

[Redacted]

25X1

[Redacted]

25X1

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
10 October 1973

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

State Dept. review completed

DIA Review Completed

MIDDLE EAST

(Situation Report Number 19)
As of 1200 EDT

SOVIET AIRLIFT

[Redacted]

25X1

2. The apparent resupply effort suggests that Moscow has reassessed its earlier cautious response to the Middle East conflict and decided to cast its lot more fully on the side of the Arabs.

25X1

25X1

3. This decision may be the result of the relatively good showing of the Arab forces as well as a Soviet desire to protect its broader Middle East investment. As reported earlier, Ambassador Vinogradov in Cairo [Redacted]

[Redacted] said on 8 October that Moscow would deliver whatever was necessary for the resupply of Egyptian forces. [Redacted]

Vinogradov told Sadat during their meeting yesterday that the USSR would supply Egypt with "ammunition." Soviet diplomats elsewhere in the Middle East are apparently spreading this word. The Beirut press is carrying reports from "diplomatic sources" of "new consignments of weapons and ammunition" on their way from the USSR.

25X1

MORI/CDF
C03326463

[Redacted]

25X1



25X1

4. Moscow, however, has not stepped up its media attention to the Middle East situation and has played in low-key yesterday's bombing of its cultural center in Damascus. A TASS dispatch issued today on the attack on Damascus contained only brief reference to the bombing of the cultural center and made no mention of casualties.

THE MILITARY SITUATION

GENERAL

5. Heavy fighting continues on both fronts, but neither side has made deep advances. Egyptian forces already across the canal continue to be reinforced; and the Israelis admit they have not been successful in destroying all of the Egyptian bridges. Israeli aircraft continued their attack with little opposition from Arab fighters, but remain under heavy fire from SAMs and anti-aircraft guns.

6. The depth of the Egyptian bridgehead varies from 5 kilometers to as much as 20 kilometers, and over 500 Egyptian tanks are reported to be on the east bank. The Israeli counterattacks have not been successful in pushing the Egyptians back to the canal despite Israeli air support. Logistical factors are beginning to have an effect on the battle as some Israeli units are experiencing shortages of artillery ammunition; while the Arabs continue to fire without restraint.

25X1



7. The introduction of another Syrian armored division into the battle for the Golan Heights yesterday is helping Damascus to hold its ground despite continuing heavy Israeli airstrikes. The Syrians are still holding Qunaytirah, but Israel claims to have crossed into Syrian territory late this afternoon Tel Aviv time. Syrian fighters have responded to the Israeli aircraft but have been unable to gain control of the air. Israeli aircraft struck the ports of Latakia, and Tartus today, and the city of Hims in northern Syria.

25X1



25X1



25X1

SYRIAN FRONT

8. Heavy air activity resumed over the Syrian front early on 10 October with at least 40 Israeli and Syrian planes engaged in dogfights over the Golan Heights and in the Syrian interior. The Syrians claim that they have downed 14 more Israeli jets today

25X1

9. Israeli planes also struck the Syrian ports of Latakia and Tartus and the city of Hims in central Syria this morning. An Israeli spokesman claims that "accurate hits" were made on fuel depots in Hims and the naval headquarters at Latakia. A Syrian military spokesman has stated that six Israeli aircraft were downed on these raids. The Damascus radio also claims that four Israeli planes attempted to strafe the Damascus International airport, but that Syrian air defenses downed three of the planes.

10. On the ground, two Syrian armored divisions and three infantry divisions continue to hold Qunaytirah, in the central part of the Golan Heights this morning, where UN observers report heavy fighting. An Israeli report that their forces crossed into Syria late this afternoon, Tel Aviv time, has not yet been confirmed. With the introduction of another armored division into the Golan Heights on 9 October, the Syrians may now have as many as 700 operational tanks, 28,000 infantry, and 10,000 to 15,000 armored troops in the Golan area.

11. Although Syria has reportedly lost 55 aircraft, it still has a sufficient aircraft for air defense operations, and Syrian airfields are believed to be essentially serviceable.

EGYPTIAN FRONT

12. Egyptian armored and infantry forces continue to hold the east bank of the canal, and Tel Aviv admits that Egyptian forces have advanced 10 kilometers into the Sinai. Cairo claims penetrations as much as 20 kilometers. Israeli air attacks on the canal bridges appear to be having only limited success, and the Israelis concede that the Egyptians are continuing to reinforce their bridgeheads.

25X1






25X1

13. Few details are available on the ground fighting, but Cairo claims that a major tank battle occurred in the Sinai this morning and that its forces destroyed over a hundred Israeli tanks. More than 500 Egyptian tanks are across the canal

25X1

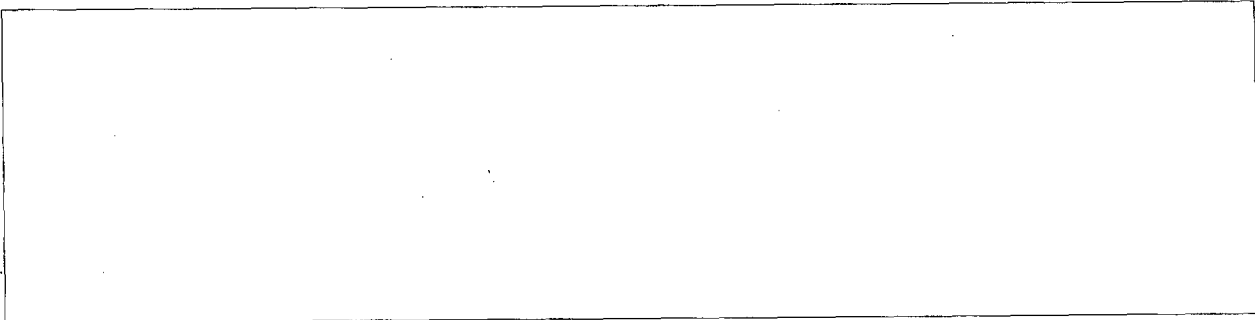
. The Egyptians are husbanding their air force and depending on their SAM air defenses, particularly the SA-6 which can move forward with the ground forces, to defend against the Israeli air attacks. At least 30 Israeli air sorties have been directed against the Port Said area today with some 25 additional Israeli aircraft attacking elsewhere along the length of the Canal.

25X1

14. The Israelis also attacked two Egyptian airfields in the delta region--Quwaysina and Abu Hammad-- and a radar station on the Mediterranean coast this morning.

15. Logistical factors may begin to have an effect on the battle soon. The Israelis are anticipating some ammunition shortage for their artillery and have requested 105- and 155-mm ammunition from the Netherlands, according to the Dutch ambassador to the US. The Israelis have indicated that the Egyptians are expending ammunition and missiles at a very high rate, as though they had unlimited supplies.

16. The US Interests Section in Cairo reports a high rate of military transport activity in Cairo during the night. Civilian transport is being employed extensively in what appears to be a well-coordinated mobilization effort. Although some heavy equipment was seen, resupply of ammunition, fuel, and small goods were predominant.



25X1



25X1

25X1

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

COMMITMENTS BY OTHER ARAB STATES

25X1

19. Egyptian and Syrian military "successes," which may have exceeded their own expectations, appear to be galvanizing some Arab states into action that normally would prefer to stay at arms length from hostilities. The Iraqis have committed air units and ground forces, the Moroccans are sending their second contingent of ground troops, and Tunisian troops are reported to have arrived in Egypt. Also, the Algerians have dispatched some MIG aircraft to Egypt, and now the Saudis, traditionally very cautious, are preparing to move troops to Syria through Jordan.

20. Whether King Faysal intends his units--whose value is marginal--to see front-line duty is not clear. In any event, it is apparent that the time is growing short when King Husayn, who is calling up his reserves, will have to make a similar decision. Quick and decisive Israeli military action, particularly in the Golan area, perhaps within hours, may be the only way the King can preserve his present military posture. Jordan's entry into the hostilities would seriously affect Israeli planning and strategy, and divert increasingly scarce resources to a new front, even though Jordanian capabilities are relatively limited.

DAMASCUS AIR RAID

21. Dr. Cardilli, an Italian diplomat representing US interests in Syria reports that damage to the diplomatic and foreign residential area in Damascus is severe as a result of yesterday's raid. He estimates total civilian casualties in the city to be about 150 plus more than 200 wounded. Cardilli has learned of no American casualties. He describes the mood in Damascus as "ugly." The widespread rumor throughout the city is that American pilots carried out the bombing.

25X1

25X1

[REDACTED]

EGYETIAN INTERNAL SITUATION

21. A US Interests Section source reports that the Ministry of Interior is arresting potential troublemakers, including communists and conservative religious elements. He claimed that as of 9 October, some 4,800 had been jailed, including 1,500 in Cairo and 890 in Alexandria.

25X1