

Trouble in Palestine

Underground Jewish Armies Take Offensive in Holy Land

JERUSALEM, Dec. 12 (AP)—Veteran Jewish underground fighters went on the warpath from Haifa to Hebron in a series of bloody clashes with Arabs and tonight the death toll from 13 days of bitter communal fighting in Palestine neared 200.

Jewish forces struck at seven places—Haifa, Yazur, Gaza, Shafat, Tireh, Ramle and in Jerusalem itself—on this Moslem Sabbath.

Claiming responsibility for five of these operations the underground Irgun Zvai Leumi also threatened new attacks on the British army "if the British continue to interfere and permit Arabs to import arms from abroad."

A British soldier was killed and another wounded when Arabs fired on a British convoy entering Jaffa tonight.

The day's disorders throughout Palestine brought death to 25 persons, 20 of them Arabs. An Associated Press tabulation showed 198 had been killed in the Holy Land since the United Nations General Assembly voted for partition. The toll for the entire Middle East stood at 314.

Haifa itself was relatively quiet. Arabs leaving mosques found the streets lined with British armored cars and Bren gun carriers.

IN JERUSALEM

Scattered firing continued all day from the besieged Jewish section of Jerusalem's old city. British soldiers and police patrolled the narrow streets where Arabs and Jews clashed Thursday.

Jewish workers living in the ancient section were convoyed from their jobs to their homes tonight. Units of the Scottish Highland Light Infantry moved into the area at dusk after police blocked Jaffa Gate. Thousands of Arabs gathered at mosques in the district during the day.

Jewish crowds gathered in Zion Square following reports that the Arabs were planning large-scale demonstrations. The demonstrations did not come off, however, and police turned back a group of 50 to 60 Arabs en route from Hebron to Jerusalem.

Anticipating an upsurge of Arab fury police armed with automatic weapons were ordered on a 100 per cent stand-by basis. Police reports said several temporary Arab policemen on duty at isolated posts had "absconded" with arms and ammunition.

It was officially announced that the Jews who attacked the Arab village of Shafat near Jerusalem wore uniforms of the British army and police. These underground attackers entered the village under cover of automatic weapon fire, bombed two houses, shot and wounded an Arab and fled leaving two unexploded grenades.

ARAB LEAGUE

As violence continued in the Holy Land, Arabs throughout the Middle

East awaited word from Cairo where ministers of Arab nations are attending an Arab League "council of war" to prevent partition of Palestine.

Organizers of the Arab "People's Army" continued signing new recruits following the Arab League's announcement that all fighting against partition would be up to this force until the British evacuate Palestine on or before August 1.

Jewish sources, both public and underground, said there was maneuvering going on in the ranks of Jewish fighters for positions of power in the projected Jewish state, and possibly accounted for Irgun's taking a hand against the Arabs.

These sources listed the following factions:

1—Haganah leaders, associated with the constituted Jewish leadership, who have been holding to a restrained policy of "defense only" in the current strife with the Arabs.

2—Menachem Beigin, Polish militarist, who commands Irgun Zvai Leumi and who is described by more conservative elements as aspiring to political leadership of the new state.

3—Radical nationalists who run the Stern Gang and who are feared to want a behind-the-scenes dictatorial role in the new state.

Jewish Fund President Visits Here

"The actions of the Security Council regarding Palestine will at this time represent a test of the validity of the United Nations," Judge Morris Rothenberg of New York declared in an interview here yesterday.

Judge Rothenberg is president of the Jewish National Fund in America, the agency that has been buying land in Palestine for the Jewish homeland for almost 40 years.

He protested last week's action by the State Department discontinuing the "licensing of shipments of all arms to the troubled areas" until further notice.

"It is idle to say," Judge Rothenberg stated, "that the embargo also applies to the Arabs. The Jews are not attacking the Arabs—the Arabs are attacking the Jews."

As a solution to the present Palestine situation, Judge Rothenberg said the Security Council should recognize the Haganah, the semi-official Jewish army, as the official militia of Palestine.

The Judge will address San Francisco Jews at 6 p. m. tomorrow in the St. Francis Hotel at the Feast of Lights, the sixth annual Chanukah banquet and Land for Freedom Festival of the Jewish National Fund of San Francisco.