

Issue Date: **July 10, 1956**

Middle East: UN Secretary to Repeat Mission; Other Developments

- [Plans 2d Mid-East Tour](#)
- [Completes East European Trip](#)
- [Arabs Charge Jews Mass Troops](#)
- [Israel Denies Reports](#)
- [Jordan Demands British Backing](#)
- [Israel Charges New Incidents](#)
- [Truce Comm. Head Replaced](#)
- [Israel Warns of Arab Strength](#)
- [Egypt](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Egypt](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Egypt Parades Forces](#)
- [Egyptian Government Revised](#)
- [U.S. Studies Egyptian Developments](#)
- [Khrushchev Backs Arabs](#)
- [Shepilov Completes Tour](#)

Plans 2d Mid-East Tour

UN Headquarters announced in New York July 10 that Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold would revisit the Middle East to confer with Israeli leaders in Jerusalem July 19-20 and Egyptian leaders in Cairo July 21-22. UN officials denied "emphatically" July 10 that Hammarskjold's 2d Middle East mission in 4 months [See 1956 [World News: Cypriot Rebels Executed; Other Developments](#); 1956 [Middle East: Hammarskjold on Mission; Other Developments](#)] was linked to reports July 4-5 of heavy troop concentrations along Arab-Israeli borders. [See 1956 [World News: Euratom Plans Approved; Other Developments](#)]

Completes East European Trip

Hammarskjold had left New York June 27 on an East European tour and stopped in Warsaw June 28, Stockholm June 29 and Helsinki June 30. He arrived in Moscow July 2 on his first visit to the USSR [See 1950 [U. S.-Russian Relations: Truman on Allies, A-Bomb; Other Developments](#)] and said July 5, after talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Dmitri T. Shepilov, that his hopes for a basis for Middle Eastern peace had been "confirmed." Hammarskjold also said July 5 that he "would not exclude" a trip to the Middle East, "although" he had "no reason now to include it." [See 1956 [World News: Cypriot Rebels Executed; Other Developments](#)]

Hammarskjold went to Minsk, Kiev and Prague July 7, Vienna July 9 and Belgrade July 10.

Arabs Charge Jews Mass Troops

Major General E. L. M. Burns, UN Palestine Truce Supervisory Organization chief, was reported attempting July 9 to arrange UN inspection of the Israel-Jordan border **after Jordan charged July 4 that Israel had massed troops in the Jerusalem area.** Jordan, Syria and Egypt redeployed forces along the Israeli frontier July 4-5, Iraqi troops were shifted to the Jordanian border, and Lebanon July 4 pledged the services of constabulary units in event of an Arab-Israeli outbreak.

Amman dispatches said July 4 that King Hussein of Jordan had summoned U.S., British and French envoys and told them to inform their Govts. of the alleged Israeli troop movements. Acting Jordanian Cabt. head Baghat el-Talhouny said in Cairo July 4 that Hussein had been informed of the Israeli concentration by Burns. There was no confirmation of the el-Talhouny report in any UN or Western press dispatches.

Israel Denies Reports

Israel July 4 denounced the Jordanian charges as "pure fabrication." Israeli Foreign Ministry Director General Walter Eytan July 5 denied any massing of troops and told U.S., British, Soviet and French diplomats that tension had been created by "competing interests" of Egypt and Iraq in an attempt to control Jordan, which Israeli officials July 4

termed a "political vacuum." U.S., British and UN observers said July 4 they had seen no unusual Israeli military activity in Jerusalem.

Jordan Demands British Backing

Jordanian Army Chief of Staff Major Gen Ali Abu Nuwar disclosed July 7 that he had warned British Ambassador-to-Jordan Sir Charles Duke July 4 that the Anglo-Jordanian mutual aid treaty would be abrogated unless Britain came to Jordan's aid in event of an Israeli attack [See 1956 [Middle East: Britain Asks More UN Mediation; Other Developments](#)]. Jordanian Foreign Minister Awni Abdul Hadi said July 7 that he had received assurances from Britain and France that they would stand behind the 1950 tri-partite agreement on Middle Eastern frontiers. [See 1956 [NATO Council: To Study NATO Extension; Other Developments](#)]

Israel Charges New Incidents

2 Israeli civilians were killed July 9 in a Negev desert ambush near the Jordanian frontier. Israeli Foreign Minister Golda Myerson July 10 protested to the UN against the "renewed outbreak of attacks on the Jordan border" [See 1956 [Middle East: Shepilov Seeks Arab Amity; Other Developments](#)]. **Jerusalem dispatches said July 9 that General Burns had relayed to the Jordanian Government a June 28 warning by Israeli Premier David Ben-Gurion that further Jordanian attacks would bring armed Israeli retaliation.** [See 1956 [Middle East: Shepilov Seeks Arab Amity; Other Developments](#)]

(Israeli Ambassador-to-U.S. Abba Eban July 10 denied press reports that Ben-Gurion had threatened retaliation against Jordan, had told U.S. Ambassador-to-Israel Edward B. Lawson that Israeli troops would move to the west bank of the Jordan River if Iraqi forces entered Jordan, or had said he was convinced there was no longer hope of obtaining U.S. arms. Eban July 10 told U.S. State Secretary John Foster Dulles that Egypt was "aggravating her blockade of the Suez Canal" [See 1956 [Middle East: Shepilov Seeks Arab Amity; Other Developments](#)] and that Arab-Israeli border incidents were taking a "constant toll of life.")

Truce Comm. Head Replaced

U.S. Navy Commander Elmer Terrill was July 2 replaced as Chairman of the Israeli-Jordanian Mixed Armistice Comm. by French Colonel J. E. L. Constanguay after Israel criticized his voting with Jordan June 28 to condemn Israel for a **June 24 border incident in which 2 Israelis were killed by Jordanian gunfire 12 mi. north of Tel Aviv.** General Burns June 28 ordered "further consideration" of the commission's findings and said that information on the incident needed clarification. [See 1956 [Middle East: Britain Asks More UN Mediation; Other Developments](#)]

Israel Warns of Arab Strength

Israeli Premier Ben-Gurion July 4 denied a July 2 statement in the House of Commons by British Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd that the Middle East arms balance was still "rather in favor of Israel." Ben-Gurion said that "nothing [in the Middle East] can compare" with Egyptian air power. Israeli sources in Washington July 3 reported increased difficulty in buying Western arms, for which they blamed U.S. refusal to release NATO arms shipments. [See 1956 [World News: Mollet Ends Moscow Talks; Other Developments](#)]

(London and Ottawa reports said July 3 that France had refused further jet sales to Israel, and Canada had halted action on an Israeli request for 24-36 Sabrejets due to delays in U.S. authorization.) [See 1956 [World News: Cypriot Rebels Executed; Other Developments](#); 1956 [Middle East: UN Secretary Sees Truce Firmer; Other Developments](#)]

Israeli Ambassador-to-Britain Eliahu Elath told reporters in London July 6 that Western arms sales had tilted the Middle East arms balance in favor of Egypt even before the Czech-Egyptian agreement in October 1955 on barter of Czech arms for Egyptian cotton. [See 1955 [Middle East: Egypt to Accept Communist Arms; Other Developments](#)] Elath July 6 issued a tally on comparative Israeli and Egyptian arms imports before and after Egypt's deal with Czechoslovakia. Received before the Egyptian-Czech treaty, according to Elath:

Egypt

40 British Centurion tanks, 150 U.S. Sherman tanks, 200 British Valentine tanks (obsolete); 100 British Vampire and Meteor jet fighters; 7 frigates and 2 corvettes.

Israel

A "somewhat smaller" number of Sherman tanks, no Centurion or Valentine tanks; a "far smaller number" of Vampire and Meteor jets; 3 frigates and 2 frigate-corvettes.

(A British White Paper January 19 said 1955 arms deliveries included 50-100 old Sherman tanks to Israel, 151 Valentines without breech blocks to Egypt--all shipped illegally.) [See 1956 [Middle East: UN Condemns Israel; Other Developments](#)]

Deliveries since the Czech-Egyptian pact, according to Elath:

Egypt

100 Stalin III heavy tanks, 200 Czech T-34 tanks, 100 field pieces; 150 of 200 promised MIG-15 jet fighters, 45 of 60 promised Ilyushin-28 jet bombers; 2 British destroyers, 2 Soviet "Skoryi" class destroyers (5.1-in. guns) and reports of promised Soviet bloc submarines. [See 1956 [Middle East: Shepilov Seeks Arab Amity; Other Developments](#)]

Israel

"Some" French light tanks and British half-tracks; 24 French Mystere jet fighters, some French Ouragan jets (shipment of 12 had been reported), a "small" number of Meteor jets and night fighters, some obsolete World War II RAF Mosquito bombers (the Israeli AF, Elath said, had no jet bombers); 2 British destroyers (4.5-in. guns, built in 1944, ordered in 1954, delivered June 20 and renamed Yaffo and Elath); some light naval anti-aircraft guns.

Egypt Parades Forces

Egyptian Premier Gamal Abdel Nasser June 20 reviewed the newly equipped Egyptian Army units in Cairo celebrations marking the withdrawal of British troops from the Suez Canal zone [See 1956 [Middle East: Shepilov Seeks Arab Amity; Other Developments](#)]. Western observers said the display, attended by Soviet Foreign Minister Dmitri T. Shepilov and British General Sir Brian Robertson, included: Stalin, Centurion and Czech T-34 tanks; MIG-15, Ilyushin-28, Meteor and Vampire jets; Soviet ABC troop carriers and artillery and Soviet trailer-borne torpedoes. The paraders, estimated at 11,000 men, included units of the Jordanian Arab Legion, Saudi Arabian, Lebanese, Libyan and Yemeni armies and troops of the newly formed Palestine Army recruited by Egypt from among Gaza Strip refugee camps.)

Egyptian Government Revised

Egypt reported June 25 that 99.9% (5,496,965) of 5,508,291 Egyptians voting in a June 22 national plebiscite approved Nasser as Egypt's first 6-yr. president and that 99.8% (5,488,225) voted acceptance of a new Egyptian constitution. The plebiscite, in which voting was optional for women but compulsory for all males over 18, was expected to be followed by elections for a single-party National Assembly in October. [See 1956 [Middle East: Shepilov Seeks Arab Amity; Other Developments](#)]

Nasser's ruling Revolution Command Council was automatically dissolved June 23. The new constitution was said to grant him power to promulgate laws until the National Assembly was convened. The Egyptian Government announced June 25 that the Interior Minister would retain powers for 10 yrs. to place suspected revolutionists and grafters under administrative arrest. [See 1956 [Middle East: Shepilov Seeks Arab Amity; Other Developments](#)]

Egyptian Cabt. announced June 30: President--Gamal Abdel Nasser; Foreign Affairs Minister--Mahmoud Fawzi; Dep. Foreign Affairs Minister--Abdel Fattah Hassan; Interior--Zakaria Mohy Eldin; War--Major General Abdel Hakim Amer; National Guidance--Fathy Radwan; Justice--Ahmed Husny; Industry--Aziz Sidky; Commerce--Mohammed Abu Nosseir; Works--Ahmed Abdouel-Sharabassy; Supply--Kamal Ramzy Stino; Finance--Abdel Monneim el-Kaissouny; Communications--Mustaka Khalil Kamel; Municipalities and Rural Affairs, State Minister for Planning--Abdel Latif el-Baghdady; Education--Kamal Eldin Hussein; Health--Dr. Nour Eldin Tarraf; Soc. Affairs and Labor--Hussein el-Fhafei; Agri.--Abdel Razzak Sidky; State Minister for Agri. Reform--Sayed Marei; Wakff (Land Trust) Minister--Sheikh Ahmed Hassan el-Bakoury.

The Egyptian Cabt. July 4 announced a £280.5 million (Egyptian) general budget and £47.5 million nation-production budget for fiscal 1956-57. The general budget, up £42.2 million over 1955-56, earmarked £93,427,000 for internal and external defense, £125,636,000 for public welfare. [See 1953 [Egypt: News in Brief](#)]

U.S. Studies Egyptian Developments

Washington dispatches July 6-8 said the State Department was "reexamining" U.S. policy toward Egypt but that an Anglo-U.S. aid offer for the Aswan High Dam project remained open despite present allocation of the Aswan funds to other foreign aid projects [See 1956 [World News: Mollet Ends Moscow Talks; Other Developments](#)]. Nasser reportedly asked International Bank President Eugene R. Black June 21 in Cairo to urge rapid U.S. action on the

offer--needed before the World Bank could grant a \$200 million Aswan Dam loan request. [See 1956 [Middle East: Shepilov Seeks Arab Amity; Other Developments](#)]

Khrushchev Backs Arabs

Soviet CP First Secretary Nikita S. Khrushchev, in an interview published by the Cairo newspaper Al Ahram July 1, said that "war between Israel and the Arab states would mean World War III." Al Ahram quoted Khrushchev as having said that Israel, "an imperialist creation," was "launching aggressive attacks" against its Arab neighbors, but that "all the results will be in their favor." [See 1956 [Middle East: Shepilov Seeks Arab Amity; Other Developments](#)]

Shepilov Completes Tour

Soviet Foreign Minister Dmitri T. Shepilov left Cairo June 22 after talks there with Premier Nasser June 16-22. A Soviet-Egyptian communique issued June 22 said that both sides had reached "complete agreement on the questions discussed." It stressed "Soviet-Egyptian relations in all the fields of political, economical and cultural cooperation" but did not mention any Soviet commitment on the Arab dispute with Israel. [See 1956 [Middle East: Shepilov Seeks Arab Amity; Other Developments](#)]

Shepilov arrived in Damascus, Syria, June 22 for talks with Forgn Minister Salah el-Bitar and President Shukri el-Kuwatly, then flew to Beirut, Lebanon, June 25 for meetings with President Camille Chamoun, Premier Abdullah Yaffi and Foreign Minister Salim Lahoud June 26-28. Reports from Damascus June 23 and Beirut June 28 said Shepilov had failed to issue a "clear statement" on Palestine demanded by Lebanese leaders.

(The U.S. State Department June 23 announced a \$3,670,000 grant in aid for Lebanon, of which \$3 million was to be used for construction of a Damascus-Beirut highway, \$200,000 for U.S. engineering advice and \$470,000 for expansion of Beirut International Airport to land jet airliners.) [See 1956 [Middle East: Gaza Cease-Fire Accepted; Other Developments](#); 1954 [World News: Vs. UN Seat for Communist China; Other Developments](#)]

Shepilov arrived in Greece June 28 for an informal 2-day visit and met with Premier Constantine Karamanlis and Foreign Minister Evangelos Averoff in Athens June 28-29. Averoff told a news conference June 30 that he and Shepilov had discussed Cyprus and improved Greek-Soviet trade and political relations. [See 1956 [Cyprus: Eden Defends Drive vs. EOKA; Other Developments](#)]

Sudanese Premier Ismail el Azhari was forced to resign July 4 when Parliament in Khartoum censured his Government, 60-31, over the deaths by suffocation of 194 farmers in an overcrowded jail in Kosti February 22 [See 1956 [Sudan: News in Brief](#)]. Ex-Defense Minister Abdulla Khalil, 65, secy. gen. of the Umma (Nationalist) Party, became Premier and Defense Minister July 5 with a Cabt. of 5 Umma, 5 Dem. Peoples and 3 Southern Liberal Party members, as follows: Finance Minister--Ibrahim Ahmed (U); Foreign--Mohamed Ahmed Mahgoub (U); Eductn. and Justice--Ziada Arbab (U); Communictns.--Dr. Mamoum Sherif (U); Agri. and Irrig.--Mirghani Hamza (DP); Interior--Ali Abdel Rohman (DP); Commerce and Industry--Hammad Tewfik (DP); Health--Dr. Omin el Sayyid (DP); Social Affairs--Mohamed Ahmed Abusin (DP); Public Works--Benjamin Lowki (SL); Animal Resources--Alfred Borjok (SL); Mineral Resources--Senator Gordon Ayom (SL); Without Portfolio--Amin Altom (U). [See 1956 [Middle East: Gaza Cease-Fire Accepted; Other Developments](#); 1956 [Middle East: Communists Warn West on Mid-East; Other Developments](#)]