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Background of the June War

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Background of the June War

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FOREWORD

This paper, written immediately following the June 1967 war, analyzes the various elements leading to the conflict.

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Background of the June War

ABBREVIATIONS

AID	Agency for International Development
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
GAOR	General Assembly Official Records (UN)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
PCC	Palestine Conciliation Commission
PL	Public Law
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
UAR	United Arab Republic
UN	United Nations
UNEF	United Nations Emergency Force
UNSCOP	United Nations Special Committee on Palestine
US	United States

ORIGINS OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE

Arab Nationalism and Zionism in Conflict

The Arab-Israeli dispute is essentially the result of the conflict, in both theory and practical application, of two ideologies: political Zionism[1] and Arab nationalism.[2] The failure to achieve a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict may be attributed to the foreign policies of the Arab states and Israel, as well as to the incompatibility of their ideologies.[3]

Zionism viewed the establishment of a Jewish state as necessary for the preservation of world Jewry.[4] This Jewish state could only be established in Palestine, its historical location. By contrast the Arab nationalists hold that the independence and unity of all Arab states must be secured. Palestine is regarded as an integral part of the Arab world.[5]

The Impetus of WWI

The Arab nationalist movement developed under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. Its earliest impetus was the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798, though it later received support from other aspects of the Western impact on the area, notably from the educational institutions established by Western missionaries in the nineteenth century. World War I accelerated Arab nationalism's political role in the Middle East and prepared the stage for its conflict with Zionism's program for the area.

Turkey's decision to enter the war as an ally of the Central Powers provided an opportunity for the Arab nationalists to attain their goal of national independence. Although they previously had been supporters of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, the British shifted to the position that the war effort, as well as the interests and security of the British Empire, would be best served by removal of the Ottoman presence from the area. Accordingly, arrangements were made involving the French, the Arabs, and the Zionists that laid the basis for the division of the Ottoman Empire after the successful completion of the war and provided the foundation for the claims of both the Arab nationalists and the Zionists in their dispute over control of Palestine.

An exchange of correspondence between Sharif Hussein of Mecca and the British High Commissioner for Egypt, Sir Henry McMahon, outlined the terms on which the Arabs would revolt against Ottoman rule and would enter the war on the side of the Allies.[6] In essence the agreement was military in nature. Its political provisions were vague and allowed various interpretations. It gave rise to Arab hopes that their aspirations for independence and unity would be fulfilled in an area that included Palestine since in their view it fell within the area defined in the correspondence as eligible for Arab unity and independence.[7] The British Government maintained that Palestine was excluded from the area under discussion.

In 1916 Britain entered into the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which provided for the partition of the Ottoman Empire into British and French spheres of influence.[8] The Balfour Declaration was issued on 2 November 1917.[9] It lent support to Zionist aspirations for a Jewish homeland in Palestine by noting:

> His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

The termination of WWI saw neither the McMahon nor the Balfour statements fulfilled. This resulted in part from their mutually conflicting nature and from the fact that both were negated by provisions of the Sykes-Picot Agreement. The ultimate result of these conflicting arrangements was the thwarting of Arab nationalist aspirations and the promoting of Arab disillusionment with Britain's role in support of Arab nationalism.[10] It fostered Arab hostility to the Zionists as symbols of great power "imperialism" and as intruders in Arab territory.

The Mandatory Period in Palestine

British control replaced Ottoman rule in Palestine in 1917. The Palestine Mandate was allocated to England by the Allied Supreme Council on 25 April 1920 and was confirmed by the Council of the League of Nations on 22 July 1922. Its provisions lent encouragement to the Zionist cause.[11]

The Zionists adopted a program designed to fulfill the pledges contained in the Balfour Declaration as confirmed by the mandate—the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Preparations for the eventual achievement of independence began with the establishment of the Jewish Agency and Jewish local government in Palestine under the mandate. In support of this goal the Zionists attempted to increase the size of the Jewish community in Palestine through immigration, which also served the goal of a haven for persecuted Jewry, and through monetary support, which enabled the community to purchase land and maintain itself.

The Arab nationalists were embittered by the establishment of the mandate, which shifted independence from a right embodied in the pledge to Sharif Hussein to a future eventuality under the mandate system. Though divisive factors were strong, there was general Arab agreement on opposition to the mandate system. From the first the Arabs adopted a program of noncooperation with the mandatory regime in an effort to bring about Arab self-government and independence. They protested Jewish immigration and land purchases in an effort to limit the number and power of Jews in Palestine so that an Arab majority and Arab control would be assured when self-determination was offered.

During most of the mandatory period[12] anti-Zionist activities were coordinated by various Palestine Arab groups including the Arab Higher Committee and the Arab Higher Executive. On its establishment in 1945 the Arab League was charged with the task of coordinating Arab opposition to the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine and of mustering support for an Arab Palestine state.[13] Throughout this period there were clashes between the Arab and Jewish communities in Palestine.

UN Consideration of the Palestine Mandate

The submission of the mandate problem to the UN by the British Government on 2 April 1947 provided an opportunity for both the Arabs and the Jews to present their positions[14] to the UN and to secure their desired goals. After preliminary debate the General Assembly established the UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to consider the problem. After deliberation UNSCOP presented two plans for consideration. Its majority plan was approved by the General Assembly on 29 November 1947 as UN Resolution 181-II.[15] It provided for the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states joined in an economic union. Jerusalem was to be governed by a separate international authority under UN supervision.

The Jewish Agency generally favored the partition plan. The Arabs declared that they would not recognize the UN resolution and served notice that were it to be implemented they would "reserve freedom of action."[16]

Israel's Independence and Arab-Israeli Conflict

Increased hostility between the Arab and Jewish communities in Palestine followed the adoption of the partition resolution and raised doubts that the partition plan could be implemented.[17] However, despite this de facto conflict in Palestine, Britain announced its intention to terminate the mandate on 15 May 1948. The Jewish Agency prepared the Declaration of Independence of the new Jewish state and announced it on 14 May in Tel Aviv. Arab preparations were discussed at the Arab League meeting in Damascus in May 1948 and were designed to achieve the establishment of an Arab state in Palestine through the use of military force.

On 15 May 1948 the Secretary-General of the Arab League informed the Security Council of the intervention of the Arab League in Palestine to achieve peace and order and to restore the territory to the Palestine Arabs.[17a] The ensuing hostilities were terminated by the signing of armistice agreements between Israel and the four contiguous Arab states (Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Transjordan, later Jordan) from February to July 1949.[17b] Since then, and until 1967, major conflict erupted only in 1956 when Israel, England, and France joined in an attack on Egypt, though terrorist and reprisal raids have been frequent features of the Middle Eastern scene.[18] By and large under the armistice system the major efforts of the parties have been channeled into a "cold war" of continual friction that has manifested itself in a series of problems and issues including Israel's existence, its territory and boundaries, the status of Jerusalem, the status of the refugees, the Arab boycott of Israel, the blockade of Suez and Aqaba to Israeli shipping, the utilization of the waters of the Jordan River, and similar phenomena. These problems remain at the core of Arab-Israeli relations.

BACKGROUND TO CONFLICT

Although the 1967 war between Israel and the Arab states may be regarded as another episode in the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict, its origins and the particular factors that played a role in the 1967 hostilities and condition post-conflict discussions might be traced to the beginning of 1966 and more particularly to 22 February of that year.

The New Syrian Regime

On 22 February 1966 a coup d'état brought into power the current radical regime in Syria. The coup, staged by the left wing of the Baath Party under the direction of MG Salah Jadid Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, ousted the more moderate right-wing regime of LTG Amin el-Hafez.

The new Syrian Government noted its desire to make common cause with "progressive and leftist elements of the Arab World so they can stand against imperialist moves and alliances." This was widely interpreted as being directed against King Faisal of Saudi Arabia and his proposal for the establishment of an Islamic Alliance.[19] In a speech marking the third anniversary of the 8 March revolution that brought the Baath Party to power in Syria, President Atasi elaborated on the policy of the new regime. He emphasized the Palestine problem and noted the necessity of a war to secure the liberation of the usurped Arab land.[20]

Nasser's Unity Day Speech: Reactionaries vs Progressives in the Arab World

In a speech on 22 February 1966 honoring Unity Day,[21] President Nasser of Egypt brought to the fore his view of the basic division in the Arab world, postulating the concept that the Arab states could be categorized as "progressives" and "reactionaries."[22] Nasser's thesis was that there were two currents in the Arab world. One was the current of imperialism and reaction that sought to divide the forces of Arab unity and Arab nationalism. Imperialism and reaction attempted to plant Israel in the heart of the Arab nation and to prevent cooperation among the Arab states by sowing seeds of sedition, discord, and division.[23] In opposition were the forces of progress that worked for the establishment of an Arab national unit, for Arab unity and Arab nationalism, and struggled to bring about the improvement of the material conditions of the people of the Arab world, essentially through socialist techniques and procedures. In that address Nasser included Egypt, Syria, the Republican regime of Yemen, and Iraq in the progressive group and the regimes of Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, in alliance with Iran, Israel, and the imperialist states of the West, in the reactionary category. In subsequent speeches and statements Nasser added the Royalist regime of Yemen and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to his list of reactionaries; and Algeria, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and the nationalist forces in Aden and South Arabia to the list of progressives.

Egyptian-Syrian Defense Pact, November 1966

On 4 November 1966 a mutual-defense agreement between Egypt and Syria was signed in Cairo.[24] It provided for the establishment of joint command over the armed forces of the two states.[25] Under the terms of the agreement each state would regard armed aggression against the other as an attack against itself and would come to the aid of its defense partner by taking all necessary measures, including the use of armed force, to defeat the aggressor.[26] President Boumédienne cabled his support for this agreement of progressive forces and indicated that Algeria would join in the struggle against imperialism, Zionism, and colonialism.

Syrian-Israeli Clash, 7 April 1967

The next major event took place on 7 April 1967. Syrian military units fired on an Israeli tractor in the demilitarized zone south of Galilee, and mortar, tank, and artillery shelling were concentrated on three Israeli villages in the area. Israel sent planes to knock out the artillery and engaged Syrian jets. Israel reported six MiG-21's of the Syrian Air Force shot down and no Israeli planes lost. Damascus Radio reported that five Israeli planes and four Syrian planes had been downed. It was apparent from the Egyptian reaction to the clash that the UAR did not want an Arab-Israeli conflict at that time—Egypt made no move to aid Syria or to attack Israel. Verbal support for Syria shown by other Arab states was not evidenced in Cairo where the Syrian battle communiqués were simply published without comment.[27] Nasser seemed preoccupied with the defeat of Arab "reaction" in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and the Persian Gulf as well as victory over British imperialism in Aden and South Arabia. It was reported[28] that the Syrian Government had requested assistance from Egypt and that Cairo had refused on the grounds that the defense agreement was not automatic.[29]

While the Syrians were claiming victory in the air battle with Israel, Jordanian communications media were speculating on the status of inter-Arab relations. The Jordanian newspaper, Al Quds, questioned:

> What steps has Cairo taken? . . . Egyptian forces are busy fighting fellow Arabs in Yemen instead of fighting Israelis. The Syrian Government pretends to have the only force that can liberate Palestine, but reality has shown that our return to Palestine can be achieved only through a United Arab front.[30]

Nasser's May Day Speech, 1967

In his annual May Day speech Nasser reaffirmed the division in the Arab world between progressive and reactionary forces and concentrated his verbal attacks against King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, King Hussein of Jordan,[31] the Shah of Iran, President Bourguiba of Tunisia, and the US as being in league with Israel against the Arab nation. He was particularly vitriolic regarding the alignment between the US and the forces of reaction in what he saw as a plot aimed at him and the Arab nation. He concluded by observing: "Brothers, the battle we are fighting is not an easy one. It is a big battle headed by America. Actually, we are not fighting Faisal, Hussein, the Shah or the imbecile Bourguiba. Never. They are all tools in the hands of the United States."

PROGRESSION TO CONFLICT

The progression of events[32] leading to the 1967 conflict began on 8 May 1967 when terrorists, apparently emanating from Syrian territory, infiltrated 5 miles into Israeli territory, planted an explosive charge on the main highway north of the Sea of Galilee, waited for a military vehicle to pass, and then detonated the charge under the vehicle.[33] The deep penetration into Israel, the choice of a major highway, the decision to wait for an appropriate target, and the use of comparatively sophisticated equipment clearly indicated to the Israelis that the Arab terrorists were able to act in Israeli territory almost with impunity.

Following this incident, Prime Minister Eshkol indicated that Israel reserved the right of action and that continued acts of terrorism would be responded to by Israel at a time, place, and by a method of its own choosing.[34]

Syria reacted by alerting its military, announcing the movement of forces to the Israeli border and calling for the activation of the Cairo-Damascus Defense Pact (1966).[35] A state of emergency was proclaimed in Egypt on 16 May and consultations between Cairo and Damascus with regard to implementation of the UAR-Syrian defense pact were reported in progress.

On 17 May Cairo and Damascus announced that the UAR and Syria were in combat readiness and alleged that a strong Israeli military buildup on the borders of both countries was taking place. On 18 May Jordan, Iraq, and Kuwait proclaimed that their forces had been mobilized and were ready to take part in the battle against the common enemy. Yemen's support was pledged to the UAR. Israel announced it was taking "appropriate measures" in view of the concentration of Arab forces on her borders. The following day the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) was officially withdrawn from the Israeli-Egyptian border at Egypt's request. Its positions were then manned by contingents of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the UAR armed forces. Egypt's Ministry of Religious Affairs was reported to have ordered the country's religious leaders to preach a Jihad (holy war) to regain Palestine for the Arabs. Vitriolic radio attacks were made against Israel, Zionism, and imperialism. Field Marshal Amer indicated that UAR armed forces had taken up positions from which they could deliver "massive retaliation against Israeli aggression." Troop buildups continued throughout the ensuing period.

On 21 May both Israel and Egypt announced the calling up of reserves, and Cairo spoke of the continued eastward movement of Egyptian armed forces. Ahmed Shukairy, leader of the PLO,[36] announced that some 8000 of his troops had been placed under the military commands of the UAR, Syria, and Iraq. He declared that Israel would be completely annihilated if war broke out and that the PLO would continue its raids on Israel. Shukairy called on the Jordanian people to overthrow King Hussein. Syrian Defense Minister, MG Assad, said that Syria's armed forces were "ready not only to repel Israeli aggression, but to take the initiative in liberating Palestine and destroying the Zionist presence in the Arab homeland."

On 22 May UN Secretary General U Thant left New York for Cairo to hold conversations with Nasser regarding the Middle East situation.

On 23 May the closing of the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping was announced by the government of the UAR. Such an action would have effectively blockaded the Israeli port of Eilat at the head of the gulf—Israel's only outlet to the Red Sea. The Cairo announcement said that the blockade would apply to vessels flying the Israeli flag and to ships of any other country carrying strategic goods to Eilat. Israel described this action as a gross infringement of international law and "an aggressive act against Israel." In the speech announcing the blockade, Nasser attacked the alliance of imperialism, Israel, and reaction as well as the policies of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Iran. Despite the confrontation with the common enemy, Israel, inter-Arab differences were still prominent.

On 23 May Eshkol spelled out the dangers resulting from the blockade of the straits. He called on the UN and the major powers to act without delay in

maintaining the right of free navigation through the Straits of Tiran and in the gulf.

President Johnson stated that the US considered the Gulf of Aqaba to be an international waterway and that the blockade of Israeli shipping in the gulf was illegal and potentially dangerous to peace. He also expressed the US Government's dismay "at the hurried withdrawal of the UN Emergency Force from Gaza and Sinai" and noted "that the United States is firmly committed to the support of the political independence and territorial integrity of all the nations" of the Middle East.

The following day Cairo announced that all entrances to the gulf had been effectively closed by mining, land batteries, and armored boat and air patrols; that Israeli ships trying to enter the gulf for Eilat would be fired on if they failed to obey orders to turn back; and that other vessels would be subject to search to establish whether they were carrying strategic materials, including oil, to Eilat.

On 26 May Nasser spoke before the leaders of the Pan Arab Federation of Trade Unions. In the course of that address he sketched some of the factors governing any conflict and any postconflict settlement. He noted that if war with Israel should come, "the battle will be a general one and our basic objective will be to destroy Israel." This was based on his assessment of the combined weight of Egypt, Syria, Algeria, Iraq, and Kuwait against Israel. He referred to the US as "the chief defender of Israel" and an "enemy of the Arab," described Britain as "America's lackey" and noted that de Gaulle had "remained impartial" on the question of Aqaba and did not toe the US or British line. In Jerusalem Israeli officials warned that Israel would not wait indefinitely for an end to the Egyptian blockade of Aqaba and stressed that she would be entirely within her rights in breaking the blockade as an act of self-defense if the UN or the maritime powers did not do so.

On 27 May U Thant reported to the Security Council and suggested that there be a "breathing spell" in which Middle East tension could subside. The various parties to the dispute seemingly adhered to the Secretary General's suggestion and proceeded to bolster their positions in the diplomatic realm while participating in the buildup of their military forces. During this period there was little doubt that one of two options had to be taken: Either the blockade of Aqaba would be lifted or there would be conflict between Israel and Egypt with some of the other Arab states probably joining in.

On 30 May Egypt and Jordan entered into a defense pact in which both states committed themselves to "immediately take all measures and employ all means at their disposal, including the use of the armed forces . . . " to repulse "any armed attack on either state or its forces."[37] On 4 June King Hussein announced that the Egyptian-Jordanian Mutual Defense Treaty had been extended to include Iraq.[38] With Iraq's acquiescence Egypt could include Syria, Iraq, and Jordan in its defense system by virtue of specific treaties.

On 5 June 1967 war broke out between Israel and Egypt and was followed shortly by a general Arab-Israeli confrontation.[39]

FACTORS LEADING TO CONFLICT

From 23 May when the Gulf of Aqaba was blockaded to 5 June when hostilities began, Israel and the Arab states headed toward conflict as a consequence of three factors: Nasser's policy course, Israel's policy course, and UN (particularly U Thant's) activities.

Nasser's Policy

Nasser was the primary actor in the preconflict period and his policy course tended to ensure conflict. Essentially the question is why he acted the way he did, particularly since this was contrary to his previous actions and to his views that the time was not appropriate for the confrontation with Israel.[40]

A persuasive assessment is that Nasser acted initially to bolster his position in the Arab world[41] and to divert attention from the failures of Egyptian domestic programs.[42] Once the chain of actions had begun he was caught up in the scheme of things to the point where he could not back down. Thus matters were effectively taken out of his hands and the course of events tended to carry the day.[43]

In the period immediately before the 1967 clash with Israel, Nasser's image in the Arab world had reached its nadir. Egypt was suffering from severe economic problems and the general economic outlook was grim.[44] The country was short of funds to buy food, to finance development, to support its 200,000-man army, and to provide jobs. The national debt was estimated at $1.5 to $2 billion, a significant part of which was overdue to Western sources.[45] Foreign credit was tight and the balance of payments was worsening. The trade gap for 1966 was expected to have widened considerably from the 1965 margin of $327 million. It was reported that the gap for the first half of 1966 was $185 million.[46] The Five-Year Plan was shelved and a modified 3-year program was adopted to bring quick returns. Various industrial development projects already in effect had to be cut back.[47] It was reported that about $100 million had to be cut from the 1966 investment budget.[48] The growth rate of the economy fell from between 6 and 7 percent to between 2 and 4 percent,[49] though the population growth rate continued at 3 percent. The population increase outstripped increases in agricultural output and threatened to offset food-production gains expected after the completion of the Aswan High Dam.[50] Two-thirds of the wheat needed to feed the Egyptian population had to be imported. Wheat was no longer available from the US, and the USSR had agreed to supply only a part of the requirement, and that through a barter arrangement.[51] The Egyptian Government had already pledged much of its cotton crop (the largest earner of foreign exchange) and a portion of the Suez Canal tolls (the second-largest source of foreign exchange) to the Soviet Union.[52] The cotton-crop volume in 1966 declined 10 percent from the previous year.[53] Military expenditures for more than $1 billion worth of Soviet military equipment, for Egyptian-produced rockets and jets, and for the military campaign in Yemen (which cost about $250 million in 1966)[54] placed a heavy burden on the economy and diverted scarce resources from development projects.

Externally Nasser's prestige suffered significantly. Despite claims of leadership in the battle to liberate Palestine, possession of the largest and best-equipped Arab army, and the existence of the Syrian–Egyptian defense

pact, Nasser had been careful not to initiate or be drawn into conflict with Israel since 1956. Nasser's Arab world rivals took note of this and intensified their criticism of his inaction.[55] His unreliability as a defense partner, exemplified by inaction during the Syrian-Israeli clash, was a central theme of his critics.[56] UNEF's position on Egypt's border with Israel was noted as Nasser's excuse for not acting more militantly.

His forces in Yemen were bogged down, and his presence there had increasingly become a political, military, and economic liability at home and in Yemen. Many Yemeni Republicans were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with Egyptian involvement and Egyptian direct rule, and in 1966 a "third force" or "Yemen first" group was formed.[57] Besides the strain placed on it by the military involvement, Egypt had all but taken over and administered the Yemen Government and supported its bankrupt economy. Dissatisfaction with that operation was growing in Egyptian military and civilian circles. Heavy casualties, mismanagement, corruption, inefficiency, and further economic burdens for Egypt were in part the cause of this dissatisfaction. Nasser's operations in Aden and South Arabia were not significantly more successful and were becoming more costly as the level of training, arms supply, and monetary support for the nationalists increased. Saudi Arabia, which supported the Royalists in Yemen and viewed the growth of Nasser's influence in the Yemen-South Arabian area as a threat, purchased significant amounts of arms from the US and Britain.[58]

The Syrian reaction to the perceived threat of Israeli aggression provided Nasser with an opportunity to burnish his tarnished image at home and in the Arab world. Acting essentially in an attempt to show that Nasser, not the propagandists of Syria or the reactionaries of Jidda, was still leader of the Arab world and more particularly of the forces in support of the cause of eliminating Israel, the Egyptian President ordered mobilization of his forces. Initially Egypt's troop movements through Cairo were made past the US Embassy, a logistically difficult feat, but one which was sure to be well publicized. If prestige had been indeed a primary objective, Nasser could have stopped after mobilizing his forces and putting on a show of force, and probably still have achieved his purpose. If Nasser had been reacting to a reported imminent Israeli attack on Syria (his stated reason for his actions), mobilization would have been sufficient to ensure a strengthened defensive position and he could have stopped at that point.

He chose to order the withdrawal of UNEF, seemingly expecting that U Thant would plead with him not to insist on this and that Nasser, in a magnanimous gesture, could agree while still bolstering his Arab world position. U Thant's unexpected willingness to agree to UNEF's withdrawal left Nasser with a dilemma. He could not very well stop at that point because he no longer had an excuse for his inaction with regard to Israel.

He chose to go one step further and announced the blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba. He knew that this would be regarded by Israel as an act of aggression and would almost certainly lead to some confrontation.[59] It was logical to assume that the US would concur in Israel's view since the US was on record as supporting freedom of passage through the Straits of Tiran.[60]

The possibilities of preventing further escalation at the two earlier stages—mobilization and UNEF withdrawal—had been quite good since he had not as yet

had a direct confrontation with Israel. He could have backed down without serious loss of face. Once Aqaba was blockaded, however, any backing down was certain to result in some loss of prestige. Nasser probably expected that he would not have to go to war and that if he did he could win. He may have calculated that the blockade of the gulf would result in some outside intervention by the UN, the Western powers, or the US that would allow him a way out with prestige and would prevent conflict between Egypt and Israel. At that point the US reiterated its position on freedom of passage through Aqaba, and Israel made known that it regarded the closing of Aqaba as an act of aggression. The next move was Nasser's, and it is questionable whether he had given thought to what his next act would be. Neither the conversations with U Thant, the Security Council's meetings, or the proposed Four Power meeting provided the way out Nasser needed to avoid conflict, and since he did not choose to back down, conflict seemed assured.

Israel's Policy

Israel's first reaction to Nasser's mobilization was one of calm, expressing the view that this was simply a show of force and a reassertion of the Egyptian role as leader of the Arab world. The blockade of Aqaba changed the Israeli interpretation. Concern became the paramount Israeli position, though many doubted that Nasser's real intention was to go to war. An immediate Israeli response was expected since Israel maintained that the straits were an international waterway and should be open to Israeli shipping, and that a blockade of Aqaba was an aggressive act.[61] After the 1956 conflict Israel had agreed to withdraw its troops from the Sinai Peninsula only after having been assured that freedom of navigation in the gulf would be maintained. During the ensuing period, Israeli shipping utilized the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba to reach the Israeli port of Eilat. This passage was assured by the presence of UNEF troops in the Sinai Peninsula and particularly at Sharm el Sheikh.

Israel's response to the blockade of Aqaba was to send its Foreign Minister, Abba Eban, to the US to inquire into the US position. En route he met with President de Gaulle of France and Prime Minister Wilson of England. It may be may be assumed that during his discussions with President Johnson, Eban explained the Israeli view that the Gulf of Aqaba was international waters and pointed out that Israeli flagships must be allowed to traverse the straits. He probably spelled out that Israel was ready, willing, and able to utilize military force in support of this position should that be necessary. Eban questioned the US position and asked what support Israel might expect from the US. It is likely that Johnson urged restraint and suggested that Israel wait for the exhaustion of diplomatic efforts to open the gulf. The immediate response of Eban and the Israeli Government was to wait and see whether the various options available to the US in support of freedom of navigation at Tiran would be exercised to assure Israeli passage through the straits. Israel placed no deadline on the requirement of free passage, but it seemed likely that an indefinite postponement of meeting the requirement would not be tolerated since time would work to the advantage of the Arab position by allowing for the full mobilization and coordination of Arab armies. Eban indicated that the time expanse was a matter of weeks, not months.

Israel held the position that it must and would allow the US and the maritime powers sufficient time to try to use the offices of the UN and other international agencies to support this position of free passage. During the course of these attempts Israel would maintain its national armed power at a level of full readiness and would attempt diplomatic maneuvering of its own, including presentation of its case to the UN. Once the US and England had attempted to ensure freedom of navigation and were seemingly making little headway, public pressures in Israel were exerted to include Moshe Dayan in the government as Minister of Defense.[62] Dayan, widely admired in Israel because of his role in the 1956 Sinai campaign, felt that the appropriate and immediate response should be essentially military and not political. His co-option to the government indicated that the time for diplomacy to prevent war was short.[63]

U Thant's Role

The role of UN Secretary General U Thant with regard to the withdrawal of UNEF and prevention of Arab–Israeli conflict requires examination. The events that led to withdrawal began on 16 May when LG Muhammad Fawzi, then Chief of Staff of the Egyptian Army, sent a letter to MG Indarjit Rikhye, who commanded UNEF, requesting that the force be pulled back from the tense border for its own safety.[64] After learning of this U Thant said that the UN would have to remove the force if asked to do so.[65]

On receipt of the Egyptian request U Thant had essentially three options.[66]

(a) He could acquiesce and withdraw UNEF troops immediately. This was the option he chose. The rationale behind this option was that UNEF troops were on Egyptian soil only by permission of the Egyptian regime. Once the permission was rescinded, UNEF did not have a legal basis for remaining there.[67] In addition the Egyptian request for withdrawal of UNEF forces was made initially over Cairo Radio, and was not transmitted to the Secretary General until after the fait accompli.

(b) He could bluntly refuse to withdraw UNEF forces from Egypt. This option was not feasible because of the small size of the force,[68] the ready acquiescence of the Indian and Yugoslav contingents to the Egyptian request,[69] and the general political climate in which UNEF was forced to operate—more specifically the unwillingness of France and the Soviet Union to pay their share of the expenses of the peace-keeping operation. Any attempt by the Secretary General to maintain the force in opposition to Egyptian protests would have had to have been made bearing the French and Soviet views in mind.

(c) He could agree to withdrawal and prolong the time involved in this maneuver.[70] In all likelihood this would have served the intended purpose of reducing the level of confrontation and might have precluded conflict if our assessment of Nasser's motivations is accurate.

Once the initial UN decision of withdrawal had been effected and the situation had further deteriorated, what options were available to the UN? The Secretary General, for his part, traveled to Cairo and engaged in conversations with the President of Egypt, supposedly in an attempt to work out some compromise position. This trip proved to be of little practical value as was his proposal for a "breathing spell." The latter was doomed because it seemed unlikely to yield any results and because of its unacceptability to Israel, who felt that time worked for the Arabs. The General Assembly was

not in session and any attempt to utilize it in the situation would have required a minimum delay of time, general international agreement as to the need for its meeting, and some assessment of the helpfulness of the role it could play. This combination was unlikely. The Security Council was called into session on Wednesday, 24 May 1967, to consider the situation. The general tenor of debate indicated a reluctance on the part of most members to take any action that might preempt the Secretary General's activities. The UN was effectively precluded from functioning and seemed to be waiting for something more tangible before taking action.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. On Zionism, see Arthur Hertzberg (ed), The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader, Doubleday and Herzl Press, Garden City, N.Y., 1959; Basil J. Vlavianos and Feliks Gross (eds), Struggle for Tomorrow: Modern Political Ideologies of the Jewish People, Arts, Inc., New York, 1954; Theodor Herzl, The Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution of the Jewish Question, (various editions).
2. On Arab nationalism, see George Antonius, The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement, various editions; Hans E. Tutsch, Facets of Arab Nationalism, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1965; Fayez A. Sayegh, Arab Unity: Hope and Fulfillment, Devin-Adair Co., New York, 1958; Hazem Zaki Nuseibeh, The Ideas of Arab Nationalism, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1956; Sylvia G. Haim (ed), Arab Nationalism: An Anthology, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962.
3. For an examination of the ideological facet of the encounter between Zionism and Arab nationalism by an Arab nationalist, see Fayez A. Sayegh, "The Encounter of Two Ideologies—Zionism and Arabism," in William Sands (ed), The Arab Nation: Paths and Obstacles to Fulfillment, Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., 1961, pp 73–91. (A series of addresses presented at the Fourteenth Annual Conference on Middle Eastern Affairs, sponsored by The Middle East Institute, 5–7 May 1960.)
4. The Basle Conference of 1897 established the World Zionist Organization, which sought the creation of a Jewish state as a counterforce to the antisemitism prevalent in nineteenth century Europe.
5. "Palestine occupies a vital position—spiritual, geographic and strategic—in the Arab world. It stands in the heart of the Arab world, at the junction of communications between Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. Without Palestine the Arab League would remain incomplete and unreal, crippled at a very sensitive point." E. Atiyah, "The Arab League," World Affairs (new series), 1:34–47 (Jan 47). (p 43)
6. George Antonius describes the correspondence in this manner: "The obligations incurred by each side with regard to military performance were not explicitly stated, for they had been debated orally with the Sharif's messenger. But it was understood all along (and the Sharif never questioned) that he would bring all his power and influence, with all the material resources he could muster, to bear on the task of defeating Turkey; and similarly understood that Great Britain would help him by supplementing his deficient material resources, in arms, equipment, and money. On the political side, the Sharif had committed himself to the proclamation of an Arab Revolt and to an open denunciation of the Turks as enemies of Islam, while Great Britain had explicitly incurred two distinct obligations: to recognise the Arab caliphate if one were proclaimed; to recognise and uphold Arab independence in a certain area." George Antonius, The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1938, p 176. For the text of the correspondence, see pp 413–27; for a discussion of it, see pp 164–83. A portion of the correspondence is available in J. C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., Princeton, New Jersey, 1956, Vol 2, pp 13–17.
7. These hopes were further encouraged, in the Arab view, by other statements, including Wilson's Fourteen Points and a series of British and joint British-French

statements, issued during and immediately following the war. See, for example, "British and Anglo-French Statements to the Arabs January-November 1918," in Hurewitz, Vol 2, pp 28-30.

8. For the text see Hurewitz, Vol 2, pp 18-22.
9. Ibid, pp 25-27. A useful study of this aspect of the problem is Leonard Stein, The Balfour Declaration, Simon & Schuster, Inc., New York, 1961.
10. "At the end of the war Britain was, however, confronted with two other secret war-time arrangements, the Sykes-Picot agreement of 16 May 1916 and the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917, which reflected the ambitions of the Great Powers in the Arab world, and which rendered the implementation of her war-time promise to the Arabs impossible. The rise of Ibn Saud, favoured by the British Government, prevented its consummation in the Arabian peninsula itself. In vain did Feisal, son of Hussein, at the Peace Conference of 1919 at Paris, stress the claims of the Arabs to independence and plead for their unity, laying special emphasis on cultural, geographical and historical factors that bound them together. Instead of achieving unity and independence the Arabs saw their lands (with the exception of the Arabian peninsula) divided into British and French spheres of influence through an ingenious system, known as the Mandates System, devised by General Jan C. Smuts." Mohamed Abdul Aziz, "The Origin and Birth of the Arab League," Revue Egyptienne de Droit International, 11:39-58 (1955), p 41.
11. Article 2 provided: "The Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home, as laid down in the preamble, and the development of self-governing institutions, and also for safeguarding the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race and religion." For the text of the mandate see Hurewitz, Vol 2, pp 106-11.
12. For a full discussion of the Arab-Jewish conflict during the Mandatory period see J. C. Hurewitz, The Struggle for Palestine, W. W. Norton & Co., New York, 1950, and William R. Polk, David M. Stamler, and Edmund Asfour, Backdrop to Tragedy: The Struggle for Palestine, The Beacon Press, Inc., Boston, 1957.
13. At the Preparatory Committee meeting in Alexandria in September 1944 Musa al-Alami represented the Arabs of Palestine and took part in the deliberations with standing equal to that of the other delegations. At the close of those meetings a Protocol was issued (7 October 1944) with a "Special Resolution Concerning Palestine": "The Committee is of the opinion that Palestine constitutes an important part of the Arab World and that the rights of the Arabs in Palestine cannot be touched without prejudice to peace and stability in the Arab World." For the full text of the Alexandria Protocol see Muhammad Khalil, The Arab States and the Arab League: A Documentary Record, Khayats, Beirut, 1962, Vol 2, pp 53-56.
14. A useful compilation of the basic views of the parties may be found in Esco Foundation for Palestine, Palestine: A Study of Jewish, Arab, and British Policies, Yale University Press, New Haven; Oxford University Press, London, 1947, 2 vols. The position of the Zionist movement as presented to the UN by the Jewish Agency is available as Book of Documents Submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations Relating to the Establishment of the National Home for the Jewish People, The Jewish Agency for Palestine, New York, May 1947.
15. For the text of the General Assembly Resolution and the Plan of Partition with Economic Union, see Hurewitz, Vol 2, pp 281-95.
16. Amir Faisal al Saud of Saudi Arabia made this statement in the General Assembly after passage of the resolution: "We have pledged ourselves before God and history to fulfill the Charter in good faith, thereby respecting human rights and repelling aggression. However, today's resolution has destroyed the Charter and all the covenants preceding it. . . . the Government of Saudi Arabia registers . . . the fact that it does not consider itself bound by the resolution adopted today by the General Assembly. Furthermore, it reserves to itself the full right to act freely in whatever way it deems fit, in accordance with the principles of right and justice." UN General Assembly Official Records, (GAOR), 2nd session, p 1425. Similar statements were made by the delegates of Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. See GAOR, 2nd session, pp 1426-27. "On 19 September [1947] the Political Committee of the League,

meeting in Sofar, Lebanon, secretly decided to send troops into Palestine in case a partition plan were agreed upon." B. Y. Boutros-Ghali, "The Arab League 1945–1955," International Conciliation (498):411 (May 1954).

17. In a progress report submitted to the Security Council on 16 February 1948, the UN Palestine Commission concluded that it ". . . will be unable to establish security and maintain law and order, without which it cannot implement the resolution of the General Assembly, unless military forces in adequate strength are made available to the Commission when the responsibility for the administration of Palestine is transferred to it." United Nations Palestine Commission: First Special Report to the Security Council: "The Problem of Security in Palestine," UN Document A/AC.21/9, 16 Feb 48, included in UN Document S/676, 16 Feb 48. It was this increased violence and the difficulties of implementing the partition resolution which led to the US proposal that a trusteeship be established.

17a. UN Document S/745. See also UN Document S/748.

17b. See Hurewitz, Vol 2, pp 299–304. See also Shabtai Rosenne, Israel's Armistice Agreements with the Arab States: A Juridical Interpretation, Blumstein's Bookstores, Tel Aviv, 1951.

18. One such event that had a discernible impact on the factors leading to the 1967 conflict was the Israeli raid on the Jordanian village of Es-Samu in November 1966.

19. On 17 April 1965 King Faisal spoke at the World Islamic League's celebration in Mecca and discussed discord in the Islamic world: "Moslems now are facing a test unprecedented in history. In the past, Moslems struggled and fought against known enemies. But today, we are afflicted with certain tribulations existing among Moslems themselves. It is the duty of us all to seize the pilgrimage as an opportunity to consider our affairs, examine and treat our shortcomings, comprehend our faith, and serve our nation. On this day—which I hope will mark the beginning of Islamic amity—I wish to explain the Saudi Kingdom's policy. We support the call for holding an Islamic summit conference to enable the highest authority in the Islamic world to discuss and consider the affairs of Moslems and, God willing, agree on their betterment. Our Arab policy is one of fraternity, love, and cooperation within the framework of the Arab League. We share with our Arab brothers all matters, questions, and problems concerning them. God willing, we shall be in the vanguard and not in the rear. We only hope that our Arab brothers will look upon us with fraternity and love and not be a source of harm or difficulties for us." Although Faisal's proposals were publicly advocated on the basis of revitalizing Islam against the forces of atheism in the Arab world his actual purpose was essentially political. He sought to rally the forces of Islam in opposition to Nasser's Arab socialism and its policies in the Arab world, particularly on the Arabian peninsula.

20. "Brethren, the Palestine question is the basic subject in the revolution's program. The liberation of Palestine has been the corner-stone in the revolution's plan and national policy. The revolution intends to direct the affairs of state in light of its firm belief that Arab existence will remain impaired and threatened by extermination unless the usurped land is liberated. The Palestine battle is a liberation war in the complete sense of the word. The revolution believes that delaying the battle only increases the enemy's power. This is why the revolution calls for unification of popular forces believing in liberation to face the Zionist enemy and expel it from the occupied territory."

21. Unity Day is the anniversary of the union of Syria and Egypt into the United Arab Republic (UAR) in February 1958.

22. It should be noted that ofttimes "radical" replaces "progressive" and "moderate" replaces "reactionary" in discussing these groupings.

23. In Nasser's view, the Arab reactionaries cooperate with imperialism because they feel that Arab unity "always underlies a social concept, mainly, stamping out exploitation and the alliance of feudalism and capital and setting up a society of sufficiency and justice—a society free from class distinctions." Thus they would be endangered by any Arab unity movement.

24. The agreement officially entered into force on 9 March 1967 with the exchange of ratification instruments in Cairo.

25. The agreement was established for an initial 5-year period, subject to renewal, and set up a joint defense council, including the Foreign and Defense Ministers of

each state, as well as a joint command headed by the Chiefs of Staff of the two states. In the event of military operations the Chief of Staff of the UAR armed forces would assume overall command.

26. An Egyptian-Syrian communiqué issued at the conclusion of the pact included a paragraph in which the parties agreed that the situation in the Middle East was characterized by "the opposition between the Arab progressive forces and reaction, the ally of imperialism and Zionism." The New York Times of 5 Nov 66 reported the Syrian Premier had indicated that the defense pact was aimed not only against Israel but also against Arab traditionalist regimes, particularly those of Jordan and Saudi Arabia.
27. See, for example, Egyptian Mail, 8 Apr 67 and The Egyptian Gazette, 9 Apr 67.
28. Christian Science Monitor, 12 Apr 67.
29. In his 1967 May Day speech Nasser offered the following observation on the Israeli-Syrian encounter: "Fighter planes have a limited range. Our fighter planes cannot reach the Syrian border. Their limited range does not enable them to make it to Syria and back. No fighter plane can do it because of its limited range. How can we send planes from here? . . . We signed a defense agreement with Syria. We said we were ready to implement the agreement in defense of Syria. The Syrians and the Egyptians are both Arab peoples. We can never differentiate between them. But when an air clash occurs between Syria and Israel, we cannot help Syria from Egypt. The only way to support Syria is to have our planes stationed in Syria."
30. The New York Times, 9 Apr 67.
31. Nasser noted: "The Americans and the British pull the strings of Kings Faisal and Hussein. The Americans and the British decided right from the beginning of the recent stage that they would not engage the Arab nation and the Arab revolution directly. They would rather use agents. They found a Hashemite agent and a Saudi agent. They accepted. . . . King Hussein's radio works for the American Central Intelligence Agency. King Hussein himself works for the CIA."
32. This section is intended as a brief discussion of the major events of May 1967 leading to the 5 June outbreak of hostilities and three of the more significant factors in this progression are considered in more detail below. Although detailed consideration of the role of the Soviet Union is beyond the scope of this paper and is under separate study, some comments on the curious activities of the USSR—in warning Syria and Egypt of Israeli aggressive intentions and actions and then obstructing UN efforts to head off conflict—are warranted.

    There is sufficient evidence to suggest that Soviet machinations contributed to the chain of events leading to the 5 June conflict though the full extent of these activities is unknown. Some consideration of the Soviet role is to be found in Walter Laqueur, "The Hand of Russia," The Reporter, 36:18–21 (29 Jun 67). Laqueur begins by inquiring: "To what extent is the Middle Eastern crisis the product of Soviet initiative?" He suggests: "There is in the analysis of current affairs a strong tendency to attribute to deliberate design much that is the result of accident, a temptation that ought to be resisted. But there is also a considerable body of evidence suggesting that the Soviet Union played a certain part both in the preparation of the script and in its orchestration." p 18. Israel's Foreign Minister, Abba Eban, discussed the Soviet role of supplying military equipment for the Arab armies and of spreading "alarmist and incendiary reports of Israel intentions amongst Arab governments." See Abba Eban, "Never Have Freedom and International Morality Been So Righteously Protected," Israel Information Services, New York, Jun 67, pp 16–19. (Text of the address by Israel's Foreign Minister, Mr. Abba Eban, in the General Assembly of the UN on 19 Jun 67.) In support of Eban's position the Israel Ministry for Foreign Affairs issued a Black Book, "The U.S.S.R. and Arab Belligerency,"(Information Division, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Jerusalem, 1967).
33. The New York Times, 10 May 67.
34. In a speech on 13 May (Remembrance Day) Eshkol noted: "We have furnished proof that we shall not permit our borders to be open to attack. We have proved that to their attempts to pick easy and exposed targets, we were able to respond at a place, time and by a method of our own choosing. Thus, the saboteurs and their employers found out that they would not accomplish their aims this way. We do not recognise the limitations they endeavour to impose upon our acts of response. The Arab States

and the nations of the world ought to know that any border which is tranquil from their side—will also be quiet from our side, and if they will try to sow unrest on our border—unrest will come to theirs." See also The Jerusalem Post (Weekly), 14 May 67.

35. Syria perceived an Israeli threat and the Arab states iterated statements concerning Israeli threats and a massing of Israeli troops on Syria's border. See "Statement Issued by a Foreign Ministry Spokesman," Damascus, 13 May 67, in Embassy of the Syrian Arab Republic Newsletter, May 67. A press release issued by the Embassy of the United Arab Republic in Washington on 26 May 67 included in its "chronology of events that led to the present Middle East situation" the following: "May 12, 1967—Israel threatened to occupy Damascus for the purpose of overthrowing the present government of Syria. . . . May 13—Israel massed thirteen brigades on the Syrian borders. . . . The U.A.R. had definite information at that time that Israel had designated May 17 to attack Syria and informed the United Nations of that."
36. On the PLO see Saadat Hasan, "Introducing the Palestine Liberation Organization," Palestine Liberation Organization, New York, no date; Palestine Liberation Organization, "The National Charter," no publisher, no date; and the various issues of Palestine Issue published by the PLO's New York office. For a negative view of the PLO see Information Department, The Jewish Agency, The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), A Survey—July 1966, and Information Department, The Jewish Agency. Arab Terrorist Organizations, A Survey—January 1967. Both Mideast Mirror and The Jewish Observer and Middle East Review contain numerous articles on the PLO.
37. An unofficial translation of the Pact is available in The New York Times, 31 May 67 and in International Legal Materials, 6:516–17 (May–Jun 67).
38. The New York Times, 5 Jun 67.
39. Most available evidence points to the conclusion that Israel launched a preemptive strike against the Arab states on the morning of 5 Jun 67. However, it should be noted that the Israeli action was taken in the context of a crisis situation that included assertions of belligerent intent on the part of Israel's Arab neighbors.
40. For example, during a joint press conference with President Aref of Iraq on 4 Feb 67, Nasser stated: "The battle with Israel is a decisive one. The Arab world cannot afford to enter a losing battle. We shall mobilize the Palestinian people first, then the Arab people. Then we shall face the fifth columns among us. Then we shall be free to deal with the Palestine issue. In 1948 King Abdallah was negotiating with the Jews, while the Egyptian Army was confronting the Israeli forces. All this means that we must first purge the Arab land of the forces which collaborate with imperialism. By cooperating with imperialism they cooperate with Zionism directly and indirectly. At the same time we will be getting ready. And as long as our enemies are unable to liquidate the Palestine issue, we shall be able to fix the time of the battle." He thus indicated the need to eliminate the forces collaborating with imperialism, which he identified as the Arab "reactionaries," and to rally the "progressives" before dealing with the Palestine problem.
41. As a practical consideration Nasser probably acted, in part, to take the initiative from the Syrians and to ensure his own control of Arab action vis-à-vis Israel.
42. In his speech of 9 Jun 67 reviewing the course of the war and announcing his intention to resign as President, Nasser justified Egyptian mobilization as the only possible response for Egypt in light of Israeli plans to invade Syria. These plans were known to him, he indicated, from Egyptian and Syrian sources as well as from Israeli statements, and were supported by the Soviet Union. As Nasser indicated, "Even our friends in the Soviet Union told the parliamentary delegation which was visiting Moscow early last month that there was a calculated [Israeli] intention." The New York Times, 10 Jun 67. Nasser again raised this point in his 23 Jul speech marking the anniversary of the revolution: "The information we received about the invasion of Syria came from many sources. Our Syrian brothers had information that Israel had mobilized 18 brigades on their front. We confirmed this information. It became evident to us that Israel had mobilized no less than 13 brigades on the Syrian front. Our parliamentary delegation headed by Anwar as-Sadat was on a visit to Moscow, and our Soviet friends informed Anwar as-Sadat at that time that the invasion of Syria was imminent."

While this is Nasser's publicly stated reason for his actions, there was no massing of Israeli forces on the Israeli–Syrian frontier. On 17 May U Thant informed the "Permanent Representative of the United Arab Republic that as of now, on the basis of the fully reliable reports received from the Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization in Palestine, there have been no recent indications of troop movements or concentrations along any of the lines which should give rise to undue concern." UN Document A/6669. It is likely that Nasser could confirm this from his own sources and that his actions were essentially aimed at bolstering his Arab world position. See also David Hirst, "Arabs Grant Nasser Full Hero's Status," Manchester Guardian Weekly, 25 May 67, p 3.

43. This is not to suggest that he could not have prevented conflict if he had wanted to, but that he would have found it difficult to do so without jeopardizing his leadership position in Egypt and the Arab world.
44. "Report from Cairo," Fortune 75:69–70, 75 (May 1967).
45. The New York Times, 28 Nov 66. Nasser had failed to make three payments of $4 million each to the International Monetary Fund on a loan of $105 million (The Washington Post, 16 Mar 67) and his 1967 debt to the US was $36 million, of which $27.8 million was due in June (The New York Times, 27 Feb 67).
46. _____, 27 Jan 67.
47. Egypt has put great emphasis on large-scale rapid industrialization and was heavily dependent on imports of industrial raw materials for this program. It was estimated that between one-third and one-half of the productive capacity of the state-owned factories went unused for lack of import materials because there was no foreign exchange to pay for them. The industrial wares that were produced found difficulty in foreign markets because of unsatisfactory quality and high prices. The New York Times, 27 Jan 67.
48. The New York Times, 28 Nov 66.
49. _____, 28 Nov 66.
50. _____, 10 Nov 66.
51. _____, 3 Jan 67.
52. The importance of cotton and the Suez Canal as foreign exchange earners is discussed in an article by Dr. Abdelmonem al-Qaisouni in Al-Ahram (Cairo), 9 Apr 67.
53. "Cotton Production in United Arab Republic," International Financial News Survey 18:423 (16 Dec 66).
54. The New York Times, 16 Jan 67.
55. Radio Amman on 3 May 67 stated: "Since 1956 Abd an-Nasir has been the only leader of an Arab state having common borders with the usurped part of Palestine who lives in peace and tranquility with Israel. Not one shot has been fired from his direction against Israel. Likewise, Israel has not fired one shot in his direction or toward the international forces camps. We hope Abd an-Nasir is satisfied with this and with the disgrace he represents. We hope Abd an-Nasir is satisfied with not approaching Israel or its forces. His treason has reached the point of disregarding violations of Egyptian air-space by the Israeli Air Forces and of not resisting them."

    Radio Jidda stated on 3 May 67: "Egypt did not want to enter into a battle with Israel, nor will it enter into such a battle in the future. Anyone who imagines that Egypt will wage an air battle or any other kind of battle against Israel to defend Syria or anyone else will wait a long while. . . ."
56. For example on 3 May 67 Radio Amman stated: "To justify his slackness in aiding fraternal Syria during the recent Israeli aggression, he alleged that the fighter planes in his possession are of limited range and cannot fly from their bases in Egypt to Syrian skies. . . . Did these planes not fly to Latakia and other towns in fraternal Syria a few years ago, when Nasir rose fuming with rage over the free Syrian revolution against the deviation from the noble national concept of unity? Have these planes not flown and are they not flying from their bases in Egypt to shell Yemen and the Yemenis with ordinary, napalm, and poison gas bombs?"
57. The New York Times, 13 Nov 66.
58. _____, 2 Oct 66.
59. In an article in Al-Ahram on 26 May Haykal indicated: "An armed clash with Israel is inevitable as a result of . . . [the closing] of the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping."

60. In a memorandum of 11 Feb 57 made public on 17 Feb the US Government stated: "The United States believes that the Gulf [of Aqaba] comprehends international waters and that no nation has the right to prevent free and innocent passage in the Gulf and through the Straits giving access thereto." Department of State Bulletin, 11 Mar 57, p 392. President Johnson reaffirmed this in his statement of 23 May 67.
61. The importance of the Gulf of Aqaba and some indication of Israel's willingness to use military action in support of its claim to freedom of passage was clearly emphasized by Eshkol during the course of a statement to the Knesset on 29 May 67: "Members of the Knesset, the Government of Israel has repeatedly stated its determination to exercise its freedom of passage in the Straits of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba and defend it in case of need. This is a supreme national interest on which no concession is possible and no compromise is admissible. It is clear to us, and I feel that it is now clear to the nations of the world, that so long as the blockade exists peace is in danger." (Underscoring is added.)
62. It was reported that on the evening of 30 May Eshkol was confronted by his cabinet, which suggested that for the sake of stability, either Dayan or Yigal Allon had to be co-opted. Eshkol's initial opposition to the inclusion of either man did not stem from a disagreement on whether or not to fight for passage through Aqaba but rather from long-standing political arguments, since both were critics of Eshkol and opponents of his policies. For further details see The New York Times, 2 Jun 67.
63. Dayan's inclusion in the cabinet did not mark the beginning of Israel's commitment to war, if necessary, to secure passage in the Gulf of Aqaba. At most it accentuated and popularized that commitment. To be sure, the presence of Dayan in the government affected its decision-making process and had an influence on the population that might be characterized as having "unified the national spirit," Curtis G. Pepper, "Hawk of Israel," The New York Times Magazine, 9 Jul 67, p 5. He probably should not be credited with having "infused an indecisive Cabinet with sufficient strength to fight the Arabs," (Ibid) since his role with regard to the decision to go to war was probably only catalytic.
64. The Washington Post, 18 May 67.
65. A UN spokesman stated: "The UNEF went into Gaza and Sinai over 10 years ago with the consent of the Government of the UAR and has continued there on that basis. As a peace-keeping force, it could not remain if that consent were withdrawn or if the conditions under which it operates were so qualified that the force was unable to function effectively." The New York Times, 18 May 67.
66. A fourth option, moving UNEF to the Israeli side of the border, was not a realistic alternative because of the Israeli view, adopted at the time UNEF was established, that the UN force would not be acceptable on Israeli soil.
67. The Secretary General's report of 19 May to the Security Council included the following statements concerning UNEF: "It is well to bear in mind that United Nations peace-keeping operations such as UNEF, and this applies in fact to all peace-keeping operations thus far undertaken by the United Nations, depend for their presence and effectiveness not only on the consent of the authorities in the area of their deployment but on the co-operation and goodwill of those authorities. When, for example, the United Arab Republic decided to move its troops up to the line, which it had a perfect right to do, the buffer function which the UNEF had been performing was eliminated. Its continued presence was thus rendered useless, its position untenable, and its withdrawal became virtually inevitable. This was the case even before the official request for the withdrawal had been received by me." UN Document S/7896. The text may be found in The New York Times, 21 May 67. Other statements by U Thant concerning the withdrawal of UNEF include UN Documents A/6669, S/7896, and S/7906. See also The New York Times, 27 Jun 67, and 28 Jun 67. See also, "Withdrawal of United Nations Emergency Force: Some Questions Answered," UN Monthly Chronicle 4:87-94 (June 1967).
68. This would have meant an inability to withstand Egyptian force exerted on it.
69. On 17 May at a meeting of U Thant and representatives of the seven countries which made up UNEF, India and Yugoslavia (together supplying about 1550 troops) made it plain that they would pull out if the UAR asked for withdrawal. The majority of representatives did not commit themselves and only Canada argued strongly for UNEF to stay in Egypt. The Times (London), 19 May 67.

70. On 17 May, previous to U Thant's announcement of withdrawal, the Egyptian commander at Sharm el Sheikh gave UNEF 48 hr to get out, and other incidents took place that indicate a prolonged withdrawal would have met with opposition from the Egyptian army. The New York Times, 20 Jun 67.