

# 500 Palestinian P.W.s Home

By J. AVRUNIN,  
Our Special Correspondent

At first glance they might have been any soldiers on the move, as they stood on the platform at Lydda Station on Friday morning, with their kit bags, coats and blankets, travel-tired and unshaven, pale beneath their sunburn. But then one saw that their dazed look was as much due to pent-up joy and excitement as to fatigue. "We didn't sleep last night, but sang quite crazily without stopping," they said. For the men, 435 Jews and 65 Arabs, had at last come home, after four years in German prison camps.

When asked how it felt to be home again, some of them laughed.

Do you really expect us to find the right words for the answer? This is the day that has kept us going for years, and the day which, in the last few months in Germany, we feared we would not live to see.

They patiently answered the tentative questions of the few civilians at the station. Yes, they had kept in touch with the world all the time, they had listened in to the B.B.C. every day over their secret wireless sets. That was a story for some other time, they promised.

They said their first few months in captivity had been very bad, until they got their Red Cross registration numbers from Geneva, and the last months, when they started their westward trek from Silesia in the bitter cold of January, were a gruesome nightmare of endless marching, disease and hunger, the death of comrades, and nights of inhuman weariness. In between there had been long monotony, work in mines and forests and in repair gangs, reading and

study and dark intervals for all British p.o.w.s when German confidence was high and their regard for international conventions was one of contempt and insolence.

## Welcome en Route

Their arrival on Friday had not been announced, but still they had a taste of Palestinian welcome along the way. At one station, members of kibbutz just managed to swing several cans of cold milk on to the train. At Gaza some A.P.s met them with rations and sweets.

At Rehovoth where the train stopped for only a few minutes, the town and the nearby settlements had all turned out. All the schoolchildren were there, with flowers and flags and banners. (It was wonderful to see such healthy children; they had quite forgotten that they could look like that, the men said.)

There Mr. M. Shertok, head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department, boarded the train and travelled to Lydda with the men, many of whom he knew personally. They were also greeted by Mr. J. Baratz and Mr. R. Burstein, of the Jewish Soldiers' Welfare Committee, and by members of the Histadrut Executive.

The Area Commander and Senior Officers met the men at Lydda with warm friendliness. The Jewish and Arab Liaison Officers; Mr. H. Beilin of the Jewish Agency; Mr. Alfred Roch and Dr. Fuadellas, of the Arab Soldiers' Welfare Committee, were also present. Mrs. R.H.P. Church, Red Cross District Representative, Mrs. B. Joseph, Honorary Controller of the P.O.W. Department, Mrs. A. Moghannam, in charge of Arab P.O.W.s and Red Cross workers greeted the men

with cigarettes and chocolates. A girl of 16 who had somehow heard of his coming, embraced her father shyly, perplexed: "But you were so much taller when you left, father."

## FOUR NEW DIRECTORS FOR J.N.F.

### INNER ZIONIST COUNCIL SESSION

A Zionist Organization budget of LP.76,500 (over and above the Jewish Agency's ordinary and extraordinary budgets totalling LP.4,000,000) was adopted by the Inner Zionist General Council at a session held in Jerusalem on Tuesday and devoted mainly to organizational matters.

The Inner Council also endorsed a recommendation by the Board of Directors of the Jewish National Fund, submitted by Dr. A. Granovsky, to nominate as Directors Mr. Abraham Hartzfeld, agricultural labour leader, and Mr. Abraham Kestenbaum (of "Hapoel Hamizrachi") in succession to the late Berl Katznelson and Prof. Hermann Struck. The Council similarly approved a proposal to elect two further directors, Mr. Joseph Janower, a former leader of the South African Zionist Movement who is now settled in Palestine, and Mr. Jacob Hazan, of "Hashomer Hatzair."

At the conclusion of the session, Mr. M. Shertok submitted the text of the memorandum presented by the Jewish Agency Executive to the British Government at the end of May urging, with the end of the war in Europe, an immediate decision on the Palestine problem, the revocation of the White Paper, an announcement of the creation of a Jewish State in Palestine, and imperative concrete action to implement the decision.

Mr. Shertok also submitted two memoranda sent by the Jewish Agency Executive in Jerusalem to the Palestine Government in recent weeks: the first urging broad immigration into Palestine in coming months, the other concerning the future of the German Templar Colonists in Palestine.

## CERTIFICATES DEMANDED FOR SURVIVORS

### DELEGATES MAY VISIT CONCENTRATION CAMPS

In addition to the memorandum submitted by the Jewish Agency to the British Government last month demanding the immediate declaration of Palestine as a Jewish State, an additional request was made for the immediate grant of a large number of certificates for Jewish survivors in Europe. This was disclosed by Mr. M. Shertok, head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department, in reply to questions at a press conference in Jerusalem yesterday.

There had been a query from Poland, Mr. Shertok said, about the possibility of sending certificates there, but no information was yet available of intending settlers being able to leave Poland.

Negotiations were in progress, Mr. Shertok said, between the Jewish Agency and the British Government for permission to send delegates to the former concentration camps in Germany, a request which had been made before V-E Day. It was hoped, Mr. Shertok said, that a Jewish Agency representative would be able to visit the American zone in occupied Germany.

It was hard to believe that precisely Palestine should be the only country under British rule where land sales legislation discriminated against the Jews, Mr. Shertok said, when asked about the Government Committee appointed to investigate land transactions in this country. The Jewish Agency would never cooperate with any body set up on the basis of the White Paper policy, Mr. Shertok declared.

The forthcoming Zionist Conference, to take place in London at the end of July, he said, would mainly "demonstrate the will and demands of the whole Zionist movement to Britain, and to the world at large." The Conference will renew Zionist contacts cut off by the war, and will discuss the political situation with the leaders of the movement, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon countries. The delegates from Palestine will be chiefly members of the Inner Zionist Council.

## Golomb Memorial

Plans are now being drawn up by a special committee appointed by the Executive Committee of the General Federation of Jewish Labour to perpetuate the name of Mr. Eliahu Golomb, the labour leader who died a week ago.

The committee includes Mr. M. Shertok, Mr. J. Sprinzak, Mrs. Ada Golomb, and Mr. A. Hartzfeld among others.

Messages of condolence have been received by Mr. M. Shertok from H.E. the High Commissioner and the Chief Secretary, and other leading figures in this country, while numerous cables have been received from abroad, including one from the newly reconstituted Zionist Federation of France.

## Zionists to Meet in London in July

The first World Zionist Conference to be held since August 1939, will take place in London at the end of July. This was announced by Mr. M. Shertok, Head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department, to the Inner Zionist Council at its meeting in Jerusalem yesterday.

Organizational affairs in the world Zionist movement took up the whole of yesterday's session which was held under the chairmanship of Mr. J. Suprasky.

## MR. SHERTOK SEES SIR EDWARD GRIGG

CAIRO, Saturday (Palestine). — Mr. M. Shertok, Head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department, who is on his way to London, was received by the Minister of State, Sir Edward Grigg at his residence on Thursday.

Mr. M. Shertok, Head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department, has arrived in London.

## Zionist Leaders Assemble in London

### ASK 100,000 CERTIFICATES FOR PALESTINE

By JOHN KIMCHE,  
Reuters Diplomatic Correspondent

LONDON, Wednesday. — An atmosphere of crisis affecting the whole of the Middle East overhangs the final preparations for the World Zionist Conference which begins in London on July 11, 1945.

About 60 prominent Zionists from all parts of the Empire, the United States, Palestine and probably also Europe are expected during the next few days. The political leader of movement, Dr. Chaim Weizman, and Mr. M. Shertok, of the Jewish Agency Executive, are already in London. Dr. Stephen Wise and Rabbi Silver are expected this week as part

## Dr. Weizman Reports

Dr. Weizman reported to the Political Commission on Thursday and was followed by Mr. D. Ben-Gurion and Mr. M. Shertok, who answered numerous questions. Dr. Silver is chairman of the Political Commission, of which Mr. Z. Rubashov (Palestine), is vice-chairman.

Dr. Bernard Joseph returned to Palestine yesterday from England, where he was in charge of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency Executive until the return of Mr. M. Shertok.