EGYPT GIVES BACK 10 ISRAELI SAILORS
Special to The New York Times.
*New York Times (1857-Current file);* Jan 2, 1955; ProQuest Historical Newspapers The New York Times (1851 - 2002)
pg. 2

# EGYPT GIVES BACK 10 ISRAELI SAILORS

## Seamen Released at Border —Beaten Regularly at Start of Captivity, They Charge

Special to The New York Times.

TEL AVIV, Israel, Jan. 1—Egypt released today ten Israeli sailors detained on Sept. 28 when their 500-ton freighter, the Bat Galim, was seized in the Gulf of Suez.

The seamen were taken by the Egyptians to an outpost in the Gaza strip of Palestine and told to walk two miles to an Israeli position on the other side of the armistice lines.

The sailors said here tonight they had been well treated by civilian jailers but had been beaten regularly in a military prison in Cairo during the first two days of their detention.

International formalities accompanying releases of prisoners were omitted in this case because the Israelis had declined to accept the prisoners formally through the machinery of the Mixed Armistice Commission. They had insisted the crew should be released together with their vessel. United Nations observers who had been invited by the Egyptians to witness the transfer were also absent.

### Issue Before Security Council

The Bat Galim case involves the principle of passage of Israeli shipping through the Suez Canal. Egyptians said the ship, which was intercepted en route from Asmara, Eritrea, to Haifa, Israel, and her cargo of meat and timber would be released to any foreign shipping company authorized by Israel to take possession. Israelis said release of ship and crew separately violated United Nations Security Council resolutions upholding Israel's right of passage through the canal.

The Security Council is scheduled to discuss the dispute Tuesday.

Egypt had originally charged the crew with sinking an Egyptian fishing boat by gunfire and causing drowning of two fishermen. The charge later was changed to illegal entry into Egyptian territorial waters. This charge also was dropped after the Mixed Armistice Commission ruled against Egypt in the case.

Zvi Shidlo, captain of the crew, said the mistreatment during the first two days of detention "was systematic and well organized."

"Our men were kept in separate cells and our hands were chained behind our backs. At regular intervals—in my case it was every fifteen minutes but in other cases it was every hour—soldiers entered our cells and struck us."

"We were not questioned or anything but just beaten. The men were experts at it and seemed to have been specially trained for that purpose. They had no other apparent functions in the prison.

### Medical Attention Given

The sailors said they had received medical attention after they were transferred to the "Muhata" prison, where former officials and other important prisoners were kept. They had no complaints about their treatment there, the seamen said.

Several hundred persons, including relatives, Government representatives and farmers from Negev settlements welcomed the seamen with flowers when they reached the Israeli outpost shortly before noon. They had been picked up on the road by an ammunition carrier.

Captain Shidlo said the Egyptians had told him the seamen would be handed over to the Israelis in the presence of United Nations observers at 10:30 A. M. The captain signed a statement that he had no complaints about the treatment by civilian jailers and that the crew had been turned over in the presence of United Nations observers.

When they reached the border and no one was there to receive them, the Egyptian officers acted surprised and told the Israelis to walk toward the Israeli outpost, Captain Shidlo said. He asserted he wanted to amend his statement. The Egyptians he declared, permitted him to write a new statement but declined to return his earlier one.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.