

TANKS IN THE VAN

Armored Cars Observed on Eve of Mandate End at Midnight Tonight

EGYPT SETS INVASION HOUR

Syria Maps War Cabinet— Fears for 250,000 Jews in Arab Countries Mount

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BEIRUT, Lebanon, May 13 — Considerable military activity is evident as one travels through the Arab countries but military censorship prevents the publication of details or even the identification of troops by their nationality.

Tanks, armored cars, artillery and modern radio equipment are among the material being mustered for the bitter fight that is expected to break when the British give up their responsibility for peace in the Holy Land.

Reliable information sources predict a stroke by the Arab armies after the Palestine High Commissioner, Lieut. Gen. Sir Alan G. Cunningham, sails from Haifa, marking the formal relinquishment of the British mandate. The nature of that stroke, naturally, is not known but the general belief, held for some time is that it will come mainly from the Trans-Jordan frontier. While all of Palestine's Arab neighbors have regular forces, it is generally conceded that King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan is the leader who will play the decisive role.

[From Cairo Reuters reported a statement attributed to the Egyptian Government saying that "Egyptian army forces will begin moving across the Palestine frontier at one minute after midnight Friday." The statement was credited to the Egyptian Education Minister.]

No Truce Sentiment

There is no discernible sentiment in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon or Trans-Jordan in favor of accepting any truce proposals but the Arab press lays the blame for the present situation on "Zionist aggression."

The Beirut newspaper Le Jour said today that "the Zionists have rejected all advances and all offers of collaboration. They will bear the responsibility."

It admitted that "the Arabs are gathering the fruits of negligence" but added that they had learned their lesson and would stand together in the present crisis.

Tension is evident in the atmosphere and Jews in all the Middle East countries are worried at what any sudden general warfare in Palestine may mean for them. This correspondent saw a man seized and mauled by a crowd in Damascus, Syria, last night and dragged off to the police station. The explanation offered was that he was a "Zionist spy."

The Arabs of these various countries maintain that there is a huge fifth column of Zionist agents among them. There is unquestionably a large number of non-Zionist Jews living in all these countries.

A Zionist source estimated that there are 250,000 to 300,000 Jews in Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt and Yemen. There is serious danger for all those, once feelings

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ARABS MUSTERING NEAR PALESTINE

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are really inflamed by the Palestine fighting.

Fear For Jewish Subjects

As the fighting develops and losses are suffered, it is sure to have an effect on popular feeling. Then it will be up to the authorities of these Arab countries to prevent mob action against their Jewish subjects.

The fate of those 250,000 Jews living in the Middle East outside Palestine is one of the vital problems that has been largely overlooked as attention has centered on Palestine itself.

Up to the present the Arabs have taken their reverses in Palestine philosophically. They insist that the situation will change when their regular forces go into action.

The general Arab view is that when the departure of the British authorities leave them a free hand they can take care of themselves.

Censorship is now complicating the work of reporting developments in all parts of the Middle East. The Syrian Parliament yesterday rejected a bill providing for general censorship, but military censorship is already in effect in all the countries bordering Palestine.

Iraq, Syria and Lebanon are also believed to be preparing to establish a "state of siege," as has already been done in Egypt, to add to their security precautions.
