

DIA review  
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**NSC BRIEFING**

**17 April 1956**

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

**ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION**

1. Although the Arab-Israeli situation has become superficially calmer during the course of UN Secretary General Hammarskjold's negotiations with Egypt (last week) and the start of his talks in Israel, sub-surface attitudes on both sides are grim, [REDACTED]

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2. The most explosive immediate possibility is a renewal-- accidental or calculated--of terrorist activities by "fedayeen" bands and consequent strong Israeli counteraction. [REDACTED]

3. Meanwhile, our military attache in Cairo has reported the outward rail movement of Egyptian armor, including 20 T-34 tanks and 75 Bren-gun-carriers, plus supplies. The destination of this movement is unknown, but may be Sinai or the Canal Zone. At the same time, the Egyptians are engaging in stepped-up civil defense activities [REDACTED]

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4. On the Israeli side, mobilization of personnel and vehicles was accelerated over the 14-15 April weekend. Our military attache in Tel Aviv estimates that the latest call-up includes between 10,000 and 15,000 men, placing Israel's active strength at about 125,000.

5. [REDACTED]

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Face-

to-face talks between the UN Secretary General and Israeli leaders began on 17 April, but only fragmentary press reports of their progress have as yet been received.

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7. The Egyptians, in contrast, have left the impression that they are extending full cooperation to Hammarskjold. The Egyptians apparently feel that time is on their side, and are thus in an easier diplomatic position than the Israelis. The actual extent of Egyptian agreement to Hammarskjold's proposals, however, is probably very limited, and almost certainly does not include agreement to a "face-to-face" meeting with Israeli leaders (as reported in the press).

8. Either authorized or inadvertent renewal of "fedayeen" activity, even on a small scale, could well lead to Israeli retaliation in force. Barring accidents, however, no action seems likely until after Hammarskjold's departure from the area.

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