

~~TOP SECRET~~ [redacted]

30 September 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE

SUBJECT: CIA Assessment of Purported Syrian Military Preparations

Since last May [redacted] de-  
tailed reports of a Syrian operational plan for an  
assault on the Golan Heights. [redacted]  
[redacted] this operation was to be launched  
sometime after 15 May; [redacted] it would  
occur between 15 July and 15 August. Another pre-  
diction was made for 30 August; and now a report  
[redacted] says the attack is to be launched  
at the end of September.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] There has in fact been  
a build-up of forces in the Golan Heights area [redacted]  
[redacted] char-  
acterize the build-up as "normal" and similar to  
others observed in the past; the Syrian units re-  
main in defensive positions.

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[redacted]  
[redacted] the Golan Heights area last week [redacted] saw no signs of an imminent attack. The assertion [redacted] that Damascus has commandeered civilian trucks for military use cannot be confirmed.

[redacted]

Assessment: [redacted] what may well be the Syrian contingency plan for attacking the Golan Heights, and last summer's maneuvers may have been conducted on the basis of this plan. The build-up [redacted] referred to in press accounts can be accounted for by the arrival of SAM equipment programmed for the area, and by the shifting of units no longer deemed vital to protecting the border with Jordan.

The elaborate contributions from other Arab countries in support of the attack--described in earlier accounts [redacted] --have not materialized, and Iraq's internal troubles leave it in no position to support the Syrian Army. The whole thrust of President Sadat's activities since last spring has been in the direction of bringing moral, political, and economic force to bear on Israel in tacit acknowledgment of Arab unreadiness to make war.

A unilateral Syrian attack for the purpose of retaking and holding the Golan Heights has no hope of success. The defeat and destruction of the forces earmarked for the operation would cripple the Syrian Army, and would have profound consequences for the cautious and pragmatic President Asad.

[redacted]

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MEMORANDUM FOR: DCI  
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D/OCI  
D/OSR  
CH/OCI/MEA

The attached memorandum was prepared by OCI in response to a request from Mr. Pickering/State for Dr. Kissinger.

CIA OPERATIONS CENTER

1 October 1973

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(DATE)

FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101  
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Approved for Release: 2012/09/04

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6 October 1973

1000 EDT

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MEMORANDUM FROM CIA MIDDLE EAST TASK FORCE

Subject: Initiation of Middle East Hostilities

The earliest confirmed military activity [redacted] so far was a high-speed Israeli aerial reconnaissance mission at 0654Z (0254 EDT, 0854 Cairo time) along the Suez Canal. The flight terminated at 0732Z.

A Jerusalem radio report citing <sup>an</sup> Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) spokesman said Egyptian and Syrian attacks began "about 1400" (1200Z); this is the time Damascus radio says Israeli attacks began. According to UPI, Cairo radio said ~~that~~ Israeli attacks began at 1330 in the Gulf of Suez.

Subsequent [redacted] reports and briefings place the beginning of Arab hostilities at about 1415.

The Egyptian naval command center at Alexandria ordered a "first state of readiness" at 1351 (1151Z),

[redacted]

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~~TOP SECRET~~ [REDACTED]EO 13526 3.3(b)(1)>25Yrs  
EO 13526 3.5(c)USSR-Egypt: Growing Estrangement

[REDACTED] the USSR in mid-September "officially protested" Egypt's moves toward improved relations with both Saudi Arabia and Jordan on the ground that closer ties with "reactionaries" were a setback for "progressive" forces in the area. The Egyptians reportedly rejected the protest in some heat, telling the Soviets that Egypt's relations in the Arab world are of no concern to Moscow.

Both President Sadat and his adviser Hafiz Ismail met last week with Ambassador Vinogradov, who had just returned from Moscow, and the cool state of Soviet-Egyptian relations was undoubtedly the chief topic of discussion. Cairo's ties with Saudi Arabia and Jordan are not Moscow's only concern, but these are symptomatic of a trend away from the left in Egypt's domestic and foreign policy that has caused the Soviets considerable apprehension.

Soviet propaganda broadcasts have reflected clear misgivings at the implications of this movement for Soviet interests in the area, and the criticism has grown increasingly strident in recent weeks. Moscow also continues to assert the right to comment on inter-Arab relations. One Soviet broadcast last week, for instance, criticized the policies of "certain functionaries in the Arab world" who are reviewing the subject of Soviet aid to the Arabs, accusing the Soviets of colluding with the US, and opening the door to foreign capital, thus moving from socialism toward dependence on Western industrialists.

This is indeed what Egypt, aided and encouraged by Saudi Arabia, is attempting to do, but the Egyptians have at the same time sought to maintain a balance in

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their relations with the Soviets. Sadat has been at pains, since initiating his policy realignment in July, to portray the Soviets as continuing friends and political allies whose failure to provide military aid is something Egypt must live with and accept with equanimity. Moscow's testy reaction, however, appears now to be causing an angry response from the Egyptians that could further damage Soviet interests. □

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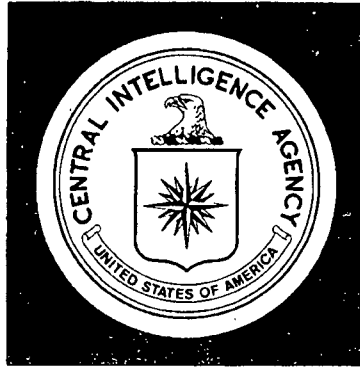
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*Soviet Developments*



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