

Is Palestine War a Myth?

Jewish State Born Despite Obstacles, Newsman Reports

This dispatch represents the considered judgment of an experienced and able correspondent who has visited most of the Arab lands in recent weeks. Daniel de Luce, a war correspondent throughout the recent world conflict, has talked with Arab leaders in both Palestine and the neighboring Arab states, interviewed Arab refugees, watched the long series of Arab War Councils.

By DANIEL DE LUCE

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JERUSALEM, May 11—The threatened war between a Jewish state and the Arab world looks more and more today like an exploded propaganda balloon.

This correspondent had come to this conclusion after weeks spent mostly in Arab capitals and after seeing the Jewish setup in Palestine.

The Jewish state is now a reality despite diplomatic discussions at Lake Success or the continuation of the British mandate until May 15.

It has an army which has decisively defeated a few thousand poorly led Arab volunteers, the majority of whom came from outside Palestine.

This Army, Haganah, in addition to holding that part of Palestine allotted the Jews under the United Nations partition plan, now dominates many Arab districts outside the Jewish boundaries drawn by the U. N.

TOTALLY MOBILIZED

The Jewish state is totally mobilized for military action. The Palestine Arabs are a military nonentity, and the neighboring Arab powers are squabbling in their high councils instead of uniting.

In the past week deep schisms have appeared in what the Arabs had been heralding as their solid front against Zionism.

This correspondent's observations in Arab capitals led to these conclusions:

If Palestine is to be invaded, the Arab governments still are unable to agree on their military commitments, on the overall command without which co-ordination would be impossible, on how territorial spoils, if any, are to be divided.

If Palestine is not to be invaded, these governments are just as bitterly at odds over how to save their faces with their own peoples, who have been stirred up to expect a miraculous, 11th-hour rescue of the Arabs of Palestine.

Regardless of the flowery communiques issued after each conference of the Arab government—at Damascus, Cairo, Amman, Riyadh—

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there are indications that the old jealousies among the Arab kings and premiers run on unabated.

The Arab governments have not yet decided on how to wage a war. It may be assumed they will have as much difficulty deciding on how to make peace with Zionism.

It appears almost inevitable that Palestine will be a trouble zone for a considerable time to come, with sporadic violence between the Jews and Arabs and among the Arabs themselves. But the prospective patterns is one of unorganized mutinies, underground terror and sheer banditry—not of modern war.

The nominal leaders of the Palestine Arabs are now almost everywhere but in Palestine. Their panicky flight to Beirut, Damascus, Cairo and other foreign cities has left the Arab population in a chaotic and hopeless frame of mind.

Two propaganda campaigns have confused the real state of affairs in Palestine until the past few days. One was by the Arab League, which since November has threatened repeatedly that 35,000,000 Arabs of the Middle East would "fight to the last man" to prevent creation of a Jewish nation.

ARMY IN FIELD

As the showdown neared, however, more than one Arab government has confessed it is unable to put an army into the field. Others apologetically said they could not bear the burden of invasion alone.

The other propaganda campaign by Jewish spokesmen has exaggerated the infiltration of fewer than 4000 foreign Arab volunteers into a mass invasion and has ignored the growth of the Jewish army into a formidable war machine.

Jewish appeals for a United Nations force to implement partition served to hide the now evident fact that the Jews can be military masters in Palestine.

The Jews have not lost a scrap of territory to the Arabs. The Arabs have lost Haifa, Jaffa and Safad and dozens of smaller settlements. They were losing Jerusalem also when they accepted a citywide truce.

Arab pride through the Middle East has suffered a terrific blow. In the highest Arab circles, the talk no longer is of exterminating Zionism, but of containing it.

(For more on Arab disunity, see Drew Pearson, Page 20.)