

2 Quakers Flying from City On Palestine Peace Mission

Evans and Vail Hope to Bring Arabs, Jews Together; Choose Egypt as Offering Best Place for Talks

By JOHN LaCERDA
Of The Bulletin Staff

An attempt to end the fighting in Israel will be made by two Philadelphia Quakers.

One of them is Harold Evans, who was to have become mayor of Jerusalem. The other is James G. Vail, who recently returned from the Holy Land, and is now being rushed back in an effort to halt the strife.

Evans, who leaves with Vail tomorrow, announced the change in his mission at the headquarters of the American Friends Service Committee, 20 S. 12th st., this afternoon.

"The UN feels," said Evans, "that a small group of Quakers might be of service in the Near East in establishing peace.

"Pattern Knocked Out of Shape"

"The pattern of our original mission has been knocked out of shape, but the underlying purpose, that of reconciliation, is needed even more."

He and Vail will fly to Cairo, and there attempt to bring both Arabs and Jews together.

"The place to arrange the peace is outside the fighting area," said Evans. "We feel that, at least in the beginning, we can work more effectively in Egypt."

"According to normal standards," he said, "the chances for success of this mission are small. However, this is by no means a conventional mission. It is absolutely without political bias.

"It is concerned only with all the inhabitants of Jerusalem as human beings. We have no military force to uphold our decisions, nor, as Quakers, would we welcome it. Whatever we may accomplish will depend entirely upon the only force we regard as valid or capable of solving the position we face—man's good will to man."

Originally, the United Nations had intended to send C. Reed Cary,

another director, to Jerusalem with Evans.

Cary, Evans said, "has retired in view of the availability of Vail, who was in Cairo and Palestine within the past month and while there, helped to achieve the original cease fire order in Jerusalem."

Explaining the change in his mission, Evans said:

"Both sides in the Palestine conflict have shown confidence in the Quakers as a religious group working for peace on non-political grounds and on the basis of non-violence. This puts on us the responsibility to be of any services we can in restoring peace in Jerusalem and in preserving from destruction the holy places of that city revered alike by Jews, Moslems and Christians."

If such a venture should succeed, Evans continued "it might be a first ray of light in a new and better day of international relationships" and provide a present-day application of the message "Not by Might nor by Power but by My Spirit."

Vail, who lives at 502 W. Front st., Media, is a vice president of the Philadelphia Quartz Co. During his recent tour he visited South Africa, the Kenya colony and most of the troubled areas of the Middle East. His association with the American Friends Service Committee goes back to 1920 when he helped with the child feeding program in Germany. In 1939, he went to Berlin to discuss the possibility of helping Jewish refugees. From 1941-45 he was secretary of the Foreign Service section of the AFSC.

Evans is a 62-year-old lawyer, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Haverford College, former member of the Pennsylvania Public Service Commission and a member of the board of managers of Haverford College. He also is a director of the Mine Hill & Schuylkill Haven P&E road.

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chance even to leave the United States.

"I won't say I wanted the job or sought it," Mr. Evans said. But both the Arabs and the Jews apparently have confidence in the Quakers, he continued, and the Quakers had stepped in many times before in places of tension to work out solutions along peaceful lines. It can be done again, he suggested.

Mr. Evans said he would not leave for Jerusalem for ten days, at the earliest. He said his wife would probably accompany him.

Mr. Evans, who is 61 years old, is a partner in the Philadelphia law firm of MacCoy, Brittain, Evans and Lewis. He is a member of the executive board of the American Friends Service Committee and is presiding clerk of the Philadelphia yearly meeting.

In the winter of 1941 he went abroad for the Quakers to investigate conditions of child nutrition in Germany and German-occupied countries. He was a member of the Public Service Commission in Pennsylvania in 1925-26. In the past he has been attorney for the civil liberty bureau of the American Union Against Militarism, on the general committee of the Liberty Defense Union and on the executive committee of Fellowship and Reconstruction.

Position Is Anomalous

Although Mr. Evans has wide powers as the "neutral" commissioner for Jerusalem, his position remained somewhat anomalous. Under the trusteeship plan proposed for the city by the United States, a higher ranking United Nations commissioner for Jerusalem may be appointed, to whom Mr. Evans would be responsible.

In a still higher rank, with authority over all Palestine, would be the proposed United Nations mediator, who is to be chosen by a committee composed of representatives of China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The most frequently suggested candidate for the post of mediator is Count Folke Bernadotte, president of the Swedish Red Cross and nephew of King Gustav V of Sweden. Count Bernadotte, who married the American-born Estelle Manville, daughter of the late industrialist Edward H. Manville, served as intermediary between the Allied countries and Germany in the days immediately preceding the Nazi surrender.

In addition to the three separate authorities now proposed for Palestine and Jerusalem, there is still the Security Council's three-nation Truce Commission operating on the spot.