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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
9 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

MIDDLE EAST

Situation Report Number 14  
(As of 0630 EDT)

THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

1. The Israeli forces continued their offensive for the second straight day on 9 October, attempting to clear all Syrian forces from the Golan Heights and to reduce the Egyptian bridgeheads on the East Bank of the Suez Canal. Israeli spokesmen have sounded a note of caution, however, in their assessment of the military situation. Major General Herzog warned the Israeli people in a broadcast this morning that the initiative had not yet passed to their forces and that they were not dealing with an enemy that could be easily defeated. He added that "I would not be lulled into believing this can be an easy and very rapid operation."

SYRIAN FRONT

2. The Syrian army launched counterattacks against the Israeli forces throughout the night of 8 October, but the Israelis claim to have maintained their positions. As morning broke, the Israeli forces again took the offensive to clear the remaining Syrian troops from positions on the Golan Heights. Large numbers of Israeli aircraft were in the air over the region in the early morning hours.

3. The Israelis have not yet definitely stated that they plan to cross the "pre-1973 war" ceasefire line, but it is clear they are keeping their options

DIA review(s)  
completed.

open. If the Israelis did enter Syrian territory they would have to face two additional armored divisions that are being held in reserve, plus the remnants of the three infantry divisions which launched the initial offensive on 6 October. They also have an additional independent brigade west of Damascus and the President's special armored force in reserve. Morocco, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia reportedly are planning to send additional forces to aid the Syrians, but they probably would be too little and too late to effect the fighting significantly.

4. The Israelis already claim to have destroyed from one fifth to one third of the Syrian armored inventory of about 1500 medium tanks, and they would want to eliminate the bulk of the tank force as well as the Syrian surface-to-air missile defenses in the region. Fighting on the front may drag on for several more days, depending on the Israeli objectives and Syrian resistance.

#### EGYPTIAN FRONT

5. On the Suez Canal, the Israelis do not appear to have yet launched a major ground offensive but are continuing with large-scale air attacks. During the night of 8 October the Egyptians continued to reinforce their units on the East Bank and claim to be driving further inland. The Israelis claim to have sunk three Egyptian missile boats in the Mediterranean and several other boats in the Red Sea.

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6. In their briefings on the military situation on the Suez Front, the Israelis stress that the Egyptians on the East Bank have strong support from the artillery and air defense positions on the West Bank. This suggests that they may be considering a major canal crossing operation of their own in order to defeat the Egyptian forces.

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EGYPT

7. In Cairo, the first air raid alarm of the war was sounded this morning. The all clear signal was heard shortly afterwards, and there was no immediate report of Israeli planes in the area. Cairo has warned that it might make retaliatory air strikes against Israeli towns following yesterday's bombing of Port Said.

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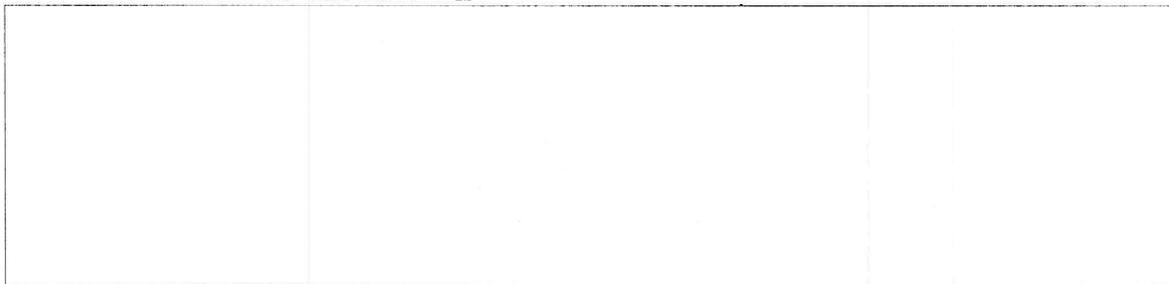


ISRAEL

9. The Israeli cabinet met early this morning-- the seventh such session since the fighting broke out. Lod airport resumed normal operations today and was open for all air traffic on a 24-hour basis.

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US SECURITY THREAT



11. Saudi Arabian military officers have assured US officials that American interests and citizens



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will be protected at all costs. These officers also were of the opinion that it would be foolish for Saudi Arabia to stop the flow of oil to the US and Europe.

ANNEX

~~Estimated Logistic Situation~~ and Capabilities  
of the Middle East Combatants

The present fighting apparently was initiated as a deliberate act by the Egyptians and Syrians. Presumably both countries took care to have sufficient supplies of food, fuel and ammunition on hand to support their forces in the kind of fighting they anticipated. It is impossible to quantify the stocks in the depots but the troops probably carried enough to allow three or four days of combat without the necessity of resupply. From the fragmentary information available it does not appear that either the Egyptian or Syrian forces are being hampered by lack of supplies. The Israeli forces, if normal procedures were in effect when they were mobilized, probably had enough supplies with their units to support three to five days of combat. Some Israeli units have been resupplied.

The delivery of supplies will be a key element that will determine the ability of the combatants to keep up the fight.

a. The Israeli Air Force (IAF) dominates the sky over the Golan Heights flying day as well as night interdiction missions. Thus, Syrian resupply capability is minimal since their supply convoys are constantly vulnerable to air attack. Shortages may begin to show soon.

b. The Egyptians may be somewhat better off. The IAF has not operated with the same frequency or degree of freedom against Egyptian forces on either side of the canal. Despite the IAF's efforts the Egyptians have kept some of the bridges across the canal open to maintain a flow of supplies to their forces on the east side. Given the disruptions we know to occur, however,

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it seems doubtful that enough supplies are reaching the east bank to maintain the Egyptian troops in a high level of combat for many days. The battle on this front may be decided before supply shortages become evident.

c. The Israeli situation is quite different. Their supply lines are almost unencumbered by enemy action. Supplies for Israeli forces are essentially limited only by the efficiency of the Israeli logistical corps and the ability of the economy to supply the necessary items. The Israelis score high on both counts. Shortages may develop in some specialized items if the fighting is prolonged and intense. Such items might include certain kinds of large caliber ammunition, bombs, missiles or electronic components. Such shortages probably would not seriously hamper the Israelis in their combat operations unless they involved items such as tank ammunition or 500 pound bombs, and that seems unlikely at this point.

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