

SPRING 2005



AMERICAN VETERANS OF ISRAEL

VOLUNTEERS IN ISRAEL'S WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

UNITED STATES & CANADA VOLUNTEERS

136 East 39th Street, New York, NY 10016

THE MIGHTY MA'OZ

Part I From Pleasure Ship to Flagship.

By J. Wandres

By October 1948, the Israeli Defence Force had pushed back Arab forces to the north and east. Egyptian forces had been halted in the Negev. Only Israel's Mediterranean coastline remained vulnerable. An Egyptian squadron, chased from Tel Aviv, was about to be dealt with at Gaza. Kvarnit (Commander) Paul Shulman, on the bridge of the 690-ton, 210-foot-long K-24 Ma'oz that day in mid-October, was no stranger to her decks. Two years earlier she had been acquired for Aliyah Bet le Mossad. Shulman, then a 24-year old ex-U.S. navy officer working with the Haganah in the U.S., had checked her out in Brooklyn, New York. Then called Abril, she had a colorful history.

Launched in March 1931 by Krupp's Germania-Werft at Kiel, her owner, American industrialist Charles A. Stone, christened her Argosy. Her twin, 1,000-hp diesel engines could make 16 knots. She carried the latest radio and navigational equipment. A crew of 12 took care of 15 richly appointed suites. Two years later, in 1934 Stone sold Argosy to T.O.M. (Thomas Octave Murdoch) Sopwith, who rechristened her Vita. Sopwith, the British aviation pioneer whose famous Sopwith "Camel" bi-plane ran roughshod over the Luftwaffe, was an experienced sea-going yachtsman. In 1938 Sopwith sold Vita to Marino Gamboa, a wealthy,

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Sharon Recalls Machal before American Jewish Leaders in New York, May 22

Following is an excerpt from Sharon's address:

I am honored to stand here and feel the strong bond between Israel and the rest of the Jewish world. We share a history, and we share a future as well.

In 1948, the new State of Israel was forced to stand its ground against the armies of the combined Arab world. The survival of Israel was not at all certain. We had no choice but to fight for our lives. It seemed as if we stood alone.

But we were not all alone. I had the merit to participate in the War of Independence, and I still remember how I felt when I learned that volunteers from Jewish communities around the world were coming to help us. They risked, and sometimes lost, their lives in our War of Independence. Then these volunteers were known as Machal.

They were few, but their solidarity made a great moral contribution. They reassured us that our fight was the fight of Jews everywhere. That we were fighting for our sisters and brothers across the sea, as much as for our long-gone grandparents, and our grandchildren yet to be born. They reassured us that the entire Jewish world was an interconnected whole.

Ezer Weizman: Pilot, Commander 1924-2005

Ezer Weizman - air force general and politician, nephew of Israel's first President Professor Chaim Weizman, and former President of the State



Air Force Pilot Ezer Weizman in 1949. © GPO

of Israel - was sworn into office on May 13, 1993.

Ezer Weizman was born in Tel Aviv in 1924, and raised in Haifa. He began his long military career as a fighter pilot during World War II, joining the Royal Air Force in 1942 at age 18. Returning to Mandatory Palestine after the war, Weizman was one of a handful of pilots who founded the "Air Service" of the Haganah. He served as a fighter pilot during the War of Independence, commanded a squadron, and later (1958-66) was O.C. of the Israel Air Force, in which capacity he introduced the use of electronic warfare systems in aircraft.

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AVI EVENTS

AVI Gathering in Gainesville Scheduled for Nov. 19-20

AVI has scheduled a gathering for veterans and families for the weekend of Nov. 19-20 to unveil the permanent Aliyah Bet and Machal Display in the new \$8.5 million Hillel building in Gainesville, Florida.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Paramount Plaza Hotel Suites and Conference Center in Gainesville. Main events will be a dinner Saturday night, Nov. 19, and a brunch Sunday morning, Nov. 20, both in the Hillel building.

AVI will be sending out more information about reservations and costs in the coming summer months. Ralph Lowenstein, who is making arrangements, said the room rate would be \$69 per night, plus tax. Veterans will be able to reserve rooms for any or all of the following nights: Friday night, Nov. 18, Saturday night, Nov. 19, or Sunday night, Nov. 20.

The seven permanent cabinets on Aliyah Bet and Machal will be completed by late summer, Ralph said. This will be the only place in the world, including Israel, with a permanent display devoted to Aliyah Bet and Machal. The Gainesville Hillel display focuses on the role of North American volunteers.

AVI members who plan to attend should mark their calendars for this important weekend.

COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE WILL MARK THE INAUGURATION OF THE MACHAL MUSEUM.

An attractive magnetic Machal plaque, designed by Machalnik Eric Ray, will soon be mailed to all AVI members. The plaque was produced by Laurie Associates as a gift from Louis and Rose Laurie from Toronto, Canada. (Lou served with the 72nd Battalion). The plaque will not be for sale, but recipients will be given an opportunity to make voluntary contributions towards the Machal Museum. Thanks to a number of generous donors, we have come very far and the displays will open to the public on November 20th, 2005. Still there is a shortfall for important ancillary projects such as setting up audio-visual kiosks, incorporating the exhibit on the Internet and in transferring replicas of the displays to venues outside of Gainesville. We all have a stake in this landmark work and will be given an opportunity to share in its creation.

Si Spiegelman

AVI in Philadelphia Celebrates Yom Ha'atsmaut

Uriel Palti, Consul General of Israel in Philadelphia, invited Machal veterans, their widows and families to participate in celebrating Israel's 57th anniversary. The celebration was held in the new Constitution Center in Independence Park on May 12. The Consul, in addressing the assembled celebrants, drew particular attention to the American Veterans of Israel in their midst.

In attendance were Sam and Layla Back, Don Agriss, son of Leon and Rose Agriss, z"l, Samuel Klausner and Roberta Sands, Max and Jacqueline Kahn, Philip and Rose Marmelstein and Augustine Labeczewski.



see Plaque on p. 14

David Shachar Dedicates Monument to Jews Who Fell in the Polish Armies in WWII: Victory Day at Mt Herzl

(Prior to observances of Yom HaZikharon and Israel Independence Day in Israel, a ceremony was conducted commemorating Jewish soldiers who fell fighting in allied and partisan forces during World War II. David Schachar, who served in the Polish Army and later came as a foreign volunteer in Israel's War of Independence gave the following Speech.)

Mr. Ambassador of the Republic of Poland-Wojciech Piekarski; Mr. Consul, Deputy; Military Attaché, Chairman of Yad Vashem- Prof. Shevach Weiss; Friends, Honored and Dear Guests

After living under the Nazi-German occupation, during which my father (Blessed be His Memory) was murdered and after exile in the Soviet far North, in 1944 at the age of 14, I volunteered for the division named after Tadeusz Kosciuszko and was billeted to the Orleta Unit in Riazan (in the Soviet Union). I underwent training in various military matters. One of the events, which I remember today, was when the Major, a difficult commander, called me at the beginning of the month

of September (1944) to appear before him. He commanded me to stand at attention and take notice that on this day the Jewish New Year begins, and those 10 days after it Yom Kippur, the holy day for the Jews. After finishing he commanded me to stand at rest "Return to exercises". I was very excited and overwhelmed. I remembered it to this day. I understood that maintaining the traditional beliefs of the soldiers adds to their honor and does not detract. At that time I absorbed values of love of the Homeland and the necessity of sacrifice in order to protect it. In 1948, while I was studying in Paris, the Independence War in Israel broke out. I left all plans for rehabilitation and personal advancement and volunteered for the Machal. I arrived in Israel and after a certain amount of time of intensive training, I joined the Palmach and fought with the Negev Brigade for the entire Independence War.

In 1994, I decided to become active in memorializing my comrades, the Jewish officers and men of the Polish Armies, who fell on all fronts of the Second World War. And establish

a monument to their memory in the Israeli sanctorum, which is the Military Cemetery on Mount Herzl, in Jerusalem. And thus to close the circle of the educational foundation which I acquired in the framework of the Polish Army and the realization of these values which are common to the large Jewish population of Poland and the Polish people among whom they lived for 800 years.

After strenuous work, and with the support of the Israel Ministry of Defence and of the Embassy and Polish attaches, and private donors, we were able to attain our dream. In 1998 the covering was removed from the monument with the hope that message it sends will pass on to the coming generations.

Today, the date is May 8, 2005. Five days ago on the 3rd of May was the Polish Constitution Day and in another 4 days on May 12 our own Independence Day will begin. This symbolic date of the celebration of freedom for both peoples, and on this occasion we will wish freedom, stability, and the flowering of mutual friendship to both the Polish people and to the people of Israel.

David Shachar

West Point holds annual Mickey Marcus ceremony

Story and photos by Eric S. Bartel
Senior Staff Writer

West Point's Jewish chaplain, Maj. Carlos Huerta, who also served with the 101st Airborne Division during wartime like Col. Marcus, speaks at the graveside ceremony Sunday. Nearly two hundred people attended a memorial service Sunday at the Jewish Chapel and a graveside ceremony at the West Point cemetery to pay homage to Col. David "Mickey" Marcus,



Rabbi Huerta

to the Brooklyn, N.Y., native's virtue of courage that helped provide Israel with its independence in 1948.

West Point graduates have marked the history of the United States with their roles in wars, politics and

American Veterans of Israel who passed away in the last year and other Jewish-Americans who fought bravely for freedom.

The 39th annual service dedicated to Marcus, USMA Class of 1924, gives tribute

the business world, but Marcus had as much significance internationally.

Marcus served during World War II and parachuted into Normandy on D-Day as a member of the 101st Airborne Division. He was eventually responsible for clearing out the Nazi death camps.

Marcus would then use his experience as a federal attorney in the 1930's to plan the legal and security procedures for the Nuremberg trials.

Once he returned to civilian life for the second time, he was called by David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, to serve as a military

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THE MIGHTY

London-based sugar merchant of Philippine origin. An American citizen who preferred to speak Spanish,

Gamboa put Vita at the service of Spanish Republican loyalists fighting the takeover of Spain by “national-



Ben Hecht Being Approached by a British Destroyer

ists” under General Francisco Franco. By spring 1939, the Spanish Civil War was over and its desperate leaders fled to Republican-sympathetic Mexico, expecting to set up a Spanish government-in-exile.

Vita’s arrival in Tampico on March 28, 1939 caused quite a stir. Flying an American flag, the vessel had no landing papers and carried a Basque-speaking crew of 29 described by a New York Times correspondent as “well-dressed and educated....One had the manner and bearing of being trained in a naval or military school.” It was later revealed that the “crew” included Juan Negrin, former Republican prime minister. There was only a cursory inspection of its cargo manifest. Each of the 160 packing crates was so heavy that it took five stevedores to lift them onto the pier and, watched by armed soldiers, into an armored baggage rail car, where a locomotive spirited it away. Likewise, the “crew” disappeared into the streets of the sleepy Mexican port. U.S officials later revealed that the “cargo” was gold bullion and jewels confiscated by the Republicans, and was valued between \$47- and 50-million dollars!

Amid factional squabbling the Republicans’ dreams of a new Spanish Order faded; likewise, much of the loot disappeared into private, numbered bank accounts. Vita’s master, a Spanish Jew named Jose Ordica y Ana, put the vessel on the block.

The U. S. Navy bought the vessel in July 1942 for \$150,531, lopped

off Argosy’s raked clipper bow, painted her haze gray, converted the state-rooms into compartments for a crew of 60, then put her into service as PY-31, Cythera II. From 1944 until 1945 she patrolled the Atlantic seaboard, running aground at least once. She was a sorry-looking rust-bucket when declared surplus in April 1946, but she would go on to serve yet another master.

Part II Its Mission, and Misery in the Med.

By spring 1946 Lieutenant (junior grade) Paul Shulman, (U.S. Naval Academy ’44) wrote a letter stating his intention to resign his commission, then permissible for regular officers who “served at the pleasure of the President.” In November the destroyer USS Massey, in which he was assistant engineering officer, returned from a good will cruise to Chile. Shulman’s resignation was approved and he went ashore at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, not far from the oily, trash-filled Gowanus canal, where the ex-Cythera II lay tied up. No longer forgotten, the former Argosy – Vita was being readied for a new mission.

In New York in 1946 and 1947 two competing organizations had the same goal: both the Ben-Gurion-led Haganah and the Menachem Beigin-led Irgun were gathering American volunteers and money with which to supply Jewish fighters that would oust the British mandatory government controlling Palestine and defend the new nation against an expected Arab invasion. The Haganah had the secretive “Sonneborn Institute,” a group of wealthy and influential Jewish business leaders who solicited donations and materiel from sources all over the U.S.

The Irgun had Ben Hecht. The flamboyant, Academy award-winning Hollywood screenwriter was an ardent supporter of a Jewish Homeland in Eretz Israel and a follower of the politically-right and militant policies of Beigin and the Irgun. Another Beigin supporter, Hillel Kook (a.k.a. “Peter

Bergson”) established the American League for a Free Palestine, with Sen. Guy Gillette as president. Bergson asked Hecht to write a play for Broadway, and the ALFP was blunt about its purpose: “[A Flag is Born] was not written to amuse or beguile. It was written to make money...to provide ships to get Hebrews to Palestine... and to arouse American public opinion to support the fight for freedom and independence...[for Jews].”

“A Flag Is Born,” with Paul Muni and a young Marlon Brando, opened in September 1946 and went on to earn over \$1 million on Broadway and in touring productions. An ALFP front corporation, Tyre Shipping, purchased the ex-Cythera II for \$50,600, and named her in honor of Ben Hecht. It was one of the few instances where Haganah leaders publicly applauded the play and purchase of the vessel.

The vessel was legally chartered as Abril under a Honduran flag, and sailed from New York on December 26, 1946. Former AVI member, the late Hyman “Bob” Levitan was First Mate and later became Abril’s Captain. Former AVI vice president, the late David Kaplan was radio officer. After a rough Atlantic crossing Abril reached Port du Bouc, a shipyard near Marseilles, France. The engines were repaired and Aliyah Bet carpenters ripped out the crew quarters to install sleeping shelves for up to 600 refugees who hoped to reach Eretz Israel. and freedom.

Part III Piracy On the High Seas; Precision at Gaza. Part III

Port du Bouc, then and now, is notoriously difficult to navigate. On or about March 1, 1947, with 660 refugees on board, Abril got underway at night without a pilot (they were on strike), and almost immediately ran aground. Tugs pulled her free. For the next week Abril hugged the Italian coastline. A diesel engine acted up. Foul weather made many on board seasick.

While crossing the Med’s open waters she was spotted by a British pa-



Israeli Naval Patrol Vessel Ma'oz

trol bomber, then intercepted by British warships. Alan Tyler, an officer on the destroyer Chevron, wrote (In a 1997 article reprinted in the AVI newsletter) “We intercepted another ‘illegal’...Abril, with an American crew that proved cooperative. I addressed them by loud hailer in English and German....saying that they should not resist as force would be met with force. It was unfortunate to use the language of the hated Nazis....Our boarding party met with no resistance and...[we] were offered tomato soup....”

David Kaplan’s recollection is not so charitable. “[Abril was] surrounded by three destroyers and boarded 10.7 nautical miles off the coast of Palestine -- an act of piracy on the high seas ...beyond the three-mile territorial limits of Palestine.”* Abril was towed into Haifa harbor. The refugees were transferred to a prison ship and sent to an internment camp on Cyprus. The American crew was jailed at Akko but, after negotiations with the American Consul-general, released and sent back to the United States.

Israel declared independence on May 15, 1948, but the Royal Navy reportedly did not hand over the port of Haifa until June 30. Still tied up at pier side was Abril. A minor problem now faced the new government of Israel. Abril was not “abandoned;” it was still owned by Tyre Shipping, and the Ben-Gurion government was obliged to buy it from ALFP. With the money-changing completed, the now ex-Argosy-Vita-Cythera II-“Ben Hecht”-Abril joined the Israeli navy as K-24 Ma’oz.

Up to the summer of 1947 Paul

Shulman had been assisting the Hagannah in the U.S. by inspecting ships to be acquired for Aliyah Bet. Then (accompanied by his wife, Rose) he was directed to assist with Aliya Bet operations in Italy. Now, in May 1948 he was summoned to Israel and, at the direction of David Ben-Gurion, established a naval academy to train officers for the new Israeli Naval Service. He took the rank of Kvarnit, or Commander. Shulman brought on board six instructors. The four Americans had served in the U.S. Navy; two were former Royal Navy officers.

The “cadets” were veterans of the Pal’yam, the sea service branch of



Abril as Santa Maria del Mare 1991

the Pal’mach strike forces. To them the new Israeli Naval Service was known as Cheyl Haambatya, the “bath-tub navy.” Battle-tested from actions against the Germans and Italians during World War II and British forces occupying Palestine, these veterans chafed at the formal, structured classes they had to take. Instruction was often difficult because Shulman and some instructors spoke little or no Hebrew and, for many of the multi-national Pal’yamnicks Hebrew was a second or third language. Shulman, the Machalnik – the volunteer from abroad – was criticised for having no combat-related sea duty and quitting the U.S. navy after only 24 months.

“Despite his youth and inexperience,” says one long-time supporter, “he did an outstanding job in converting a rag-tag bunch into the nucleus of

what was to become a modern, effective naval force.”

Perhaps feeling he needed to further prove his worth, Shulman as I.N.S. Commander-in-chief led the naval action against Egyptian warships cruising within Israeli territorial waters, apparently looking for invasion sites. Now, on October 22 1948, with Shulman on the Ma’oz bridge, and underwater demolition commandos from Yochai Bin-Nun’s Shayetet 13 on K-26 Nogah, the Israeli ships followed the Egyptians to Gaza. Another U.N. truce had been brokered, effective 1200 GMT (2pm in Israel), but the Egyptians were suspected of ignoring it. Thus, Shulman radioed for permission to attack. After dark he got the go-ahead from Ben-Gurion.

The Egyptian corvette Emir Farouk was believed to have embarked up to 500 soldiers to reinforce Egyptian ground forces. The commandos’ explosive-laden motorboats were launched. Two struck the cruiser, causing it to sink. Another attack sunk the Egyptian flagship’s escort. Sometime after midnight Ma’oz sailed away to victory and into history.

Was that the end of Ma’oz? There are reports that the vessel served the Israeli navy until the mid-1950s, and was then sold. By 1968 it had been converted into as a ferry in the Naples Bay area under the name of “Santa Maria del Mare.” It was believed still in service as late as 1998.

*Doubtful. Palestine was under the British mandate, which was not recognized as a sovereign state.

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J. Wandres is writing a book about Paul Shulman and other Americans who served in the early years of the Israeli navy. He welcomes questions and comments at jperiod@optonline.net

(See NYT articles on p. 13)

Obituaries

During the Six-Day War he was Chief of Operations of the General Staff, and later Deputy Chief of Staff. He retired in 1969 with the rank of major-general, and turned to politics.

An outspoken individual with strong political views and a vivid personality, Ezer Weizman maintained a high and at times highly-provocative public profile, even while in the army. In the two and a half decades following his retirement from the military, Weizman served in many key political posts. He ran the election campaign that brought Likud leader Menachem Begin to power in 1977, after nearly thirty years in opposition; served as Minister of Defense; and was a member of the Israeli negotiating team to the talks that culminated in the Camp David Accords. In 1980, Weizman, who had gradually moderated his views, retired from politics to pursue a business career. Returning to public life four years later, he formed a small independent party and served as a government minister for the next six years - first as Minister for Arab Affairs, then as Minister of Science and Technology. In 1992 he retired from active politics and a year later, he was elected as the seventh President of the State of Israel. Almost without actual powers, the Presidency is an institution that relies heavily on style. Ezer Weizman's strong personality and unique manner, which pervaded every task he undertook - from air force commander to government minister - also colored his Presidency. Weizman's down-to-earth manner was quite different from the statesmanlike image and "elevated status" that characterized most of his predecessors. His unique character endowed the Presidency with an informality and lack of reserve that reflected the warm, dynamic and unstructured nature of Israel's society. Thus, the office had in many ways come to mirror the typical Israeli - direct, familial and

unceremonious, candid and spontaneous.

While President Weizman conducted state visits to Great Britain, India, South Africa and Turkey, meeting national and Jewish leaders in his travels, he focused more on Israel itself and its citizens - Jews, Arabs and Druze - and on Israel's immediate neighbors. In addition to planned visits to various communities and participation in major public events, Weizman adopted a Presidential schedule that included unplanned and spontaneous visits closely tied to unfolding events, many of them tragic. Thus, during the July 1993 "Accountability" campaign against Hizbullah terrorism, the President demonstrated his solidarity with Israeli citizens living on the northern border by visiting them while their towns were still under shell-fire, staying the night with the inhabitants and even sleeping in a bunker with IDF soldiers. President Weizman also visited the wounded in hospitals and the families of the fallen and of terror victims in their homes. Weizman applied the one real power of the Presidency - the right to grant Presidential pardons - in his own way, by refusing to sign some pardons recommended by the Ministry of Justice.

Ezer Weizman took a more active role in political developments than his predecessors, and his actions were a source of public controversy. Political figures involved in the peace process have met with Weizman, even though this was not part of diplomatic protocol. Moreover, the President openly criticized the government's performance and attempted to prevent the derailing of the peace process. His unique brand of personal diplomacy, his charm and his personal ties opened communication lines between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and with Egypt.

Ezer Weizman was re-elected to a second term in May 1998, and resigned from the Presidency in July 2000.

Condolence letter from Smokey Simon, World Machal

25th April, 2005
Mrs. Reuma Weizman
Rehov HaDekel
Caesarea 38900

Dear Reuma,

On behalf of Myra and myself, as well as on behalf of World Machal, I wish to express our most sincere sympathy and condolences to all the members of your family.

The Machalniks deeply appreciated the ongoing friendly relations between Ezer and his Machal comrades, especially with the Machal personnel who served in 101 Squadron. During Ezer's service in the Army, or in his political life, or as the State President, he always had an open door and a welcoming smile for Machalniks.

His close friendship with Syd Cohen is particularly noteworthy. I will always remember the incident which took place in March 1949 concerning President Chaim Weizman and Syd. The President was about to embark on his first formal visit to the USA. This was an auspicious occasion. The Sky-master aircraft was spruced-up for the flight, and the crew members were fitted out with new uniforms, etc. Ezer had very recently taken over command of 101 Squadron, and I suggested to him that we should honour the President by giving him a fighter escort on his flight out of Israel. Ezer's response was that although it was a nice idea, he had so many practical problems in the squadron that didn't enable him to implement my suggestion - the aircraft had serious maintenance problems; the squadron was short of engine hours; his pilot-training program was running late, etc., and so the idea was dropped. Two days later, Syd left Israel to resume his medical studies in South Africa, and lo and behold, two Spitfires escorted the chartered DC3 aircraft in which Syd was flying to South Africa. When I asked Ezer to explain this asymmetry in the honours accorded to the President of the State and to Syd, he replied by saying, "Could anyone believe that

Syd Cohen would leave Israel without a fighter escort?" It would therefore appear that Ezer's friendship with Syd was even thicker than blood!

May you and all the members of your family be blessed with abundant good health, and may Ezer rest in peace. Myra and I will visit you to pay our respects.

Warmest regards.

Sincerely,
Smokey Simon

Condolence Letter from Ira Feinberg

Our heartfelt condolences to the family of Ezer Weizman, who passed away on April 24, 2005. Ezer Weizman rose to lead the Israel Air Force, and served as IDF Operations Chief, Defense Minister and President of the State of Israel. To many of our fraternity he remained Ezer, the fighter pilot and comrade in arms during Israel's War of Independence. They were Americans, Canadians, Britons and South Africans who together with young Israelis flew the war surplus Messerschmits and Spitfires in 101 squadron and helped turn the tide of the 1948 war. Ezer Weizman will be remembered as a steadfast and revered friend who did not forget the contributions of the volunteers in the formation of the IDF and on the battlefield.

Ira Feinberg, President AVI

A first-class air force character

By Uri Dromi

Ha'aretz, English Edition, April 28, 2005



Eddy Kaplansky

Yedidia Kaplansky, whom everybody called Eddy, was born in Montreal. He studied at an Orthodox Jewish school, where

he learned Hebrew. During World War II he volunteered for the Canadian Air Force, where he learned to fly and passed an advanced course in navigation. After the war, as part of the Aliyah Bet clandestine immigration operations, he navigated an illegal immigrants' ship to Palestine, but was arrested by the British. When he was released from prison in Cyprus, he arrived in Israel with Machal (a Hebrew acronym for "volunteer from abroad") on June 22, 1948. Here, he became one of the first members of the 301 transport and bombing squadron, stationed at Ramat David.



Eddy at Haifa Military Cemetery, 1933

Conditions at the base were hard, and faulty aircraft maintenance ("neglect, intrigues" as one of the reports stated) almost cost Eddy his life. On July 21, during a bombing run over Mishmar Hayarden, which had been attacked by the Syrians, a bomb dropped from the plane hit its tail and caused it to go into a spin. The captain ordered the crew to bail out, but in the ensuing panic, Eddy's parachute opened inside the plane. The co-pilot finally managed to take control of the Dakota, landing it on its belly at Ramat David.

In September Eddy was transferred to Squadron A (light aircraft) where he carried out a top secret mission, dubbed Operation Taskit ("radio skit") in a Dragon Rapid aircraft. His job was to fly over Samaria every night, with his navigator dropping firecrackers that caused the Arab forces to operate their radios, revealing important

military information.

On December 7, Eddy tried to convince the squadron commander, Ralph Moster, also a Canadian volunteer, not to fly to Lake Kinneret on a test flight of a Vision seaplane, but instead to join him for a flyover of the Hulda grove in honor of the opening of the road to Jerusalem. Moster refused, but Eddy did manage to convince another passenger waiting for the Vision's takeoff, Hugo Steiner, to join him. Hugo's brother, Ludwig, who worked at the base officers club, took off with Moster. On their return from Hulda, Eddy found out that the Vision had crashed into the Kinneret. He took off immediately on a search, but to no avail. The debris of the plane and the bodies were found only a week later.

A short time after that, Eddy was transferred to Wing 53, which had the task of maintaining communications with besieged Sodom in Norseman aircraft. When the unit got a Harvard plane, he took off in it to take part in Operation Horev against the Egyptian army, attacking Khan Yunis and Dir al-Balah. In January 1949, after the downing of five British airplanes by the Israel Air Force, the Machal soldiers celebrated victory. As Eddy later described it, someone took out a gun and shot the lock off the liquor cabinet, took out a bottle, and left an I.O.U. Another happy pilot, he said, shot two bullets through a tin roof in the exact cadence of the music that was playing.

The last chapter of Eddy's War of Independence career took place on March 17, when he took off as co-pilot in a Commando aircraft from Sde Avraham in the Negev, to take part in Operation Uvda for the capture of Eilat. Because of a motor malfunction on takeoff, the crew attempted to reland the plane, crashing in the dunes. Miraculously, no one was injured, but a few minutes after the crew was evacuated to safety, the bombs the plane was carrying exploded, destroying it.

Eddy married Leah Gellman, and had three children - Dafna, Daniel, and

KAPLANSKY continued on pg. 9

adviser. He then commanded the Israeli armed forces -- the Machal or overseas volunteers -- against Arab fighters along the Jewish Front. He also ordered the construction of a road between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem to bring more men and equipment to break the Arab siege, a road that still exists today.



(L-R) Cadets 1st Class David Rokhlin, Vinay Mahadevan and Matthew Moosey light memorial candles for those who died in the name of freedom.

Called "A Soldier for All Humanity," his bravery and willingness to return to duty after leaving the military on two separate occasions is not lost on today's cadets.

"He represents a visible example that anybody, regardless if they're Jewish or not, can follow," said Cadet 1st Class Matthew Moosey, member of the West Point Hillel, a 60-member Jewish cadet organization. "The Army values are universal to all Soldiers of any race and religion, and Col. Marcus embodied and reflected those in his life and that's why he's important for any cadet to recognize."

Moosey has been to Israel twice and has taken the 40-minute drive between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem on the road that Marcus helped build.

"It's nothing short of miraculous of some of the things he did," Moosey describes of Marcus, who

became the first general of the Jewish Army in nearly two thousand years in 1948. "The road that he built largely with refugees and Holocaust survivors with their bare hands is impressive."



Cadet 1st Class Ramona Fastow places a rock on top of Col. David "Mickey" Marcus' grave following a ceremony honoring his accomplishments.

Cadet 1st Class Ramona Fastow was excited to be a part of the wreath laying ceremony and placed a stone on Marcus' headstone.

"It was an honor (to help with placing the wreath), but more so it was a great learning experience because I'm Jewish and I've been to Israel twice," Fastow said. "But I'm slowly learning about the connections the Israeli military have with the American military -- it's cool to know I'm a part of it."

Although Marcus never reaped the benefits of his work because of his death six hours after the called ceasefire, the ancient Jewish custom of placing a rock on the headstone is a reminder and a symbol of the great work he did.

"It's a way to tactfully and physically connect with the deceased by placing something more permanent than something temporary like flowers," Moosey said. "His headstone is absolutely covered with rocks, I think more so than any other headstone at the cemetery."

Statues adorn the likeness of Eisenhower, MacArthur and Thayer around West Point; however, Moosey is intrigued by Marcus' likeness at a place he visits regularly.

"In the firstie club, there's a picture of (Marcus) boxing and there are several small things like that," Moosey said. "There are pictures of him in a prison commissioner uniform; there are pictures of him on a tank, mundane things that have gone largely unnoticed."

Serving the country of his ancient birthright was not a mundane task for a man born in the United States, but his Jewish heritage was sown deep enough that he was compelled to do his part as much so as he did with the 101st on D-Day which is part inspiration for Chaplain (Maj.) Carlos Huerta.

"Col. Marcus was a Soldier, I served with the 101st in Operation Iraqi Freedom and he jumped with the 101st during D-Day, so there's that connection from Soldier to Soldier," Huerta said. "We have hundreds and hundreds of graduates who did great things and Marcus is one that people may not know as much about, but he's a hero, not only an American hero but an international hero."

After 9-11, Moosey's convictions about Israel were deepened of their history of terrorism that has plagued the Jewish state since its independence and sees the correlation between the two countries.

"Now it's important to everybody (to be aware of terrorism), so we can all share in those concerns that strengthen us as nations," Moosey said. "(Israel) is a democracy, it's united in the war on terror and I think our destinies as nations are intertwined."

Gilad. He returned to Canada, but in 1971 he came back to Israel and settled in Haifa, devoting himself to research and commemoration of the contribution of Machal volunteers to the air force in its early days. Major Avi Cohen, of the Israel Air Force history department, says Kaplansky's book, "The First Fliers" is an important foundation of Cohen's own major research project on the history of the air force in the War of Independence.



Eddy assisted the Israel Air Force Museum at Hazor in interviewing Machal veterans, and Rama Flint, former deputy head of the Defense Ministry's department of commemoration, says somewhere near Vancouver Eddy had managed to locate the daughter of Len Fitchitt, a Machal volunteer who crashed during the attack on the Iraq-Suidan police station east of Ashkelon, and to invite her for a moving visit to Israel. Eddy's Machal comrades, David Teperson and Sol Jacobs laud his contribution to the world Machal organization and Harold ("Smokey") Simon, chairman of the organization, calls him a "first class air force character."

The Funeral

On Thursday March 10, a chilly partly cloudy day, Eddie Kaplansky's funeral took place. There were about 75 people attending. Eddie's wife Leah, daughter Dafne, and sons, Dan and Gidon, were there.

AVI members present were Lee Silverman, Avi Livney and Batsheva, Yehuda Witnoff and Nachum Ziv both of whom were friends of Eddy's from childhood in Montreal and Dave Baum.

Eulogies at the graveside were spoken by Smokey Simon and in Hebrew by Yuske Almog who commanded the Medinat Ha Yehudim (Jewish State) *Aliya Bet* ship on which Eddy served. They maintained a close relationship over the years.

World Machal members also present included Joe Woolf, David Shachar, Mira Simon, David Teperson, Sol Jacobs. Sidney Cohen, commander of Fighter Squadron 101 and a Rav Seren of the Air Force Archive.

Dave Baum

Words from a Friend

World Machal, his wife and family and a vast number of friends and colleagues sustained a heavy loss when Yedidia (Eddy) Kaplansky, 79, died with tragic suddenness March 6. He had returned from an extended skiing holiday a few days earlier and seemed in great physical condition. According to what had become after many years a virtual tradition I should have been skiing with him, but had cancelled out due a painful lumbar region. We had had daily 'phone consultation since he returned home.

Eddy went back to Montreal when the War of Independence ended. A WW2 pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force, he had volunteered and served with distinction in the embryo Israel Air Force which he, together with other Machal volunteers, transformed into an effective, modern weapon, staffed by WW2 veteran aircrew including 'ace' pilots. Quickly wresting air dominance from the countries invading the Jewish state, the Air Force made survival - even victory - seem feasible, raising incalculably, the morale of the fighters and citizens of the infant state.

But Eddy's Zionist devotion had earlier found expression among the gallant few of Aliya Beth who left the security and comforts of their homes to confront the hazards of transporting by sea the desperate remnants of Eu-

rope's Jews to the haven of what was then Palestine. Coincidentally, unknown to us both, I, 'though still serving in the RAF in Germany, was part of the team sending the occupants of the D.P. camps to the ports to meet the ships of Aliya Beth. Sailing as navigator on the 'Jewish State' with 2,700 refugees in a dilapidated vessel designed for less than a quarter of that number, interception by the Royal Navy had passengers and crew interned in Cyprus. He managed to get back to Montreal only to volunteer again - this time to fly when a war of purported annihilation, on four fronts, descended upon Israel.

Eddy's attributes were many; he, with Tel Aviv born wife Leah whom he had met and married in Israel, returned for good in 1971. During a nostalgic visit to the Air Force History branch, he happened upon a sheet of paper listing the known aircrew participants in the War of Independence nearly all of whom were Machal volunteers. This revelatory information triggered the dormant, but none-the-less compulsive researcher in Eddy Kaplansky. His interest was translated into a long, arduous but all-consuming research leading to 'The First Fliers' written by Eddy and edited by myself. It is a definitive presentation in Hebrew and English of every known aircrew member, his origin, the bases at which he served during the W of I ...and a comprehensive foreword and introduction. It is an official publication of the I.D.F. complementing as it does, official history. Eddy had started a second edition constituting a major revision with new facts and personalities previously omitted, on the strength of information with greater accuracy, which has surfaced since the book's publication, and it appears I could now be made responsible for its completion.

In common with those of us who remained in Israel, Eddy found that the contribution of Machal to the success of Israel's defense against ostensibly overwhelming odds was not taught in schools; was virtually forgotten and

fast ceasing to be a part of the history of Israel's renaissance. This was particularly but not exclusively so in the case of the IAF. This outraged Eddy, relatively fresh from the diaspora and brimming with vigor. Devoting himself to remedial action he was inspirational in provoking some of those ex-Machal in Israel to emerge from lethargy and join him in battle. As to the success of our years of effort the jury is still out, but we have managed to conscript allies notably in the History branch of the IAF, including major (retd.) Avi Cohen who has written a history in Hebrew - awaiting an English translation - of the IAF in three volumes. An excerpt ! from the first book declares, "Special thanks are due to Eddy Kaplansky who, during the last 10 years followed this work and then volunteered to communicate with people of that period who sent him material and pictures which were part of the basis of this book. He did research on 103 Squadron and 35 Flight and very important research pertaining to aircrew in the War of Liberation published by the Historic branch adding an excellent collection of pictures. Co-operation with him was of a very high order. We were made privy to as-yet unpublished books to whose authors Eddy's consultations were invaluable".

Until the day he so unexpectedly and tragically left us, Eddy's huge energy, intelligence and resourcefulness were always directed at the cause of ensuring Machal's part in determining the outcome of Israel's War of Independence and that it would not be lost to the annals of our long history. He was generous with his time and rare qualities and made them easily available to World Machal, its individual members and those who gave us their support.

Our exchanges and consultations were often daily, his friendship warm and infinitely gratifying. His knowledge of Machal and our War of Liberation encyclopaedic - I cannot yet conceive of the void confronting me and us all, left by his departure. His memory is treasured and will always

be with us; his contributions not forgotten.

I wish Leah and his family long, healthy lives and the strength and endurance to carry the oppressive burden of their loss.

Yihyeh Zichroh Baruch

Sol Jacobs

He took a load off my shoulders

In early summer of 1947 the Mossad assigned me to the Northland to reposition her in the Mediterranean from southern France to near the Iberian Peninsula. And then to Bayonne, France in the Bay of Biscay.

Favorable currents to speed the passage run close offshore but you have to stay alert to keep from drifting onto the beach. My only experienced watch officer was an Italian former submarine commander and he couldn't navigate a toothpick in a washbasin. Fortunately, we had a fairly trained young Canadian fellow aboard who appeared to understand navigation and he took a load off my shoulders. That quiet, unassuming lad was, unbeknown to me, an experienced fighter pilot, Eddy Kaplansky.

In later years we became firm friends. A lot of people were lucky to have Ed to "take a load off their shoulders" in the IDF Air Force. He never stopped contributing. Right down to the very end he was getting history correct.

Arthur Bernstein

*Condolences to
Leah Kaplansky
58 Hillel St. Apt. 83
Haifa 33728*

Harold Greene, Air Force Director of Training: An Historical Obituary

Harold Greene a WWII flight instructor at Eglin Field in Florida volunteered for the fledgling Israel Air Force in 1948 where he became a director of training. Harold died in 1975 but was never memorialized in this Newsletter. An article was published about his service in Israel the year he died. The following are excerpts from that article. The article is unattributed but it is suspected that it was written by Jonathan Shimshone who is currently on the faculty of Princeton University.

I don't remember ever getting a letter from Pappy. Every few years, wherever we happened to be, I would come home late one evening to find him sitting in the living room. He would drop in, unheralded at Herzlyia, Cambridge, Massachusetts or Palo Alto from his lonely wanderings alone around the world. It was characteristic that when we learned of his death by phone from America, we were not told where he was when he died....

His manner and language were stark and bright against the mumblings and gray landscape. I remember a meeting with Ben Gurion in Tel Aviv towards the end of the 1948 War of Liberation. Many of the top air force and ground officers had been called to discuss a proposal, which, in essence, would lead to the absorption of the fledgling air force, by the ground forces. B-G finally came to Pappy. He switched to English (and said, we felt, with somewhat more respect than we youngsters were getting at that point): "Well Colonel Greene, what do you think?" "I'll tell you," said Pappy, "The whole idea stinks."

Pappy was one of the first heads of training—in the lean year of 1948 in the Israel Air Force. When you think back on how the Israeli pilots came to be some of the best in history, the story is seen to be the work of many. But, Pappy was the first who knew the busi-

ness who could make it clear from real knowledge and experience that there is no much room for compromise in pilot training...

The truce in July 1948 gave the air force a breathing space and there was some reorganization. It was decided to start training in Israel and Pappy came to headquarters as Director of Training, which also made him a member of the top air staff. Here he became, in a way, a rallying point for dissenting, plain speakers, and those who had experience; a conscience, direct and to the essence of the matter. His blunt speech and manner could not hide the real knowledge, the shrewdness in judging character or professional capability.



Harold Greene

In Pappy's day there were few resources to spare for training or for other than the most needed guns and ammunition. When he visited cadets at the old St. John airport near Acre, he found them wearing tatters; and flying hours for training were nearly as scarce as decent uniforms. Still he put across the idea that you can't fool yourself about flying achievement, and pushed his programs as long as he could, against odds. He did not stay on until the resources were there and we could start training in earnest, but the conscience somehow remained.

So it is not just as a personal friend that so many will always remember him so fondly. Israel has not had a better friend, or one more frank. Pappy won't be showing up any more; but I will remember him whenever a discussion is wooly, the thinking is wishful, and the grey consensus is beginning to compromise on quality.

Businessman Louis 'Shorty' Levin; Sold Ship That Became 'Exodus'

*By Matt Schudel
(From the Washington Post)*

Louis S. "Shorty" Levin, 90, a Washington businessman who had an unexpected brush with history in the 1940s, when a ship he once owned became a symbol of the movement to create an independent Jewish state, died Feb. 10 of an intestinal disorder at a hospital in Aventura, Fla. His primary residence was in Bethesda, and he had a winter home in Aventura.

Mr. Levin, whose name was accented on the second syllable, was a Washington native who embarked on several failed business ventures before he launched the Potomac Shipwrecking Co. with his brother in the 1940s. They bought aging, out-of-service ships, dismantled them at a shipyard in Pope's Creek, near Waldorf, and sold the scrap metal.

In the fall of 1946, Mr. Levin was put in touch with the Chinese-American Industrial Co., a New York consortium seeking to rebuild one of his ships for cargo transport in Asia. He sold the firm a rusting excursion boat called the President Warfield, which had plied the waters between Baltimore and Norfolk, for \$10,000.

Mr. Levin didn't see the President Warfield again until the following summer, when it appeared in the news under a different name, trying to break the British blockade of Palestine, then under British jurisdiction. The Chinese-American organization turned out to be a front for the Haganah, an underground Jewish paramilitary group fighting for the creation of Israel.

The 320-foot President Warfield, launched in 1928, was secretly outfitted with hundreds of bunks and supplies in Baltimore and sailed from Marseille, France, on July 11, 1947. Originally designed to hold 400 passengers, the renamed Exodus carried 4,554 Jewish

survivors of Nazi concentration camps toward what they hoped would be a new home in Palestine.

Shortly before it was to enter the port of Haifa, British navy vessels rammed the Exodus at sea. During the resulting shipboard riot, in which passengers and crew defended themselves with cans of soup and potatoes, British sailors killed two passengers and an American crew member.

When the Exodus finally docked in Haifa, the Jewish refugees were denied entry by British authorities.

The lone American journalist to board the Exodus, Ruth Gruber, described it as "a black, shabby, broken steamer . . . The ship looked like a matchbox that had been splintered by a nutcracker. In the torn square hole . . . we could see a muddle of bedding, possessions, plumbing, broken pipes, overflowing toilets, half-naked men, women looking for children."

The refugees were placed on three squalid transport ships that took them back to France. After three weeks, when they refused to disembark, they were sent to detention camps in Germany -- an act of such symbolic cruelty that it provoked international outrage. The Exodus was still in the Haifa harbor on Nov. 28, 1947, when the United Nations voted to establish an independent Jewish state.

Many survivors escaped the German camps and eventually made their way to Israel or the United States. Their plight was described in Leon Uris's novel "Exodus" and in a 1960 film directed by Otto Preminger. The Exodus became known as the "Mayflower of the Middle East" and "the ship that launched a nation."

Mr. Levin, who grew up on 4 1/2 St. SW, was called Shorty by everyone, including his mother. His middle initial, like Harry Truman's, stood for nothing.

"If it's good enough for Harry," he said, "it's good enough for me."

He graduated from Central High School and, despite being only 5 feet 7 1/2 inches tall, played center on

semiprofessional basketball teams. He served in the Navy during World War II.

After he left the shipwrecking business in the mid-1950s, Mr. Levin owned Pleasant Liquors in Seat Pleasant until 1979. He was a founder of the Prince George's Liquor Association.

Since the 1950s, he was also involved in real estate, eventually becoming vice president of Westwood Management Corp. in Bethesda. His company constructed and managed

buildings in Maryland, Virginia, the District and elsewhere. He retired in 1995.

His pastimes included tennis and fishing. Mr. Levin supported Jewish causes and visited Israel but never met anyone who had been a passenger aboard the Exodus.

Survivors include his wife of 63 years, Evelyn Levin of Bethesda and Aventura; two children, Monica Pollans of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Dr. Jon Levin of Port Charlotte, Fla.; three

sisters, Dora Fox of Kansas City, Kan., Zelda Gallun of Silver Spring and Leah McNair of Woodland Hills, Calif.; a brother, Dr. Sidney Levin of Jacksonville, Fla.; eight grandchildren; and a great-grandson.

*Condolences to
Evelyn Levin
5401 Westbard Ave.
Bethesda, MD 20846*

Did foreign volunteers help Arab fighters in '48?

Jerusalem Post | 5-17-05 | ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

(The AVI Newsletter ran an article, translated by the editor from Al-Jazeera, entitled Arab "Mahal." That article was more informative than is O'Sullivan about volunteers from several Arab states who served in the armies invading the new State of Israel. O'Sullivan, however, speculates about western volunteers in Arab service. It attests to the continued lack of good information on the topic.)

While most people know of the foreign "Mahal" volunteers who came to help Israel fight for independence in 1948, far fewer are aware there were non-Muslim foreigners who joined the Arab side too. Some were British, others Bosnian. Some Jewish Mahal veterans and historians claim there were even Americans, Polish and according to rumor, ex-Nazi officers helping the Arabs.

The volunteers, or mercenaries apparently, were not driven by the compelling spirit of ideology and love for the Arabs, or a commitment of the heart. Rather, theirs was a motivation of greed and hatred, and possibly adventure.

At a recent gathering of Mahal veterans, New Yorker Ira Feinberg recalled a story of two Americans who were on a ship named Marine Tiger with him back in April 1948 on their

way from New York to France and the Middle East. He was part of a dozen volunteers headed for Palestine where he would eventually join the ranks of the Palmah.

According to Feinberg, two Americans named Tony Ferrento and Al McDonald were also aboard and on a very similar mission.

"Only they were going to fight for the other side, the Arab side," Feinberg said. "We were told to stay away from them, but they ended up playing craps and gambling with us. We parted ways in Paris," Feinberg said.

Ferrento and McDonald were in their late 20s and veterans of World War II. A few months later while regrouping following battles, he got a report that the American pair had been fighting as artillery officers in the Egyptian Army, and were killed in combat during a battle in the Negev, apparently near Faluja.

Could this have happened? Could Americans and other non-Muslims actually have been out here volunteering to fight against the Jewish state? Most Mahal veterans interviewed don't believe it.

Mahal veteran Col. David Teperson said there was a lot of hearsay about foreigners in the ranks of the Arab armies, but he isn't aware of any verified account.

"I took quite a lot of prisoners of war," said Teperson, who fought in

the Palmah's Negev Brigade. "We never captured any foreigners. We only seldom captured their officers. They'd run like hell. Hearsay goes a long way."

The IDF Unit for Missing Soldiers said they had no record of these two Americans.

But historian Meir Pa'il said there definitely were a handful of foreigners who joined the Arab side.

"There were a few fascists and even Germans we knew of," Pa'il said. Pa'il said he fought on the Jerusalem front and does not recall any Europeans among the Arab forces.

"It doesn't mean there were none. But if there were, then they didn't have any significant impact on the battles, certainly not like the foreign volunteers who joined the Jewish side," Pa'il said.

Some 3,500 foreign volunteers, Jews and non-Jews from 43 countries, came to Israel to help fight for the fledgling state. Some British soldiers deserted to join the ranks of the Hagana, some bringing their tanks with them.

Historian Benny Morris said there were definitely foreign volunteers from Europe who joined the Arab side. He said there was documented proof that one to two dozen British Army deserters had joined the forces of Arab leader Abdel Khader Husseini.

"Their motivation was anti-Semitic or for money. Don't forget the period. This was when the IZL and Lehi

underground had been killing British troops and they were perhaps seeking revenge," Morris said.

He said that ex-British troops had a hand in the car bombing of Jerusalem's Rehov Ben-Yehuda in 1948 that killed 50 people.

"The deserters also helped blow up the Palestine Post building," Morris said.

Using stolen British Army vehicles, they were able to rig the bombs in them at Husseini's headquarters in Ramallah and drove them through roadblocks to their targets.

"Their names were known and published," Morris said.

Ironically, the presence of British Army deserters on the side of the Arabs may have played a part in the death of the Arab commander. According to Pa'il, Husseini had gone to the summit of the Castel after bitter fighting. He had been under the impression that his forces had already captured the strategic heights and then he saw a pair

of light-skinned soldiers.

"He called out to them in English 'Hey fellas,' thinking they were British deserters with his militiamen. They were actually Israeli sentries who mortally wounded Husseini, thus depriving the Arabs of a charismatic leader.

Historian Morris said that there were a few dozen Bosnian Muslims, veterans of the Second World War, who volunteered to fight against the Jews. Two of these volunteers were killed in a battle where present-day Mevaseret Zion lies. Their papers identified them as Yugoslavian volunteers.

Morris said a "handful" of Polish volunteers aided the Arabs. The most dramatic rumor is that former Nazi officers had come out to Palestine to help the Arab militias and armies fight the Jews. But so far there is no proof of this.

There were, of course, thousands of Arabs who volunteered to fight the Jewish state. Morocco, Tunisia and

Algeria all sent thousands to Egypt to join forces with the Muslim Brotherhood to fight. But the Egyptians interned most of them after rioting broke out and they never participated in the war.

The Jordanian Arab Legion was led by British officers seconded by the British Army. There were about 75 British officers and professional soldiers with the Legion, serving as artillery operators, mechanics and in communications, Morris said.

There were rumors that the Egyptians had hired ex-German officers to help train their people, particularly in tank warfare, Morris said.

The Syrians had French trainers. The British advised the Egyptians and Iraqis until early 1948. Some of these advisers may have been involved in the battles, Morris said.

There were none reported captured or killed. Morris suspects if they had been captured, the Israeli forces most likely killed them on the spot.

THE MIGHTY MA'UZ continued from pg.5

MYSTERY SHIP SEEN AS EXILES' HAVEN

Yacht Constructed in 1931 Is
Believed Carrying Jews
Into Palestine

By GEORGE HORNE

An 800-ton yacht, the subject of international "representations" and of considerable speculation on the New York waterfront as a "mystery" craft, is headed eastward from Marseille presumably to engage in running the British blockade carrying Jewish refugees into Palestine, it was disclosed yesterday.

The 2,000-horsepower Abril, built in 1931 and formerly called the Cythera, left New York late in December headed for Marseille with a cargo that aroused attention.

With a crew of twenty-eight men aboard and flying the flag of Honduras, the trim yacht carried a thousand mess kits of an Army type, believed to have been bought in surplus sales here, and 1,500 standard type lifejackets. Her ac-

commodations and stores indicated that she would take on passengers in number far in excess of any journey in her previous history.

She had cleared her papers at the Custom House, according to public records there, on Dec. 25, and two days later she quietly left port. The names of her master and crew are not publicly known, but her owner was listed as the Tyre Shipping Company, 233 Broadway, a corporation formed on June 10, 1946, with the firm of Friedman, Marx & Handler, of the same address, as attorneys.

Knows Nothing About Owners

K. Bertram Friedman of the law firm said he had drawn up the incorporation papers but that he knew nothing of the owners of the vessel or of her destination.

Lord Inverchapel, British Ambassador in Washington, has made representations at the Department of State on the subject of the powerful motor yacht, but the basis of the representations are not known.

A spokesman at the Department of State said yesterday that an investigation had been made, and no violation of the laws was found. A Maritime Commission spokesman said the yacht, formerly the PY31, in Navy use during the war, was sold for \$36,100, in the regular course of its duties as vessel disposal agent of the United States Government.

21 AMERICANS HELD FOR TRIAL IN HAIFA

19 Seamen and 2 Reporters
Were on Immigrant Ship
Seized Last Week

By JULIAN LOUIS MELTZER
Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES

JERUSALEM, March 10 — Twenty-one American citizens, including a woman named Hanna Herschkowitz, as well as two Norwegians with American first papers and two French nationals, all of whom arrived aboard the unauthorized immigrant ship Abril, were remanded by a magistrate in Haifa today.

They will be held for a fortnight pending investigations into charges arising from the ship's arrival in Palestine waters. The Americans include eighteen men and one woman, who were allegedly the ship's crew, and two newspaper reporters — Wallace Litwin of 17 East Eighth Street, New York, representing the North American Newspaper Alliance, and Albert L. Hirschkoff of 2047 Bay Ridge Parkway, Brooklyn, a freelance. One of the French nationals is Jacques Meir, a Paris newspaper man.

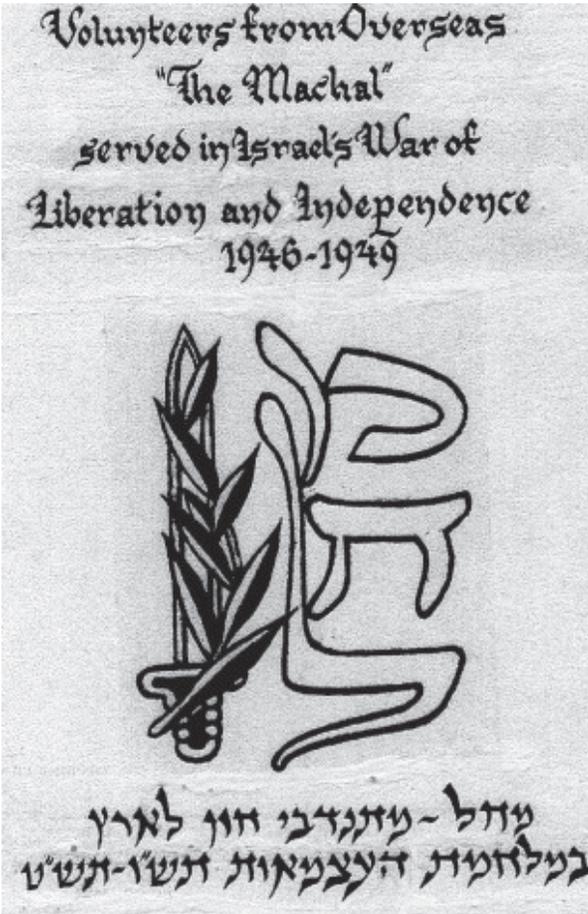
The crew is charged under local legislation with "abetting persons

NYT Jan. 18, 1947

NYT Mar. 11, 1947



(Zach is the son, age 11, of Ofer and Laura Ben Amots of Colorado Springs. The work was encouraged by the Center for Jewish Culture and Creativity in Los Angeles. Ofer tells me that Zach read whatever he could get his hands on about Machal in preparation writing the poem.)



Machal Plaque

MACHAL

BY ZACH BEN AMOTS (2004)

As if proud birds
 All flying together in formation
 Flapping of wings ringing in the air
 Carrying the hopes of the innocent
 Renewed hope flashing in their eyes
 Some fragile, some mighty
 But all selfless.

Visions of peace and victory lit up their minds.
 Only a few emerge
 They fly in as hawks and come out as doves.

* * *

Dignity and bravery versus hatred and aggression
 Came crushing upon each other.

Two thousand years of terror and trials had been their share,
 Two thousand years of hopes and prayers.

Too long had it been,
 Too long with no home or independence.

And now a declaration was made,
 And nothing would stop it.

Without warning a war begins.

They fight for their freedom,
 They fight for their lives.

* * *

Outnumbered and weak, all confidence almost lost.
 When out from the sky, across oceans, across lands,
 Like angels,
 They came.

Not drafted, not asked for, but freely came forward.

They arose
 To fight for Freedom
 To fight for Independence.

All hope that had been lost,
 Was renewed.

* * *

*Machal,
 Mitnadvai Chutz La'Aretz
 Volunteers From Abroad*