

# JTA

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### GAZA ENCLOSED BY ISRAELI FORCES; EGYPTIAN POSITION IN NEGEV DISINTEGRATING

JERUSALEM, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- Egyptian resistance in the Negev was seen to be rapidly crumbling today after Israeli troops had encircled Gaza, the capital of the so-called Palestine Arab Provisional Government.

Jewish forces also cut the railroad lines and a paved road near Rafa and, it was learned today, also captured yesterday the important desert road juncture of Auja el Hafir, five kilometers inside Israeli territory, a point dominating all roads to the Egyptian frontier by way of Sinai.

In Tel Aviv, meanwhile, U.N. truce headquarters announced that Gaza had been bombed and machine gunned by three Israeli planes on three separate raids. However, the U.N. announced that one of its planes reached Gaza this afternoon "as usual." Palestine U.N. headquarters in Eufia announced receipt of Egyptian complaints that the Jews have attacked Faluja, Iraq Manshieh and Birasluj, deep in the Negev, and captured Auja el Hafir.

The ensuing hasty retreat of beaten and disorganized Egyptian troops has resulted in the capture by Israeli troops of several Egyptian commanders, it was reported here. According to Israeli Army sources, the captured Egyptian officers disclosed that the Egyptian Army in the Negev, totalling nearly 15,000 troops, has now been cut into three separate and unequal groups. These groups, the captured officers admitted, were fighting separately and without contact with one another. The prisoners also stated that under present conditions it was impossible to send reinforcements to these separated pockets and that the Egyptian situation was, consequently, untenable.

### Complete Evacuation of the Egyptian Troops from Negev Is Expected

There would appear to be no alternative but an Egyptian evacuation from the entire Negev, Israeli sources assert. They add, however, that such a move may almost be impossible since the Israeli forces are pressing hard and delivering swift blows to each isolated enemy pocket. Any organized retreat, it was further pointed out, is also hampered by the fact that many thousands of Arab refugees are fleeing by way of muddy and sandy tracks on the very edge of the Mediterranean toward Egypt.

An official Israeli announcement today reported that Israeli fighter planes today intercepted six Egyptian-piloted Fiat planes which were apparently heading for Faluja to drop supplies to the beleaguered Arab force there. One Egyptian plane was shot down in flames, while the others were sent scurrying for their home base. Three of the surviving planes were damaged. The Israeli aircraft suffered no injuries.

An official spokesman confirmed that additional territory in the Negev has been freed from Egyptian control in the five-day engagement. He added that the operation was "slackening off." He also emphasized that if the Security Council orders a cease-fire in the Negev, Israel will comply, and reiterated that the question of war or peace in the Negev is entirely in the hands of the Egyptians.

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BRITISH ASK U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL TO ORDER NEW CEASE-FIRE, TROOP WITHDRAWALS IN NEGEV

PARIS, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- The British delegation at the U.N. Security Council today called on the Council to order an immediate cease-fire in the Negev and implementation, without delay, of the Council's resolution of November 4 ordering the Egyptians and the belligerents in Israel to withdraw from the Negev to positions held before October 14. A vote on Britain's resolution was postponed at the suggestion of Canada and the Council will resume discussion of the Negev situation tomorrow.

Harold Beeley, British delegate, also urged the convocation on January 6 of the seven-nation Council sub-committee on imposing sanctions against either party if it did not withdraw from the Negev. He suggested that Norway and Cuba replace Colombia and Belgium, which are no longer members of the Council. He further urged the Governments of the United States, France and Turkey, which were elected members of a Palestine Conciliation Commission by the U.N. General Assembly, to name their representatives to the commission immediately.

The Briton insisted that the prestige of the U.N. was at stake in this issue and that the success of the Conciliation Commission's work depended on U.N. prestige and authority. He specified three situations in Palestine which he labelled as violations of the Council truce. For the first one he held the Arabs responsible, but for the last two instances he held the Jews at fault. Beeley denied that Britain had ever shipped arms to the Arabs in violation of the truce, but asserted that other members of the Council had supplied the Jews.

The Belgian delegate, who announced that he would vote for the United Kingdom resolution, said that the Jews were responsible for a truce violation according to the reports of acting U.N. Palestine mediator Ralph J. Bunche. French representative Alexandre Parodi asked the Egyptian representative for additional information concerning the Faluja situation, but was given an evasive reply.

Maurice Fischer, Israeli representative in France, who represented his government at the Council session today, declared that the Egyptian representative, Foreign Minister Mahmoud Fawzi, who pressed charges of truce violation against the Jewish state, spoke as if Israel had invaded Egypt and were endangering Egyptian sovereignty. The contrary was the case, Fischer insisted, and Egypt was not complying with the Security Council resolution of November 16 calling on the belligerents to negotiate an armistice.

He reviewed the Negev and armistice situations in relation to the Council's resolutions and pointed out that the Jews had agreed to withdraw their troops from the Negev, indicated their eagerness to negotiate an armistice and even agreed to release the Egyptian troops at Faluja. However, the Egyptians had changed their minds on the armistice and that in fact the present conflict was caused by this attitude on the part of the Egyptians.

JOSEPH B. KEENAN NAMED AMERICAN MEMBER OF U.N. PALESTINE CONCILIATION COMMISSION

NEW YORK, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- Joseph B. Keenan, noted lawyer, has been named American member of the U.N. Palestine Conciliation Commission, it was learned here today. France and Turkey still have to appoint their representatives.

Keenan, an Assistant U.S. Attorney General from 1936 to 1939, served as chief United States prosecutor in the trial of Japanese war criminals. Beside practicing law in Ohio and Washington, he also served as a special assistant to the Attorney General of Ohio.

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TENSION IN JERUSALEM MOUNTS FOLLOWING REPORTS OF NEGEV BATTLES; EIGHT JEWS WOUNDED

JERUSALEM, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- Tension in Jerusalem rose suddenly today following the receipt of reports of heavy fighting in the Negev and on the central front. The wounding of seven Jewish soldiers -- two of them seriously -- by Arab Legionnaires who opened fire from the Old City also increased the uneasy atmosphere here.

The Israeli troops were walking in Jewish territory when they were suddenly attacked by the Legion troops. The Arabs also called on the Israelis to withdraw from the vicinity of "no-man's-land." When the Jews returned to their earlier positions in Israeli territory, they were once again fired on, this time with Bren guns. In this second fray, another Jewish soldier was wounded.

Communiqués issued both by the Jews and the Arabs do not report whether Israeli commander in Jerusalem, Col. Moshe Dayan, protested to his Arab Legion counterpart, Lt. Col. Abdullah Bey el Tel, against the shootings.

BRITAIN REFUSES TO REDEEM \$40,000,000 IN BONDS ISSUED BY PALESTINE MANDATORY REGIME

TEL AVIV, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- The question of redeeming Palestine bonds issued by the British Mandatory Government of Palestine during the last few years, which reached a value of approximately \$40,000,000, and which are held by a large number of small investors here, is now presenting a serious problem.

The Jews in Palestine bought these debentures as a means of saving money. They were urged by the Jewish Agency to buy these bonds because the Mandatory had promised that part of the proceeds would be earmarked for Jewish projects. The British Government is now, however, showing no inclination towards meeting the interest payments or redeeming the bonds.

Some of the small investors have given up hope of recovering their money and are selling the bonds at almost any price to speculators. Some of the buyers are acting in behalf of a group of local financiers, who intend to take legal action on the issue in British courts. A number of the bond-holders proposed that the Israeli Government assume the old mandatory bonds by accepting them as part payment in various Israeli war loans, but the Cabinet rejected the suggestion. The Cabinet is prepared, however, to make official representations to the British Government, in conjunction with other financial claims Israel has against Britain.

The Israeli Government, furthermore, has forbidden local businessmen to negotiate independently with the British concerning the payment of trade accounts in these bonds. The Cabinet here does not wish individuals to reach financial settlements on these bonds to the possible detriment of less fortunate investors. The Government has promised to treat the bonds as of equal importance with the question of Israel's holdings of Palestine pounds and plans to arrange for a general registration of all holders of bonds issued by the mandatory, as soon as the time is ripe for action.

BRITAIN DOES NOT INTEND TO FOLLOW EXAMPLE OF CANADA'S RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL

LONDON, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- Britain does not intend to follow Canada's example and grant Israel de facto recognition, a Foreign Office spokesman said today. He added that Canada did not consult Britain before extending recognition to the Jewish state.

Official circles here denied today that the British Government has received a direct appeal from Egypt regarding fighting in the Negev.

ISRAEL-BOUND VESSEL CARRYING 500 JEWS BEING TOWED TOWARDS CRETE BY DUTCH SALVAGE SHIP

ATHENS, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- The Greek Admiralty announced today that the S.S. *Stampa*, a Panamanian vessel on route to Israel with 500 Jewish refugee passengers which lost its radio and signalled for aid yesterday, is being towed towards Crete by a Dutch salvage ship, the S.S. *Uruguay*.

Earlier, two vessels attempted to reach the distressed vessel but were prevented from doing so because of rough seas. The Dutch rescue vessel put out from Alexandria to reach the Israel-bound *Stampa*.

Greek authorities today halted the burial of 17 Jews who were killed in the crash of an Israel-bound plane last week in the Peloponnese after Israeli Government officials notified the Greek Foreign Ministry that they are arranging for the transfer of the dead to Israel via Athens.

600 JEWISH DISPLACED PERSONS SAIL FROM ITALY FOR ISRAEL; MAJORITY ARE CZECH REFUGEES

ROME, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- The Italian steamer S.S. *Caserta* sailed from Naples last night with 684 Czech and 116 Austrian Jews en route to Israel. All of the immigrants have been living in Italy awaiting transportation to the Jewish state. A group of 80 Italian Jewish displaced persons scheduled to sail aboard the *Caserta* remained in Naples because of the lack of shipping space.

A Jewish flying school, with an enrollment chiefly of Israeli students, celebrated the completion of its program today and will close down shortly. The school is housed in a villa outside Rome.

ONE-THIRD OF JEWISH COMMUNITY OF TURKEY'S SECOND LARGEST CITY IMMIGRATES TO ISRAEL

ISTANBUL, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- One-third of the Jews of Izmir--some 4,000 persons--have left for Israel within the past two months, it was learned here today. Most of the emigrants managed to sell their property before they left. The Jewish community of Izmir is the second largest in Turkey.

Negotiations on new trade and postal agreements between Turkey and Israel are in progress, it was reported here. With the conclusion of the pacts, which is due soon, closer relations between the two nations are expected. Meanwhile, despite the fact that Turkey has not officially recognized the Government of Israel, trade between the two countries has been increasing at a rapid rate.

ONLY FEW HUNDRED JEWISH FAMILIES LEFT IN BULGARIA; MAJORITY OF 40,000 REACHED ISRAEL

TEL AVIV, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- Only a few hundred Jewish families are left in Bulgaria at the present time, recently-arrived Jews from that country reported here today. The new arrivals said that most of Bulgaria's 40,000 Jews had already reached the shores of Israel. They emphasized that there is no anti-Semitism in Bulgaria.

Jewish youths arriving in Israel wish to be sent to the Negev, including the most isolated areas, a Youth Aliyah spokesman said today. He revealed that plans are now under study providing for the dispatch of numerous youth immigrants to the Negev region. However, they will not be sent to the southern desert area until after nine months residence in Israel. Those immigrants serving in the Israeli armed forces will receive preferential treatment insofar as their basic education is concerned, the Aliyah official said. Many of the new arrivals did not complete their basic schooling in Europe.

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60 PERCENT OF 5,000 JEWISH DP'S REMAINING IN ITALY WISH TO IMMIGRATE TO UNITED STATES

ROME, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- Sixty percent of the 5,000 Jewish DP's remaining in Italy at present, following the emigration of 20,000 displaced Jews from this country to Israel during the past year, wish to immigrate to the United States under the Displaced Persons Act, it was reported here today by officials of the Jewish Refugee Organization in Italy.

The situation of displaced Jews in Italy is changing continuously as the movement of refugees to Israel increases almost daily. Of 12 Jewish DP camps which formerly existed in Italy, only three remain at present in the Bari area, with a total refugee population of 3,000. Only eight out of 90 Kibutzim are in existence today in the Rome region.

Officials of the Jewish Refugee Organization stated today that although the group will cease its activities on March 15, a new body will be formed to replace it which will continue to represent Jewish DP's in Italy so long as any still remain in this country.

TRUMAN URGED TO EXTEND DEADLINE FOR FILING OF RESTITUTION CLAIMS IN GERMANY

NEW YORK, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- President Truman has been asked to extend the deadline for filing restoration claims in Germany to December 31, 1949, it was announced here today by the Axis Victims League, which made the appeal.

The League, which has members in this country, Latin America and other parts of the world and seeks to regain rights and interests lost as a result of fascist action, asked that the present Dec. 31, 1948, deadline of U.S. Military Law 59 be extended to conform with the later deadline in effect in the British zone.

The wire to President Truman pointed out that many Axis victims are still uninformed regarding their rights and are seeking proof of original ownership. The plea, similar to one which was directed to Gen. Lucius D. Clay, American commander in Germany, also asserted that important regulations concerning monetary questions and administrative interpretation have not yet been established.

At a recent meeting of the organization, Bruno Weil, president, reported on a trip he made to Germany to study restitution conditions. He reported that up to the beginning of November only 12,000 restitution claims had been filed in the American zone, although some 70,000 to 80,000 had been expected. He also reported that up to last August more than 30,000 Germans had, in accordance with Military Law 59, stated their obligation to make restitution of various forms of property.

ORT TRANSFERS MACHINERY FROM DP CAMPS IN GERMANY FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN ISRAEL

GENEVA, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- The transfer to Israel of several carloads of machinery from DP camps in Germany was announced here today by the headquarters of the world ORT. The move is in line with a plan which the ORT has embarked upon to gradually shift its vocational training activities from Europe to artisan schools in Israel. More shipments are in preparation, the announcement said.

The ORT office here also announced the shipping to Tel Aviv from Geneva of complete installations for schools to train typewriter repair workers and wireless operators. A shipment of 333 sewing machines--part of the organization's artisan aid program--was also dispatched to Israel.

Jews in Cuba Form Body to Combat Increased Anti-Semitic Propaganda; Seek Govt. Action

HAVANA, Cuba, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- Increased anti-Jewish propaganda--through leaflets and radio--prompted the Jewish community here to establish a special committee to combat the efforts of local anti-Semitic elements and to seek government action against them.

The leaflets, as well as the anti-Jewish radio talks broadcast regularly every day, call for a boycott of Jewish enterprises and for the deportation of Jews from Cuba. During one of the broadcasts the speaker went so far as to call upon the people of Cuba "to complete the job on the Jews which was not completed by Hitler."

Australia and New Zealand Expected to Recognize Israel; Canada Looks for More Trading

OTTAWA, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- The prediction that Australia and New Zealand will soon follow the example of Canada and grant de facto recognition to Israel was made here today in well-informed quarters.

An official government spokesman today stated that it was "highly improbable" that Canadian diplomatic representatives will be sent to Israel at the present time. However, he emphasized that the de facto recognition of Israel announced by Canada last Friday will facilitate trade and postal relations between the two countries.

2,000 Attend Maccabean Festival Dinner Arranged in New York by Jewish National Fund

NEW YORK, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- The United States, France and Turkey, as members of the United Nations Palestine Conciliation Commission, will have to recognize that "Israel has won the war and that all recommendations regarding the settlement of the Palestine issue must be based on this pivotal fact," Dr. Jorge Garcia Granados, head of the Guatemala delegation to the U.N. General Assembly, declared here tonight.

Dr. Granados, who recently returned from the U.N. sessions in Paris, was the principal speaker, together with Judge Morris Rothenberg, president of the Jewish National Fund of America, at a Maccabean Festival Dinner held at the Hotel Commodore under the auspices of the J.N.F. The function, attended by 2,000 representatives of synagogues and Orthodox Zionist groups in the metropolitan area, was dedicated to the acquisition of an extensive land tract in the vicinity of Jerusalem for the establishment of a new agricultural settlement for religious immigrants.

"The new settlement," Judge Rothenberg stated, "will be one of the hundred new colonies which have been blueprinted and which will rise in Israel during 1949 on the land of the Jewish National Fund. The J.N.F. has adopted for this purpose a budget of \$104,000,000 to make available the land areas needed for the new colonies and the construction of thousands of barracks and permanent homes for the new arrivals," he added.

International Red Cross Seeks Arab Agreement to Renew Jewish Burials at Mt. of Olives

GENEVA, Dec. 28. (JTA) -- The International Red Cross has instructed its representatives in Transjordan to obtain the necessary permission for the renewal of Jewish burials on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem, it was learned here today. The step was taken following a recommendation by the Agudas Israel.

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