

ARAB STATES - ISRAEL: The cease-fire was marred yesterday when Egyptian forces shot down an Israeli aircraft. Cairo and Tel Aviv continue to withhold final acceptance of the US-backed cease-fire plan, and their unofficial spokesmen are offering differing interpretations of its details.

The cease-fire was interrupted yesterday when Egyptian forces shot down an Israeli Phantom north of Ismailia. Cairo claims its surface-to-air missiles brought down two Israeli aircraft and that two pilots were captured, although Tel Aviv has admitted the loss of only one plane. Israel continues to fly numerous reconnaissance missions on both fronts for close observation of Arab force dispositions, justifying this activity by its determination not to be taken by surprise should the fighting resume.

Israel charged yesterday that the Strait of Gubal at the southern entrance to the Gulf of Suez has not yet been cleared of Egyptian mines. The Israeli-chartered tanker Sirius was severely damaged in the strait on 25 October, but the Israelis reportedly are not considering clearing the minefield. Despite the apparent hazard of some 30 Soviet-made acoustic mines, three tankers reportedly have transited the strait since the war began.

Only minor cease-fire violations were reported on the Syrian front yesterday. Press reports of an exchange of fire early in the day were later confirmed by an Israeli military spokesman. He reported, however, that the rather desultory firing had ended after only three hours.

Both Tel Aviv and, to a lesser extent, Cairo appear to be having last minute doubts about signing the cease-fire agreement announced by Secretary Kissinger yesterday. The accord states that: Egypt and Israel agree to observe scrupulously the cease-fire called for by the UN Security Council; discussions will begin immediately to settle the question

of a return to the 22 October positions in the framework of agreement on the disengagement and separation of forces under the auspices of the UN; the town of Suez will receive daily supplies of food, water, and medicine, and all wounded civilians in the city will be evacuated; there shall be no impediments to the movement of non-military supplies to the east bank of the Suez; Israeli checkpoints along the Cairo-Suez road will be replaced by UN checkpoints, but at the Suez end of the road, Israeli military officers can monitor resupply cargo; and as soon as the UN checkpoints are established on the Cairo-Suez road, there will be an exchange of all prisoners of war, including the wounded.

The Israeli cabinet, after a lengthy session late last night, announced that Tel Aviv maintains its "positive decision in principle" in favor of signing the agreement. The cabinet will continue its deliberations this morning, however, and has called for additional consultations with the US. Israel apparently perceives three sticking points: the agreement provides no assurances that Cairo will lift its naval blockade of Bab al-Mandab, it contains a call for immediate discussions on a return to the 22 October battlelines that Tel Aviv claims cannot be fixed, and it jeopardizes Tel Aviv's ability to monitor effectively the flow of traffic to the encircled Egyptian Third Army. In addition, the agreement has been criticized in Israel for failing to clarify the status of Israeli POWs held by Syria.

Egypt appears to have adopted a wait-and-see attitude while unofficially repeating its insistence on an Israeli return to the 22 October lines and obscuring the status of the Bab al-Mandab blockade. Cairo's authoritative Middle East News Agency, after initially broadcasting a seriously distorted version of the cease-fire agreement, late last night accurately announced its provisions. The news agency again, however, stressed that the accord contains no Egyptian commitment to lift the Bab al-Mandab blockade. The pro-Egyptian Lebanese daily Al-Anwar,

10 Nov 73

*Central Intelligence Bulletin*

2

meanwhile, reported yesterday that Cairo had given the US only "a few days" to prove its ability to obtain an Israeli return to the 22 October positions or there would be no need to appoint ambassadors between Cairo and Washington.

In New York, UN Secretary-General Waldheim has instructed the UN's Middle East commander to arrange for a meeting this afternoon between Egyptian and Israeli military commanders to exchange letters of agreement on the cease-fire plan and to arrange for its implementation.

25X1

Saudi Arabia's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Saqqaf yesterday reported to newsmen that King Faysal is cautiously optimistic at the prospect of an agreement between Egypt and Israel, adding that "any step taken toward solving the problem by peaceful means is guaranteed to have our appreciation and acclaim." He reaffirmed Riyadh's insistence that there be a complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories, however, and hinted that Saudi Arabia would not participate in a general peace conference. Negotiating the Israeli withdrawal, Saqqaf suggested, is the concern of the Arab states that border Israel.

The official Soviet news agency TASS charges last night that Tel Aviv is continuing to sabotage

10 Nov 73

*Central Intelligence Bulletin*

3

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/10/15 : CIA-RDP79T00975A025600030001-4

UN resolutions requiring the withdrawal of Israeli troops to the 22 October cease-fire lines. The news agency also accused Israel of cease-fire violations on the Egyptian front and of "armed provocations" against Lebanon. By early this morning, however, the Soviet press still had not carried reports that Israel and Egypt were close to signing a peace agreement.

25X1

10 Nov 73

*Central Intelligence Bulletin*

4

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/10/15 : CIA-RDP79T00975A025600030001-4

FOR THE RECORD\*

Algeria-USSR: The Soviets apparently are supplying Algeria with the BMP infantry combat vehicle-- a tracked, amphibious troop-carrier mounting a 76-mm. gun and a Sagger antitank missile. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

[redacted]

25X1

[redacted] Other Arab countries that have received BMPs are Syria, Egypt, Iraq, and Libya. Some of the vehicles were used in the Middle East war. The BMP is the most modern infantry vehicle in the Soviet inventory, and many Soviet units are not equipped with it. The Soviets probably have had to draw BMPs from operational units to meet Arab requests. [redacted]

25X1

USSR: The Supreme Soviet will convene on 12 December, TASS announced yesterday. A session of the national legislature customarily is held in late November or December to approve the economic plan and budget for the coming year and is usually preceded by a meeting of the party's Central Committee. [redacted]

25X1

*\*These items were prepared by CIA without consultation with the Departments of State and Defense.*