

BEN GURION STANDS FIRM:

Public opinion in Israel is sharply divided over the United Nations' demand for evacuation of the Gaza Strip. Premier Ben Gurion, after days of Cabinet debate, decides on his own authority that the U.N. order shall be obeyed. Here in Gaza, Israel prepares to withdraw from the 25-mile strip of Mediterranean coastline she has doggedly held ever since her brief war with Egypt.

Egypt says this land, where Arab farmers still plough their ancient fields, was occupied by aggression. Israel declares that Egypt herself had been using it as a base for aggression, and that Israel had had to police it to prevent a return to the old border-raiding days. Now the troops are leaving, and in Jerusalem, right-wing demonstrators heatedly protest against Ben Gurion's decision.

They have little faith in the United Nations' ability to halt a new out-break of the hit-and-run fighting which has kept the Israeli frontier in a permanent state of siege ever since Israel was founded. Feelings run high - and squads of police arrive to protect the Parliament building, in case some of the hotter heads try to break in. The Prime Minister arrives to seek Parliament's support for his decision - and he gets it, by a majority of more than three to one. Outside the protests continue, but parliament's decision stands.