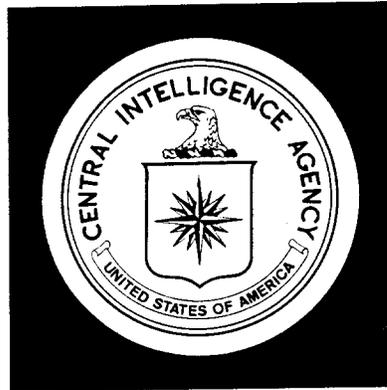


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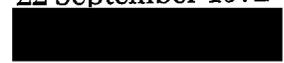
DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# WEEKLY REVIEW

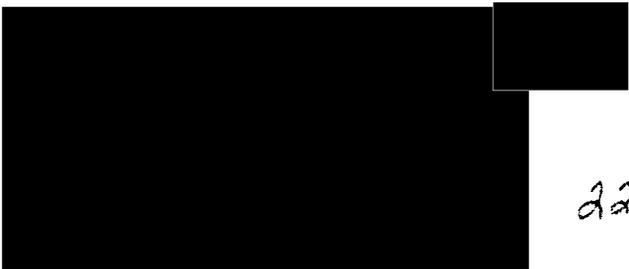
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22 September 1972



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The WEEKLY REVIEW, issued every Friday morning by the Office of Current Intelligence, reports and analyzes significant developments of the week through noon on Thursday. It frequently includes material coordinated with or prepared by the Office of Economic Research, the Office of Strategic Research, and the Directorate of Science and Technology. Topics requiring more comprehensive treatment and therefore published separately as Special Reports are listed in the contents.

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## ISRAEL: MORE OF THE SAME

Tel Aviv intends to press on with its "war" against the Arab fedayeen in the wake of Munich. The Israelis followed up their 8 September air strikes into Syria and Lebanon with a 36-hour ground-air operation into southern Lebanon on 16-17 September. Damascus clearly sees itself as the target for the next Israeli attack, and there are indications that the Israelis are preparing for just such an action.

### Strike Into Lebanon

At first light on 16 September, an Israeli armored force—estimated at about 2,000—crossed into southern Lebanon to "clean-out" fedayeen concentrations just below the Litani River—some 15 miles inside the border. The Israeli operation involved the flushing out of fedayeen in some 20 villages in the area, and an air strike at the town of Nabiteyah—some 25 miles from the border. Nabiteyah was reputed to be the fedayeen southern headquarters. Combined with this action were more air strikes against a dozen or so fedayeen bases in the Arqub area stretching into the country's most eastern corners. Israeli Chief of Staff Elazar said the Israeli action was not a reprisal for the killing of two Israeli soldiers in the Mt. Hermon area, but part of Israel's "war" against the fedayeen.

Some 200 Lebanese houses were blown up in the operation, a minimum of 60 fedayeen were killed, and two bridges over the Litani were destroyed. Elazar indicated that the army would have killed hundreds of fedayeen if they had not fled. Lebanese Army units were involved and lost 17 killed as well as some 44 wounded or missing. Figures on Lebanese civilian casualties are incomplete, but apparently were high. The Israelis lost three killed and had six wounded.

Although the Israelis killed relatively few fedayeen, Tel Aviv achieved another objective by pushing the Beirut government into renewed

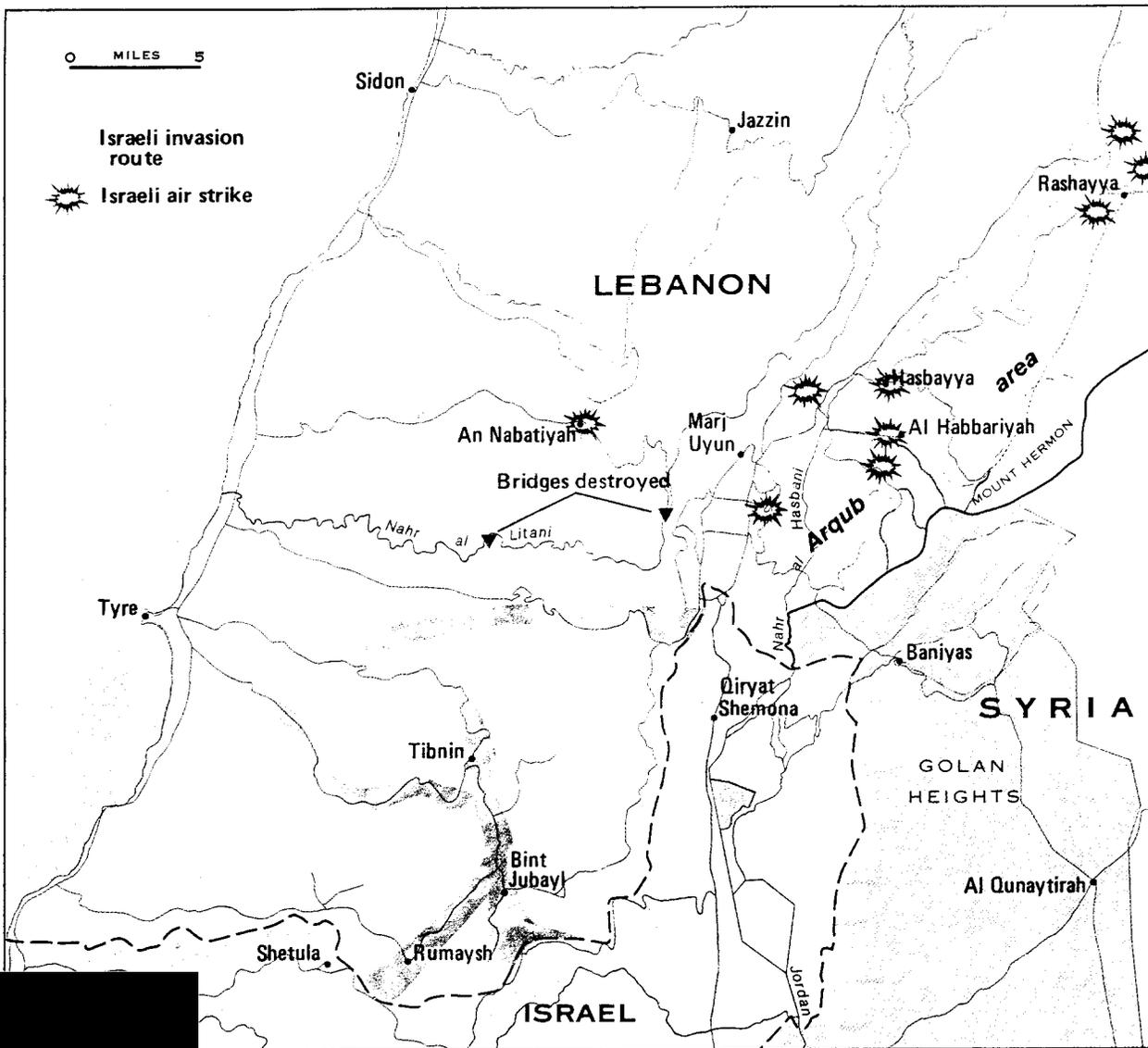
efforts to curb fedayeen activity. Tel Aviv has consistently held the host government equally responsible for guerrilla actions, and the real and potential threat of an Israeli strike is designed to force the governments to act.

### The Lebanese Response

In this case, the Lebanese responded with a government "ultimatum" issued on 16 September to the fedayeen to evacuate villages near the border. The army apparently hopes to enforce the order. If the army really cracks down on the fedayeen, the action could bring down the Lebanese Government or lead to civil disturbances since the country is sharply divided in attitude toward the fedayeen. Radical Sunni Muslims and leftists in parliament have called for complete freedom of action for the fedayeen. Prime Minister Salam, who denied that any ultimatum was sent, has met with Fatah chief Arafat to work out an accommodation. Arab League Secretary General Riad has also arrived in Beirut to mediate between the Lebanese Army and the fedayeen. He will be trying to soften the restriction of fedayeen activity, it being the position of both Egypt and Syria that the fedayeen should be encouraged to do their things but from some one else's territory. Any deal that does not remove the commandos from the south will risk further strikes from Israel.

### Syria is Next

Syria is another target for further Israeli military action. Arab fedayeen—assisted by Syrian regulars—continue to shell Israeli settlements in the Golan Heights. Such actions have continued after the Israeli air strikes of 8 September and the Israeli thrust into Lebanon. The semi-official Israeli newspaper *Davar* has warned that the operations in Lebanon were just part of a campaign "with much broader aims." The paper said that there were "many more" terrorist bases in



Lebanon that had not been hit, and that there are "many terrorist bases in neighboring Syria as well," all within the reach of the Israeli defense forces.

Rooting the fedayeen out of Syria may pose a more difficult task than it is in Lebanon. The terrain is more difficult, the distances involved are greater, and the Syrian regulars appear ready to

put up a fight. Israel prefers operations that incur the fewest casualties, so Israeli military action against Syria will probably keep to the air as much as possible. Air strikes against fedayeen bases in Syria or perhaps some helicopter-commando operations as it used in Egypt may be in the cards. If the Israelis want to hurt Syria severely, they could strike at the ports of Latakia or Banyas, or at the oil refinery at Homs. [REDACTED]