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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 199688

EXDIS INFORM CONSULS
MM. 11652: GDS
TAGS: XX
SUBJ: MIDDLE EAST SITUATION

*State guidance
to all posts on
M.E. Situation*

1. FOLLOWING FYI IS SUMMARY OF CURRENT MIDDLE EAST SITUATION EVENING OCTOBER 6.

2. FOLLOWING SEVERAL DAYS OF FRAGMENTARY REPORTS OF SYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN MILITARY MOVEMENTS BEHIND THEIR RESPECTIVE CEASEFIRE LINES, ISRAELIS INFORMED US MID-MORNING OCTOBER 6 THEY HAD REASON TO BELIEVE COORDINATED SYRIAN/EGYPTIAN ATTACK WOULD TAKE PLACE WITHIN FEW HOURS. THEY HAD ALSO ASSURED US THEY WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT UNDERTAKE PREEMPTIVE MILITARY ACTION. WE MOVED QUICKLY IN DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS WITH SOVIETS, EGYPTIANS, SAUDIS AND JORDANIANS IN EFFORT TO FORESTALL MILITARY ACTION. IN MATTER OF FEW HOURS, HOWEVER, HOSTILITIES BEGAN ON BOTH FRONTS. IN BACKGROUNDING PRESS, WE HAVE RESERVED JUDGMENT RE WHO BEGAN THE FIGHTING, BUT STRICTLY FYI INDICATIONS ARE CLEAR THAT THIS WAS SYRIAN/EGYPTIAN INITIATIVE. SUCH ACTION IS CONSISTENT WITH POLITICAL-MILITARY STRATEGY PRESIDENT SADAT WAS KNOWN TO BE CONTEMPLATING EARLIER THIS YEAR, DESIGNED TO CREATE CRISIS, WHEN LIMITED MILITARY GAINS AND PUT PRESSURE ON WORLD COMMUNITY AND MAJOR POWERS IN PARTICULAR TO PRESS FOR POLITICAL PROGRESS. SADAT'S STRATEGY OVER PAST TWO MONTHS AT

LEAST HAS BEEN TO EMPHASIZE LONG-RANGE POLITICAL STRATEGY IN CONTEXT OF NEW SAUDI-EGYPTIAN-JORDANIAN ALIGNMENT AND TO DE-EMPHASIZE POSSIBILITY OF EARLY MILITARY ACTION. REASONS FOR DECISION TO LAUNCH THIS ATTACK IF IN EFFECT

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THIS PROVES TO BE THE CASE, WILL HAVE TO AWAIT FURTHER ANALYSIS.

3. MEANWHILE, MILITARY SITUATION NIGHTFALL OCTOBER 6 IS GENERALLY AS FOLLOWS: THERE HAS BEEN AIR ACTIVITY ON BOTH FRONTS BUT CONCENTRATED ALONG SYRIAN CEASEFIRE LINES. THERE DO NOT APPEAR TO BE SIGNIFICANT PENETRATIONS OF LINES ON GROUND OF SYRIAN FRONT, ALTHOUGH HEAVY ARMORED ENCOUNTERS HAVE APPARENTLY TAKEN PLACE. ON EGYPTIAN FRONT, EGYPTIANS HAVE ESTABLISHED FOOTHOIDS EAST OF SUEZ CANAL IN SINAI AGAINST THINLY-HELD ISRAELI POSITIONS AND APPARENTLY AT CONSIDERABLE COST OF LOSS OF PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT. ISRAELIS, WHO WERE CELEBRATING JEWISH DAY OF ATONEMENT (YOM KIPPUR) INSTITUTED MOBILIZATION. DEFENSE MINISTER DAYAN HAS WARNED ISRAELIS THAT FIGHTING MAY CONTINUE FOR SEVERAL DAYS BUT HAS EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCES WILL REPULSE INVADERS.

4. JORDAN AND LEBANON HAVE REMAINED ALOOF FROM FIGHTING AND GIVE EVERY INDICATION OF SEEKING TO AVOID INVOLVEMENT. PUBLIC MEDIA AND GOVERNMENTAL STATEMENTS IN ARAB WORLD HAVE FOLLOWED EGYPTIAN/SYRIAN LINE THAT ISRAELIS INITIATED ATTACKS.

5. IN CONSULTATIONS AMONG SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS IN NEW YORK, WE HAVE TAKEN POSITION THAT ANY SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION MUST CALL FOR CEASEFIRE AND RESTORATION OF STATUS QUO ANTE, I.E., THAT ALL FORCES MUST WITHDRAW TO THEIR RESPECTIVE SIDES OF CEASEFIRE LINES. CONSULTATIONS INCONCLUSIVE SO FAR, WITH CERTAIN MEMBERS TALKING ABOUT SIMPLE CEASE FIRE. WE HAVE EMPHASIZED THAT RESTORATION OF STATUS QUO ANTE IS NECESSARY TO CREATE CONDITIONS IN WHICH PEACE SETTLEMENT EFFORTS, TO WHICH WE INTEND TO DEVOTE HIGH PRIORITY IN PERIOD AHEAD, CAN GO FORWARD, THERE HAS SO FAR BEEN NO CALL REPEAT NO CALL FOR MEETING, AND CONSULTATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO RESUME MORNING OCTOBER 7. WE WILL REVIEW OUR POSITION ON THIS MATTER SUNDAY A.M.

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6. ABOVE IS STRICTLY FOR YOUR BACKGROUND ONLY. KISSINGER
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