‘^U>״ **zk6 \* . \*׳ October, 1950**

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**■ From! .׳;. II•: &» coway׳, Jiakirya :- .־^• ’ י ;• י.v**

**Msiffifc# Wagev Arabs .’■־־׳.• M״ ־־.׳־**

**י’\* ׳י'״'• In '▼lew.of the Egyptian eonplalnts of large-scale ; expulsions of Bedouin from Israel, and also of the foroed ;**

**-; transfer Into the Oasa strip of a number of Arabs from .**

**. Ulgd&l o&d,you may be, interested in the following further information• k•---' -:. - • \*;:־fc.•**

**During .the hostilities, and particularly after Israel forces had broken through, most of the Bedouin in the northern Fagev disappeared into sinla or further southward• After ־ Beereheba was captured, there were no more than 5,000 in the -area, and they accepted the control of the Israel authorities• In Hovenfcer, 19b6, a further 9,500 were allowed to return and their status regularised by the, issue of identity cards and .**

**. ration cards• in April, 19U9, another 5,000 were permitted baclc ln this, way, ao that, shortly after the Israel—Egyptian ,Armistice Agreement, the total of "Israel Bedouin\* living - under the laws of .the State had reached 17,500־• as ץ'•-..׳**

I **2• A nuniber (unspecified) of Bedouin, normally in the ~ northern Hegev trekked farther south during the hoatilltlea, and have remained since in the Central Fegev, i,e. , in the r, triangle Auja-el-Oafir — Eurnub — glath, also to eoma ex- 1 tent wandering and cultivating crops on the Sinai aide of the. bo&der, They did not seek Israel protection or register them- selves with the Israel authorities, but no attempt has been ;**

**־ made by ua to molest them or drive them away• when the first : reports were received of thousands of Bedouin from the Fegev concentrating in Sinai, it'was thought that some of these Southern Bedouin might have migrated, but ..of this there does ;.not׳ seem to be confirmation• our policy, at any rate, la .: • j simply to leave the status quo for the time being, provided j they do not become a nuisance and start harassing our settle- / ments or communications• '• ■ t** ,'^ **־**

**3׳• 'The' broad facts about the Asasroi tribe are known to you bynow• The total strength of the ’tribe is estimated at 15,000, but of these some two-thirds would normally remain permanently in Sinai, The remainder who habitually migrate into the Western part of the Fegev sided with the- Fgyptlana against us, and׳ were driven away or fled• .They were In Sinai When the Armistice was signed, but since then, nuRtber\* of them have penetrated into .the area between pafia and Auja-el-daflr• This la difficult** tar׳ **stop, as they are nomadic tent-dwellers and ,as it is a sandy waste devoid of any Jewish settlement• ' Our policy •has been to drive them away again from time to time, and at an early stage, a request on their behalf for laral identity cards was rejected.by Michael Uanegbi, the Military Governor of Beereheba, abd by־ Ylgal Allan, then the Commander in that area• The current excitement seems to have been set ?: off by a dash which took place with them at the beginning of September• After a vehicle had been blown up on a mine outside Hlriia, the tracks wera~ followed to a Bedouin encampment, and' a military detachment, consisting of a command oar and some 15 jeeps, 1ms -sent out to drive 1'them away. The party was accompanied by a Piper.cub for reconnaissance• Most, of. them ״**

fled when the duet of this approaching expedition wa•^ ^

•potted, abandoning some 30 tents, which were destroyed. ץ

aorae of the Bedouin, who were armed, engaged the Israel j party, which returned fire with rifles and automatics, j

killing som 7 or 8 of the Arabs. The number of Bedouin J

involved was estimated at 300\* AS you know, the UK chair- man of the terael~3gyptlan MAC has recently given a ruling . In our favour on the basic point fit Issue, by finding that the Bedouin of this tribe were infiltrators when they entered Israel. It 18 a matter for consideration, however, whether.

: we should not be prepared to negotiate with the Egyptians eon- corning the authorized return of some of them, on condition that the rest of them were definitely kept inside Egyptian territory, on this point there is ns yet no decision, and our official attitude remains that they have no right to enter Israel without permission and will be driven back if they do.

4• A number of Arabs in Klgdal Gad are not in fact reel- dents of that town but refugees from other areas. For obvious reasons, we have been keen to get some of them away from that sensitive border spot and resettle them elsewhere, and in fact,

. 200 have been moved to the paxnleh area and resettled, there. A number of others conveyed to the Israel local authorities a »

v desire to cross the line into oasa, and we were naturally willing to facilitate this and make practical arrangements.

There were various reasons for this desire־\*— the maintenance of military government over them, the restrictions Imposed . upon their freedom of movement, a wish to rejoin their families and relatives In the Gaza strip, uncertainty about their .future (inereased by the transfer of. the 200 to Ramleh), fear that fresh hostilities would break out, and the drop in •the value j

of the Israel'.pound (quoted at hO piastres in Gaza), etc. They were permitted to register at the municipal'office in Hlgdal for transfer to ossa, and also to sell their possessions and take with them cash up to £120• per head. Their ILs were ex- \* . j

changed for £Fa on a pound-for-pound basis, although scross • /

the line the SP is worth considerably more than the XL. Be- tween June 14th and September 19th, a total of 1,159 persons were voluntarily transferred under these arrangements, taking with thorn £P 70,124, according to the official records.

ז At the 32nd meeting of the Uixed Armistice commission ׳

on August 15th, the Egyptian representative complained that this transfer was being carried out without prior notification to them. It was thereupon agreed that subsequent •'transfers should be notified in advance, and the number ־actually trana—

. ferred since then was 490. The Egyptians met parties at the /

^border with trucks.

The allegation in Gen. PIley״־® report to the secretary 7 .General that these Arabs had been forced to leave, after sign— I lng away their property, was based on what he-had been told by 01? people in the Oasa strip, and these statements were included in his report without any prior reference to Israel repreeenta- J tivee. As far as I am aware, no official complaint has been I made to the UAO concerning the. alleged expulsion of Arabs from I lilgdal Gad. : ": 5' י ־ J .־ג,. \*; j

׳־' '.yours,'׳:'

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