

GUNBOATS
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and kept in force by the Pompidou Government.
A Government statement said that France would continue her Mideast peace efforts as part of the Big Four effort. Any strong anti-Israel reaction such as a break in relations would have effectively lined up Paris on the side of the Arabs and further weakened the peacemaking role of both Paris and the Big Powers.

United States officials were reported to have viewed the affair as a great coup for Israel while the British press said the matter was Israeli revenge against France for the arms embargo that embarrassed the Paris Government and raised questions in the mind of the Arabs. Arab Governments and newspapers were confused over the affair, not knowing whether Paris let the boats go in a weakening of the arms embargo or whether Jerusalem had carried off a clever operation. The commanders of one of the boats at a news conference discussed only naval aspects of the journey and shunned other matters beyond saying on oil contract-

ing firm owned by the Israeli Government, Netivei Nepht, has instructed him to deliver the ships to Israel. A company official said the boats would be used for general purposes in off-shore drilling operations.

The drilling ship Typhoon had recently arrived at Ashdod and was to drill six bores off the Israeli coast as part of an \$8 million oil investment undertaken by the Belco Petroleum Corp. of New York.

(The Belco company is headed by Arthur B. Belfer, a leading Jewish philanthropist whose charitable endeavor include support of universities in Israel and the United States. He is the benefactor of the Belfer Graduate School of Science at Yeshiva University and a member of the school's board of trustees.)

French officials contended that they had been told that a Norwegian Company bought the ships for use in oil prospecting. This report was challenged when Norway denied that the company was registered in the nation and when the ships, after leaving Cherbourg late at night without running lights sailed into the Mediterranean sea and headed for Israel. Once on the high seas, it picked up



LEGION OF MEDAL PRESENTED TO CHAPLAIN JACK OSTRAVSKY (LEFT) BY BRIGADIER GENERAL ALBIN F. IRZYK, DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL OF FORT DIX, N.J. THE AWARD WAS FOR ESPECIALLY MERITORIOUS AND OUTSTANDING SERVICE WITH THE 1ST LOGISTICAL COMMAND, LONG BINH, VIETNAM, FROM JULY 1968 TO JULY 1969, ACCORDING TO WORD RECEIVED BY THE COMMISSION ON JEWISH CHAPLAINCY OF THE NATIONAL JEWISH WELFARE BOARD.

Israeli escort vessels and air coverage when this became practical.

The five boats were part of an order of 12 built at the Cherbourg shipyard. Five were completed and delivered before the arms embargo while two others were fitted out when Gen. De Gaulle ordered a total halt on deliveries. These two vessels were taken out for a trial run by their Israeli crew and never returned to France.

The boats were built to Israeli naval specifications calling for 240 ton craft with a top speed over 40 knots and cruising speed of 38 knots. They carry torpedoes, guns and Israeli-made Gabriel sea-to-sea missiles with a 12-mile range.

Israel has never acknowledged receiving the seven boats although they are seen on patrol off the coast. The ships were involved in intercepting an Arab terrorist boat that led to the breaking up of the leading commando network in northern Israel.

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