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LAST MINUTE NEWS

ISRAELI UNITS WITHDRAWN FROM EGYPT, GOVERNMENT SAYS; STAYED THERE THREE DAYS

TEL AVIV, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- The Israeli Government today issued an official statement revealing that Israeli troops entered Egyptian territory and remained there for three days carrying out a mission which resulted in the damaging of Egyptian military installations. The statement reads:

"In hot pursuit of the Egyptians, Israeli units entered Egyptian territory in the Negev. They took Abou Augayla and certain airfields near El Arish. They withdrew after damaging military installations. The United States Government was advised of the operation in reply to its note.

"The Israeli forces captured large quantities of arms, ammunition, artillery pieces and oil. They also took some undamaged Spitfires and several hundred prisoners. The Egyptians suffered hundreds of casualties. The Israeli units stayed in the area for three days."

An Israeli spokesman refused to comment whether the withdrawal from El Arish and Abou Augayla indicates that all forces that crossed into Egypt have been withdrawn. However, he stated that "we do not desire at any time to occupy Egyptian territory." He added that the U.S. representations to the Government of Israel and the Israeli reply were both made in a friendly spirit, "reflecting the desire for peace and stability in the Middle East with which the Israeli Government identifies itself."

TEL AVIV, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- An air raid alarm was sounded here this evening. Three explosions were heard.

Egyptian and Iraqi reports claiming that an Israeli-Iraqi battle is being waged on the central front were emphatically denied today by an Israeli Government spokesman.

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ISRAELI CABINET DECIDES TO ACCEPT CEASE-FIRE ORDER IN NEGEV; U.N. TO GET REPLY TODAY

TEL AVIV, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- The Israeli Cabinet decided tonight to accept the U.N. Security Council's cease-fire order in the Negev, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency learned without official confirmation. The decision will be delivered to the Security Council tomorrow.

BRITAIN DOUBTS WHETHER ALL ISRAELI FORCES HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM EGYPTIAN SOIL

LONDON, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- The assurance given by the Israeli Government to the United States Government that no Israeli troops now remain on Egyptian soil was welcomed here today by the British Foreign Office. However, the British Government continued to charge Israel with violating the Palestine truce by entering Egyptian territory.

Declaring that it is "likely" that some Israeli units still remain on Egyptian soil, a spokesman for the Foreign Office said: "The withdrawal gives some local relief to the general situation which continues to be grave and will continue to give cause for anxiety. The whole situation has arisen out of a flagrant violation of the recent decisions of the U.N. Security Council with regard to the Negev."

The Foreign Office today refused to confirm or deny reports about alleged British troop movements in the Aqaba area of Transjordan. A conciliatory statement issued by British Consul-General Cyril Marriott in Haifa yesterday--declaring that "Britain has no intention of engaging in war against Israel"--was repudiated today by a Foreign Office spokesman.

The official indicated that the conciliatory note in Marriott's statement does not correspond with the policy of the British Government, which is seeking to put the blame for the situation in the Negev entirely on Israel.

BRITISH AMBASSADOR CONFERS ON PALESTINE SITUATION WITH SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- British Ambassador Sir Oliver Franks, in an hour-long discussion on Palestine with Acting Secretary of State Robert A. Lovett today "reviewed the Palestine situation." He told reporters after the talk that they had "discussed the prospects of peace and looked at the chances of a cessation of hostilities." He declined to elaborate further.

State Department press officer Michael J. McDermott today declined to comment on a report the British had "quietly but officially informed the Department that they are sending combat troops back into the Palestine area."

"The British have given us a good deal of information but we don't reveal all that they tell us," he said. He referred correspondents to the British for the answer to their question. A British Embassy spokesman was quoted as flatly denying the report and branding it "complete nonsense." "We have told the State Department nothing of the sort," he said. "We have no intention of returning combat troops to the Palestine area."

ISRAEL TO BRING CHARGES AGAINST BRITAIN TO U.N.; BRITISH BOMBERS REACH TRANSJORDAN

TEL AVIV, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- The Israeli Government will lodge a complaint against Britain at the U.N. Security Council in connection with the British Government's threats against Israel, it was officially announced today. The announcement emphasized that the Israeli Government is taking "an extremely serious and grave view" of the entire matter.

"The British Government is contemplating active military intervention in the Palestine war," an official Israeli statement said. "We know now that British forces are en route to the Aqaba port. Plans have been completed to dispatch British forces to the Egyptian-Palestine Sinai border. During the past few days a considerable number of British fighters and bombers reached Transjordan. The British Government is actively considering the lifting of the embargo in order to supply Egypt and Transjordan with arms.

"These are not hasty moves. They have been carefully planned. British troops in Tripolitania are undergoing maneuvers under conditions aimed at Israel. The names of places in Israel are even being used in these military maneuvers.

"The British Government is now actively engaged in a smear campaign against Israel and is whipping up British public opinion against Israel and trying to neutralize the friendship of the United States for Israel. Britain is also seeking to maneuver Egypt into invoking the provisions of the 1936 British-Egyptian treaty. Indications point to the fact that the British Government is possibly embarking on an active military operation to present the U.N. Security Council with a fait accompli of armed British intervention.

"The British attempt to wrest the Negev from Israel began on November 29, 1947, and has been speeded up since the assassination of Count Folke Bernadotte, the U.N. Mediator for Palestine. The Israeli Government is bringing this matter to the United Nations and will present it to the Security Council, taking an extremely serious and grave view of these developments," the statement concluded.

A spokesman for the Israeli Government emphasized that British action against Israel could materialize "within 24 hours" by Britain's lifting of the arms embargo and supplying the Arab countries with military equipment.

CONSULAR TRUCE BODY WILL NOT CEASE FUNCTIONING AFTER ARRIVAL OF CONCILIATION COMMISSION

JERUSALEM, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- The Consular Truce Commission established by the United Nations Security Council last April will not cease functioning even after the arrival in Palestine of the newly-named U.N. Palestine Conciliation Commission, it was learned here today from authoritative consular sources. Unless the Security Council specifically orders its dissolution, the Consular body will serve as an advisory body to the Conciliation Commission and will refrain, meanwhile, from any "major political acts."

U.N. truce observers in Gaza reported last night that Israeli planes bombed Gaza, Khan Yunis, Rafa and the Gaza beach last Sunday and again on the night of Jan. 3. The U.N. officials said that 30 civilians were killed and 70 wounded in the bombings.

RESIDENT TRUMAN WILL ATTEND DINNER IN HONOR OF DR. WEIZMANN, WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCES

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- President Truman will go to New York on February 9 to address a testimonial dinner in honor of Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of Israel, the White House said today. The dinner will be held at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

(In a message to the American people, Dr. Chaim Weizmann today emphasized that the friendship and support which President Truman and the American people have given to Israel "have been an encouragement beyond measure, and this will long be remembered in our annals." He compared the Israeli fight for freedom with that of the American colonists. The Israeli President conveyed this message through the New York Herald Tribune which today began serializing Dr. Weizmann's autobiography, "Trial and Error".)

ISRAELI OFFICE OF CUSTODIAN FOR ENEMY PROPERTY WILL BE TRANSFERRED TO JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- The first Israeli Government department to be transferred from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem will be that of the Custodian for Enemy Property, it was reported here today by Israeli Military Governor Dr. Bernard Joseph. The department will move to Jerusalem next week.

The Ministry of Religion and several other government offices will be moved here thereafter, Dr. Joseph said. He revealed that settlement of the Ein Karim area, located nearby, where semi-agricultural housing units will be established, has already begun.

ANTI-TERRORISM ORDINANCE IS NOT RETROACTIVE, ISRAELI MINISTER OF JUSTICE SAYS

TEL AVIV, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- "The anti-terrorist ordinance promulgated by the Israeli Government following the assassination of Count Folke Bernadotte is not retroactive and consequently a person who committed a terrorist act before the law went into effect cannot now be charged with its violation," Minister of Justice Dr. Felix Rosenbluth declared today.

He made his statement in the Acre military court where Nathan Friedman-Yellin and his aide, M. Shmulevitz, are being tried on charges of terrorism. He added, however, that a person can be charged retroactively with membership in a terrorist organization.

Two other principal witnesses today were Minister of Interior Dr. Itzhak Gruenbaum and Police Inspector-General Yeheskiel Sachar. Dr. Gruenbaum told the court the present anti-terrorist ordinance is not "fascist, but democratic" since it gives defendants a chance to prove their innocence.

JEWISH AGENCY CONSIDERS ERECTION OF \$1,000,000-BUILDING FOR WORLD ZIONIST CONGRESS

JERUSALEM, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- The question of erecting a special building to house sessions of the World Zionist Congress was raised here today at a meeting of the Jewish Agency executive. The proposed edifice would cost \$1,000,000 to construct. Dr. Herzl's grave would be permanently established at its entrance. Today's session also took up the question of increased colonization programs and the movement of newly-arriving immigrants to rural areas.

VESSEL WITH 500 JEWISH PASSENGERS STRANDED IN CRETE AFTER MISHAP SAILS FOR ISRAEL

ATHENS, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- The S.S. Tampa, with 500 Jewish passengers aboard, sailed from Suda Bay in Crete today for Israel. The health and morale of the immigrants is reported as good. The Panamanian vessel has been under repairs for the past week after it lost its rudder in the Mediterranean and was towed in by a Dutch salvage vessel.

U.N. SECRETARY GENERAL PREDICTS THERE WILL BE PEACE IN PALESTINE THIS YEAR

LAKE SUCCESS, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- U.N. Secretary-General Trygve Lie volunteered the prediction today that "there will be peace in Palestine in 1949."

At his first press conference since the General Assembly adjourned its Paris session, Lie said the U.N. Secretariat had no information to confirm or deny British charges that Israeli forces had penetrated into Egypt, capturing air bases at El Arish and Rafah. He announced that the Negev subcommittee of the Security Council will meet here Friday morning to consider the situation. "I think the subcommittee may have some information on that point," Lie declared.

In answer to a reporter's question, Lie said that while he could not divulge the basis for his optimism, a general settlement of the Palestine problem was closer than it had been before the U.N. Assembly meeting in Paris and offered the prediction that the new year would bring an end to the warfare between Israel and her Arab neighbors.

The office of Dr. Ralph Bunche, acting U.N. mediator, turned away today all queries about the alleged Israeli incursions into Egyptian territory and the reported landing of British troops at Aqaba. A spokesman for the mediator declared that Dr. Bunche was receiving a constant flow of reports from U.N. observers in the field but that he did not make a practice of divulging military information.

TRUMAN, IN MESSAGE TO CONGRESS, URGES ABOLITION OF "UNFAIR DISCRIMINATION" IN DP LAW

WASHINGTON, Jan. 5. (JTA) -- President Truman, in his State of the Union message today, called upon Congress "to open our doors to displaced persons without unfair discrimination."

It was the only reference to displaced persons legislation in the nearly 4,000-word speech which covered a multitude of domestic problems, touched on foreign policy, and described "prejudice and intolerance" as one of the country's major shortcomings.

"The driving force behind our progress is our faith in our democratic institutions," the President said. "That faith is embodied in the promise of equal rights and equal opportunities which the founders of our republic proclaimed to their countrymen and to the whole world."

"The fulfillment of this promise is among the highest purposes of government. The civil rights proposals I made to the 80th Congress I now repeat to the 81st Congress," he declared. "They should be enacted in order that the Federal Government may assume the leadership and discharge the obligations clearly placed upon it by the Constitution. I stand squarely behind those proposals," Truman emphasized.

Two bills providing for the setting up of a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission were introduced in the House late yesterday at the opening session of the 81st Congress. The measures were introduced by Reps. Adam Clayton Powell, of New York, and James Fulton, of Pennsylvania.

A bill calling upon the United States to remove its embargo on the shipment of arms to Israel was introduced in the House by Rep. Emanuel Celler. The same measure was first introduced by Celler during the last Congressional session.

400 CZECH JEWS ARRIVED IN U.S. ZONES OF GERMANY AND AUSTRIA DURING END OF DECEMBER

MUNICH, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- Some 400 Jews, including a number of complete family units, arrived in the U.S. zones of Germany and Austria from Czechoslovakia during the latter part of December, it was stated here by International Refugee Organization officials. They were queried following statements by Bavarian authorities that the rate of Czechoslovak Jews arriving here is increasing daily.

At Weisbaden, in the American zone, Socialist Party Prime Minister for Hesse Christian Stock, told the Hesse Parliament that there are 262 former Nazis employed in seven government departments as against 49 former persecutees. The only department in which former Nazis are not employed, he said, is the Ministry of Denazification and Demilitarization, but admitted that only two percent of the employees of this department are persecutees.

GESTAPO OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR EXECUTION OF POLISH JEWS GETS DEATH SENTENCE

WARSAW, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- Former Maj. Gen. Theobald Thier, Gestapo official who was found guilty of directing the execution of thousands of Jews in Cracow and Lwow during the war, was sentenced to death today by the Polish District Court here.

Kasimiech Ankerstein, a Pole who, during the war was one of the principal liquidators of the Sarny ghetto, was sentenced to death by the district court of Opele. Although he changed his name and remained in hiding in Lower Silesia after the end of the war, Ankerstein was arrested after a young Jewish boy, who succeeded in escaping the fate of his townspeople in Sarny, recognized him on the street.

JOHANNESBURG COURT DISMISSES CHARGE AGAINST PRO-NAZI FOR MAKING ANTI-SEMITIC THREATS

JOHANNESBURG, So. Africa, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- A charge brought against the notorious Fascist, Robey Leibrandt, for using abusive language and making anti-Semitic threats in a holiday resort in Parys, in the Transvaal, was dismissed here today by a magistrate. The judge said that the government had not been able to prove that Leibrandt used incriminating terms when, addressing the government over a loudspeaker, he urged that the Jews be driven out of South Africa.

Leibrandt was granted amnesty last July from a prison sentence he was serving for wartime Nazi activities. Under cross-examination the defendant made insulting remarks against several witnesses and had to be called to order by the court repeatedly.

CHIEF RABBI OF FRANCE PAYS VISIT TO FRENCH PRESIDENT; HEARS HIS VIEWS ON ISRAEL

PARIS, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- President Auriol of France today confirmed to French Chief Rabbi Isaye Schwarz that France is prepared, in principle, to grant early de facto recognition to Israel. The statement was made during a visit by the Chief Rabbi to the President.

In Zionist quarters, however, it is believed that Britain's hostile attitude toward Israel at this time--on the eve of Foreign Minister Robert Schuman's official visit to London--is likely to interfere with "France's good intentions."

JEWISH ORPHANS IN ITALY TRANSFERRED FROM COMMUNITY INSTITUTION TO YOUTH ALIYAH

ROME, Jan. 4. (JTA) -- Thirty Jewish orphans have been transferred from an orphanage maintained by the Union of Jewish Communities and the Joint Distribution Committee to a former ORT installation near Tivoli which is now being run by the Youth Aliyah as a training school for farm life in Israel. The orphans, who are natives of Italy, will proceed to Israel after completing basic training in agriculture and Hebrew. The youths range in age from 15 to 17.