

SENSITIVE

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SITUATION(S) MESSAGE(S) LISTING

DATE 09/23/73//266

SITUATION: HAK TRIP
SUBJECT CATEGORY: TOHAK

MESSAGE / ANNOTATION:

ANNOTATIONS:

SCORCROFT, HOWE, MCFARLANE

MESSAGES:

IMMEDIATE)

O 220806Z OCT 73

FM THE SITUATION TUDM TOHAK 74

TO PETER RODMAN FOR DR. KISSINGER

WH 32605 TOHAK 74

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//NOFORN IN SLANTS//

HW MIDDLE EAST SITREP NO. 05 FOR 2230, 21 OCTOBER 1973,
THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

1. THERE HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY NO REACTION AMONG THE PARTIES CONCERNED TO THE US ANNOUNCEMENT TONIGHT OF A US-SOVIET CEASE-FIRE PROPOSAL. CAIRO, AMMAN, AND BEIRUT RADIOS HAVE CARRIED THE ANNOUNCEMENT WITHOUT COMMENT; TASS HAS ALSO REPEATED IT WITHOUT COMMENTARY. NEITHER TRIPOLI, BAGHDAD, NOR DAMASCUS RADIOS HAVE MENTIONED THE DECISION.

2. AT DAVIS END, BOTH CAIRO AND TEL AVIV CLAIMED TO HAVE INFLICTED SEVERE LOSSES ON THE OTHER SIDE. THE DAY WAS NOTABLE FOR THE LOW LEVEL OF ACTIVITY BY EGYPTIAN [REDACTED] THE LACK OF AGGRESSIVENESS BY EGYPTIAN PILOTS. THE ISRAELIS CLAIM TO HAVE DESTROYED ALL SAM SITES NORTH OF AL QANTARAH. IF TRUE, THIS WOULD GIVE THE IAF ALMOST COMPLETE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IN THE SKIES OVER THE SUEZ CANAL.

3. THE SYRIAN FRONT CONTINUED TO BE RELATIVELY QUIET. THERE WERE SOME SMALL-SCALE TANK AND ARTILLERY ENGAGEMENTS TODAY, BUT THE SITUATION HAS REMAINED GENERALLY STABLE OVER THE PAST WEEK. IN THE AIR, THE SYRIANS CLAIM 11 ISRAELI AIRCRAFT DOWNED; THE ISRAELIS SAY THAT EIGHT SYRIAN MIGS WERE DESTROYED.

EGYPTIAN FRONT

***** WHSR COMMENTS *****

MORI/CDP
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SECRET

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4. THE DAY CLOSED WITH BOTH SIDES HOLDING ESSENTIALLY THE SAME POSITIONS THEY DID IN THE LATE AFTERNOON AS USUAL. BOTH CAIRO AND TEL AVIV CLAIM TO HAVE INFLECTED MAJOR LOSSES ON THE OTHER SIDE. ISRAELI CHIEF OF STAFF GENERAL ELAZAR STATED LATE TODAY THAT "WE ARE ON THE WAY TOWARD THE DECISIVE TURNING POINT." CAIRO SPOKESMEN, HOWEVER, CLAIMED TO BE IN THE PROCESS OF ELIMINATING THE ISRAELI FORCE ON THE WEST BANK, AND SPOKE OF EXTENSIVE TANK BATTLES RAGING ON THE EAST BANK OF THE CANAL.

5. ONE IMPORTANT FEATURE OF TODAY'S ACTION ON THE EGYPTIAN FRONT WAS THE LACK OF EGYPTIAN SAM ACTIVITY. THE ISRAELIS CLAIM TO HAVE DESTROYED ALL SAM SITES NORTH OF AL-QANTARAH.

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MOREOVER, EGYPTIAN PILOTS HAVE GENERALLY AVOIDED COMBAT WITH ISRAELI AIRCRAFT DURING THE DAY. THE IAF APPEARS TO BE GAINING INCREASING FREEDOM OF ACTION IN THE SKIES OVER THE SUEZ CANAL.

END OF PAGE ONE

6. ISRAELI SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT RETURNED TO EGYPT'S NORTH COAST TONIGHT. EXPLOSIONS WERE REPORTED AT DARIETTA, BALTIM, AND AT RASHID, SOME 20 MILES EAST OF ALEXANDRIA, AND ISRAELI PATROL BOATS HAVE ATTACKED EGYPTIAN FISHING BOATS OFF PORT SAID. THESE CRAFT HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN USED TO PROVIDE WARNING OF ISRAELI SEA MOVEMENTS ALONG THE COAST.

7. ONE OF THE GOALS OF THE ISRAELI FORCES ON THE WEST BANK OF THE CANAL IS APPARENTLY TO INTERDICT EGYPTIAN LINES OF COMMUNICATION. TO DATE, ISRAEL HAS MANAGED TO CUT THE CAIRO-SUEZ CITY AND THE CAIRO-ISMAILIA ROADS, THUS GREATLY REDUCING OR ELIMINATING THE FLOW OF SUPPLIES TO EGYPTIAN FORCES ON THE EAST BANK. MOREOVER, A MAJOR SUPPLY LINE AT AL-QANTARAH HAS COME UNDER PERIODIC ATTACK BY THE ISRAELIS. AS A RESULT,

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EGYPTIAN FORCES ON THE EAST BANK COULD START RUNNING SHORT OF CRITICAL ITEMS OF AMMUNITION--SPECIFICALLY TANK, ANTITANK, AND ARTILLERY SHELLS.

8. HOW LONG EGYPTIAN FORCES ON THE EAST BANK CAN MAINTAIN THEIR COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS IN THE FACE OF CURTAILED SUPPLIES DEPENDS ON THE INTENSITY OF THE COMBAT AND THE QUANTITY OF STOCKS REMAINING IN THEIR HANDS. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION CONCERNING THE AMOUNT OF SUPPLIES THE EGYPTIANS WERE ABLE TO STOCKPILE ON THE EAST BANK DURING THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF THE WAR. NEITHER DO WE KNOW THE EXTENT OF THE LOSSES INFLICTED ON THESE STOCKPILES BY ISRAELI ARTILLERY AND AIR ATTACKS. REPORTS OF INTENSIVE FIGHTING ON THE EAST BANK SUGGEST THAT AMMUNITION EXPENDITURES ON BOTH SIDES HAVE BEEN SUBSTANTIAL.

9. ANY SUPPLY SHORTAGES SHOULD LOGICALLY FIRST AFFECT THE EGYPTIAN FORCES FIGHTING IN THE SOUTHERN SECTOR ON THE EAST BANK. THESE FORCES ARE CUT OFF ON THE EAST BANK BY THE ISRAELI CORRIDOR LEADING TO DEVERSOIR, AND ON THE WEST BANK THEIR LINES OF COMMUNICATION LEADING TO SUEZ CITY HAVE BEEN RUPTURED OR INTERDICTED. LACK OF ADEQUATE LOGISTIC SUPPORT WILL CERTAINLY LIMIT THE AGGRESSIVENESS OF THIS FORCE AND HAMPER AN EGYPTIAN THRUST TOWARD THE MITLA OR GIDI PASS. WITHOUT KNOWING THE AMOUNT OF SUPPLIES AVAILABLE TO EGYPTIAN FORCES ON THE EAST BANK, HOWEVER, IT IS PREMATURE TO ESTIMATE THE DAYS OF LOGISTIC SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO THESE FORCES.

THE SYRIAN FRONT

10. THERE DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN ANY SIGNIFICANT ACTION ON THE SYRIAN FRONT TODAY. THE SITUATION HAS REMAINED RELATIVELY STABLE FOR THE PAST WEEK, DESPITE CLAIMS FROM BOTH SIDES THAT THEIR FORCES WERE ATTACKING AND COUNTERATTACKING. THERE WAS SPORADIC TANK AND ARTILLERY ACTIVITY ALONG THE FRONT, AS WELL AS SOME DOPFIGHTS DURING WHICH THE SYRIANS CLAIM TO HAVE

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DOWNED 11 ISRAELI AIRCRAFT, AN ISRAELI SPOKESMAN HAS SAID THAT EIGHT SYRIAN MIGS WERE DESTROYED.

11. ISRAELI PRESS REPORTS STATE THAT THE ISRAELI AIR FORCE DESTROYED A BRIDGE ON THE ROAD FROM LATAKIA TO DAMASCUS, THE STRIKE COULD BE PART OF AN ISRAELI EFFORT TO INTERDICT THE MOVEMENT OF SOVIET-SUPPLIES ARMS FROM THE DELIVERY POINTS TO THE FRONT.

12. [REDACTED] REPORTS THAT THE ISRAELIS WERE MOVING THOUSANDS OF ANTITANK MINES TO THE SYRIAN FRONT ON 20 OCTOBER, THIS SUGGESTED TO HIM THAT THE ISRAELIS WERE ADOPTING A DEFENSIVE POSTURE IN THE NORTH, THIS IS THE MOST LIKELY CONCLUSION, BUT MINES CAN BE USED OFFENSIVELY AS WELL TO PROTECT THE FLANKS OF AN ARMORED THRUST OR TO BOLSTER DEFENSES IN SOME SECTORS WHILE WITHDRAWING MANEUVER UNITS TO REINFORCE THE MAIN ATTACK.

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13. [REDACTED] ALSO REPORTED THAT IN THEIR INITIAL OFFENSIVE, THE SYRIANS LOST EIGHT TANKS FOR EVERY ISRAELI TANK DESTROYED, THIS FIGURE INCLUDED LARGE NUMBER THAT WERE NOT DESTROYED BUT WERE IMMOBILIZED BY ANTITANK OBSTACLES, ONCE THE ISRAELI DEFENSES WERE PENETRATED, HOWEVER, SYRIAN AND ISRAELI TANK LOSSES WERE REPORTED BY [REDACTED] TO BE ROUGHLY EVEN, //

25X1

14. //THE SAMPLE IN THIS OBSERVATION WAS LIMITED BUT ILLUSTRATES THE INCREASED LOSSES THE ISRAELIS COULD EXPECT IF THEY LAUNCHED A FRONTAL ASSAULT ON THE EXTENSIVE SYRIAN DEFENSES BEFORE DAMASCUS, WHILE THE ISRAELIS PROBABLY COULD GAIN GROUND, THEIR LOSSES RELATIVE TO THOSE OF THE ARAB DEFENDERS WOULD BE HIGH, THEY PROBABLY WILL INSTEAD TRY TO DEFEND THEIR PRESENT POSITIONS AND WEAR DOWN THE ARAB ATTACKERS, ARMORED ATTACKS TO DESTROY INDIVIDUAL ARAB UNITS PROBABLY WOULD BE CONDUCTED, HOWEVER, IF THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED ITSELF, //

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MOOD IN JORDAN

15. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] CRITICISM OF JORDAN'S ROLE IN THE WAR IS WIDESPREAD, MANY PEOPLE

[REDACTED] BELIEVE THAT KING HUSAYN SHOULD PURSUE A MORE AGGRESSIVE POLICY TOWARD THE ISRAELIS, AND THEY CLAIM NOT TO BE DECEIVED BY JORDAN'S MEASURES TO MAKE IT APPEAR THAT THE COUNTRY IS ON A WAR FOOTING, EVEN MANY OF THESE MEASURES, THEY NOTE, HAVE BEEN EASED SINCE THE WAR BEGAN; SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN REOPENED, THE AMMAN

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AIRPORT HAS BEEN REOPENED TO ALIA TRAFFIC, AND AMMAN RADIO HAS STOPPED PLAYING MARTIAL MUSIC. THESE MOVES AND THE DECISION TO KEEP THE ALLENBY BRIDGE OPEN ARE CITED AS EVIDENCE THAT JORDAN IS NOT SERIOUS IN ITS WAR

END OF PAGE THREE

EFFORT, //

16. // INCREASING CRITICISM OF THE US RESUPPLY EFFORT TO ISRAEL IS ALSO NOTED [REDACTED] WHO REPORTS THAT THIS WAS NOT STRONG DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF THE WAR, THE PEOPLE ARE CRITICIZING JORDAN FOR RELYING ON THE US AS AN ALLY, WHEN THE OTHER ARAB STATES' ALLY, THE SOVIET UNION, IS PROVIDING THEM WITH AID JORDAN CANNOT GET FROM THE US. [REDACTED] WIDESPREAD PRAISE FOR THE SOVIETS. //

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ARAB STATES

18.

SOME OF THE ARAB CONTRIBUTORS ARE IRKED AT PRESIDENT SADAT'S PEACE PROPOSAL.

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ONE ISRAELI'S VIEW

19. AN EDITORIALIST IN THE TEL AVIV NEWSPAPER DAVAR CALLED ON THE [ISRAEL] GOVERNMENT TODAY TO MAKE A PUBLIC DECLARATION OF THE SECURE BORDERS IT REQUIRES AND TO STATE ITS WILLINGNESS TO WITHDRAW IN STAGES TO THESE BORDERS, AFTER: A) A MEANINGFUL US-USSR AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED LIMITING THE MIDDLE EAST ARMS RACE, AND B) THE SUEZ CANAL HAS BEEN CLEARED AND OPENED TO INTERNATIONAL, INCLUDING ISRAELI, SHIPPING.

20. THE COMMENTATOR EXPRESSED HIS VIEW THAT, DESPITE ISRAEL'S NEED FOR SECURE BORDERS, THIS WAR HAS PROVED THAT THEY ARE NOT ENOUGH AND ARE NOT, IN FACT, THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENT FOR ISRAEL'S SECURITY. THIS, HE SAID, IS AN ARMS LIMITATION AGREEMENT. THE COMMENTATOR WOULD NOT ELABORATE,

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ON HIS URGING THAT ISRAEL BE SATISFIED WITH THE "YARIV MAP," HE NOTED ONLY THAT THE MAP, DRAWN UP IN JANUARY 1971, CONTAINED VARIOUS CONTINGENCY LINES

END OF PAGE FOUR

RANGING FROM THE MINIMAL TO THE MAXIMAL. HE CLAIMED NOT TO KNOW WHERE THE MINIMAL LINE LAY.

21. THE EDITORIALIST VOLUNTEERED THAT NO ONE IN THE GOVERNMENT PUT HIM UP TO THE PROPOSAL AND NOT ONE HAS TALKED ALONG THESE LINES IN HIS PRESENCE. THE EMBASSY, NOTING THAT NO OTHER PAPERS HAVE PICKED UP THIS LINE, POINTS OUT THAT THIS COMMENTATOR HAS IN THE PAST BEEN A CONDUIT FOR THE VIEWS OF VARIOUS OFFICIALS.

OIL

22. IRAQ HAS NATIONALIZED THE NETHERLANDS' 24 PERCENT SHARE IN THE BASRAH PETROLEUM COMPANY IN RETALIATION FOR THE "FLAGRANT HOSTILE STAND" THE DUTCH HAVE ADOPTED TOWARD THE ARABS, ACCORDING TO BAGHDAD RADIO,

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IRAQ NATIONALIZED THE AMERICAN SHARE IN THE SAME COMPANY
ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE WAR, TODAY'S ACTION FOLLOWS
ALGERIA'S MOVE YESTERDAY TO CUT OFF OIL TO THE
NETHERLANDS.

23. THE PERSIAN GULF SHEIKHOOM OF DUBAI BECAME
THE EIGHTH ARAB PRODUCER TO EMBARGO OIL SHIPMENTS TO THE
US, [REDACTED]

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