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RESEARCH REPORT

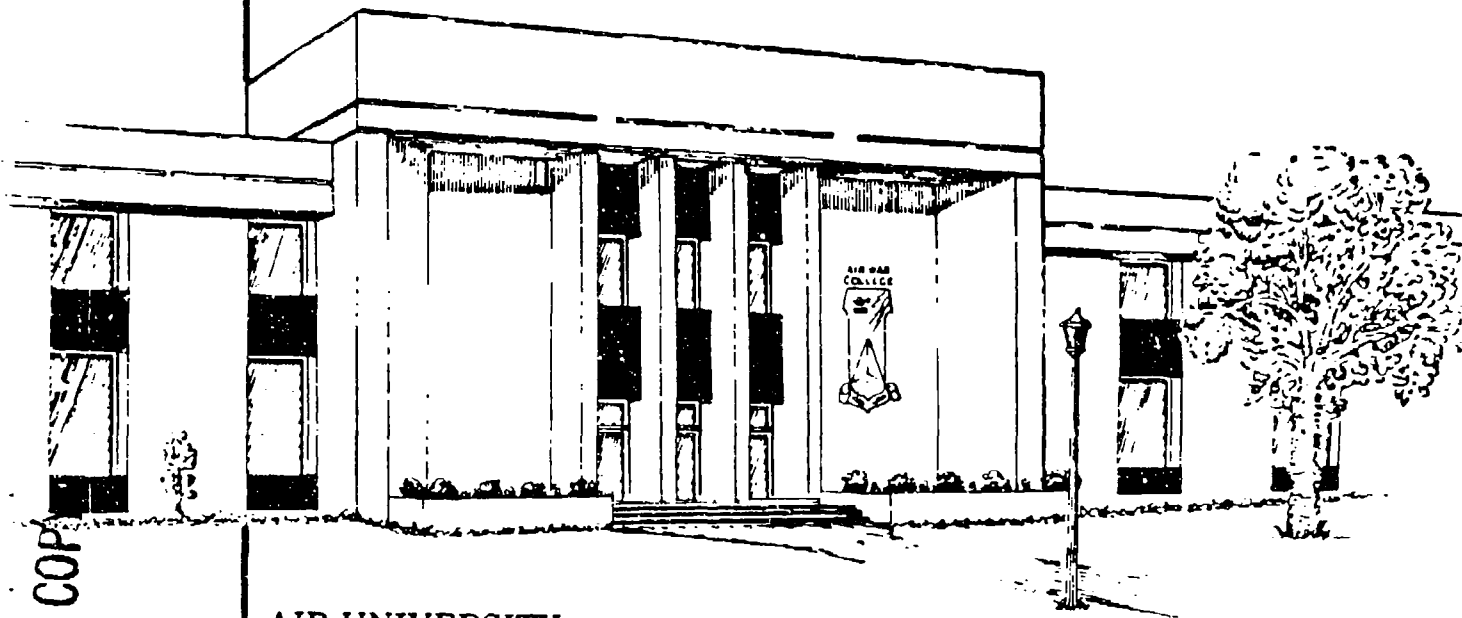
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THE RAMADAN WAR
1973

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By COLONEL TAREK A. AWAD, EGYPTIAN AIR FORCE



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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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AIR WAR COLLEGE
AIR UNIVERSITY

THE RAMADAN WAR
1973

by

Tarek A. Awad
Colonel, Egyptian Air Force

A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY
IN
FULFILLMENT OF THE RESEARCH
REQUIREMENT

Research Advisor: Colonel Harry Johnson

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

MARCH 1986

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AIR WAR COLLEGE RESEARCH REPORT ABSTRACT

TITLE: Ramadan War

AUTHOR: Tarek A. Awad, Colonel, Egyptian Air Force

Naturally, as in any combat, the two participants view the events differently, both because of their objectives and interests and because of the facts known uniquely to them. Since the Arab participants in these wars have published little, and their side of the conflict was not covered in the Western press in the detail in which the Israeli side was, there has not been an equal opportunity for Westerners to evaluate it adequately, or even to understand the Arab position.

That is why the cornerstone in this research paper is to highlight the Fourth Round between Israel and some of the Arab countries. Remarks on some historical aspects of this war from the Egyptian point of view will be presented, attempting to articulate the facts far away from any propaganda or false facts. Maybe the painful fact to me, as an Egyptian soldier, in this paper is that the United States was supporting the other side. Subsequently, the Americans have an incorrect idea about the Ramadan War, "The October 1973 War."

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Colonel Tarek A. Awad has been graduated from the Egyptian Air Force Academy since 1964. He served as a fighter pilot from that date, and subsequently he participated in the Arab-Israeli conflict from that time until the end of the Ramadan War. He shot down two Israeli fighter aircraft during this war, one F-4E and one Mirage 3. Due to the insufficient knowledge of the Egyptian perspectives about the October 1973 War, he has been interested in writing on this war to articulate the facts of the conflict from the other side.

Colonel Awad has finished the Squadron Leaders Course, Air Staff and Command College in Egypt, and he recently completed the United States Air War College, Class of 1986.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During my recent course at Air War College I was struck by the fact that the Americans have an incorrect idea about the October War. In my opinion that has happened because there are very few books in English that reliably and authoritatively present the Egyptian viewpoint about that war, or about the general conflict and confrontation between Israel and the neighboring Arab states. Most American and British readers are exposed to books by Israelis written or translated in English, or to books by Westerners familiar with Israel and Israeli viewpoints, but with little knowledge of Arab attitudes and opinions and very limited access to Arab sources. Since the Arab participants in these wars have published little, and our side of the conflict was not covered in the Western press in the detail in which the Israeli side was, there has not been an equal opportunity for Westerners to evaluate the war adequately, or even to understand the Arab position.

In fact, my decision to write my research on the October War was due to the unreal information which faced me in the beginning of my course, which was affected by the Israeli and the Zionist propaganda.

CHAPTER II

PROLOGUE

In none of the accounts of the eight-decade-long conflict between the Arabs and the Zionists has the Arab side of the story been adequately told.

The Israelis and their champions in the world have published numerous books and articles backing the Israeli point of view, particularly their rights and roots in Palestine. Yet, Arabs point out that the ideological premises of the Israeli aggression are to be found in the very concept of Zionism.

The nineteenth century Zionists of eastern Europe shared objectives with many other nationalists of the time. But, unlike other nationalists, Zionists did not then possess a land they could call their own. Other nationalists were basically trying either to break away territorially from a foreign ruling power or to extract greater concessions in their own territories from the ruling government. But the Zionists were literally in search of a territory; and the land they were looking for was one they wanted to possess and unmistakably stamp with their own image.

But what if this land was already possessed by others? It was the consciousness of power that dictated Zionist policy when the new homeland had been selected and partly occupied. As early as March 1946, representatives

of Haganah (the illegal underground military organization of the Jewish Agency) had told an Anglo-American committee: "If you accept the Zionist solution, but are unable or unwilling to enforce it, please do not interfere. We, the armed forces of Zionism, will secure its implementation by force." The British were reluctant, for various domestic and international reasons, to reply with any severity to repeated Zionist provocations, and this greatly increased Zionist self-confidence. The American-Soviet backing of Zionism at the United Nations in 1947 provided further basis for confidence.

As early as June 1932, Arlosoroff sent Chaim Weizmann a confidential letter in which he outlined his views on Zionist strategy. He pointed out that Zionist policy should be judged only against the relationship of forces of the two people contending in the country, the Arabs and the Jews. Arlosoroff concluded his letter by observing that, under such an ideology, Zionism might resemble fascism that the world at large had rejected and despised, but the failure of Zionism to exploit its superiority in field forces in Palestine would never be forgiven by Jews in the future.

Ben-Gurion, true to that ideology, could put in the field by the end of March 1949 three Palmach Brigades of highly mobile striking forces, as well as six Haganah Brigades and two Irgun Terrorist Brigades.¹ Yacov Dori,

the first Israeli JCS, mustered in the field 67,000 Israeli soldiers, organized in eleven brigades, in the face of 14,000 Arab soldiers, deployed in the area by five Arab states. The numerical superiority thus was more than 4.5 to 1 for Israel. And yet Zionist propaganda succeeded in convincing the world that the Israelis were David and the Arabs Goliath.

The arms at the disposal of these Israeli forces were plentiful and much in excess of what may be gathered superficially from Zionist sources. Ironically, the main supplier of arms to Israel in the First Round of 1948 (Soviet Union) suddenly became the sole supplier to the Arabs in the Second Round in 1956.

The basic features of the 1948 situation from the power point of view were:

1. Without question, the Jews possessed superiority in forces and means.
2. Arab strength, however, lay in the fact that they were deeply rooted in the Middle East.
3. To be defeated, the Arabs had first to be dislodged, if Zionism were to get its "Eretz Israel," the hoped-for Zionist empire stretching from the Nile to the Euphrates; and this is the real cause behind the ever-increasing Arab refugees' disaster in the last 25 years of the conflict.

The Zionist authorities had applied military power to the task of realizing Herzl's vision. By military action, Israel exploited the prevailing circumstances and was able in less than a quarter of a century to expand the territories originally allotted to it by the 1947 United Nations partition plan more than five-fold. The expansion began between 1947 and 1949. In 1956 Israel attacked her Arab neighbors in collusion with France and Britain. In 1967 Israel attacked again, though this time acting on her own.

Israel's political-military doctrine became one of aggression, with high priority allotted to territorial expansion against a "yielding environment." This was a doctrine in which, evidently, any injustice inflicted upon the Arabs counted for very little.²

Both the 1956 and 1967 campaigns were based on this strategy of expansion. In 1956 the fruits of aggression were denied to Israel by the late U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, because, according to his own words, "he wanted to meet his creator with a clear conscience."³ But after 1967 the climate of opinion in the United States had changed.

That the Arabs could also evolve their own effective style of war based on their experiences was discounted by the Israelis. The Israelis' false victory in the Six-Day War confirmed their assumption of continuing Arab disunity and incompetence. Even the War of Attrition of 1969-70

failed hopelessly to show the fallacy of the Israeli military establishment's assumption of superiority, of the stupidity of relying on the Bar Lev line or the Golan fortifications as secure borders. The possibility of an early Arab military revival was just not credible to the Israelis, and for this arrogance, they were to pay a heavy price in the Fourth Round of October 1973.

The ready U.S. commitment to the Zionist cause stems as much from lack of understanding of the M.E. people as from the impact of Israeli propaganda.⁴ There have been few spokesmen for the Arab cause in the U.S. capable of influencing sympathetic American attitudes toward the Arab people and their cause. It was easy for Zionist propaganda with effective agencies on the American continent to inject into this vacuum an erroneous image of the Arabs and their aims. As a result, the American image of the Arabs is of a mass of unreasonable people, antagonistic toward the long-suffering Jews, who have been outrageously persecuted in medieval and modern times.

Since 1967 the close relationship of Israel and the U.S. has in effect supported Israeli arrogance and brutality in dealing with its neighbors. Accompanying this attitude was a backward and disinterested people, too inferior and primitive to protect their own interests or defend their lands against a superior civilization.

The main purpose of Zionist propoganda was to confuse the basic facts of the injustice done to the Arabs and to influence international opinion--particularly in the West--in favor of Israel.

Following the defeat of June 1967, the Arabs spared no efforts to reach a just solution for the Middle East crisis. But Israeli arrogance destroyed every initiative. By the end of 1972, Egypt had exhausted all means to break the stalemate of the "no war, no peace" situation.

1. Egypt had accepted all resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council.

2. Egypt had accepted all international initiatives for peace.

3. Egypt had supported all endeavors to reach a peaceful solution.

4. Egypt had accepted two Rogers initiatives.

5. Egypt had accepted the Jarring initiative and replied in the affirmative to his suggestions.

6. President Salat had proposed his own initiative, which included a substantial compromise.

7. Egypt had accepted the United States proposals on proximity talks.

All this Egypt did, to break the stalemate, but to no avail owing to Israeli arrogance and insistence on frustrating all proposals and initiatives that aimed for peace in the Middle East. Moreover, Israel exploited the

passage of time to escalate its expansionist designs, to frustrate Arab policies in order to achieve supremacy in the Middle East, and to impose a fait accompli on the international community.

On the other hand, Egypt did not waste this time either; it was gathering strength in all political, economic, moral, and military spheres.

CHAPTER III

DECISION AND CONCEPT

The Decision

The decision to use military power was made in November 1972 when Egypt's political and military commands reached total agreement that Egypt could never escape from the stagnated state of "no war, no peace" without recourse to armed force.

There were two courses of action open to the Egyptian Military Command: either return to the War of Attrition or launch a limited war.

Extensive discussions led to the conclusion that the War of Attrition had exhausted its usefulness. It was necessary to think in terms of a larger military effort and to determine the type and scope of operation that would make it worth the expected Israeli reaction. In other words, Egypt had to make the initial blow against Israel effective, while at the same time making the necessary preparations to repel the counteraction that Israel would launch, regardless of the limits and direction of the Egyptian blow.

The decision to use force was taken as part of a direct and total strategy, in which the armed forces were to play the principal role, with the aim of changing the existing political and military balance in the Middle East by undermining the basic concepts of the Israeli national

security doctrine. The aim was to convince Israel, and the world as well, that its military establishment was not invincible, that its military achievements could not impose peace, and that natural or artificial obstacles do not provide security for any country in our modern times. One element of the Arab objective was to offer the United States the choice either of taking the long-delayed action on an implicit commitment to force Israel to evacuate the Arab territories or to expose U.S. interests in the Arab world to real danger.

The Factors

The prime objective of the Egyptian military plan was to nullify the theory of Israel's national security, which was built on the myth of "secure borders," on the maintenance of the initiative and the power of deterrence, and on the necessity of fighting the Arabs one at a time with the guarantee of support from the United States.

From the entirely realistic position of assessing the capability of both the Egyptian and the Syrian armed forces, the Egyptian JCC formulated the aim of the military operation in the simplest framework, "to undertake a limited offensive, to establish a bridge head across the Suez Canal."

The following considerations had to be kept in mind:

1. In our present time and under the international detente policy there have been restrictions imposed upon the use of military force which may be dictated by international

and local causes. This is because the superpowers have delineated invisible limits for the scope of using military force deciding the form and scale of the armed conflict.

2. The capabilities of military force have their own limitations which determine the goals that can be achieved.

3. Superiority of Israel Air Force, armoured, and mechanized troops.

4. The Egyptian armed forces were equipped with mostly defensive weapons as a result of the restrictions imposed by the Soviet Union.

5. Israel's manpower shortfalls and their being sensitive to sustaining losses in personnel.

6. Maintaining the bulk of our armed forces safe and unharmed after attaining the limited goals so that they could be employed effectively in forthcoming tasks.

The most outstanding studies upon which the practical planning for that strategic operation was based were as follows:

1. Anatomy of the Israeli security theory and spotting its positives and negatives.

2. Collecting accurate information on Israel and its armed forces.

3. Assessing the actions and reactions expected from the Israeli side at political and military levels.

4. The importance of achieving the element of surprise and taking the initiative in our hands.

5. Determining the approach of qualifying and preparing the armed forces for the awaited operation.

Anatomy of the Israeli Security Theory

By studying and analyzing that theory, it becomes very clear that it is based on the following five principles that imply expansionist intentions and aggressive spirit:

- Secure borders.
- Ability for deterrence.
- Conduct of blitzkrieg.
- Avoiding fighting on more than one front at the same time.
- Securing the support and assistance of a super-power.

Overthrowing the Secure Borders Doctrine

Depending upon natural and easily defended borders, such as the Suez Gulf and Canal on the Egyptian front, seized during the June 1967 hostilities, giving an additional strategic depth to Israel. In order to collapse the security borders doctrine that had been deeply rooted in the Israeli thought, it was incumbent upon the Egyptian military command to destroy the Bar Lev presence east of the canal, and in the Suez Gulf, and afflicting the Israelis with as heavy losses as possible in personnel and materiel. Inevitable as well was to cut off the Israeli navigation lines through the Red Sea and the Suez Gulf by closing the southern inlet of the Red Sea, in order to prove the uselessness of retaining and holding Sharm-El-Sheikh and Agapa Gulf Coasts by Israel.

Defeating the Israeli Deterrence Capability

To deprive Israel of the advantage of air superiority, the following were taken into consideration on planning for the strategic offensive operation:

1. Organizing a powerful air defense system.
2. Planning for levelling a total and surprise air blow, by a most massive air concentration force "separately or in combination with the Syrian Air Force" to break the enemy air superiority.
3. Keeping the majority of the Air Force intact and unimpaired during the operations in order to be a source of permanent threat to the enemy Air Force.
4. Planning for the most optimal employment of the Air Force by equipping the operations scene with air bases and airfields all along the confrontation line, and throughout the depth of the country in such a way that should provide the most favourable conditions for dealing effective air blows, and improving the Air Force combat effectiveness by developing the technical capabilities at air bases in order to help in preparing aircraft rapidly to re-deal such blows and to increase the number of sorties during the day.
5. Limiting the volume of the air effort allotted for supporting the land forces, with a view to providing the Air Force for other tasks.

As for preventing Israel from making use of armour superiority, the following fundamentals had been considered during the planning for the strategic offensive operation.

Surprising Israel during the first stages of operations before they were able to mobilize all their armoured troops already concentrated in Sinai, comprising four armed brigades bringing them up to twelve armoured brigades after mobilization.

6. Providing the assaulting troops with light anti-tank devices.

7. Delaying the counterattacks to be launched by the enemy tactical reserves until the heavy equipment had been transported across the canal and made available on the bridgeheads.

Thwarting Israel's Ability to Conduct a Blitzkrieg

In order to neutralize Israel's capability of conducting a blitzkrieg that might enable them to settle the situation decisively in their favour, the following assessments and positive solutions were made:

1. Planning to effect surprise and taking initiative in order to frustrate the enemy's quick response.

2. Conducting offensive operations, by Air Force, and special troop tanks, on a vast confrontation area including large depths alongside with a wide range of naval operations across the Mediterranean and Red Sea, distracting and confusing the enemy troop efforts and preventing them from concentrating their actions and specific sector of the front.

3. Balancing, and defending with a strong air defense system, the Egyptian troops in the initial areas of

offensive operation in a vast area of confrontation and in large depth in order to avoid the enemy's capability for dealing them an effective frustrating air strike.

4. Levelling a massive air blow at the enemy airfields and air defense elements "on Sinai."

5. Paralyzing the enemy's ability for controlling his troops by hitting their command posts and by dominating the other levels of command in Sinai.

6. Planning for repelling any foiling attempts on the part of the enemy to obstruct our offensive preparation.

7. Improving the combat efficiency of our troops and that of command and control posts so they are able to encounter any possible reactions on the part of the enemy.

Forcing Israel to Fight Simultaneously on More Than One Front

The fully organized cooperation and coordination between the Syrian armed forces and those of Egypt had compelled Israel to fight on more than one front.

Securing a Superpower Back Up

The Egyptian planners were able to undermine the mainstays of the Israeli security doctrine except for one, that is being dependent on a superpower during the armed conflict, political efforts had not been successful in having the United States neutralized. The American role in backing Israel up during the critical hours was very clear on October 8, 1973 when Israel was about to give up after its failure in directing effective counter blows to favourably

settle the situation on the Egyptian front. The United States was quick to strengthen Israel by establishing an airlift of the most up-to-date equipment and weapons. Further, Israel received accurate information on the positions of troops collected by the American air reconnaissance.

The Obstacle

When the Egyptian command determined to undertake the offensive, it realized the magnitude of the problem. The action would involve crossing the Suez Canal with massive forces--as much as two armies fully equipped and armed crossing simultaneously--and in the face of violent resistance from Israeli troops, fully prepared to meet them on the eastern bank.

Crossing water obstacles has always proved to be very complicated, but the Suez Canal is a unique water obstacle, differing in several ways from other rivers and waterways.

The Suez Canal has very steep banks, covered by reinforced concrete, which prevent amphibious vehicles from landing and climbing the banks without engineering pre-arrangements. In addition, the canal has a tide change of 60 centimeters in the north, increasing to 2 meters near Suez in the south. This factor greatly affected the Egyptian crossing plan, particularly the technical problems of establishing ferries and erecting a bridge. Because of the tide, the canal has a strong and rapid current which reaches 18

meters per minute in the northern sector and as much as 90 meters in the southern sector. The direction of the current changes every six hours with the change of the tide. The width of the canal varies from 180 to 220 meters and its depth varies from 16 to 18 meters. The water level is about two meters below the bank. It thus is impossible to swim across the canal or ford it with any kind of equipment at any point in its 175 kilometer length.

The Defense Line

The Israeli troops had taken advantage of the piles of sand thrown during digging and cleaning the canal in erecting their fortified defense line alongside the canal; they raised the height to 25 meters by an angle of more than 45°. Built into the high rampart were a number of fortified Israeli points. This was the so-called Bar Lev Line, on which the Israelis had spent \$238 million, that is to say half the cost of the High Dam in Aswan. The fortified area extended from Port Fued in the north to Ras Misalla on the Suez Gulf in the south, and extended in depth from 30-35 kilometers to the east.

The first line consisted of 22 fortified positions, embodying 31 strongpoints, each covering about 40,000 square meters. The strongpoints were complicated engineering structures of several stories, dug below ground and built up high enough to reach the top of the rampart. Each story consisted of several concrete shelters, reinforced by

railway rails and steel plates, and separated from the others by layers of iron rails, reinforced concrete, and sand and stone piles two meters thick. These strongpoints were impervious to bombs of up to 1,000 pounds. Each concrete pillbox was equipped for both artillery weapons and tanks and had several loopholes which would enable fire in all directions. To increase the impregnability of the positions, they were surrounded with dense belts of barbed wire, as well as with antitank and antipersonnel minefields which reached a depth of about 200 meters. In addition, booby traps covered the steep slopes of the rampart and its top. Some positions were equipped with oil depots and oil tanks from which pipes extended to the canal so that oil could be released to cover the water. When lit, the oil would turn the watery surface into an inferno with flames more than one meter high and temperatures reaching 700°C.

Between the main line on the bank of the canal and the line of mountains to the east, the Israeli forces established two other similarly designed defensive ramparts. The second rampart was 300 to 500 meters behind the first. It was built to the same specifications as the first one. The third and less extensive rampart was three to five kilometers from the canal on the sides of the main roads leading to the interior. In addition, Israeli forces prepared concentration areas for armored reserves inside the fortified areas, at depths varying from 5 to 35 kilometers from the Suez

Canal, and protected them by antiaircraft weapons and anti-tank rockets. Within the fortified area, a massive number of med-/long-range battery positions had been prepared, totalling approximately 240, ready for immediate occupancy. Israeli air forces provided air defense for the defending forces in the fortified area, and a strong network of HAWK missiles, equipped with the most up-to-date electronic and radar equipment protected command posts, strongholds, and fortified points.

The Egyptian planners realized that the Suez Canal and the Bar Lev Line formed a unique fortified obstacle, and there was no experience to assist in overcoming it. Yet, despite General David Elazar's declaration that the Bar Lev Line would prove to be "the Egyptian army's graveyard," the Egyptian soldiers proved the Israeli commander wrong. He said himself after the war, "This war's greatest surprise was the Egyptian soldier's high morale and capacity."

CHAPTER IV

SURPRISE

Planning for Surprise

Surprise and the way to achieve it successfully was one of the vital problems that preoccupied the Egyptian General Command for quite a long time. Among the principal factors that were adopted in the detailed plan of strategic deception in Egypt and Syria, this one involved all concerned levels of government. Its aim was (1) to deceive the enemy as to the possibility of the use of our armed forces in any assault operations, (2) to maintain the concept of the offensive operation in complete secrecy, and (3) to conceal the timing for the beginning of the war.

All political and information agencies coordinated their efforts to deceive the enemy. Coordination of the efforts of the ministries of information, foreign affairs, and defense, and coordination with Syria began five or six months before the beginning of the operation.

From the military point of view, the plan was to deceive Israel as to the real intention of launching an offensive operation and to conceal its timing, the direction of the main blows, and the size of participating forces. This was to be done by inducing the enemy into believing that our forces were merely perfecting their defensive preparations and raising their fighting efficiency through normal training and maneuvers.

Military Deception

The plan included the following measures:

1. All preparations for defensive operations were continued, including setting up defensive lines in depth to meet any sudden Israeli attack.

2. Troops were moved in different and secondary directions, including lateral moves inside the front zone and moves to and from the front, under pretense of training. Simultaneously with these constant changes in the size and positions of the land forces, there were comparable changes in the positions of naval units in different ports and anchorages inside and outside the country.

3. The assembling of troops for the offensive was done over a period of up to four months, by moving units in small elements and gradually accumulating strength near the front. The major elements were shifted from the interior of Egypt to the front three weeks before the beginning of the attack, under pretense of undertaking engineering preparations as a prelude to a joint massive maneuver. As a matter of fact, the real attack was launched during this maneuver.

4. A special plan was set up to move crossing equipment from the rear to the front. It was realized that if this movement was detected, in the light of the massive volume of such equipment, it would provide the enemy with clear evidence of offensive determination. The plan

encompassed several moves of this equipment, to take place from rear to front, and then back again, together with incidental and lateral movement, to indicate to the enemy that this was a kind of movement training.

5. The plan also included a well-practiced mobilization of reserves at regular intervals in a way that would allow having the greatest part of the reserves ready and standing by for action at the zero hour for the carrying out of the offensive. To add to the deception, it was decided to demobilize 20,000 soldiers 48 hours prior to the initiation of operations, making sure that this operation would be observed by Israeli intelligence.

6. The deception plan called for spreading misinformation as well as for action. It was an overwhelming success and misled foreign intelligence service bodies including the CIA, as well as Israeli intelligence. In fact, the whole world was startled by the sudden Egyptian-Syrian offensive.

Israeli military spokesmen tried to justify what befell them, declaring that "they saw but could not get the grasp of it." Some have even tried to justify their failure by saying that Israel did know of the Arab plan, but deliberately let Egypt direct the first blow. These declarations are answered by point out that accepting the first blow goes totally against Israeli strategy, which is based upon the necessity to anticipate the enemy in launching the first

blow as an indispensable preventive measure for frustrating Arab preparations.

On the other hand, the post-war inquisitions, investigations, and calls for the punishment of those who were at the head of the intelligence service and the armed forces that took place in Israel are the best proof that the joint Egyptian-Syrian plan was a total success in deluding Israel and the other foreign intelligence service bodies.

Selecting the Time for the Offensive

Among the principal factors that contributed to strategic surprise was the timing for the offensive. This process included the selection of the most suitable month of the year, the most convenient day of the month, and the best hour for launching the attack.

Detailed studies were carried out to select the most convenient meteorological, hydro-atmospheric, and hydro-graphic conditions that would help crossing actions and the naval and aerial combat actions. It was also necessary to choose timing most suitable for carrying out the offensive on both the Egyptian and the Syrian fronts simultaneously.

Choosing the Best Month of the Year

The aim was to choose a month of the year that could afford:

- Suitable atmospheric conditions that would be more favorable for our forces than for the enemy.

- The possibility of achieving strategic, operational, and tactical surprise.
- The possibility of taking advantage of the local and foreign political circumstances, as well as of the occasions, feast, and holidays that might affect the enemy's military position.
- Time for our forces to complete the improvement of their efficiency and full readiness for the accomplishment of the assigned offensive and engineering missions.
- Temperate weather and the best atmospheric conditions on both the Egyptian and the Syrian fronts, since snow starts falling on the Golan Heights of the Syrian front in November or December, and hydrographic conditions in the canal are not favorable at the end of autumn.
- A long night so as to enable our forces to accomplish the crossing in the dark.

All of these characteristics were found in the month of October.

- Preparations would be underway for the Israeli Knesset election, which would be held on the 28th of October 1973.
- The month of October 1973 was full of Israeli national and religious holidays, among which are the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), Sukkoth, and Simchas Torah.

- The Moslems' holy month of Ramadan would also fall during that same month; this period has a special religiously moral influence upon the Egyptian forces. An attack during this time would undoubtedly surprise Israel, which would not expect a war to be waged during the month of fasting.
- The October night is long; darkness would last for nearly twelve hours.
- The month is one of temperate weather on both fronts, which would aid in carrying out the massive military operations.
- October is the best month from the standpoint of convenient hydro-atmospheric conditions for naval operations.

Choosing the Best Day of the Month

The study aimed at selecting a D-day:

- Which would be an official holiday, a feast day, or weekend in Israel.
- In which the tidal difference in the canal would be the least so as to afford better circumstances for the erection of bridges and ferry bridges.
- When there would be moonlight, especially in the first half of the night, to facilitate the operation of ferries and the erection of bridges and to pave the way for the crossing of our forces

for several hours under cover of complete darkness; this required lunar light to last for no less than five to six hours before moonset.

All these terms and conditions were characteristic of the 6th of October since:

- Activities would stop in Israel on that day because it was Yom Kippur, as well as a Saturday (the Jewish Sabbath).
- That day is conformable to the tenth of Ramadan, with the moonlight is propitious and shining from sunset until midnight.
- The tide was considered most convenient.

Choosing the Hour for the Offensive

Lastly, the study aimed at choosing a suitable time for an H-hour that would afford a limited number of hours before darkness in order to:

- Enable the Syrian forces to accomplish their first vital mission, which included the crossing of the antitank trench along the Golan front, then taking hold of an important line on the heights in daylight.
- Afford the Syrian and Egyptian air forces enough time to direct a concentrated air attack in daylight and to repeat that blow before the last light, if need be, while simultaneously not giving enough daylight opportunity for Israel

to achieve a concentration of its air forces and to direct a counter air blow before the last light of the first day of operation; this would deprive Israel of effective air reaction before the morning of the second day. Meanwhile, the main crossing actions would be carried out without counter air interference from the enemy.

- Provide efficient daytime capability for controlling and correcting artillery fires throughout the initial offensive firing preparations and for repelling the expected enemy counterattacks within the first post-crossing hours.
- Enable the Egyptians to drop heavy crossing equipment in the Suez Canal water immediately upon nightfall and to build the ferries and bridges under moonlight to ensure their use for the crossing actions after moonset at midnight.
- Put the sun in the enemy's eyes during our forces' crossing of the canal, decreasing his capability observation and aim.

Taking into account all of these conditions, H-hour was set for about three and one-half hours before the last light, so as to facilitate execution of the following major operations:

- A joint air strike of both the Egyptian and Syrian forces by about 300 aircraft.

- Massive artillery preparations, with concentrated fire, using about 4,000 guns for one hour.
- Movement of the bridges from the rear concentration areas forward to the western bank of the canal and commencement of the lowering operation to the canal waters at dusk.
- The cutting of passages into the sand rampart by the use of the water pumps before dark.
- Launching Ranger groups behind the enemy front before the last light.

The studies undertaken for fixing the timing were so thorough and accurate that success was achieved in every respect. Most important was the securing of strategic surprise over the enemy. The best expression of the value of this work is in the words of General Ismail, commenting upon the factors that marked the day and hour for the attack: "The fixing of D-day was a substantial scientific achievement. This work will receive the appreciative esteem it deserves. It will take its place in the scientific history of wars as a model of meticulous accuracy and devoted research work."

Secret Preparations and Plans

At the outset of the planning stage the pattern was mixed in a way that would insure absolute secrecy. The "successive planning" method was chosen, so that requirements for action gradually were shifted from one level to a lower

level in accordance with a fixed time scheme. Planning was confined on all levels to a certain limited group of general staff officers. The handling of the plan documents was not allowed to any officers beyond this group.

The Results

The salient result achieved by surprising the enemy caused a radical and instantaneous change in the area's balance of military power, creating a new strategic situation during the very first hours of the battle. Moreover, the surprise factor resulted in:

1. Paralyzing and confusing Israeli military commands at all levels, preventing them from quick action, sound behavior, or immediate reaction. This condition of disruption lasted for several days.

2. Preventing the enemy from systematically mobilizing armed forces and human and economic resources and concentrating them in time and in a convenient place prior to the attack.

3. Successful accomplishment of the complex planned operations, foremost of which was the assault crossing of the Suez Canal and the destruction of the Bar Lev strongholds.

4. Greatly limiting the number of casualties suffered by Egyptian forces while simultaneously dealing the Israeli forces severe casualty blows in manpower, weapons, and equipment.

CHAPTER V

THE COURSE OF OPERATIONS

Combat actions can be divided into four distinctive stages according to the nature and volume of their objectives.

The First Stage

Assaulting the Suez Canal and routing the Bar Lev Line as well as seizing and consolidating the bridgeheads, 6-12 October 1973.

At just 1405 hours on 6 October 1973 the Egyptian/Syrian aircraft thrust over the confrontation lines towards their designated targets. In an unprecedented air concentration, some 220 aircraft went deeper into Sinai mounting a massive air strike against the enemy targets. Simultaneously, the enemy tactical defensive zone was surprised by intensive firing, along the Egyptian front, delivered by 2,000 guns, tanks, and tactical SSM announcing the start of fire preparations against the fortified Bar Lev Line. This bombardment was so accurate and intensive that 40,500 shells "175 shells per second" were fired at the enemy positions during the first minute only. This fire preparation, which consumed 3,000 tons of shells, lasted for 53 minutes. In the meantime, the naval forces were implementing their combat missions throughout the Mediterranean and Red Seas to

interdict and ward off the enemy sea communications and refute the theory of security claimed by Israel.

At 1420 hours, the force crossing of the water barrier was carried out by the first waves of five first echelon divisions of the field armies, supported by the artillery fire.*

The third army launched its offensive through a 30 kilometer assault sector, while the second army attacked through a 80 kilometer assault sector.

The Second Stage

The development of the offensive by starting from bridgeheads, 13-14 October 1973.

Before referring to this stage, it is worthy to mention the general features that prevailed at that time.

1. A collapsing strategic situation on the Syrian front threatened the political nature of Syria, a matter which forced the Egyptian Command to accomplish all possible political and military actions in order to attract the Israeli burden.

2. A sudden change in the situation on the Egyptian front regarding the superpowers' balance, where the American support and reinforcements for Israel reached its peak in

* In his daily orders to the Israeli forces, General Junin, Commander of the Southern Front, said: "You Israeli Soldiers are tasked with such missions that have been imposed upon you in a surprising manner."

the fields of information and supply of up-to-date weapons, a matter which was not observed completely before the development.

3. The Egyptian forces were not completed in a stable form at the eastern bank of the canal. This situation imposed compulsory conditions on the form and results of this stage. This stage aimed mainly at reducing the Israeli pressure on the Syrian front. By realizing this mission, the Israeli Command shifted its main efforts towards the Egyptian front. This situation will be made clear through the following stage.

Development Decision

According to Syrian Command reports and the contacts that took place at the political level, and due to the request of the Syrian Command, President Sadat, early on October 12th, ordered the Egyptian Commander in Chief to develop the offensive eastward with the mission of reducing the Israeli pressure and forcing Israel to quickly direct its land forces and air force towards the Egyptian front.

It is noteworthy that on October 13th, the Egyptian radars detected an aerial target (two aircraft) flying at 25 kilometers altitude and at a speed more than double the speed of sound over the Egyptian front. It was SR-71, the course of events later assured that the results of this sortie were delivered to Israel. This also gave Israel a green light and a completely clear image about the Egyptian

positions. This information enabled the Israeli Command to confront our combat actions during the development period, and what followed it.

At 0615 hours, 14 October, the air forces delivered a strike against important enemy targets in Sinai. Another strike was delivered with the tactical surface-to-surface rockets against enemy control positions and electronic jam stations. At that very moment more than 500 medium and heavy field guns and missile launchers (45 artillery battalions) opened fire for 50 minutes to pave the way for the attacking troops. It was apparent that the offensive had realized its general targets. The enemy's attention and main strength had shifted toward the Egyptian front releasing the pressure upon the Syrian front. Owing to the inability to continue the offensive eastward, especially the shortage of air defense and air protection for the advanced detachments, the Egyptians estimated that the attack eastward had served its purpose and issued orders for the detachments to return to return to the bridgeheads for reorganization. It also altered and strengthened some positions in order to drive off and destroy the strong armored counterattacks and blows. All these counterattacks failed to realize reasonable results.

The Third Stage

Seizing armies' bridgeheads on the eastern bank of the canal and confronting enemy's combat actions at the western bank of the canal, 15-22 October 1973.

This stage was characterized by a shift in the balance of the situation in the Middle East, where certain changes took place, which forced the Israeli strategic balance on the Egyptian front. It was considered that combat actions at the western bank of the canal were the only way to realize the balance. Until then it was impossible, from the military view, to destroy the huge Egyptian forces at the eastern bank of the canal.

These changes can be summed up as follows:

- A change in the strategic situation on the Syrian front in favor of Israel since October 17, 1973.
- Unbalanced positions on the western bank of the canal as a result of the sudden development of the offensive.
- Rapid American supply to Israel including new and further modern weapons and equipment through air bridge supply started since October 10th (2,200 tons). The most important equipment and weapons supplied by the U.S. were tanks, modern antitank missiles, Shrike missiles, and TV bombs used against air defense positions.

- Attempts to cease fighting, exerted by the United Nations and big countries and pushed Israel to carry out a certain action which affected the balance in the frame of running discussions at international and Security Council levels.
- Ability of the Israeli Command to exert moral and materialistic pressure on the field armies' groupings located east of the canal, in case of splitting or threatening the field armies' communications. Accordingly, the Israeli Command found itself able to launch a concentrated military action aiming to create favorable conditions to realize a strategic balance on the Egyptian front, by shifting the Israel main efforts towards the west bank of the canal. This would force the Egyptian Command to release the bridgeheads. Israeli Command concentrated five armoured brigades and two mechanized brigades in Tasa area, in addition to 5 or 6 artillery brigades at close contact with our forces at the bridgeheads.

The offensive started on October 15th against the right flank of the 2nd Army aiming at crossing the canal in the Devresoir area and captured a bridgehead west of the canal. Through consecutive attacks and attempts, some of the Israeli detachment succeeded on the night of 15-16 October in advancing west of the canal through the water area

north of the great bitter lakes. The attacks were delivered against the bridgehead of the 16th Division. The volume of Israeli forces was increased. They were able to set up bridges which led to excess flow of Israeli troops to the west during October 17th and 18th. This enabled the enemy to advance towards Ismailia and deploy to attack the air defense positions. The 2nd Field Army Command and General Headquarters faced this situation by trying to encircle the penetrating forces and creating favorable conditions to destroy these troops. On October 17, a brigade of the 27th Armoured Division and the 25th Independent Armoured Brigade failed to close the Israeli point at Devresoir.

The Egyptian forces west of the canal faced the Israeli combat actions to secure the area north and south of the Ismailia Canal. The 4th Armoured Division in the west with a part of their forces completed a maneuver to stop the enemy deployment. At the end of October 18, Israeli forces were two armoured brigades and one paratrooper brigade.

Egyptian artillery and air forces delivered massive fire and air strikes against the enemy's crossing sites at Devresoir area.

On October 20th, after discussing the situation during a conference headed by President Sadat, who issued his directives to maintain the bridgeheads east of the canal and containing enemy forces located in the west in order to launch a counter blow, aiming at destroying Israeli forces

and securing the canal cities, mainly Ismailia and Suez.

During the period 19-22 October, the flow of Israeli forces continued and Egyptian forces launched a counter blow aimed at destroying Israeli forces, and securing the canal cities. During this same period, the flow of Israeli forces continued to the west, reaching a strength of 5 to 6 brigades. These forces expanded the bridgeheads in the west. The expansion extended from South Ismailia Canal in the north and the second defensive zone to the west and north Geneva mountain El Kott mountain to the south. The enemy was unable before these dates to cut or prevent the supply to the Third Field Army.

On October 22, Egypt accepted the resolution of the Security Council to cease fire, which came into force at 1952 hours on the same day. This resolution was issued, initiated, and supported by the United States and the Soviet Union. During this period, our air forces carried out 2,500 sorties. Our air defense forces destroyed 100 hostile aircraft in cooperation with our air forces.

Our naval forces continued securing the operational zones in both the Red and Mediterranean Seas and intercepting enemy naval lines of communication.

The Fourth Stage

Abortion of cease fire resolution by Israeli forces, and the containment of these forces west of the canal, 22-28 October 1973.

Despite the Israeli approval of the cease fire, which went into effect on October 22, small Israeli groups continued to pour into the south and west, bypassing Egyptian resistance and trying to spread out over the largest possible area. The Israeli Command realized that they had achieved only tactical success. Meanwhile, their planned political and strategic target as stated in the third stage were not realized despite their heavy losses and casualties.

Regardless of the erection of limited bridgeheads west of the canal, penetrating our air defense system, and disrupting one line of supply and communication for the 2nd Field Army. Yet, the situation of Israeli forces west of Devresoir was extremely uncovered and subjected to destruction if the combat actions started again, where the Egyptian forces encircled the area from all directions.

Israel was also unable to disrupt the operational and strategic balance of the Egyptian armed forces at the canal front. In addition, it failed to compel the Egyptian General Command to withdraw any forces from the east to the west of the canal. Israel failed to capture Ismailia City, to isolate or besiege the bridgeheads or intercept its lines of supply and communication.

According to this situation, Israel did not fulfill its commitment towards the cease fire resolution and in order to carry out a considerable volume of propaganda outcome, political and military success, Israeli forces

continued to cross the canal with fresh forces in the evening of October 22 to reinforce its forces at the bridgehead. This attitude was based on taking a chance that the Egyptian forces were complying with the cease fire resolution. Thus Israel was sure that crossing the sites north of Devresoir they would not be attacked. Israeli forces continued their offensive towards the south across mountain passes, concentrating the main efforts to reach the rear of the Third Field Army to disrupt its communication lines with Cairo. Also, to encircle the army bridgeheads east of the Canal and to capture Suez City. In the meantime, the Israeli forces continued their concentrated air strikes on the army bridgeheads east of the Canal.

October 23, 1973

According to the new changes of the Israeli situation and the nature of its combat actions, the General Command of the Egyptian armed forces issued on October 23 the directives to the Second and Third Field Armies to face the enemy combat actions in the west and prevent the spread of the Israeli troops. Also, to exhaust and disrupt the Israeli forces day and night and reinforce the defense of Ismailia and Suez City. On the same day the directives and instructions were issued to the Red Sea military district to carry out limited combat actions at the eastern bank of the Gulf of Suez and South Sinai, as a reaction against the enemy's abortion of the cease fire.

During October 23, the enemy concentrated his combat actions to attack the positions of antiaircraft missiles and radar stations. The enemy reached the rear of the Third Field Army and intercepted the main line of supply and communications between Cairo and Suez. In the evening an armoured advanced detachment attacked Suez City, but the attack failed completely. Another armoured detachment infiltrated into Al-Adabiyah port.

October 24, 1973

The Israelis concentrated their combat actions to move towards the south to complete the besiege of the Third Army. They captured Al-Adabiyah port through deceptive actions. They pretended to accept the cease fire resolution, made use of the mere presence of United Nations observers in the area, and declared that they had already encircled the bridgehead of the Third Field Army. The Israelis failed to capture Suez City and suffered heavy losses in tanks.

The Period from October 25 to October 28, 1973

At the first hour of October 25, President Nixon declared an increased defense posture. The enemy went on ignoring the cease fire resolution and attacked for the third time Suez City after concentrated artillery and air strikes. The combat actions continued for some hours, but resulted in a complete failure on the part of the enemy.

By the end of October 28, the size of the Israeli land forces in Sinai was 21 brigades; among these brigades

there were 6 to 7 west of the canal. Our forces continued to stand firm at the bridgeheads east of the canal and Kabrit. The enemy failed to capture Ismailia and Suez City. The Israeli forces located west of the canal asked for confrontation with the Egyptian forces in all directions.

The Egyptian Command initiated "Shamel Plan" to destroy the Israeli forces west of the canal and regain the positions that existed before October 14, and also to recover the bridgehead of the 16th Infantry Division east of Devresoir and restore its former positions.

The plan aimed to employ five divisions in the west, where the Egyptian forces outnumbered the Israeli forces 3:1. Further, to close up the base of the Israeli bridgehead at Devresoir by a force of one armoured brigade and one mechanized brigade. It is worth mentioning that Israeli forces located east of the canal had always been exposed to daily losses in lives and poverty.

Demonstrating its course of events, this period gave evidence to the final result of the Israeli non-conviction as regards the results of the previous stage, until the cease fire resolutions were announced on October 22, 1973.

The Israeli combat actions both east and west of the canal were not the decisive factor to realize the strategic target, since the captured areas did not include vital targets such as Ismailia and Suez City.

The holding of these larger areas would have realized a strategic balance or political success in favor of Israel. This situation did not affect the Egyptian will to secure the positions east of the canal and Gulf of Suez. To support this fact, the Israeli side during negotiations of KM 101, requested the withdrawal of all Israeli forces to the eastern bank of the canal, and not to the lines of October 22.

It is worth mentioning that the size of losses due to the combat actions west of the canal, as referred to by Away Dan,* the correspondent of the Maareef newspaper in the September 25, 1974 issue, "Where losses of General Sharon in persons only were estimated to be 500 Killed and 1500 Wounded [this similar to 14,000 Killed and 40,000 Wounded from the Egyptian forces related to its population]." In addition to Israeli losses of equipment, particularly at Devresoir pocket area.

Finally, I would like to compare the enemy success west of the canal in the pocket battle and the setting up of the bridgehead to the victories achieved by the Egyptian forces in a series of battles. The Egyptian armoured forces assaulted the Suez Canal, broke through the Bar Lev Line, and captured all its fortified strong points. All the enemy's

* Quoted from Sharon Bridge, a book edited by Israel Sharon.

counterattacks and blows failed against the bridgeheads east of the canal. This cannot be considered as a measure to judge the final results of the October War, but it should be measured by the final outcome of what has been achieved by each side as to the political and strategic objectives.

CHAPTER VI
RESULTS AND STRATEGIC LESSONS
OF THE OCTOBER WAR 1973

The October War 1973 was a unique event. It could be considered as a principal turning point in the course of the Arab-Israel conflict. It changed the political and strategic situations in the area. It also had its effect on the course of the contemporary international relations. The world started to reconsider its calculations and positions in respect to this area on the basis of strategic facts which were imposed by the October War results.

The Israeli objectives during this war were to prevent the Egyptian forces from assaulting and crossing the Suez Canal, to defeat the troops from succeeding in crossing it, and finally to bring about the submission of Egypt to Israeli political conditions. In Israel, no one doubted this objective and several nations also shared this understanding.

The Egyptian goal was to undermine the basic concept of the Israeli national security doctrine. The military objective was to defeat the Israeli armed forces deployed in Sinai and to inflict on them heavy losses in order to convince them that the continuity of occupation of our land would cost them a lot. Here we ask: Did Israel realize its strategic military aims from this war or not?

Egyptian forces assaulted the Suez Canal, destroyed the Bar Lev Line, fortified strong points and defenses, defeated the Israeli main grouping, inflicted on the Israeli troops heavy losses, and forced the enemy to withdraw. As a result of this war, the strategic balance was completely changed in the area.

The Israeli theory of security was refuted, its idea of secured boundaries proved to be false, and it is considered a permanent source of irritation in the area. In 1967, Israel's victory was achieved from non-secured boundaries and the Israeli defeat in 1973 on the Egyptian front was achieved also from secured lines according to the Israeli point of view.

The assault of the Suez Canal is considered, according to Israel, a huge and unique achievement as regards the size of forces, large areas of confrontation, and carrying out complicated combat missions; all this under the conditions of employment of up-to-date weapons which possess high rates of destruction.

The Basic Military Lessons Learned from the October War

The following lessons were learned from the October War:

1. The possibility of achieving surprise in the open desert land.
2. Modern operations will be an operation of combined arms. It was clear that Israel's reliance on tanks

only in many battles caused expedient failure.

3. The impossibility of achieving air supremacy, even if the air forces of one of the two sides was specifically superior or outnumbered the other side. But the air forces will still play a principal role in the armed struggle.

4. The anti-tanks guided missiles proved their efficiency in fighting enemy's tanks, as they destroyed several tanks, a matter which raised questions about the role of the tank in modern battle. There is, however, no doubt that the tanks will continue to play a decisive role in the land forces.

5. Local wars cost so much at present. Disastrous losses occur in personnel and equipment, which require reconsideration as to the rates of consumption in order to replenish ammunition, equipment, and personnel. The flow of weapons that poured out of the American arsenal and were directly unloaded at El-Arish Airfield were significant; the size of the airlift was more than 22,000 tons, owing to the armament restrictions imposed on the Egyptian side. We have learned a very important lesson from this war; that is that we should diversify our armament sources and develop national military industrialization.

6. The human factor constitutes a vital basis for achieving victory in modern combat.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

I had never thought of writing about the October 1973 War at the outset of the Air War College classes. But, later on, and because I was shocked by the fact that many facts of this war have been misinterpreted, especially by the Western Europe and the United States. It is even more shocking that these facts have been misinterpreted by the public, and by those who specialize in the issues of strategy. This particular point became quite clear to me when I shared perspectives with Dr. Organisky, who gave a speech at the Air War College about strategy. From his viewpoint Egypt was defeated in the fourth round (1973 War) of the Arab-Israeli confrontation. The round which the Arabs call "Ramadan War" and which the Israelis call the "Yom Kippur War." So I decided, as an Egyptian in the first place, and as a fighter pilot who participated in the third (1967) as well as the fourth round, in addition to the Attrition War, to cast some light on the October 1973 War. However, I wrote very briefly about the war, because you need a full volume to cover the October War. I addressed the subject as follows:

1. In the first chapter I explained briefly how Israel came into being, and I highlighted the propaganda which the Jews have adopted to gain international sympathy.

The propaganda focused on the numerical superiority of the Arabs and that the Israel State is encircled by anti-semitic people. And I have also touched on the three rounds preceding the October War.

2. In the second chapter I explained how the decision to wage the war was made after it became clear that to return the lands captured by Israel military means was vital as peaceful means proved to be a failure. The constraints that the Egyptian planner was faced with were as follows:

a. The detente posed by the two superpowers.

b. The Israeli superiority in air assets and armour supplied by western countries, especially the United States.

c. The constraints imposed by the Soviet Union with respect to weapons supplied to Egypt, especially offensive arms.

d. The Suez Canal as an obstacle and the Bar Lev Line with its fortified positions.

Then I analyzed the Israeli national security theory and concept and how the Egyptian warrior was able to overcome it, except the Israeli reliance on a superpower (U.S.A.) that became clear since October 10 and which entailed substantial airlift to forward airbases in the theater of operations and which numbered 22,000 tons of sophisticated weapons. On the other hand, the U.S.A. conducted strategic

reconnaissance sorties which assisted the Israeli forces to infiltrate through the Second and Third Field Armies. The analysis of the Egyptian SAM frequencies by the U.S.A. also helped the Israelis to suppress the Egyptian air defense.

3. In Chapter 3 I touched on the Suez Canal as a hard water obstacle. I also touched on the Bar Lev Line which the Israeli leader thought would be the graveyard of the Egyptian Army; however, it was penetrated as easily as a knife can penetrate butter.

4. In Chapter 4 I chose to write about the preparation for the surprise on both the strategic and the operational levels.

5. In Chapter 5 I briefly wrote about the five phases of the war, focusing on the Israeli pocket which represented no strategic importance for the following reasons:

a. Supplies to the Third Army were not disrupted.

b. The Israelis failed to seize any strategic targets (Ismailia and Suez City).

c. The Israelis exploited the cease fire to augment their forces in the pocket.

d. The pocket, in itself, represented a threat to Israeli, especially when plans were made to encircle it.

e. The Israeli pocket was similar to the pocket established by the German forces' last ditch maneuver in the Ardennes and its strategic results.

6. In Chapter 6 I wrote about the strategic lessons learned from the October War in general, but I focused on the main lesson learned.

7. There has always been a big question about the October War: WHO WON THE WAR? To answer this question, let us take Clausewitz' definition of War. He said: "War is a continuation of policy to achieve an objective." And, as we analyze the results, we come out with:

a. The Egyptian forces crossed the Suez Canal in a limited military operation as directed by the president for the purpose of politically furthering the cause, and also to convince Israel that the Israeli concept of natural boundary security was a failure.

b. The Egyptian military implemented the principles of war in the best way. This was quite noticeable in the achievement of surprise, gaining the initiative, and the coordination in addition to cooperation between all the services.

c. The intervention of the U.S.A. resulted in the pocket. However, if the Egyptian armoured forces were kept west of the canal, the pocket could not have happened. There were 21 armoured divisions which represented the General Command reserve. The situation in the Syrian front deteriorated, which compelled the Egyptian General Command to make that decision, which I illustrated in chapter 5.

d. On the other hand, the Israeli pocket was

considered as a critical situation for Israel, because in the disengagement confrontation, the Egyptian demand was to return the Israeli forces to the position of October 22, west of Suez Canal. But the Israeli side refused and asked for the complete withdrawal east of the Suez Canal.

e. Egypt accepted the cease fire resolution after the Israeli approval within 15 minutes, which is documented on the United Nations document.

f. From the strategic point of view, the Ramadan War [Yom Kippur War or October War] refuted Israel's theory of strategic depth and doctrine of secure borders.

NOTES

1. Hassan El Badri, Taha El Magdoub, Mohammed Dia El Din Zohdy, Ramadan War, 1973, T. N. Dupuy Associates, Inc., Dunn Loring, Virginia 22027, pp. 3,4.
2. Ibid., p. 4.
3. Ibid., p. 6.
4. Ibid., pp. 8,12.

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