

Jewish Forces in Tight Spot in Jerusalem Battle

Meanwhile Neutrals Continue Efforts to Arrange a Truce

(The following dispatch on the fighting in Jerusalem was received Tuesday thru U. S. Navy communications. It was made available by the Navy on a pooled basis.)

Jerusalem, May 17 (Delayed) (AP)—The Arabs cannonaded the central thoroughfares of New Jerusalem Monday, killing two and injuring 33 Jews. Both sides consolidated their positions inside the walled old city.

With no indications beyond a surmise that the Arabs and Jews were staking everything upon taking or holding the clustered houses between the Zion gate and the Wailing Wall enclosure, the United Nations truce commission made another move to restore the cease fire convention.

Assisted by consuls of the other western powers including Italy, and by the Franciscan ecclesiastical head, the security council's peacemakers established contact with both sides in a new truce effort.

The Arabs stated, according to a Jewish agency spokesman, that they are ready to refrain from using mortars to obviate damaging the Holy Land places, but would not accept a cease fire. The Jews said they could only agree to a full cease fire, but refused the proposal to eliminate mortars on the ground they must be allowed every means of defense.

The stalemate continues.

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SOME 1,300 JEWS in the southeast corner of Jerusalem's old city are threatened with annihilation as the reinforced Arab units press their attack, which is endangering the world's most sacred religious structures.

In continuing frontal assaults Sunday night and early Monday, the Arab volunteer army units breached Haganah lines at two points, forcing the Jews to withdraw further into their exposed and tiny corner of the old city.

Haganah and Irgun Zvai Leumi began a furious assault to rescue their beleaguered colleagues and were reported ready to blow a hole in the massive stone wall if necessary. Jewish soldiers captured buildings near the Jaffa gate and were attacking toward David's tower within the walls. Women, children and religious officials are among the besieged Jews.

Because of the battle's ferocity, it is impossible to say whether there is damage to religious structures, which include the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the most revered church in Christendom.

The Jews are backed against a wall and have two flanks exposed. Strategically, their situation is untenable. For four days, they have endured continuous fire. Rumors of a Jewish surrender here have been denied by Haganah and Jewish agency officials.

The Arabs have now so far regained confidence that they told the security council's truce commission Sunday not to expect an answer to the cease-fire or truce proposals for the time being. Previously they had said they were awaiting a reply from King Abdulla of Trans-Jordan.

St. Patrick's birthplace has been variously said to be Scotland, England, Wales and France.