

Christian Arabs In Palestine to Curb Yule Fetes

Bar Elaborate Celebration as Mark of Mourning for Proposed Partition

By Fitzhugh Turner

By Wireless to the Herald Tribune
JERUSALEM, Dec. 23.—Except for regular formal religious services, Christian Arabs of Bethlehem and Jerusalem intend to forgo elaborate celebration of Christmas this year as a gesture of mourning for the proposed partition of Palestine. It was reported today. Normally there are scores of small processions on Christmas, along with neighborhood festivities.

The principal formal observance will start at 12:30 p. m. tomorrow at the Jaffa Gate to the walled city of Jerusalem. Monsignor Vincent Gelat, apostolic administrator of the Jerusalem Latin patriarchate, will lead a procession from Jaffa Gate four miles to the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem for services climaxed by a solemn high mass at midnight.

Police, soldiers and members of the Arab National Guard will patrol the road, as well as Bethlehem proper, against incidents. In recent years as many as 40,000 persons have flocked to Bethlehem on Christmas Eve, but this year the worshippers are expected to be considerably fewer because of troubled conditions here.

Shooting Interrupts Funeral

An example of these conditions came this afternoon when fifty persons set out with a police escort to bury Robert Clive Stern, British-born freelance Jewish newspaper man who was shot to death Sunday night, presumably by an Arab. The mourners included members of the local and foreign press and several government officials.

At the Jewish cemetery on the Mount of Olives the burial services had just started when unseen Arab snipers began to fire from houses across a valley in the direction of the Golden Gate to the walled city. The funeral party took cover, and police shot back. No one was hurt, but the firing started an hour-long sniper battle in the Old City itself.

For twenty-four days, residents of the Jewish quarter and the Arab section of the ancient walled city have faced each other in sand-bagged positions inside their houses, with British soldiers between to keep the peace. Today when a grenade exploded in the area, Jews sniped at Arabs and Arabs at Jews, and soldiers shot at both. Two Arabs, one a sixty-year-old man, were wounded.

Fire on Jewish Convoys

All morning and during part of the afternoon a group of at least five Arabs haunted the hills at Bab el Wad (Gate of the Gorge), where a dirt road winds out of a canyon into the coastal plain, forming a favorite spot for snipers.

The Arabs shot at Jewish convoys as they passed, injuring five persons including Harold Hagg, a Swedish newspaper man who had just arrived at Lydda international airport. Mr. Hagg was hit in the wrist and knee.

The convoys, which included women and children passengers, were escorted by members of Haganah, the Jewish militia, in taxis, or by Jewish settlement police in pick-up trucks.

Sir Alan Gordon Cunningham, British High Commissioner, traveling in a Rolls-Royce sedan escorted by armored police cars and soldiers, twice passed through the area on his way to a military inspection, but the Arabs held their fire.

[Two Jews were killed in an Arab-Jewish struggle at Bat-Yam, south of Jaffa, The Associated Press reported.]

Jews Bomb Arab Mill

JERUSALEM, Dec. 23 (UP).—A bomb squad of forty members of the Jewish underground organization Irgun Zvai Leumi destroyed an Arab flour mill in the Tel Aviv-Jaffa area tonight and set off a melee in which at least one Arab was reported killed. Ten or more Arabs were wounded.

The Irgunists threw mine bombs into the flour mill and set it afire. A high wind spread the flames, and the building was destroyed in ten minutes.

Jewish and Arab snipers exchanged fire, and a British military and police patrol, in armored cars, opened fire when it was caught between the lines. The Irgunists withdrew into Jewish Tel Aviv, eluding the British armored cars which pursued them.

Later the Irgunists telephoned newspapers that the flour mill was an Arab sniper center.

Meanwhile, the British transport Ocean Vigor sailed from Haifa for the Cyprus detention camps with the 851 Jewish illegal immigrants who were seized yesterday on board the refugee ship Al Tafchiduni (You Can't Frighten Us).

Bedell Smith Back in Moscow

MOSCOW, Dec. 23 (P).—American Ambassador Walter Bedell Smith returned by air today from London, where he had attended the conference of the four-power Council of Foreign Ministers.

Sally Milgrim

SAYS:

Merry Christmas!

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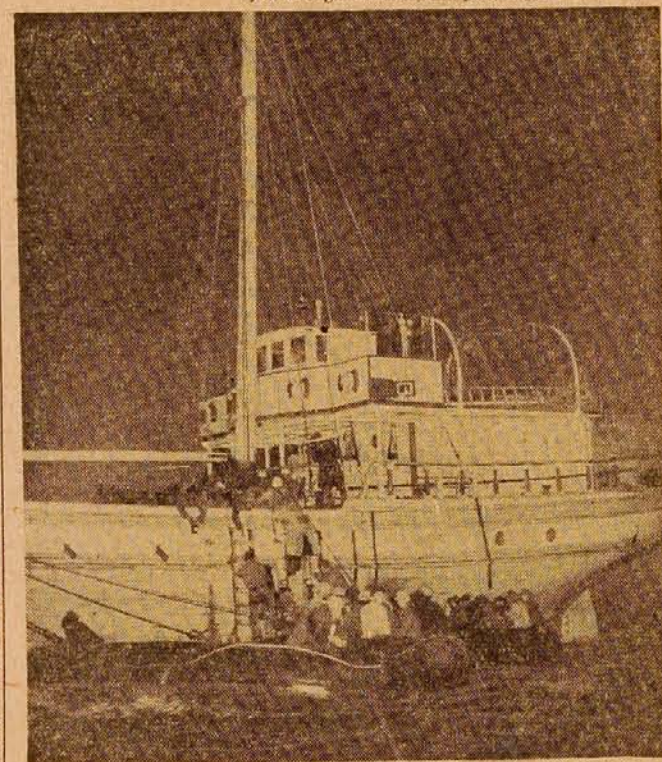
Jewish Immigrants Beginning a Voyage From Italy That Ended With Capture Off Palestine



Jews bound for Palestine on the refugee ship Al Tafchiduni (You Can't Frighten Us) leaving a beach near Rome on Dec. 11 in American Army surplus rubber raft. Members of Haganah, the Hebrew defense organization, are pushing the raft off the beach.



Immigrants hauling their raft with ropes tossed from the Al Tafchiduni. The vessel was intercepted by the British on Monday and escorted to Haifa. Pictures were made by J. Walter Green, Associated Press staff photographer.



The immigrants climbing aboard the Al Tafchiduni from their bobbing rubber rafts. The vessel carried 800 passengers.



The Italian captain of the two-masted schooner lifting an infant over the side of the vessel as Jews already on ship stand by ready to help their fellow refugees aboard.

U.N. Trust Plan To Cover Town Of Bethlehem

Nativity Site Is in Jerusalem Area; Residents Today Chiefly Christian Arabs

By Peter Kihss

LAKE SUCCESS, L. I., Dec. 23.—The little town of Bethlehem, the City of David where Christ was born nearly two thousand years ago, will come under United Nations trust, according to the plan for a special international regime for Jerusalem to be set up by Oct. 1 "to insure that order and peace, and especially religious peace, reign in Jerusalem."

Under the statute which is now being worked out by experts for the Trusteeship Council the southernmost place of the seventy-eight-square-mile city of Jerusalem district would be Bethlehem—a town today housing 6,600 people, principally Christian Arabs, atop a limestone ridge five miles south of Jerusalem municipality.

John D. L. Hood, Australian member of the U. N. special committee on Palestine, which originally recommended the bounds for internationalized and neutralized Jerusalem, recalled that Bethlehem had been included because of its holy places. Chief among them is the Church of the Nativity, first built by Constantine, inclosing the grotto in which Jesus is believed to have been born.

"It obviously had to be included because of the Nativity," Mr. Hood explained. "It's only a short distance from Jerusalem, and then after Bethlehem there is nothing for about fifteen miles, a barren district, until you come to Hebron, an Arab town."

Mr. Hood has brought back "an impression of a town dominated by church towers and spires" with low gray limestone buildings, clear, attractive and self-contained "like most small towns anywhere."

Of the three experts drawing up the section of the statute for the

Holy Land Christmas: Both Sides Talk War

By Wireless to the Herald Tribune

JERUSALEM, Dec. 23.—Two pre-Christmas thoughts expressed today in the Holy Land of Christians, Moslems and Jews:

By "Ad Difaa" ("Defense"), Moslem-published Arab newspaper: "Repartition threatens the present of the world, its future, even its life, with the worst consequences. The Arabs have already made up their minds (to defy it) and rely on God."

By David Remez, chairman of the Jewish National Council: "We hope the Arabs will realize some day that the Jews offered peace. . . . We have to accept now that we are in a war, and we will fight it. With God's help we will win."

protection of the holy places, who recessed yesterday until Jan. 5, the British member is Leslie H. Gibson, Attorney General of Palestine. Mr. Gibson has attended Christmas Eve midnight mass at the Church of the Nativity and recalled carol singing in the seasonally bare fields below the city.

Mr. Gibson recalled the town with winding narrow streets and no pavements, "an old city, exactly what you would imagine from the Bible pictures" of the days when the Wise Men came, bearing gold and frankincense and myrrh to honor the new-born Babe.

The most shocking statement about present-day Bethlehem, without doubt, is contained in the U. N. S. C. O. P. report. David Horowitz, of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, was testifying about high rates of infant mortality in districts outside Jewish colonization. "The highest," he said, "is in Bethlehem, 176.4 per thousand, where there are no Jews at all," a child death rate almost double that of the Haifa and Jaffa areas.

U.N. Board Tells Neutral Zone Plan for Java

Good Offices Committee Will Propose One if No Agreement Is Reached

BATAVIA, Java, Dec. 23 (P).—The United Nations Good Offices Committee announced today details of its Dec. 3 plan for a demilitarized zone to give effect to the U. N. Security Council's cease-fire order in the Indonesian Republic's conflict with the Dutch.

Under the plan, accepted by the Dutch and Indonesians, each side would propose the demilitarized zone it thinks should be set up. "In the event the parties do not agree," the plan said, "representatives of the (U. N.) committee should propose delimitations of demilitarized zones, which the parties would be asked to accept."

The Good Offices Committee is composed of Dr. Frank Porter Graham, of the United States, chairman, and representatives of Belgium and Australia. The committee also proposed that, upon acceptance of the zones by both sides, there be an immediate resumption of normal trade by the demilitarized zones with

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both Netherlands-occupied and Republican-occupied areas.

Upon acceptance of the zone limits, all forces in the demilitarized zones and those in territory occupied by the opposite side would "move peacefully to territory on the party's own side" with "arms and warlike equipment."

A Dutch statement said the committee's proposals "can be accepted in general terms as a working base" for implementation of the cease-fire order of Aug. 4. However, it added that the Netherlands holds to the "Van Mook Line" (named for Acting Governor General Hubertus J. van Mook) as the boundary between the two sides.

The Dutch also proposed that any restrictions on their troops in the demilitarized zones be binding for only fourteen days, subject to renewal if carried out.

The Indonesian Republic held that each side is entitled only to the territory its troops actually held when the cease-fire order went into effect.

Jewish Immigrant Ship Leaves Romania Empty

TOULON, France, Dec. 23 (UP).—Diplomatic sources said today that the American ship Pan Crescent, flying the flag of Panama, left Constanta empty yesterday, two months after it entered that Rumanian port to pick up Jewish illegal immigrants to Palestine. A sister ship, the Pan York, also empty, was expected to leave today.

Local sources believed the ships were canceled because the United Nations decision to partition Palestine will soon open the door to increased legal immigration.

French Hold Italian Crew

TOULON, France, Dec. 23 (UP).—Police today held the skipper and twelve crew members of a 300-ton Italian ship suspected of entering French water to take on a load of Jewish immigrants to Palestine. The ship, the Scotti Fratelli, was towed to Toulon Saturday and impounded.

Mary Lewis

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Mine Output Jun In Year Without

WASHINGTON, Dec.

The strike-free soft-coal have produced 17 per cent this year than the strike-ridden 1946, the Bit Coal Institute reported today.

The extra output was snapped up by fuel-hungry homes and abroad, stitute said. Coal exports 1 per cent and industrial consumption in the United States increased 13 per cent over last year.

More than 590,450,000 tons of soft coal had been dug by middle of this month, the institute said—a gain of 86,000,000 tons over the total output for 1946. Industry sources have predicted that production will go over the 600,000,000-ton mark by the year's end for the third time in history.

The sharp upswing was regarded as attributable to the relative peace which has prevailed between John L. Lewis and the mine owners this year. Mr. Lewis's United Mine Workers have called no formal strikes, although they left the pits for about ten days in a "memorial holiday" after an explosion at Centralia, Ill., killed 111 miners. In 1946 the miners were out on strike twice for a total of seventy-six days.

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TODAY

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Eugene K. Broton
President

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