Some were arrested for anti-German activities and others "for continuing Zionist activities and for smuggling Jews from Poland into Rumania," the Nazi news agency said.

Thirty-two Rumanian Jews were also arrested in Bucharest charged with "establishing contact with Jewish parachutists and cooperating with agents of Tito," the Transocean news agency reported, adding that they will all be put on trial before a court martial.

British Paper Hails Roosevelt Statement, but Wants Immediate Action

LONDON, March 26. (JTA) -- The liberal Manchester Guardian yesterday published a lead editorial hailing President Roosevelt's statement appealing to persons in Nazi-occupied lands to aid persecuted Jews, and warning the Germans of post-war reprisals for mistreatment of Jews in Hungary. The editorial comments, however, that "what is needed now is to translate fine principles into performances."

AMERICAN JEWISH CONFERENCE WELCOMES ROOSEVELT WARNING TO NAZIS

NEW YORK, March 26. (JTA)-- The American Jewish Conference today hailed President Roosevelt's warning to the Nazis and his appeal for assistance for Jews in Hungary, in a statement issued by Dr. Stephen S. Wise of New York, Henry Monsky of Omaha and Dr. Israel Goldstein of New York, co-chairmen of the Interim Committee of the Conference. The statement read:

"The occupation of the Balkan countries by the Nazis constitutes a turning point in the epochal task of rescuing Jews threatened with extermination at Nazi hands and the American Jewish Conference welcomes with a deep sense of gratitude President Roosevelt's recognition of the great danger and his prompt action.

"The President's warning that all persons who share the guilt for crimes against the refugees shall share the punishment will be effective to deter the Nazi hangmen. His appeal to the population within Germany itself to hide Jews from their executioners and to assist them in escaping and his appeal to countries to open their doors to Jewish refugees are heartening assurance of a determination to carry out heroic measures which must be taken if the rescue work of the War Refugee Board is to be effective.

"The situation imposes a responsibility on all Jewish agencies to unite and we appeal to all Jewish organizations, including those not affiliated with the Conference to meet the challenge created by the Nazi invasion of the Balkans and to unite on a common program of action to assist and co-operate with the War Refugee Board."

World Jewish Congress Lauds President's Appeal for Refugee Havens

NEW YORK, March 26. (JTA) -- At an all-day session of the administrative committee and the European Advisory Council of the World Jewish Congress, today, a resolution was adopted commending President Roosevelt for his public statement on the position of the Government of the United States on the problem of the rescue of the remnants of European Jewry and for his appeal to the neutral countries to afford havens to the victims of Nazi tyranny.

Dr. Nahum Goldmann, chairman of the administrative committee, paid tribute to the American Government, which, he said, was in the vanguard of the rescue movement. He asserted that it was the general consensus of opinion here and abroad that there will not be a "quick peace conference," and, therefore, Jewish post-war plans must be drawn up with a view to many years of activity.

Dr. Arich Tartakower, who together with Dr. Goldmann spent several months in London recently, in frequent meetings with governmental heads and leaders of Jewry, reported in detail about the negotiations with various governments-in-exile concerning the problem of rescue of the remnants of European Jewry.

ABRAHAM HERMAN RE-ELECTED PRESIDENT OF HIAS FOR NINETEENTH TERM

NEW YORK, March 26. (JTA) -- Abraham Herman, well-known Jewish communal leader, was re-elected president of the Hias for the nineteenth time at a meeting of the Board of Directors of the organization held here last night.

The board also elected Joseph Pulvermacher, Albert Rosenblatt, Samuel A. Telsey, and Solomon Dingol, as vice-presidents. Harry Fischel was reelected treasurer. Isaac L. Asofsky is the executive director of the organization.