

~~TOP SECRET~~

APPROVED FOR RELEASE - CIA INFO DATE: 29-Aug-2012

ARAB STATES - ISRAEL: Fighting intensified on the Egyptian front yesterday as the reinforced Israeli task force on the west bank made large gains before meeting stiffening resistance late in the day. On the Syrian front, relatively heavy fighting took place for the first time in several days.

The Israeli force on the west bank launched major attacks in three directions during the day. One Israeli column moved north toward Ismailia, a second pushed to the southwest edge of Great Bitter Lake, and the third column attacked southwest toward the Cairo-Suez highway and railroad junctions in an attempt to block the movement of Egyptian supplies to the front. By late evening, however, the drives south toward Suez City and southwest were both stalled.

In the thrust to the north, the Israelis attacked positions at Abu Suwayr. If the Israelis move beyond Ismailia, they will have ruptured a major supply line to the east bank. The Israeli force now consists of over 300 tanks, as well as mechanized infantry and paratrooper units.

Both Cairo and Tel Aviv described yesterday's fighting as severe. The Egyptians pulled back some forces from the east bank to contain the Israelis. The Israelis claim they destroyed 70 Egyptian tanks and 27 aircraft on both sides of the canal, as well as capturing 10 SAM sites on the west bank. The reduction in Egyptian SAM defenses will allow Israeli aircraft greater latitude to provide heavier air support to their forces on the west bank. Fighting was also heavy in the central sector of the east bank, but few details are available.

On the Syrian front, the Jordanian brigade reportedly advanced along the southern edge of the Israeli salient, capturing Mashara, while Iraqi units secured Tell Aantar. The Syrians also were involved in the armored attacks, and Damascus radio claims that 52 Israeli tanks were destroyed. The Israelis

20 Oct 73

Central Intelligence Bulletin

1

~~TOP SECRET~~~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

[redacted]

said they had beaten off the Arab attacks and destroyed about 30 tanks and two aircraft. Air activity continued at a relatively low level with both sides primarily flying defensive patrols, although some ground support was provided.

The massive Soviet airlift to the Middle East reached a new high yesterday, both in terms of the number of flights and the tonnage delivered. Egypt continues to receive the bulk of the Soviet resupply.

Six Soviet ships, including two combatants, passed through the Bosphorus yesterday. No more than six Soviet ships have gone through in one day since hostilities began in the Middle East. The two combatants were guided-missile destroyers, bringing to 29 the total of Soviet combatants in the Mediterranean. Two guided-missile destroyers that are scheduled to return to the Black Sea today are unlikely to do so. A tug towing a guided-missile patrol boat and probably heading for Syria also transited the Bosphorus, as did an oiler and a cargo ship.

Fedayeen [redacted] stepped-up clashes with Israeli forces along the northwest border with Lebanon. A fedayeen spokesman claims two artillery duels on Friday afternoon silenced the Israeli positions. In the Golan Heights, the fedayeen reportedly attacked Israeli supply convoys. The clashes were reported soon after a spokesman for the PLO executive committee announced that the committee, in a meeting chaired by Yasir Arafat, had decided to escalate fighting on the Palestinian front "within hours." The spokesman gave no details, but the fedayeen may have decided to divert Israeli attention from the main fronts. King Husayn, meanwhile, has refused an Egyptian request that fedayeen forces be permitted to enter Jordan in order to stage guerrilla raids into the west bank and Israel, [redacted]

Syria is pressing to have the oil cutback by Arab states increased. [redacted]
[redacted] Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam

20 Oct 73

Central Intelligence Bulletin

2

~~TOP SECRET~~~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

[Redacted]

summoned the Arab ambassadors on 17 October to complain that Syria is suffering from the bombing of economic installations and needs a more effective application of the oil weapon. Khaddam argued that what is needed is a 50-percent cutback.

In New York, the Arab foreign ministers at the UN met yesterday to plan diplomatic activities supporting President Sadat's recent five-point statement. Most of the ministers intend to leave New York within the next few days to visit European capitals. The ministers have agreed to return, however, if Egypt takes the Middle East issue to the General Assembly, where the Arabs would be unhampered by great power vetoes. Egypt has apparently been in contact with Yugoslavia concerning a draft resolution. As a Security Council member, Yugoslavia could introduce a resolution which, if vetoed, would open the possibility of a special session of the Assembly.

* * * *

[Redacted]

20 Oct 73

Central Intelligence Bulletin

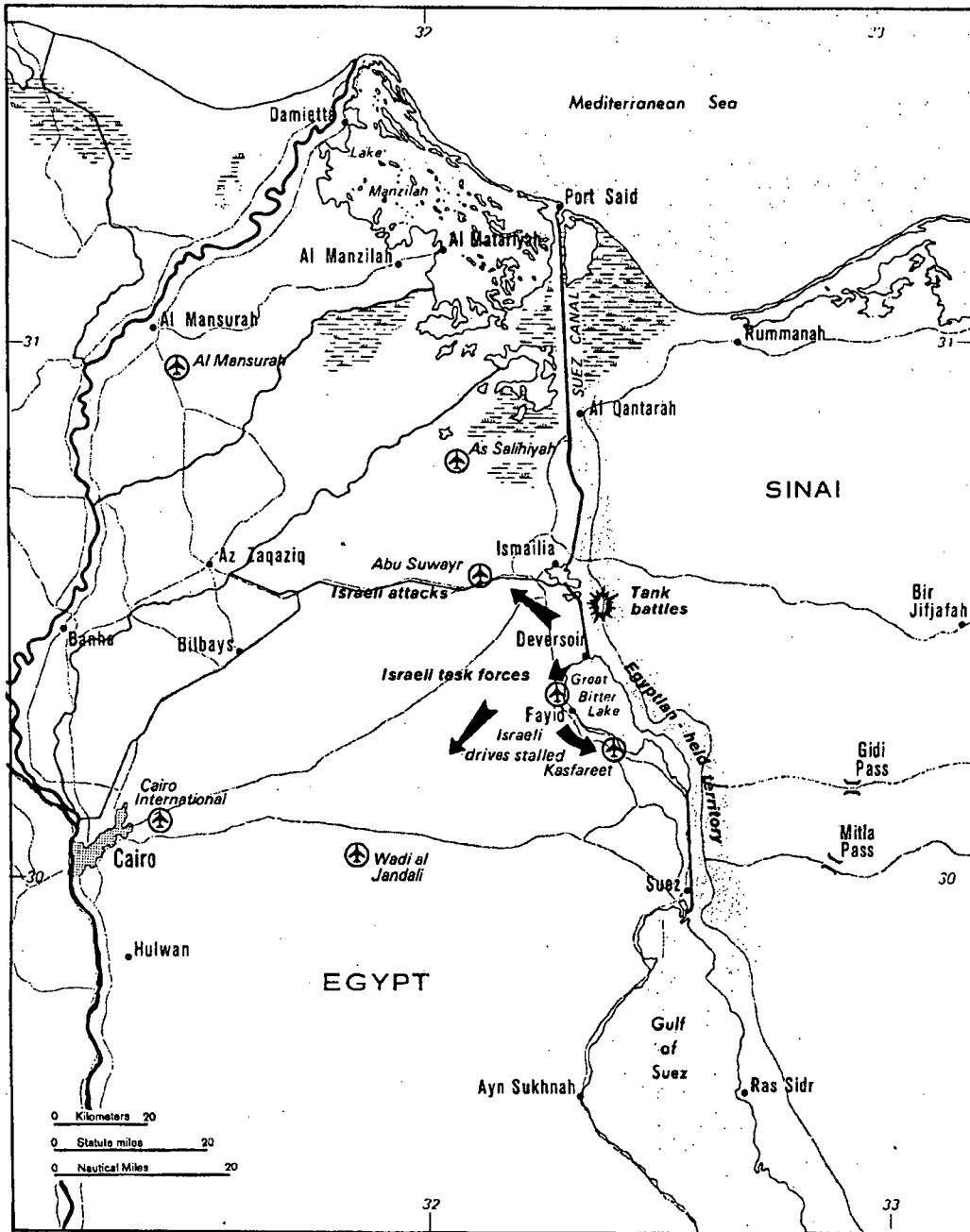
3

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

Suez Canal Zone



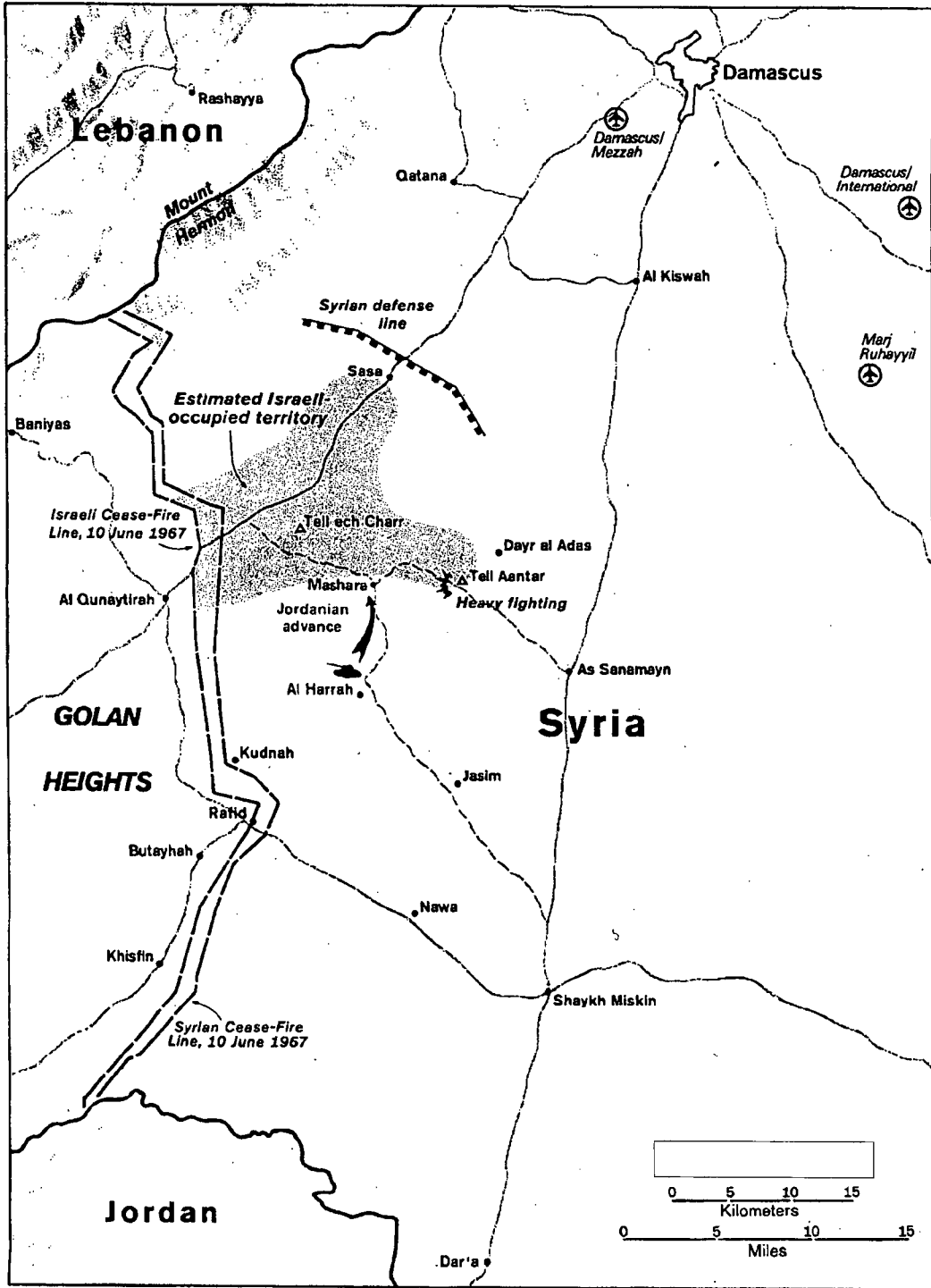
554754 10-73 CIA

~~TOP SECRET~~

TOP SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~

The Syrian Front



554755 10-73 CIA

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~