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9 October 1973

# Central Intelligence Bulletin

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**ARAB STATES - ISRAEL:** After three days of heavy fighting, Israel has regained most of the territory it lost to Syria in the Golan Heights, and has contained Egyptian forces to a narrow area along the east bank of the Suez Canal. No other Arab states have become significantly involved in the fighting.

Syrian forces dealt heavy blows to Israeli outposts in the Golan Heights after fighting broke out in the early afternoon of 6 October. Syria breached Israeli lines at two points, captured the town of Qunaytirah, and for a time held considerable territory in the central sector. By early this morning, Israeli forces had recaptured almost all territory up to the previous cease-fire lines, and--according to Israeli accounts--had surrounded some Syrian units. Losses have been substantial on both sides. The Israelis have admitted losing at least 35 aircraft and 150 tanks in the Golan battle alone. Syrian tank losses are placed at 300 by the Israelis, who claim to have destroyed 37 Syrian aircraft in yesterday's fighting.

On the Sinai front, fighting was initially less intense. The Israelis apparently were satisfied to contain the Egyptian thrust while dealing with the more pressing situation on the Golan Heights. The Egyptians succeeded in putting as many as 11 bridges across the canal, some of which were still in use early this morning. As many as five Egyptian infantry divisions and 600-700 tanks have moved into the Sinai, according to Israeli accounts. The Israelis now claim to have hemmed in this force, but acknowledge that removing it will be a formidable task. Contrary to their public statements, the Egyptians have not made a concerted effort to strike into the Sinai, suggesting that their strategy may be to take and hold a relatively small area with a view to its political rather than military advantages.

King Husayn of Jordan continues to resist the pressures of other Arab leaders, ranging from Libya's President Qadhafi to Saudi Arabia's King Faysal, to enter the battle. [REDACTED]

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Few Arab states have contributed meaningful assistance to Syria or Egypt, although most have placed their military forces on alert and applauded initial Syrian and Egyptian successes. Sudan, Morocco, Tunisia, Kuwait, and Iraq have sent or promised to send soldiers to the front, but these troops will not make an impact on the military situation. Some fedayeen forces have been active in southern Lebanon, but these have been more an irritant than a threat to Israel. Lebanon has provided token humanitarian assistance to Egypt, but its modest army is concentrated around Beirut and is deployed in such a way as to guard against fedayeen-inspired domestic trouble rather than an Israeli attack.

The Soviet Union has given political support to the Arab cause, but has not made any moves to suggest it intends to become involved in the military action. In remarks yesterday, party chief Brezhnev placed the blame for the fighting on Israel, but offered only "sympathy" for the Arabs and reiterated Soviet support for a political settlement. Soviet officials have stressed that the present situation must not jeopardize the general improvement in US-Soviet relations.

The bulk of the Soviet Mediterranean squadron has been grouped near Crete--well away from the combat area--and has not been reinforced from the Black Sea Fleet. Moscow has made [REDACTED] flights to Egypt and Syria since 4 October.

[REDACTED] these flights--as well as some Soviet naval ships--evacuated dependents of Soviet personnel as well as some civilian and military technicians.

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Ⓒ Egypt and Syria have been restrained in their press treatment of the US, reflecting primarily official pride in the performance of their forces during the first days of fighting. All Arab capitals have been reported calm, with no serious anti-US demonstrations. None of the oil-producing states have threatened to cut off the flow of oil to the West, although Iraq on 6 October nationalized the Exxon and Mobil shares of the Basra Petroleum Company.

Yesterday's Security Council meeting requested by the US adjourned until today without taking any decision on the US proposal for a cease-fire, accompanied by a return to the 1967 cease-fire line. Soviet delegate Malik called for a clear-cut statement by Israel of its readiness to withdraw from occupied territories. China's Huang Hua--with a gibe at the USSR--praised the Arabs for breaking the stalemate imposed on them by the "superpowers." For the present, both Egyptian and Israeli spokesmen are taking a hard line on their possible acceptance of a cease-fire, maintaining that any settlement must leave their respective states in control of the disputed "occupied territories." [REDACTED]

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