WEST SAYS ISRAEL IS CORRECT ON SUEZ
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Tells Egypt in U. N. It Must Be Open to All Ships—Hails Cairo for Freeing Sailors

Special to The New York Times.

UNITED NATIONS, N. Y., Jan. 4—The Western Big Three supported today Israel's demand that her ships be allowed to pass through the Suez Canal without interference from Egypt.

The positions taken by the United States, Britain and France in the Security Council were in clear support of Israel's contention that her ships be allowed transit. However, the three Western states were quick also to praise the conciliatory attitude they said Egypt had showed by releasing the ten-man crew of the seized Israeli freighter Bat Galim on New Year's Day.

Israel had brought up the old quarrel over the Suez Canal after Egypt seized the 500-ton freighter south of the waterway entrance and jailed its crew on charges of having slain two Egyptian fishermen. The charges later were dropped when Cairo courts found insufficient evidence to support them.

The declarations by the three Western powers came after Omar Loutfi of Egypt told the Council his Government would agree that the freighter's release should be arranged by an organ of the Mixed Armistice Commission created under the Israeli-Egyptian armistice agreement of 1949.

His brief words made it plain that Cairo had no intention of yielding to Israel's demand that the Bat Galim be allowed to pass north through the canal flying the Israeli flag. It is Egypt's contention that in the absence of a peace treaty she can bar Israeli ships in the interests of security.

Henry Cabot Lodge Jr., United States delegate, told the Council that Egyptian restrictions on ships passing through the Canal, whether trading with Israel or flying the Israeli flag, were inconsistent with the "spirit and intent" of the armistice agreement and were contrary to a 1951 Council resolution calling on Egypt to desist from interference with shipping.

During the last twelve months, he continued, there has seemed to be a lessening of tension concerning the Palestine question. He commended Egypt for her "positive" contribution and Israel for her patience during the Council debates, "in which a majority have shown they believed right to be on her [Israel's] side."

Sir Pierson Dixon, British delegate, disputed Egypt's view that she had a legal right to bar Israeli ships and insisted that failure to comply fully with the 1951 resolution was "not only regrettable but even dangerous."

Abba Eban of Israel took no part in the Council debate, which will resume next week. Israeli spokesmen said later that Egypt's suggestion that the Mixed Armistice Commission arrange for the Bat Galim's release took the issue "no further toward settlement."

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