Elath Undaunted by Bus Killings; Stricken Negev Town Carries On
By HARRY GILROYSpecial to THE NEW YORK TIMES.
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'Something Bad Happens Once a Year,' Young Mother Says—New Threat on the Desert Highway Is Reported

By HARRY GILROY

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

ELATH, Israel, March 18—The courage that is building this port, in sight of Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, is not wavering despite the massacre of eleven Israelis on the road leading north from here.

"Something bad happens once a year," said a young woman who stood with her husband and child. "We don't think this attack is the beginning of any campaign or anything like that."

Aqye Pines, chief executive of this municipality on the Gulf of Aqaba, said: "This dreadful deed is not distracting us from our job of developing a port and local industries here."

There was a new threat against the 150-mile-long road reported today by two highway workers. They raced their trucks into the settlement of Ein Radian to tell of fifteen shots fired at them thirty miles north of Elath.

Port Projects Discussed

The news of this incident came from Bruce McDaniel, chief of the United States operations mission, who led a convoy of four jeeps and trailers here. He plans to discuss port projects with Mr. Pines, the local representative of Israel's Ministry of Development.

The McDaniel convoy, which included the Swedish chargé d'Affaires in Israel, Jens Nalling, came through Scorpion Pass, where yesterday's deadly ambush occurred.

"There has not been any trouble on the road for the last year, until a month ago," he said. "Then the people on the Jordan side began to spy on the road."

As the convoy hugged along the dirt road southward, on the edge of the Jordan frontier, it was given escort by Israeli troops. Then it was halted and warned to keep close up because of a new report of shooting ahead on the road.

Mr. McDaniel stopped again at Ein Radian.

At Elath Mr. Pines, a tanned, sharp-eyed, moustached man, shrugged his shoulder over the new report of the shooting.

"I have been in Palestine thirty-five years," he said, "and we have come through thirty-five years of trouble."

The chief of United States aid to Israel stopped beside the blood-splashed site of recent attacks and expressed to a soldier guard his sympathy for the victims.

Anniversary Festival

Mr. Pines told of the speeches, soccer football games, symphony concerts and dancing that had marked Elath's fifth anniversary festival, earlier this week. The bus that ran into the ambush was carrying about fifteen persons who had been here for the festival.

"But life is going on here even though we are saddened," said Mr. Pines. "The fishermen were out today. Work was done on a wood-fashioning shop and a housing development."

The kind of personal feeling that lies behind the steady courage of Elath and other Negev settlers came out when Mr. Pines was asked how he came to his present place.

"My son died in the fighting for the Negev," he said. "Apart from that, I was posted here by the Ministry and it is my duty."

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