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30 March 1962

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY



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OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

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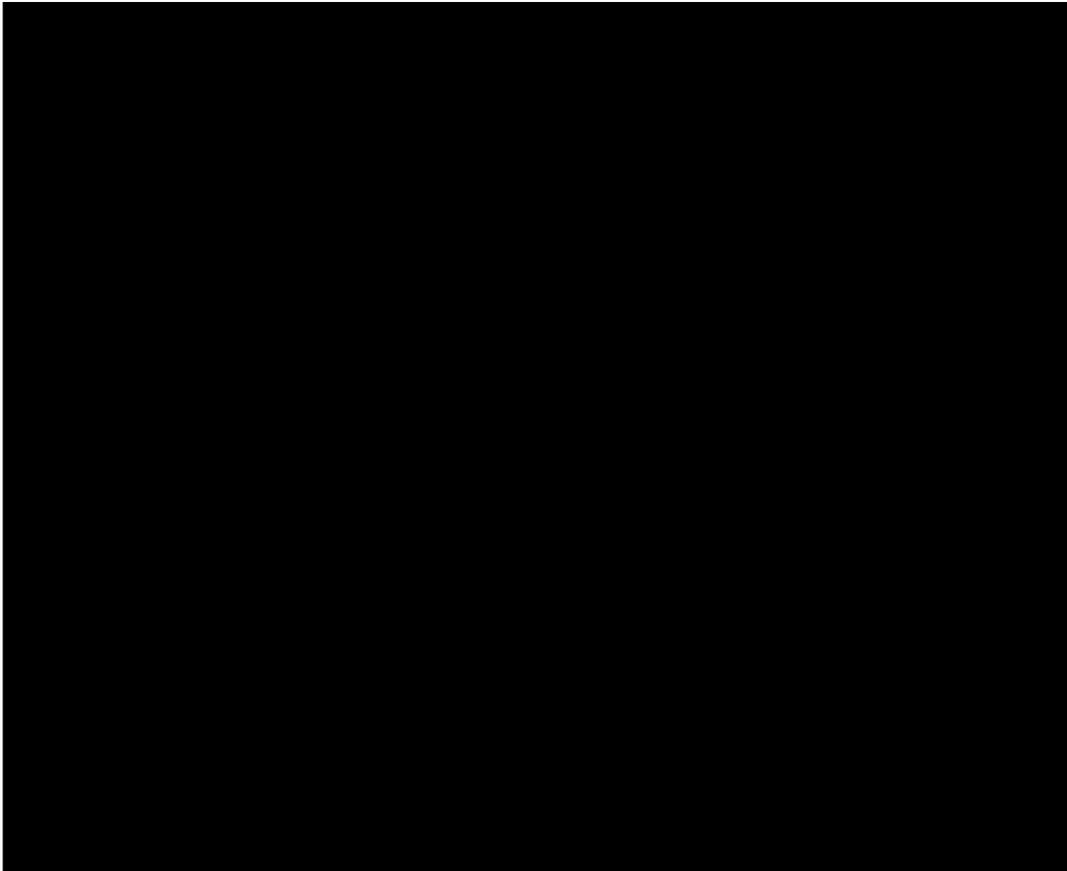
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THE WEEK IN BRIEF

(Information as of 1200 EST 29 Mar)



SYRIA Page 7

The Syrian army command, which has attempted since the break with the UAR last September to control government decisions, has forced out the Qudsi-Dawalibi government and assumed direct power. Its initial communiqués suggest that it contemplates resumption of certain socialist measures and some improvement of relations with Egypt. Pressure from radical elements in the officer corps, probably a major cause of the army command's action, is likely to lead sooner or later to a further governmental shift to the left. [REDACTED]

ISRAELI-SYRIAN TENSION Page 7

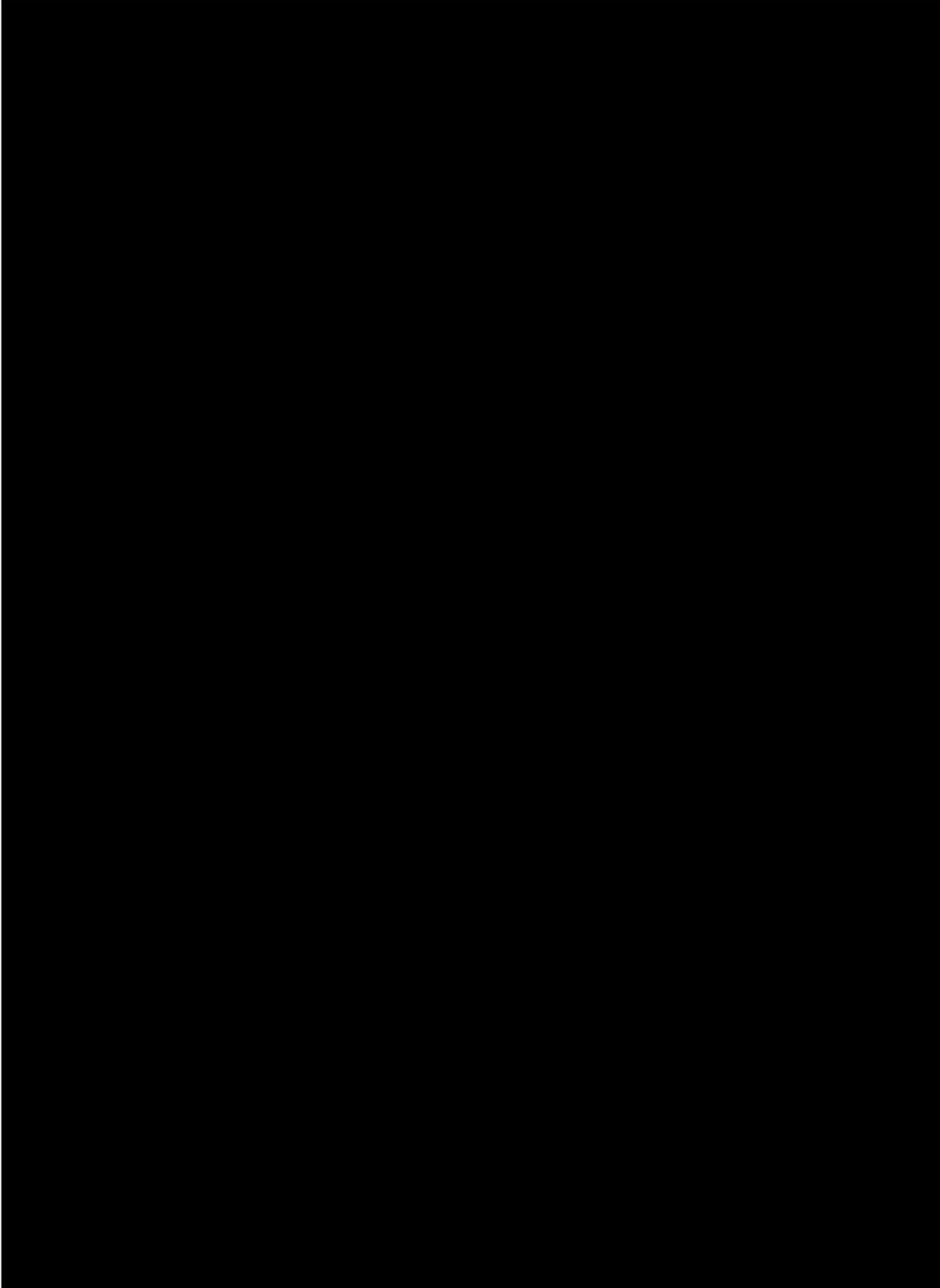
Syria and Israel continue to keep forces deployed in the Lake Tiberias area. Israel has undertaken a limited, selective call-up of reserves and has moved an infantry battalion, an artillery battalion, and a tank-destroyer company into the area north of the lake near the Syrian border. Although neither side seems likely at this time to launch a major attack, further clashes are likely. [REDACTED]

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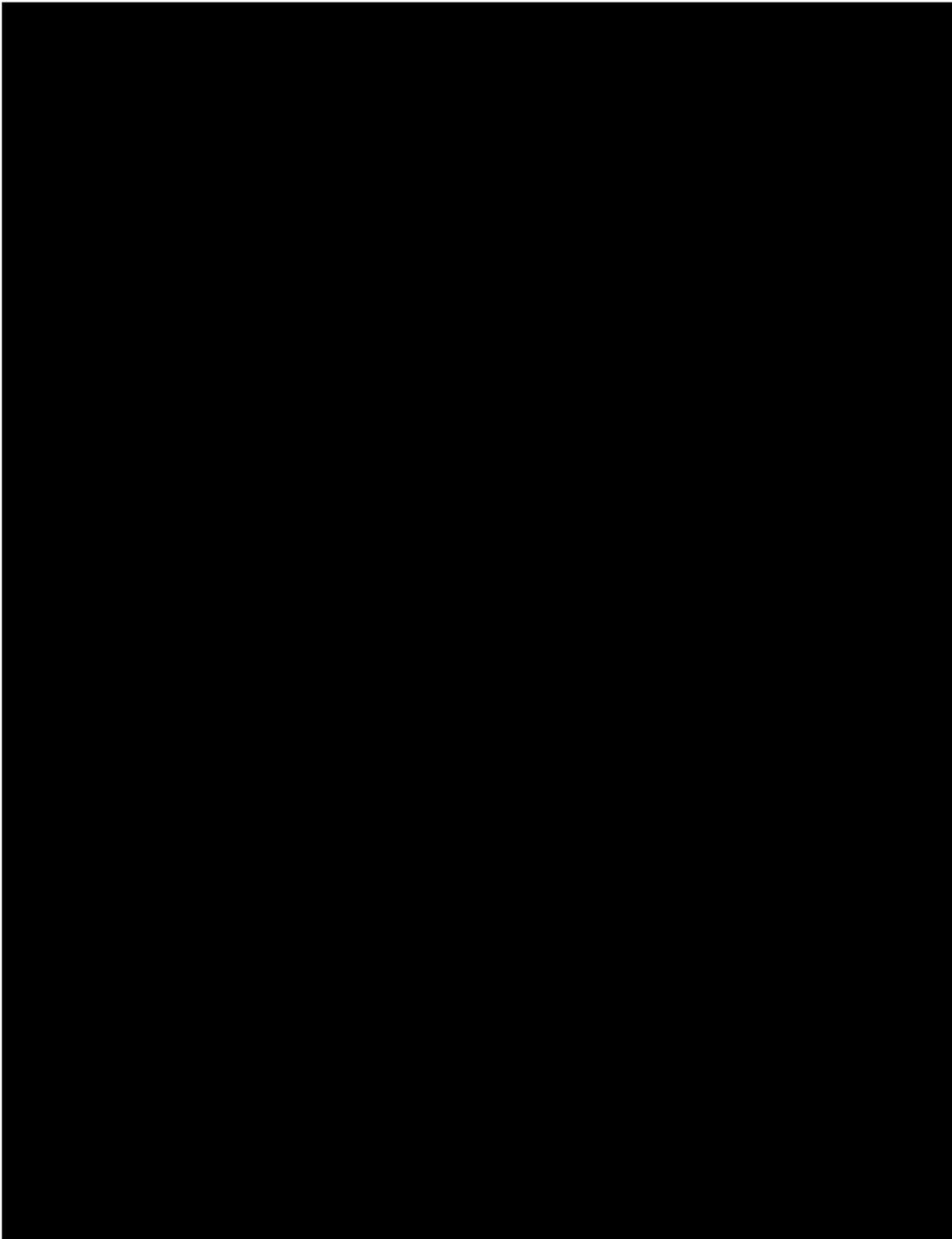
BRIEFS

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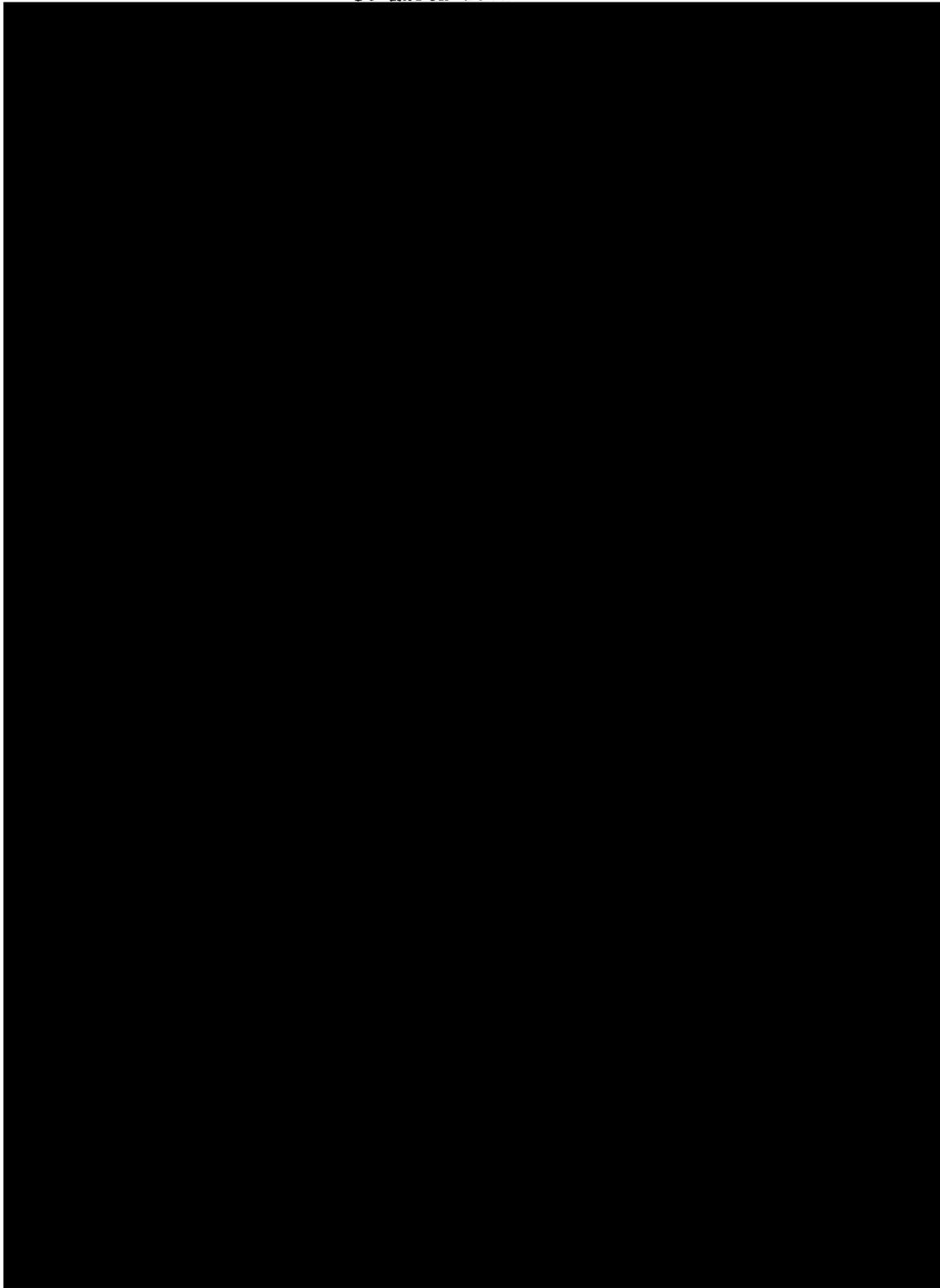
BRIEFS

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BRIEFS

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SYRIA

The Syrian army command, which has attempted since the break with the UAR last September to control government decisions, assumed direct power on 28 March, accepted the resignations of President Qudsi and the Dawalibi cabinet, and dissolved parliament. Army Chief of Staff Zahr al-Din has advised

██████████ that there will be no change in Syrian foreign policy and that new elections will soon be held. The tone of the army command's statement broadcast by Damascus Radio on 28 March suggests, however, than an important change is contemplated in Syria's relationship with Egypt, as well as a leftward shift from the conservative Qudsi-Dawalibi line in internal political and economic matters.

These prospective modifications of policy are, in a sense, complementary. Re-endorsement of the "socialist" approach, agricultural reforms, and industrial nationalizations instituted by Nasir in Syria will obviously help to pave the way for an improvement in relations between the two countries. The present tension between Syria and Israel is probably an important factor

in the army command's decision to try for a better relationship with Egypt. Conversely, suspicion in the army that the Dawalibi government had gone too far in developing closer relations with Iraq hastened Dawalibi's fall.

The command, after forcing Dawalibi out on 26 March, reportedly gave President Qudsi the opportunity to make two quick attempts to devise a successor cabinet. When Qudsi was unable to come up with a combination acceptable to key members of the command, the army leaders decided to take control.

Both the composition of and the pressure on the army command have changed considerably since last fall. Present members have become increasingly involved with various Syrian political factions and increasingly subject to pressures from radical elements within the officer corps itself. The struggle for power within the army now seems likely to become more rather than less intense; the result over a period of time will probably be a government further to the left. ██████████

ISRAELI-SYRIAN TENSION

Syria and Israel continue to keep forces deployed in the Lake Tiberias area. Syria reportedly moved an additional tank battalion to the border area on 24-25 March. Israel has undertaken a limited, selective call-up of reserves and has moved an infantry battalion, an artillery battalion, and a tank-destroyer company into the area north of the lake near the Syrian border. Although neither side seems likely at this time to launch a major attack, further clashes are likely.

On 25 March, Israel seemed to be trying to invite an incident. It sent a ferryboat, with only an armed launch as escort, to cruise about the area of the lake where the previous shooting exchanges between Syrian shore batteries and Israeli patrol and fishing boats had taken place. The maneuver passed off without incident, however.

That same day an Israeli military representative informed the assistant chief of staff of the United Nations

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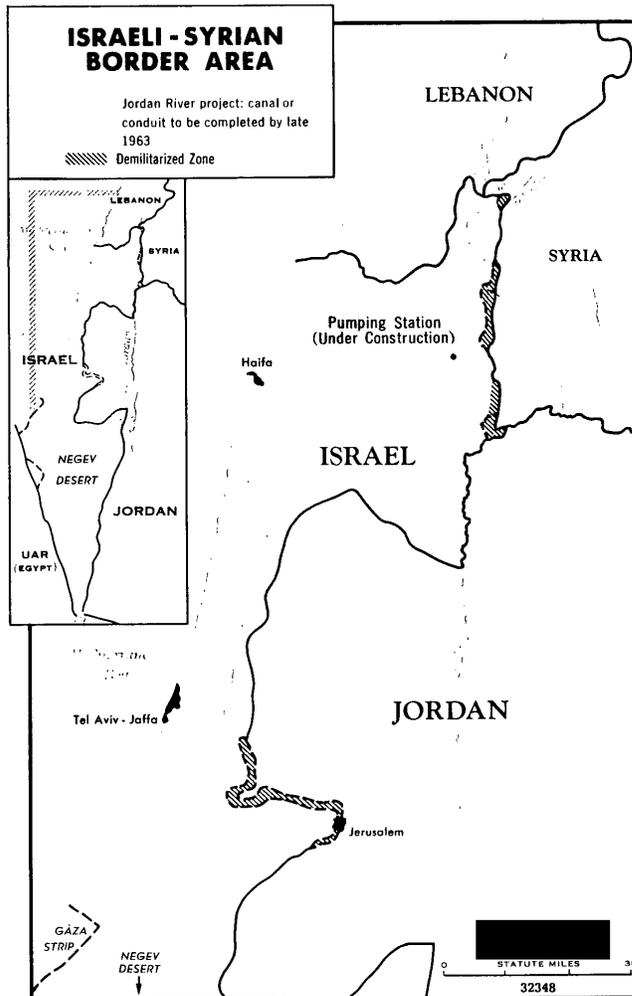
Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) that large-scale military maneuvers will soon be held in northern Israel, but "well away from the Syrian frontier." These maneuvers are probably designed both as a show of military strength and as a means of keeping units within easy striking distance of Syrian territory. On 27 March the Israelis reportedly held a training exercise involving a 500-man paratroop unit.

The UN Security Council heard complaints from both Syria and Israel on 28 March and agreed to call for a personal report next week from UNTSO's chief General von Horn.

Syria last week asked for an emergency meeting of the Arab League. However, the Secretariat, which continues to be under strong Egyptian influence, apparently did not push itself to convene an extraordinary session; instead, "Israeli aggression against Syria" is to be discussed at a regular meeting of the league to be held at the foreign ministers' level in Riyadh beginning 31 March.

Despite the well-published Syrian-Iraqi accord and recent assurances of support for Syria by the Jordanian and Saudi governments, prospects for effective military cooperation by the Arab states--even against Israel--have been dimmed as a result of Syria's breakaway from the UAR last fall. The Syrian army command, after its assumption of direct power on 28 March, made a standard

call for positive steps to achieve Arab unity and for mobilization of all efforts "to liberate and recover usurped Palestine." However, its appeal for unity departed



significantly from the Dawalibi government's line by singling out "dear Egypt" as well as "brotherly Iraq" as the two most desirable allies.