

French. The Israelis should go in and fight and then the other two would take over from there.

JK: They had been planning it for a while.

Epstein: Right, they had been planning it. When I had talked to that young man -- he knew I was in the UN -- he mentioned the possibility of that and I laughed it off. I didn't think that Israel would go into a war to pull the Canal Company's chestnuts out of the fire. They had suffered enough in the War of Liberation in 1948. They had five or six thousand people killed out of a population of only 600,000. That was their big war. I had forgotten about the thing and then along about in October the Israelis did start something. Eban and Golda Meir and everybody else around here said they were responding to attacks on them from the Fedayeen coming from Egypt. That's why they had to do it, in other words, self-defense. It's permitted under Article 51 of the Charter. The Arabs were all insulted. The character of the war changed when the British and the French went in there to occupy the Suez Canal. Then they did it so stupidly. The Israelis had gone right to the banks of the Canal in six days. Then the British got held up at Port Said by the Egyptians for a hell of a long time.

JK: Just to back up a little bit, I wanted to ask about the negotiations that had been going on in New York prior to the attack when Dag Hammarskjöld was meeting with Foreign