

# 4,500 Jews Get Another Lesson in "Democracy"

By Evelyn Atwood

For the past 12 days, 4,500 Jewish refugees, among them 1,800 women and children, bound for Palestine, have undergone bloodshed and torture at the hands of the British imperialists that Hitler could hardly excel.

Packed like sardines in an ancient American ferryboat renamed **Exodus 1947**, this mass of tired, hungry, unwashed people, clad in rags, sleeping on boards, endured their hardships in the hope of finding a place where they could begin a new, decent life for themselves and their children.

About 17 miles out of Haifa, six British warships — five destroyers and one cruiser — opened up savage warfare on the little vessel and its defenseless occupants. The warships smashed into the **Exodus** from three directions, enveloping the ship in a cloud of fire bombs, gunfire, tear gas. Huge portions of the ship were reduced to kindling wood.

## SCORES WOUNDED

For more than three hours, while women and children screamed, the murderous assault continued. Twenty men fell seriously wounded, five lay dying, a hundred were injured. William Bernstein, 24, of Los Angeles, chief mate of the ship, with four others in the wheelhouse were attacked by armed British soldiers who leaped aboard the vessel. Bernstein died the following day in a Haifa hospital of a fractured skull. A 15-year-old boy, orphaned by Hitler's gas chambers, expired of British gun wounds. Jewish boys were "smashed down like animals," reported J. S. Grauel, former clergyman and now working with the American Christian Palestine Committee.

The damaged ship, in danger of floundering, made for the Haifa port. The ship's captain flashed a message to UNSCOP (United Nations Special Commission on Palestine) which correctly stated: "Come quickly, come immediately to Haifa to witness a shocking crime against humanity and international law. There was never such a crime on the high seas. . . ."

Unloaded from the **Exodus**, many of them in bloody bandages on

stretchers, the Jewish immigrants were ordered aboard three British ships, the **Empire Valour**, **Ocean Vigour** and **Runnymede Park** for re-shipment to France. Food supplies were far from sufficient for such multitudes.

British officials still claim that the refugees were well treated. The condition of the involuntary passengers revealed quite the contrary. Several died as a result of ill treatment or of wounds. According to a Reuters dispatch, a Jewish doctor who went aboard the **Runnymede Park** said there was an epidemic of diarrhoea among the children. But reports about the condition of the ship's occupants could not be verified, since newspaper men were forbidden even to approach the ships. The wretched people could be observed only through field glasses. Some were peering through portholes. Others were standing on decks which were completely compartmented with barbed wire.

So bitterly have the Jews suffered in Europe at the hands of the Nazis and later of the Allied "liberators" that to date they are refusing to leave the ships docked at Port de Bouc, France, and accept refuge offered in France. "The authorities seemed relieved when the refugees declined to land and the British did not demand a forcible evacuation of the vessels. There was obviously a lack of supplies to care for so large a group," reports the July 30 **N. Y. Times**.

## U. S. SHARES GUILT

The British imperialist brigands are not alone in their responsibility for this monstrous episode which is only one of the shocking crimes against a long-suffering people. President Truman's crocodile tears about their plight, his hypocritical request of the British government to permit 100,000 Jews to emigrate to Palestine, cannot cover up the crime of Wall Street's government in closing the doors of this coun-

## British Seize Refugee



At least three persons were killed. British Navy boarding party seized the ship outside territorial waters off the visibly damaged side, the vessel's rudder was damaged and members of a British boarding party can be seen on deck.

try to these displaced persons.

The Jewish people, like the oppressed, toiling masses of the whole world, will find genuine peace and security only when the monstrous capitalist system is abolished. But right now their hardships can be mitigated through a demand raised by the workers of every country to open its doors. Above all, in this big and rich country, the workers must force Congress and Truman to immediately open the doors to the Jewish and other refugees.