CAIRO EASES RULE OF GAZA REFUGEES
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pg. 22

CAIRO EASES RULE OF GAZA REFUGEES

250,000 Persons in Palestine Strip Given More Rights Under Egyptian Army

CAIRO, Jan. 2 (Reuters)—President Mohammed Naguib issued today a new basic law for Gaza, in southern Palestine, giving permanent residents and Arab refugees increased self-government under Egyptian military rule.

The Gaza area was occupied in 1948 by Egyptian troops during the war against Israel. Its population, entirely Arab, now is estimated at 250,000, of whom 200,000 were refugees from the Palestine war.

The new Egyptian Governor of Gaza, Brig. Gen. Abdullah Rifaat, who made the law public here tonight, said "Egypt has no ambitions in this area."

"Egyptian forces were invited by the inhabitants to enter the area, upon the termination of the British mandate, to save them and maintain its Arab character until the over-all settlement of the Palestine question," he said.

The aim of the new basic law is to raise living standards of the people in the Gaza area and safeguard their security, the Governor declared.

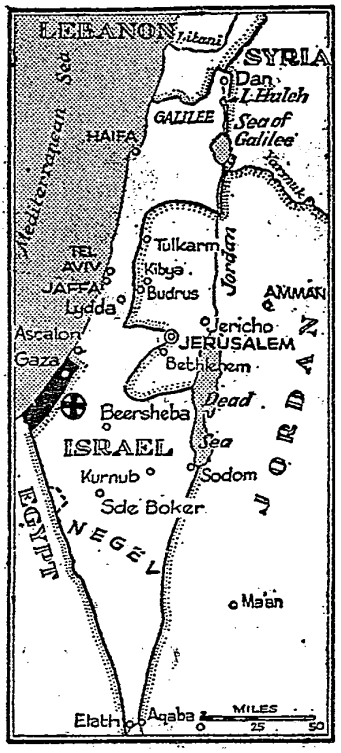
The new law guarantees freedom of religion, residence, opinion and association. It defines the position of the Governor, who is appointed by President Naguib and comes under the authority of the Egyptian War Minister. The Governor is assisted by an executive council of six appointed by the Minister.

A legislative council is also set up presided over by the Governor and including members of the executive council, eight members elected by local municipalities, and six members representing the professions. The legislative council approves laws, which must be ratified by the Governor.

Judges are said to be independent under the new law. A high court is set up, whose president is appointed by President Naguib and its members by decree of the War Minister.

Armed forces in the area continue to come under the jurisdiction of the commander of the Egyptian armed forces.

The Governor said tonight the Gaza area had a basic law of its own under the British mandate but "it was found this law did not suit the new situation."



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NEW LAW FOR ARABS: Greater self-rule was given by Egypt to inhabitants of the Gaza strip (cross).

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