

The Voyage of “Ha’Umot Ha’Meuchadot” [The United Nations]

“Ha’Umot Ha’Meuchadot” was a 30 meter long, 70 years old wooden sailing vessel, equipped with an overhauled diesel engine. The vessel had been called Archmidis. She was bought by Ha’Mossad Le’Aliya Bet in Italy and prepared to receive Ma’apilim at Porto Venere. On December 24th 1947, she anchored near the northern shore of the Bay of Chivitavekia port and 537 Ma’apilim came aboard, aided by an improvised bridge from shore to deck. They also used two rubber boats that were pulled along a cable stretched between the shore and the vessel, so that the boarding process would be expedited.

The Ma’apilim were, for the most part, from the Zionist Youth Movements of Hungary, Rumania and Poland and their average age was about 35 years. There were also 35 children with them. The commander of the vessel was David Maimon and he was accompanied by the Palyamnik- Emanuel (Man) Vardi and the Gideonit - Shoshana Carmeli. The crew of the vessel, including the captain, was Italian.

The voyage took eight days of peaceful sailing until on January 1st, 1948 they neared the shores of Palestine, where they were discovered by a British scout plane that contacted a British destroyer. The commander altered course and headed North for the shore of Nahariya, where he beached the vessel. The Ma’apilim disembarked with the aid of a boat and by sliding down a rope. They were greeted on shore by men of the Palyam and citizens of the town. The latter spread the Ma’apilim in various kibbutzim and other settlements nearby. The commander and the other Palyamnikim also ‘evaporated’.

(Compiled by Tzvi Ben-Tzur)



*The Ma’apilim disembarking
“Ha’Umot Ha’Meuchadot” near Nahariya*



Army Takes 131 As Refugees

Palestine Post Bureau

HAIFA, Saturday. — In house-to-house searches in Nahariya yesterday morning, 131 "suspected refugees" were rounded up by soldiers and Police. They had been among about 700 passengers on the s.s. United Nations, the schooner which beached herself at Nahariya on Thursday afternoon.

The town was cordoned off and the search was made during a curfew. The Local Council had notified the Army that the inhabitants would not cooperate, and no identity cards were shown.

However, the operation was carried out in good humour on both sides. The Local Council said that soldiers were polite and tactful.

The 67 men, 46 women and 18 children who were "spotted" as immigrants were gathered in the town cinema and then escorted in Army lorries to the Kiryat Shmuel transit camp. Two have been brought to the Government Hospital here.

Two Haifa newspapermen, one representing the Arab and the other the Jewish press, were taken to Nahariyah under escort to observe the proceedings.