

MAY 15—22, 1948

A. PALESTINE. — End of the British Mandate. - Proclamation of the State of Israel. - Jewish Cabinet formed under Premiership of Mr. Ben-Gurion. - Special Palestine Session of U.N. General Assembly. - Trusteeship Council Meetings. - Jews and Arabs accept Mr. Harold Evans as Municipal Commissioner for Jerusalem after Mandate. - Assembly Resolution for Appointment of U.N. Mediator in Palestine. - Security Council appoints Consular Truce Commission. - Red Cross Efforts for Neutralisation of Jerusalem. - Despatch of British Military Reinforcements. - Jews capture Safad and occupy Jaffa after Arab Surrender. - Arab States invade Palestine after Termination of Mandate. - Martial Law in Egypt, Iraq, Transjordan, Syria, and Lebanon. - Unified Arab Command under King Abdullah. - Egyptian Air Raids on Tel Aviv. - Emergency Meeting of Security Council. - U.S.A. recognises Israel.

The 25-year-old British mandate over Palestine ended on May 15, on which date the High Commissioner, General Sir Alan Cunningham, left the country and all British civil administration ceased. A few hours before the expiry of the mandate an independent Jewish State, under the name of Israel, had been proclaimed in Tel Aviv, whilst at midnight on May 14-15 the armed forces of Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, the Lebanon, and Iraq invaded Palestine.

The United Nations and Palestine. The special session of the U.N. General Assembly convened to consider the Palestine situation opened on April 19 and decided to refer the whole question to its Political Committee.

Mr. Austin (U.S.A.) introduced on April 20 the U.S. plan for a temporary trusteeship (see 9237 A), and in doing so made the following statement: "The U.S.A. has raised with certain other governments the question of joint responsibility for the security of a temporary trusteeship. These discussions have thus far produced no tangible result. The U.S.A. is willing to undertake its share of responsibility for the provision of the police forces required during the truce and the temporary trusteeship along with other members who may be selected by the General Assembly and who are willing to carry out such a task in accordance with the will of the Assembly and the provisions of the Charter. While the U.S.A. is prepared to carry its fair share of the United Nations' burden involved in such a temporary trusteeship, it is not prepared to act alone in this matter. Our participation will be conditioned upon the readiness of other Governments to provide similar assistance."

The trusteeship proposal, however, found little general support, the representatives of Australia, New Zealand, the Soviet Union, and Sweden (respectively Mr. John Hood, Sir Carl Berendsen, M. Gromyko, and Hr. Gunnar Hagglöf) all calling on April 22 for the implementation of the partition plan, whilst Dr. Silver, of the Jewish Agency, again declared that the Jews of Palestine had announced their "unqualified rejection" of trusteeship and were determined to proclaim a Jewish State on the termination of the mandate.

Mr. Creech Jones (Great Britain), on April 23, emphasised that with less than a month to go before the mandate terminated, it was of the highest urgency that the United Nations should do everything possible to obtain a truce in Palestine. After repeating the determination of H.M. Government to end the mandate on May 15, he declared: "It has to be decided who will assume central responsibility in Palestine for maintaining law and order, protecting life and property, taking over the assets, equipment, and stores of the Palestine Administration, collecting revenues, controlling health water and other essential services, directing the personnel of public utilities, and performing a thousand and one other duties essential to a civilised society. Outrages, internal conflicts, the failure of public confidence, and the disappearance of Government staff have already disorganised the administration and social order of the country. On the withdrawal of the mandatory administration the country is in danger of being plunged into anarchy and suicidal struggle."

The Assembly's Political Committee, on April 23, agreed to interrupt the general debate on Palestine in order to concentrate on a French proposal, presented by M. Parodi, for the protection of Jerusalem and its inhabitants. On April 26 it adopted by 44 votes to 3 a resolution, presented jointly by France and Sweden, calling on the Trusteeship Council to take immediate action for the protection of Jerusalem in consultation with Great Britain, the Jews, and the Arabs (the Soviet Union, the Ukraine, and Byelo-Russia opposing on the grounds that such measures should be instituted by the Assembly and not by the Trusteeship Council), the resolution being approved later the same day by the plenary session of the Assembly by 46 votes to nil (the Soviet group abstaining).

The Trusteeship Council accordingly met on April 27, the Soviet representative (M. Tsarapkin) taking his place for the first time since the Council was created (see 9247 B). M. Garreau (France) proposed that an international police force of 1,000 volunteers should be sent to Jerusalem for the protection of the population and the Holy Places, but Mr. Creech

Jones pointed out the great strategic importance of Jerusalem to both Jews and Arabs, believed that the proposed force of 1,000 men would be inadequate for its purpose, and expressed the opinion that the safety of Jerusalem could not be effectively secured in the absence of a truce covering the whole of Palestine.

The President of the Trusteeship Council (Mr. Francis B. Sayre, U.S.A.) on April 27 met Mr. Moshe Shertok (of the Jewish Agency) and Dr. Jamal Husseini (of the Arab Higher Committee) in an attempt to obtain their signatures to an agreement for a truce in Jerusalem, and on the following day announced that both Mr. Shertok and Dr. Husseini had agreed to recommend to their respective communities in Palestine: (a) the immediate cessation of all military operations and acts of violence within the Old City of Jerusalem; (6) the issue of cease-fire orders to this effect at the earliest possible moment; and (c) that the keeping of the truce should be observed by an impartial commission reporting to the Trusteeship Council.

At the Trusteeship Council's meeting on May 3 Mr. Sayre announced that, following the Arab-Jewish truce agreement, a cease-fire order had been issued the previous day effective for the Old City of Jerusalem only. The Council then went on to hear a statement by Mr. John Fletcher-Cooke, of the Palestine Government, who said that further efforts were in progress both by the British authorities and by the International Red Cross representative in Jerusalem (M. de Reynier) to secure Arab-Jewish agreement to a truce covering the whole of Jerusalem and not merely the Old City. Mr. Fletcher-Cooke presented at the same time a British proposal for the appointment of a neutral Municipal Commissioner for Jerusalem, to be chosen in agreement with the Jews and Arabs, so as to ensure the continuation of municipal services after the end of the mandate. Representatives of the Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency met the Trusteeship Council the same day (May 3) and agreed that the proposed neutral Municipal Commissioner should be appointed by the British High Commissioner in Palestine (General Cunningham).

At the Trusteeship Council's meeting on May 3, Mr. Creech Jones again emphasised the urgency of securing a truce covering all Palestine and not only Jerusalem; asked that the American proposal for a temporary trusteeship should be dropped; proposed instead that the General Assembly should appoint a "neutral continuing authority" in the Holy Land to maintain administrative and public services after the termination of the mandate; and expressed the opinion that attempts to secure a permanent solution of the Palestine problem should be delayed until there was a lull in the fighting. With reference to the despatch of British troop reinforcements to Palestine (see below), he declared: "I wish to make it clear that the sole purpose is to make it possible for the British authorities in Palestine to carry out the mandate until May 15 and to complete the evacuation before Aug. 1. It does not imply any change of policy or modification in the programme of withdrawal."

On May 5 the Trusteeship Council adopted by 9 votes to nil (France and the Soviet Union abstaining) a report containing "operative conclusions and recommendations" to the General Assembly, and thereupon adjourned indefinitely. This report ran as follows:

"1. Following consultations with the Trusteeship Council, the Arab Higher Committee and the Jewish Agency ordered on May 2 within the walled city of Jerusalem a cease-fire which is now in effect.

"2. The Trusteeship Council brings to the notice of the General Assembly undertakings given by the Arab Higher Committee and Jewish Agency that their communities will respect and safeguard the Holy Places.

"3. The Council has been informed that the Mandatory Power would be willing, if the Assembly agrees, to appoint before May 15 a neutral acceptable to both Arabs and Jews as a special Municipal Commissioner who shall, with the co-operation of the community committees already existing in Jerusalem, carry out the functions hitherto performed by the Municipal Commission. The Council recommends to the Assembly that it inform the mandatory Power of its full agreement with such a measure.

"4. The Council recognises that the measure recommended does not provide adequately for the protection of the city and its inhabitants. It considers also that urgent attention should be given to the necessity of providing for the custody of the assets of the Government of Palestine in Jerusalem and for effective maintenance of law and order in the municipal area pending a final settlement."

On May 6 the General Assembly, meeting in plenary session, adopted the Trusteeship Council's report and, by 35 votes to nil with 17 abstentions, accepted the main recommendation of that report, viz., to ask General Cunningham to appoint a special Municipal Commissioner for Jerusalem acceptable to both Jews and Arabs.

During the debate Sir Carl Berendsen (New Zealand) strongly criticised the inadequacy of the Trusteeship Council's report, saying that unless the Municipal Commissioner had the full backing of the

United Nations, and was not appointed solely on condition of Arab-Jewish agreement, he would be merely a "man of straw"; M. Gareaux (France) similarly opposed the recommendations as representing only a very slim measure for a very grave situation, reiterating the French demand for an international police force for Jerusalem; and M. Tsarapkin (Soviet Union) held, with Sir Carl Berendsen, that the Municipal Commissioner should be appointed by the United Nations.

Mr. Creech Jones, on May 7, informed the U.N. Secretary-General (Mr. Trygve Lie) that the High Commissioner in Palestine had reported that he had been unable to find anyone in Palestine acceptable to both Jews and Arabs for the post of Municipal Commissioner after the termination of the mandate. The President of the General Assembly (Dr. Arce) accordingly suggested to Dr. Hussein and Mr. Shertok that they should try to agree upon some person to fill the post, and on May 13 it was announced at Lake Success that both Jews and Arabs had agreed to the appointment of Mr. Harold Evans, of Philadelphia, a prominent official of the American Society of Friends (Quakers), to the post of Municipal Commissioner for Jerusalem after the termination of the mandate.

On the same day (May 13), less than 36 hours before the termination of the mandate, the U.S. delegate formally moved a resolution, evolved in discussions with the British delegation, providing for the appointment of a United Nations commissioner as mediator in Palestine after May 15.

This resolution, covering Palestine as a whole, provided: (1) that the U.N. Commissioner should be chosen by a committee of the General Assembly consisting of representatives of the "Big Five" (the U.S.A., Great Britain, Soviet Union, France, and China); (2) that he should use his good offices as mediator with local and community authorities in Palestine to (a) arrange for the operation of common services necessary to the safety and well-being of the people of Palestine, (6) assure the protection of the Holy Places and religious sites, and (c) promote agreement on the future government of Palestine; (3) that he should co-operate with the Security Council's truce commission in Palestine (see below) and invite, if deemed advisable, the assistance of specialised U.N. agencies and other governmental and non-governmental institutions of a humanitarian and non-political character; (4) that he should report to the Security Council; and (5) that the U.N. Palestine Commission set up under the partition resolution of the General Assembly should be relieved forthwith of the further exercise of its responsibilities.

The American resolution for a U.N. mediator was approved by the General Assembly's Political Committee on May 14 by 35 votes to 6, with 10 abstentions; the Russian *bloc* voted against and the Arab nations abstained, together with Colombia, Venezuela, and a few other countries. The Political Committee also voted by 15 to nil, but with 26 abstentions, to send to the plenary session a French-American proposal to put Jerusalem under U.N. trusteeship for one year. On May 15, the date on which the mandate ended, the special General Assembly terminated its session and adjourned *sine die* after (a) approving by 31 votes to 7, with 16 abstentions, the U.S. resolution for the appointment of a U.N. Commissioner to act as mediator in Palestine, and (b) rejecting the American-French proposal for a temporary trusteeship for Jerusalem (this proposal received 20 votes in favour and 15 against, with 19 abstentions, and was rejected under the two-thirds majority rule).

The Security Council, on April 23, had voted by 8 to nil (the Soviet Union, the Ukraine, and Colombia abstaining) to set up a truce commission in Palestine consisting of the U.S., French, and Belgian Consuls in Jerusalem, under the chairmanship of the U.N. Consul-General (Mr. Thomas C. Wasson). Subsequently the truce commission had several meetings with both Jews and Arabs, and on May 5 met at Jericho representatives of Transjordan, Syria, and the Lebanon.

The head of the Secretariat of the U.N. Palestine Commission, Señor Pablo de Azcarate, reported to the Commission on April 29 on the situation in Palestine after his return from a visit to that country. He stated that partition was already an established fact and lacked only formal legal recognition; that there existed in Palestine two distinct military zones, Jewish and Arab, with their frontiers organised as military fronts; and that there was a "very serious war potential" in the existing situation, giving it as his opinion that a state of major warfare would probably ensue after May 15. He said that Jewish administrative machinery in the Jewish areas was complete and in operation, and, from his observations, stated that the Jews had a well-organised army ready to defend what they considered their own, and that the Arab forces were also well organised and well disciplined.

The Palestine Situation before May 15. Prior to the termination of the mandate, fighting between Jews and Arabs occurred in four main areas—in Jaffa, which was surrendered by the Arabs to the Jews after a truce had been arranged by the British authorities following a renewed Jewish offensive on the port; in Northern Galilee, where Haganah captured the town of Safad from the "Arab Liberation Army"; in

the hilly country west of Jerusalem, where the Jews fought to keep the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv road open in face of constant Arab attempts to cut it; and for a short period in Jerusalem itself, where, however, a truce was agreed to after British intervention.

On April 28 Jewish forces renewed their attack on Jaffa, subjecting the port to heavy mortar and small-arms fire and occupying the Manshieh quarter. Though the earlier Jewish attack on the town had been carried out only by *Irgun* forces, both *Irgun* and Haganah were reported in action in the latest attack, the two organisations having signed the previous day an agreement providing for full military co-operation throughout Palestine. British troops, using tanks, artillery, and mortars, and supported by rocket-firing Spitfires, went into action on a major scale to halt the Jewish assault on Jaffa. The High Commissioner giving a warning to the Jewish Agency on May 29 that unless the attack on Jaffa (a purely Arab town, and under the partition scheme scheduled for inclusion in the proposed Arab State) ceased, the British Army would take the strongest measures. In consequence, a general cease-fire was agreed to the same day after a meeting between the British Army authorities and the Jews and Arabs. On May 12, however, the Arab emergency committee which had taken over control in Jaffa approached Haganah and agreed to hand over control of the town to the Jewish forces, and on the following day an agreement to this effect was signed and Jewish troops took over full control in Jaffa, the Arabs handing over all arms and ammunition under the surrender agreement. Jaffa had been largely devastated in the earlier fighting, and at the time of its surrender to the Jews was without normal municipal services, the greater part of its population having fled.

In Jerusalem, Haganah launched an attack on April 30 on the Arab quarter of Kafamun (outside the Old City) and occupied the Greek Orthodox monastery of St. Simeon, used by the Arabs as a military stronghold. The British authorities, as at Jaffa, threatened "powerful military intervention" if the attack continued, and as a result a cease-fire was arranged in the evening of April 30 through the intermediary of the British Military Commander in Jerusalem, the Highland Light Infantry subsequently establishing a demarcation line between the Jews and Arabs. In the Judean Hills west of Jerusalem, however, incessant fighting continued throughout the period before the termination of the mandate, the Arabs persisting with their attempts to cut the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv road and Haganah fighting to keep the road open as a "life-line" for the Jewish community in Jerusalem with the main Jewish areas in Western Palestine.

The "Arab Liberation Army" in a *communiqué* on May 10, admitted the loss of Safad, in Northern Galilee, to Jewish forces, the full occupation of the town (included in the Jewish State under the partition scheme) by Haganah being confirmed in Tel Aviv.

The cease-fire agreement for the Old City of Jerusalem, accepted by both Jews and Arabs in agreement with the Trusteeship Council (see above), took effect from May 2, and was followed on May 7 by Arab and Jewish agreement to a cease-fire for the whole municipal area of Jerusalem after British intervention. General Cunningham, on that date, met Arab League representatives—among them Azzam Pasha, the Secretary-General of the League—in Jericho and obtained their approval for a cease-fire agreement on condition that the Jews likewise gave such an undertaking, this being forthcoming the same day when Haganah issued a cease-fire order to its troops in the Jerusalem area. Until the ending of the mandate on May 15 the cease-fire in Jerusalem was observed by both sides with the exception of a few minor and isolated incidents.

At a press conference in Jerusalem on May 10, M. de Reynier, of the International Red Cross, announced that he had received verbal support from both Arabs and Jews for a plan whereby Jerusalem would be made an open city and a "hospital area," under the protection of the Red Cross, on the termination of the mandate. M. de Reynier stated that assurances had been received on the Arab side from King Abdullah of Transjordan, Azzam Pasha, the Mufti, and other Arab leaders, and on the Jewish side from the Jewish Agency, the Mayor of Tel Aviv, and Haganah, as well as from *Irgun Zvai Leumi* and the Sternists, and added that the terms stipulated by the Red Cross would be as follows: both the Arab and Jewish areas of Jerusalem to remain under the control of their respective civic authorities, the Red Cross acting only as an intermediary and without administrative duties; both zones to be completely demilitarised, with order being maintained by their respective police forces; Red Cross convoys to Jerusalem to have free passage through Arab and Jewish areas; in emergency, food for the Jewish population to be allowed to pass through Arab areas and *vice versa*; the Red Cross flag to be hoisted at all entrances to the city after the mandate ended, and to be respected by both parties.

On May 2 British military headquarters in Jerusalem announced that reinforcements from Malta and Cyprus were *en route* for Palestine to strengthen the British garrison in the country (estimated at about 20,000 men). The announcement stated that the situation in Palestine had "seriously deteriorated" owing to the "unwarranted aggression on the part of *Irgun Zvai Leumi* in Jaffa"; that Palestine had

"now assumed operational priority over some other commitments in the Middle East"; and that "as a consequence, considerable reinforcements of infantry, tanks, guns, and marine commandos had to be despatched to Palestine in the cause of general security." The Admiralty announced the same day that the 9,000-ton cruiser *Newcastle*, flagship of the Mediterranean Fleet, had been ordered to Jaffa.

The End of the British Mandate. General Cunningham, the High Commissioner, left Government House in Jerusalem in the morning of May 14, his farewell act being to broadcast a message to both Jews and Arabs appealing for moderation and the maintenance of peace after the British mandate had ended. After reviewing a guard of honour, he flew to Haifa with Sir Henry Gurney, the Chief Secretary, and other senior British officials, and after saying farewell to the Jewish Mayor of Haifa, the Arab deputy-mayor, and the head of the Jewish community council, and inspecting a guard of honour of the Palestine Police, went on board the cruiser *Euryalus*, which sailed for Britain at midnight. Lt.-Gen. Macmillan, the British G.O.C. in Palestine, also left Jerusalem on May 14 for Haifa to take up his headquarters in that city until the completion of the Army's evacuation on Aug. 1.

After General Cunningham's departure from Jerusalem the International Red Cross took over Government House, over which the Red Cross flag was hoisted in place of the Union Jack. At midnight on May 14-15, when the mandate officially terminated, all British administrative activities had ceased throughout Palestine.

Proclamation of the State of Israel. At 4 p.m. in the afternoon of April 14 the first independent Jewish State for 2,000 years was proclaimed in Tel Aviv by the Jewish National Council (the *Vaad Leumi*), the ceremony taking place at the Tel Aviv Museum in the Rothschild Boulevard. The proclamation, broadcast by Mr. Ben-Gurion, the first Premier of Israel, over the newly-opened "Voice of Israel" station in Tel Aviv, was as follows:

"We, members of the National Council representing the Jewish people in Palestine and the Zionist movement of the world, met together in solemn assembly on the day of the termination of the British mandate for Palestine, and by virtue of the natural and historic right of the Jewish people, and by resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations, hereby proclaim the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine to be called Israel.

As from the termination of the mandate at midnight to-night and until the setting up of duly elected bodies in accordance with the Constitution to be drawn up by the Constituent Assembly not later than Oct. 1, 1948, the present National Council shall act as the Provisional Government of Israel.

The State will be open to all Jewish immigrants, will promote the development of the country for all its inhabitants, will be based on the precepts of liberty, justice, and peace taught by the Hebrew prophets, will uphold full social and political equality for all its citizens without distinction of race, creed, or sex, and will guarantee full freedom of education and culture."

The declaration promised that the shrines and Holy Places of all religions would be safeguarded; pledged Israel to dedicate itself to the principles of the United Nations Charter; stated that Israel would seek admittance to the United Nations; promised the Arab inhabitants of Israel equality of citizenship and representation in all the institutions of the Jewish State; offered peace to all Arab countries; and concluded: "With trust in Almighty God, we set our hands to this declaration in the city of Tel Aviv on this Sabbath eve, the fifth day of Iyar, 5708" (corresponding to May 14, 1948).

Simultaneously the Tel Aviv radio announced the formation of the first Cabinet of Israel, under the Premiership of Mr. David Ben-Gurion (head of the Jewish Agency Executive), with the following Ministers:

Mr. David Ben-Gurion, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence.

Mr. Moshe Shertok, Foreign Minister.

Mr. Isaac Grunbaum, Home Affairs.

Mr. Eliezer Kaplan, Treasury.

Dr. Felix Rosenblueth, Justice.

Mr. David Remez, Communications.

Dr. Fritz Bernstein, Trade, Industries, and Supply.

Mr. M. Bentov, Labour and Public Works.

Mr. A. Zisling, Agriculture.

Mr. Moshe Shapiro, Immigration.

Mr. B. Shitreet, Police.

Rabbi Judah Fishman } Ministers without  
Mr. I. M. Levin } Portfolio.

The first act of the Provisional Government of Israel was to revoke the British White Paper of 1939 limiting immigration into Palestine.

Mr. David Ben-Gurion (62), the first Premier of Israel and a life-long Zionist and Social-Democrat, was born in Pionisk, Poland (then part of Tsarist Russia), went to Palestine in 1900 and worked as a farm labourer and trade union organiser, was exiled by the Turkish Government in 1915 for pro-Allied sympathies, fled to America, organised a Jewish volunteer force, and subsequently served in a Jewish battalion of the British Army under Field-Marshal Allenby. After demobilisation in 1920 he became secretary of the Federation of Jewish Labour and subsequently head of the Jewish Agency Executive, Mr. Shertok (54), the Foreign Minister, went to Palestine from Russia as a boy of 12, studied at London University, and was among the Jewish leaders interned in the Latrun detention camp by the British in 1946; like Mr. Ben-Gurion, he is a Social-Democrat.

The proclamation of the State of Israel was signed by all members of the Cabinet after a ceremony which opened with the singing of the *Hatikvah*—the Zionist National Anthem—by the 400 delegates assembled. The new national flag—the blue-and-white Zionist flag bearing the Shield of David—was flown from all buildings in Tel Aviv, Haifa, and other Jewish centres, while thousands of people thronged the streets and heard Mr. Ben-Gurion's broadcast. At Lake Success, Dr. Silver, the chairman of the Jewish Agency's American section, said that "the Jewish people have kept their appointment with history" and that "the dream of 20 centuries of homeless wandering is to-day a reality."

Earlier, on May 5, it had been announced that the former German settlement of Saron, in the north-eastern suburbs of Tel Aviv, had been purchased by the Jewish National Fund and the Tel Aviv Municipal Council from the Government of Palestine as a site for the capital of the Jewish State, the purchase price being over £2,000,000 and constituting the largest transaction carried out by Jewish agencies in Palestine. Saron, a mansion residential suburb, was founded in the 19th century as a colony of the German Templar sect, and at the outbreak of the second world war was the property of some 250 German nationals who fled or were interned. It consists of about 1,250 acres of land containing 110 buildings which, it was stated, would be converted into offices for the various Ministries and Government agencies, whilst one building would be the official residence of the Prime Minister.

It was officially announced in Cyprus on May 12 that all Jewish illegal immigrants detained in the island would be released as soon as the Jewish Agency was prepared to ship them to Palestine, and that the immigrant ships *Pan-York* and *Pan-Crescent*, seized by the Royal Navy earlier in the year, would likewise be released. With the end of the mandate the Navy's blockade of illegal immigrant vessels came to an end, it being reported from Haifa on May 13 that a 5,000-ton Rumanian vessel from Constanza, and a 1,000-ton steamer from Cyprus flying the Panamanian flag, had landed several hundred immigrants without opposition.

Within a few hours of the proclamation in Tel Aviv, President Truman announced in Washington on May 14 that the United States recognised the Jewish Provisional Government as the *de facto* Government of Israel.

Arab States' Invasion of Palestine. The Egyptian Government announced on May 12 that the country was being placed under a state of siege so as to enable Egypt to "decide her attitude and assemble her forces on the Palestine frontier to be able to undertake military action to repulse Zionist attacks on Arab Palestine." In the evening of May 14 martial law was declared throughout Egypt, Iraq, Transjordan, Syria, and the Lebanon, and in Cairo proclamations were issued appointing Nokrashy Pasha (the Egyptian Premier) as Military Governor of Egypt and warning captains of merchant ships that their vessels were liable to be searched in Egyptian ports.

At midnight on April 14-15 Palestine was simultaneously invaded by the armies of the Arab States from three sides—on the south by Egyptian infantry and armoured formations which crossed the frontier and advanced into the *Negev* (the southern desert) in the general directions of Gaza and Beersheba; in the east by the Transjordan Arab Legion; and in the north by Syro-Lebanese forces. Nokrashy Pasha, in a midnight broadcast from Cairo, declared: "Orders have been given to the Egyptian armed forces to enter Palestine with the object of restoring security and order in that country and putting an end to massacres perpetrated by terrorist Zionist gangs against the Arabs and humanity."

On May 15 the Egyptian Government, addressed Notes to Great Britain, the U.S.A., France, Belgium, Poland, and China saying that it had decided to intervene in Palestine "to put an end to massacres and establish respect for the laws of universal morality and the principles recognised by the United Nations," and adding: "This intervention is not

directed against the Jews of Palestine but against Zionist terrorist bands, and has no other object than the re-establishment of order, peace, and security in that country until a just and equitable solution is found."

In Israel, the Provisional Government established a military censorship, imposed a black-out in Tel Aviv, and ordered compulsory military service in Haganah for all men between 18 and 35.

A Cairo *communiqué* of May 15 stated that several Jewish settlements in the *Negev* had been shelled by Egyptian artillery, and one destroyed, after ignoring demands to surrender, and claimed that other Egyptian forces had advanced 30 miles across the frontier towards Gaza without meeting opposition. On the eastern front, Trans Jordanian troops, having crossed the Allenby Bridge across the Jordan, were reported to be advancing towards Jericho, while other Trans Jordanian forces, attacking due south of the Sea of Galilee, were reported to be attacking the frontier town of Samakh. The previous day (May 14) 4 Jewish settlements south of Hebron, of which Kfar Etzion was the chief, surrendered to detachments of the Arab Legion after heavy fighting in which, according to Jerusalem reports, nearly 200 Jews were said to have been killed.

Four air raids were made on Tel Aviv during the day (May 15) by Egyptian Spitfires, one of which was shot down by Jewish small-arms fire and its pilot captured; each raid was carried out by only one or two machines, reports from Tel Aviv stating that damage and casualties were light.

According to authoritative Cairo reports, it was understood that the countries of the Arab League, in the various conferences before the termination of the mandate, had agreed that King Abdullah of Transjordan should be supreme commander of Arab forces on all three fronts in Palestine; that he would be advised by a War Council on which the staffs of all the Arab armies would be represented, and which would co-ordinate operations on these fronts; and that it had been agreed that the Syro-Lebanese forces should operate under unified command on the northern front, that the eastern front would be the responsibility of Iraqi and Trans Jordanian troops, and that Egyptian, Saudi Arabian, and Yemenite troops would operate on the southern front.

The U.N. Security Council convened at Lake Success on May 15 to consider (a) the Egyptian Note (see above), and (b) a request from the Jewish Agency to put on its agenda "acts of aggression by King Abdullah of Transjordan against Palestine, the Jewish communication accusing the Arab Legion of committing aggressive acts "despite British assurances" that the Legion was being withdrawn from Palestine.—(Times - Daily Telegraph - Manchester Guardian - Sunday Times - Observer - New York Times - New York Herald Tribune - Le Monde, Paris - U.N. Information Centre, London) (Prev. rep. Palestine, 9237 A.)

A. UNITED KINGDOM. — Stern Gang Attempt on Capt. Farran. - Mr. Rex Farran killed by Parcel Bomb. - Bomb sent to General Barker.

Mr. Rex Farran (26), brother of Capt. Roy Farran, was killed on May 3 when he opened a parcel addressed to Capt. Farran at their home at Codsall, near Wolverhampton. The parcel contained a book from which the pages had been cut to make room for a bomb, the latter exploding when the parcel was opened and inflicting fatal injuries on Mr. Rex Farran. Capt. Roy Farran was acquitted by a military court in Palestine in October last on a charge of murdering a Jewish youth, Alexander Rubowitz, who was a member of the Stern Gang, and since that time had received a number of threats from the Stern Gang threatening to take his life. The parcel containing the bomb bore a London postmark, it being disclosed that Capt. Farran (who was away from home at the time) had recently received threatening postcards bearing similar postmarks. The outrage came within 3 days of the anniversary of the disappearance of Rubowitz, whose body was never found. Mr. Ede, in the House of Commons on May 4, condemned the "wicked outrage" perpetrated by the terrorists, and stated that police investigations were in progress.

On May 11 a package containing a bomb and bearing a London postmark was delivered at the home of General Sir Evelyn Barker, G.O.C. Eastern Command and recently G.O.C. Palestine, who like Capt. Farran was on the Stern Gang's "death list" for confirming the death sentence on three terrorists before he left Palestine. The bomb was subsequently examined by Home Office experts and was found to contain sodium cyanide, a dangerous poison.—(Times - Manchester Guardian) (Prev. rep. Capt. Farran, 8974 A.)

B. EIRE. — Child Health Council.

It was announced in Dublin on May 14 that the Minister of Health had set up a Consultative Child Health Council to advise him on measures for the improvement of the health of children, and in particular as to the reduction of infant mortality. The Council consists of representatives of the medical and nursing professions, and officials of the Ministries of Health and Social Welfare.—(Irish Times)

C. RUMANIA. — General Elections. - New Cabinet.

General elections were held in Rumania on March 28 for a new National Assembly to adopt and ratify the constitution of the Rumanian People's Republic, the draft of which had been issued on March 6. A joint list of candidates was presented by the Government *bloc* (the Popular Democratic Front) in which the following 4 parties were grouped: the Rumanian Workers' Party, formed by the fusion of the Communist and Socialist parties (see 8865 C); the "Ploughmen's Front" (*Frontul Plugarilor*) headed by the Premier, M. Groza, who is also leader of the Popular Democratic Front; the National People's party; and the Hungarian People's Union, representing the Magyar minority. Lists were also presented by 2 Opposition parties, the Liberals (formerly headed by M. Tatarescu and now by M. Bejan) and the Democratic Peasants (led by Dr. Lupu); the programmes of these parties, however, were virtually identical with that of the Government *bloc*, both having accepted the new draft constitution.

The Ministry of the Interior announced on March 30 that 7,663,375 voters went to the polls out of a registered electorate of 8,417,467 (91 per cent); that the Popular Democratic Front had received 6,958,533 votes (90.8 per cent); and that in the new National Assembly (414 deputies) the Popular Democratic Front would hold 405 seats and the Opposition 9 seats (7 Liberals, 1 Democratic Peasant, 1 Independent).

The new Assembly unanimously adopted the new Republican Constitution (of which details will be given in a subsequent issue—*Ed. K.C.A.*) on April 13 after a 2-day debate, and also elected a new State Presidium of which Prof. Constantin Parhon remained the head. M. Groza, after the adoption of the Constitution, formally handed his Cabinet's resignation to the Assembly, which on April 15 elected a new Government of 21 members from the parties of the Popular Democratic Front—15 from the Rumanian Workers' party (12 Communists and 3 Socialists), 5 from the *Frontul Plugarilor*, and 1 from the National People's party. M. Groza was re-elected Premier, assisted by 3 Vice-Premiers—M. Gheorgiu-Dej (Rumanian Workers' party, a prominent Communist leader and ex-Minister of National Economy) as first Vice-Premier with general responsibility for economic and financial policy; Prof. Traian Savulescu (*Frontul Plugarilor*, ex-Minister of Agriculture) as second Vice-Premier with general responsibility for agriculture and forestry; and M. Stefan Voitec (Rumanian Workers' party, a Socialist and ex-Minister of Education) as third Vice-Premier with responsibility in social and cultural matters. Key portfolios such as those of Foreign Affairs (Mme. Anna Pauker), the Interior (M. Gheorgescu), and Defence (M. Bodnarus) remained, as hitherto, in Communist hands. Among new Ministers entering the Cabinet were M. Ion Vinte, Minister in Budapest (Forests), M. Vasile Vaida (Agriculture), and M. Stoica, vice-president of the Rumanian General Confederation of Labour (Industry). (Le Monde, Paris - Neue Zürcher Zeitung - Times - New York Times) (Prev. rep. Elections, 8731 A; Cabinet, 9054 C; 8975 B; 8731 A 5 State Presidium, 9054 C; 9033 A; Republic, 9033 A.)

D. INDIA. — Socialist Party secedes from Congress.

The Socialist Party of India, at a convention at Nasik on March 20, ratified a decision taken by its national executive on March 18 to dissociate itself completely from Congress (of which it was technically only a group), to work in future as a fully-fledged independent party, and to direct all party members to resign their membership of Congress, as well as all posts in that party, not later than April 15.

The resolution, which was passed without a debate, stated that "with the achievement of freedom the role of Congress as the joint front of the Indian people has come to an end"; that Congress leaders themselves desired to convert their organisation into a compact party; and that "once the decision is taken to become a party, the national or multi-class character of Congress disappears and it would then inevitably become a party of one class or the other." Saying that "Congress efforts at becoming a multi-class party in fact resulted in its refusing to become a working-class party" the resolution declared that only a Socialist State could assure a solid foundation for political stability. Moving the resolution, Mr. Narendra Deo made it clear, however, that the "opportunistic politics of the Communists could never suit the temperament of Socialists," and that Congress and the Socialists were the only two parties in India which would fight "the two evil forces at work the Communists and the Communalists."

Mr. Jai Prakash Narain, the Socialist Party's general secretary, stated during the debate that whilst Socialists elected on the Congress ticket should resign from local boards, municipalities, and the Central and Provincial Legislatures, they should stay in office on committees and boards appointed by the Central and Provincial Governments.—(The Hindu, Madras - The Statesman, Calcutta) (Prev. rep. 8782 B.)