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 By NARA Date 8/26/03

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 Operations Center

MIDDLE EAST TASK FORCE
 Situation Report #8 (corrected first page)

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Situation in the Middle East, as of 2300 Hours. (EDT, Oct. 7, 1973)

Military Situation

1. Summary. It is becoming clear that October 7 was a day of heavy fighting with major losses on both sides. The Israelis, still not fully mobilized, concentrated on containing the Egyptian and Syrian thrusts; however, they admit to losing some ground in both sectors.
2. At midnight local time the Israeli radio reported that the Egyptian bridgeheads established on the east bank of the Canal were being subjected to intense Israeli air force, armored and artillery attack.
3. USDAO/Tel Aviv was briefed by Israelis on events of October 7. General impression was one of a "miserably tough day" with implied heavy casualties and losses of equipment. IDF admitted to losing some ground on the Golan Heights and also on the Egyptian front. Estimate was that 400 Egyptian tanks have crossed Canal over eleven bridges in central and southern sectors, and another 100 in the northern sector. Israelis claim to have knocked out nine of these bridges. IAF flew SAM suppression raids in both Syria and Egypt and attacked 8 Egyptian airfields. IAF admits high aircraft losses, all but one or two to SAMs and AAA (one report says 37 aircraft on October 7 alone; another says 35 since hostilities began). On the Golan sector, the Israelis say the Syrians have massed 1000 tanks and 600 artillery pieces but believe their forces are now exhausted. The Israelis are massing their armor for counterattack, which may come Oct 8 or 9.
4. IDF claims to have a radio transcript of Soviets speaking at Syrian brigade and battalion command level, including one instance of Soviet assuming de facto control of a battalion and giving orders.
5. The United Nations Truce Supervisory Organization said that the Egyptians have requested the evacuation by UNTSO of its observation posts along the Suez Canal. In the Syrian sector, several UNTSO observation posts have been overrun by Syrian forces, but so far UNTSO has not taken any casualties on either sector.

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SECRET2. Situation Report continued
October 7

6. Israelis expect the Egyptians to blockade the Red Sea and possibly to try to sink Israel-bound ships.

7. Radio Algiers announced that Algerian Air Force had arrived on the Egyptian front. The Israelis believe that some Iraqi aircraft may have arrived in Syria.

Diplomatic

The White House announced that it was instructing Secretary Kissinger to request a Security Council meeting. It is also expected that several speeches on Middle East hostilities will be made October 8 in the General Assembly.

American Communities

The situation in the Arab capitals remains calm, with no reports of imminent danger to American citizens.

APPROVED BY:

E. F. M.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS

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