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Although many of the reasons for Arab success in the latest outbreak of the seemingly interminable Arab-Israeli conflict are not yet clear, several general observations are possible. First, a combination of preconditioning and Israeli complacency contributed to the achievement of complete Arab surprise. Second, the Israeli command did not fully realize the capabilities of Arab weapons, particularly those of the anti-aircraft and anti-tank variety. And finally, the Arabs were able to successfully compensate for the "qualitative" shortcomings of their army with overwhelming "quantitative" superiority. These successes have all added new unknowns to the Middle East balance of power equation, and the volatile nature of the situation at present seems to indicate that some new action may further add to the number of as yet unresolved questions.

ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT FOUR: A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

An article prepared by
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Introduction. The dust on the latest Arab-Israeli war has not yet settled. The combatants and their supporters brace themselves for the oncoming political-or, possibly, military-struggle. Many questions raised during the conduct of hostilities are still unanswered, and others will undoubtedly remain so for time to come. Yet, a preliminary assessment of some of the general characteristics of the last war is already possible.

The successes of the Arab armies during the initial stages of the war came as a surprise to Israel, to the world, and probably to the Arabs themselves. These successes were heralded by the international press as having exploded some commonly accepted myths. Everywhere, but particularly in Israel and the Arab countries, some crucial questions were raised. Did a new generation of Arab warriors emerge? Is the "quali-

tative gap" between Israel and the Arabs narrowing? Is Israeli military superiority still assured and for how much longer?

It may be said that Arab early successes were due to a strategic surprise caused by three principal factors:

- mistakes at the political-military decisionmaking level in Israel,
- Israeli unpreparedness on the military tactical level,
- *quantitative compensation* by the Arabs for the *qualitative gap* between them and Israel.

These will be discussed below, along with an assessment of the naval aspects of the war.

Mistakes at the Political-Military Decisionmaking Level. Since Israel's standing army is a mere fraction of the Arab forces surrounding it, Israel's deterrent capability always heavily relied on the

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efficiency of its intelligence services. These were required to forewarn the political-military leadership of any approaching danger in order to place on alert the small standing army and allow for a mobilization of Israel's reserve units which constitute the bulk of the country's armed forces.

The Egyptian and Syrian Armies could not entirely cover up their military preparations for the Yom Kippur attack. The massing of troops and equipment on Israel's lines could not have escaped aerial reconnaissance and other means of detection. Therefore Israel's intelligence organizations certainly had plenty of evidence of the Egyptian-Syrian buildup. Yet, on the highest level of assessment and decision-making, both Jerusalem and Washington failed to draw the proper conclusions, and the question is why.

The Egyptian-Syrian leadership deserves much of the credit for achieving the surprise. Although they could not conceal their physical preparations on the field, they nevertheless managed to cover up the purpose of their moves with an effective smokescreen. Part of this smokescreen resulted from a process of preconditioning. In the past, and especially during the last year, the Egyptians and Syrians had carried out similar military buildups without attacking. These were commonly explained as "routine" maneuvers and gestures intended to maintain the pressure on Israel and the United States so as not to allow the Middle East situation to become permanently frozen. Past troop concentrations ended indeed in dissolution and a return to "normalcy."

But the success of the strategic surprise was predicated even to a larger extent on the psychopolitical changes which took place in Israel following the Six Day War. With the passing of time, Israel remembered its victory in 1967 not so much for its tremendous preparations and the bitter fighting that took place on virtually all fronts, as for its

speed and decisive results. The outcome of the war of attrition strengthened what the Arabs called "the myth of Israel's invincibility." Indeed, many Israelis felt that their country's military superiority over the Arabs was increasing because of their conviction that the "qualitative gap" between Israel and the Arabs was widening. Such assertions assumed that as warfare becomes more sophisticated, Israel increases its edge over the Arabs because of her more advanced technology. As proof of this conviction, Israelis cited their country's successful breakthrough into the production of sophisticated weapons.

In addition, Israel's control of the territories occupied in 1967 strengthened the nation's feeling of security and resulted in changing national defense concepts. Instead of thinking in terms of a "preemptive" strike as prior to 1967, Israel prepared for a defensive posture which would allow her to absorb a "first strike" and then proceed to counterattack. Israeli leaders could argue therefore that the country's "strategic depth" made it possible for Israel not to mobilize even when the Arabs concentrated force on the cease-fire lines. This theory also had its obvious attractions for Israel's economic planners.

Political developments in the last year tended to strengthen this feeling of complacency in Israel. Admittedly, the Arabs would not likely give up and accept forever the political-military stalemate, but for the time being, at least, their major efforts were expected to take place in the political-diplomatic sphere. Similar beliefs were also prevalent in Washington, what with the growing spirit of détente with the Communist camp. Although the Soviets have, in the last year, increased arms shipments to their Arab clients, the Soviet interest in the Middle East was considered as declining. In view of the many gains which Moscow could reap from the process of détente, Washington and

Jerusalem thought it highly unlikely that the Russians would encourage yet another Arab military adventure in the Middle East.

The general juxtaposition of conflicting forces in the Arab world in the last year also failed to indicate the possibility of a renewal of hostilities on a large scale. For one thing the Arab world continued to suffer from numerous dissensions. Egypt and the radical Arab elements appeared to be losing ground to more conservative forces. The pro-Western King Faisal of Saudi Arabia seemed to emerge as a central factor in inter-Arab politics. The Arabs seemed to be concentrating on the use of oil as an economic-political weapon rather than military action to bring about Israeli concessions. Last summer there were growing indications of Egyptian willingness to improve relations with the United States, and in September an American concern was awarded the contract to construct an oil pipeline from the Gulf of Suez to the Mediterranean.

All these developments seemed to indicate that while the Arab States did not entirely give up their military option, for the moment they were concentrating on nonmilitary means to bring about Israeli concessions. Against this background a number of Arab Foreign Ministers attending the opening session of the U.N. General Assembly in September asked to discuss the Middle East situation with the U.S. administration—still another factor in the lack of concern about a quick resumption of military operations.

In Israel several additional factors deterred any "hasty" military steps: In the last year, certain military measures were subject to intense criticism both at home and abroad. The two most famous incidents were the shooting down of a Lybian airliner over Sinai and the forcing down of a Lebanese airliner suspected of carrying the extremist Palestinian leader George Habash.

Against this background, as well as the growing international "energy crisis," Israel's leadership was painfully aware of the country's growing political isolation. To underscore this isolation, some friendly countries in Africa had recently severed their relations with Jerusalem.

In addition, while Cairo's policy aimed to underscore the urgency of the Middle East situation through occasional bellicose pronouncements and military maneuvers, Jerusalem played it down. Stressing the role of the Israeli deterrent as a stabilizing factor in Middle Eastern politics, Israeli leaders generally labeled these pronouncements no more than idle talk. In September, Israel's belief in its role as a deterrent factor became even stronger when, in an air battle, its air force destroyed 13 Syrian planes against the loss of only 1 Israeli aircraft. They therefore believed that taking any serious countermeasures to Arab threats, such as mobilization of the reserves, would play into the hands of the Arabs by admitting the gravity of the situation. Consequently, Israel's interests would be served best by remaining calm and playing down the Arab claims of the urgency of the situation.

Furthermore, the country was on the eve of general elections to be held at the end of October. By the beginning of that month, all of Israel's politicians, including members of the government, were preoccupied with the upcoming elections. To mobilize the reserves on the eve of the elections, and especially during the High Holiday season, might have appeared as a political maneuver by the government, damaging their parties' political interests. It could also prove economically costly and lend credence to charges that the government's claims of having successfully built up Israel's deterrent forces were exaggerated. Consequently, when on the eve of the Day of Atonement the danger signals increased, the government essentially decided to sit this one out, contenting itself with a partial mobilization

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of reserve units and placing the frontline troops on alert.

It could prove ironic if future disclosures indicate that two events which prompted the Israeli Government to take the least precautionary measures against a possible Arab attack convinced the latter that their only recourse was war. The first of these came within the context of the upcoming Israeli elections. The formation of the rightist coalition (Likud) which adopted a hard line on the question of the occupied territories, also forced the Labor Alignment to adopt a tougher line on this issue. The press reported that American diplomats had counseled the Arabs to wait until after the Israeli elections before taking any meaningful political steps toward the solution of the Middle East crisis, but since the two major political parties were both committed to a harder line on the issue of the territories, the Arabs could easily contend that there was no reason to wait.

The second incident was the downing of the Syrian planes in September. In Arab eyes, and especially to Damascus, this incident provided further proof of Israel's recalcitrance and, as a result, the die was cast in favor of war.

Israel's Tactical Unpreparedness. In theory, the small Israeli forces on the line could check an Arab surprise offensive, at least temporarily, until the arrival of larger reserve forces. The Bar-Lev line on the Suez Canal was hardly the Israeli equivalent of the maginot line. It consisted of a thin line of isolated fortified bunkers separated by miles of wasteland and held together by patrol roads running parallel to the canal. The Bar-Lev line had many critics in Israel who opposed any static defensive system. These critics argued that the Israeli forces were not accustomed to such warfare and in the end holding a static line could prove too expensive, both in material and in manpower.

Actually, the Bar-Lev line came into being during the war of attrition (1968-1970), when Egyptian artillery pounded the exposed Israeli positions strung along the canal, causing numerous casualties. Israel thus confronted a dilemma. On the one hand, it could pull its forces away from the canal to a safe distance from the range of Egyptian fire and, if necessary, move in with strong armored forces to smash any Egyptian attempt to cross the waterway. On the other hand, it could dig in and build heavily fortified positions that could protect Israeli soldiers under the heaviest artillery barrages. Partly for political reasons, Israel adopted the second alternative.

The purpose of the Israeli positions on the canal was thus mainly to show the flag, to serve as forward observation posts and as midway stops for Israeli patrols along the canal. The real role of driving off an enemy bridgehead or slowing down a large scale offensive was allocated to the armored forces behind the Bar-Lev line, part of which were in constant readiness a few miles behind the forward positions. The Israelis used a somewhat similar deployment in the Golan Heights.

The attractive aspects of this system to Israeli planners were that the Israelis could show its flag up to the last foot of occupied territory; the system was not entirely static but combined mobile elements more suited to the Israeli fighting tradition; and, most important, it seemed possible to hold the line with as few troops as possible. In fact, as time went on and the Israeli belief in its deterrent capability increased, they thinned down their forces on the line even further.

But, if on the eve of the Day of Atonement, the Israeli Government counted on its troops on the line to counter any sneak attack, it soon discovered to its dismay that even these limited forces were anything but prepared. The Israeli Army, basically a

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civilian army, tends to reflect the views and moods of the entire nation. The "mood of complacency," as it is called in Israel, which prevailed in Israeli society for some time also prevailed in the army.

Moreover, in the last year the General Headquarters issued several high alerts during which nothing happened. So when on the eve of the Day of Atonement General Headquarters passed down a high alert order to the troops on the line, its most important message to the Israeli soldiers was that all leaves were cancelled and that they could not get home for the High Holiday. Unfortunately, this did not eliminate the holiday spirit and many of the troops spent the morning praying, reading, writing letters, playing volleyball, and even swimming. In short, the troops on the lines were psychologically totally unprepared for what lay ahead.

Moreover, in the last moment the Arabs reaped still another advantage. On Saturday morning, 6 October, Israeli intelligence apparently learned that the Egyptian and Syrian armies planned to attack at 6 p.m. While mobilization of reserves was accelerated, Israel also made diplomatic efforts to avert the war through the mediation of the United States. Orders were also passed down to the troops on the lines to prepare for an evening attack. While the orders traveled down the pyramid of command, they were often understood to mean "a possible enemy attack at 6 p.m." In many posts, a 21- or 22-year-old officer assembled his men at noon, informed them of the "possible enemy attack," and ordered them to be combat ready by 4 p.m. Life in the Israeli posts on the Bar-Lev line and on the Golan Heights generally continued, therefore, at its relaxed Yom Kippur pace. Meanwhile, however, in view of the accelerated Israeli military and diplomatic activity, the Arabs decided to advance the hour of attack. Consequently, when they opened fire at 2 p.m. the attack totally

surprised the Israeli forces on the lines. The Egyptians later declared that it took their first units only 7 minutes to cross the canal and attack the Israeli positions on the east bank.

Quantitative Compensation for the Qualitative Gap. The early Arab successes resulted directly from the political and tactical surprise. But, in addition, it appears that Israeli intelligence of the enemy's tactical capabilities did not provide a complete picture. Israel undoubtedly had accurate information about the technical capabilities of the Soviet supplied modern weapons in the Arab arsenals. It probably had also a fairly accurate knowledge of their quantity and information on their tactical use by the Egyptian and Syrian armies. What apparently was missing was an accurate assessment of their operations—tactical capabilities, something which can be fully assessed only under battle-field conditions.

For example, Israeli military planners probably did not fully understand the potential performance of the Soviet bridging equipment. The bridges which the Egyptians threw across the canal were highly mobile and easily constructed. Moreover, since they consisted of replaceable segments, even when damaged, they could be easily re-assembled and put back in use within a short time. Thus, when in the early stages of the war the Israeli Air Force announced the destruction of most of the bridges, the statements, based on aerial photographs, were probably accurate, but only temporarily so. The pilots brought back photographs of direct hits, but by the time these photographs were studied, the Egyptians had repaired their bridges and continued to push men, arms, and supplies eastward.

During the war of attrition, the Israeli Air Force became painfully aware of the deadly capabilities of the Soviet made ground-to-air missile system, and it is safe to assume that the air force

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developed its own countertactics. What Israel did not fully realize, because of lack of experience, was the deadly effectiveness of light antitank missiles operated by masses of infantry. The Israeli armored units which rushed to stem the attacking Arab forces found that their heaviest casualties resulted not from clashes with enemy armor but rather from these missiles operated by infantry. In addition, during the first stage of the fighting, the Arab forces enjoyed overwhelming numerical superiority over the Israelis, estimated at 14 or 15 to 1.

Given these odds, it was not surprising that the Egyptians badly mauled the first Israeli ground forces to race to the front. The Israeli Air Force also suffered heavy losses in the initial stage of the fighting. The planned strategy of the air force was to knock out the anti-aircraft missiles before flying ground support missions. But since at the initial stage of the war the situation of the Israeli ground forces was so perilous, the air force was required to change its order of priorities and first support the ground forces. As a result, it suffered numerous losses to the enemy's missile batteries.

But the Arab initial offensive exhausted itself during the first 2 days of the fighting. In the first place, Egyptian attempts to seize the passes and other strategic points in Sinai and Syrian efforts to capture the Jordan bridges by helicopter-borne troops totally miscarried. The Israelis shot down many helicopters with their human loads on the way to their destination and wiped out those forces which reached their objective. Then, although greatly outnumbered, the Israeli forces managed to stop the advancing Arab columns before they reached their initial objectives—probably the line of the Sinai passes in the south and the Jordan River in the north.

The Arab forces were also hampered by the inflexibility of their offensive

strategy. Following the Soviet fighting doctrine, the Arabs attacked with huge masses of armor and artillery which complicated logistics problems. More important, however, the qualitative superiority of the Israeli Air Force led the Arabs to give up the use of their own air forces for the protection of their ground troops and, instead, rely heavily on their missile umbrella. Consequently, the Arab armies, and especially the Egyptians, had to bring forward their missile batteries before making any deeper thrusts. This gave Israel sufficient time to rush in more troops, consolidate a second line of defense, and prepare to take the initiative.

At this juncture, however, the major decision faced the Israeli Government: which front would receive first priority? Israeli strategists always considered Egypt as the more dangerous enemy by far. In 1967 Israel gave first priority to the Egyptian front and only after the crushing victory in the south did the Israeli Army take up the initiative in other fronts. This time, however, with the lines stabilized, the Egyptian Army was effectively blocked far from Israel's population centers while the Syrian advance brought the northern enemy within dangerous range of towns and villages in the Jordan valley. Also, with another effort, the Syrians could have pushed the Israeli forces off the rim of the Golan Heights, and a later Israeli attempt to retake the Heights could have proved extremely difficult and costly. Consequently, Israel decided to first fight a holding operation in Sinai while taking the offensive against the Syrians in the north.

Nevertheless, the Israeli counterthrust was relatively slow in unfolding. The lightning warfare which had characterized the Israeli Army did not materialize for a variety of psychological, political, and military factors. In the first place, Israel's leadership probably had to recover from the shock created by the surprise attack, the enemy's

initial successes, and, most important, the blow of many casualties. Militarily, since many units were badly mauled in the initial stage of fighting, Israel needed a longer period to regroup and organize. Politically, according to a number of public statements made by government ministers, it seemed that this time, with American backing, Israel would not have to fight against the clock. Since the country already had suffered an unprecedented heavy toll of casualties, another consideration was to spare lives.

Consequently, Israel seemed to employ on the Syrian front a cautious campaign, using what might be termed as "steamroller tactics." Close air support and artillery barrages heavily pounded the Syrian positions, while armor supported by infantry carefully picked its way through the Syrian lines. By the beginning of the second week of fighting, the Syrians were not only pushed back to the former cease-fire lines, but Israeli forces captured a wide salient on the Kuneitra-Damascus axis up to the town of Sasa, a point almost midway between the prewar lines and the Syrian capital. In the process, the Syrian armed forces suffered very heavy losses, and an Israeli military breakthrough on this front was probably within reach.

But for political as well as military reasons, Israel opted to restrain its advance. An Israeli breakthrough on the Syrian Southern Sector in the direction of Suweida could have forced Jordan to take a more active role in the war, while a continued advance on Damascus might have triggered Soviet intervention and result in a cessation of hostilities. Such a possibility would have been most unwelcome to Israel with Egyptian troops entrenched on both banks of the canal. Later, with the threat in the north reduced and the Syrian Army forced to fall back on the defensive, Israel shifted its attention to the south.

In Sinai, meanwhile, the situation

appeared static. Several Egyptian offensives and probes during the first 10 days of the fighting were repulsed by Israel's forces. But in the meanwhile, the Egyptians had massed large forces on the eastern bank of the canal and had dug in. Past experience taught Israel that the Egyptian Army fights best when in a defensive position.

Given their missile umbrella and their numerical superiority in ground forces, any attempt to dislodge the Egyptians through a frontal attack could prove very costly, if not altogether impossible. Israel had, therefore, to choose a more mobile type of operation which would throw the Egyptians off their balance and force them to give up their static defensive position.

The only area which had sufficient depth for such a mobile maneuver was the west bank of the canal. The added attraction for Israel of fighting on the west bank were the options created by such a maneuver allowing for quick thrusts and improvised operations. An operation on the west bank could cut off all, or part, of the Egyptian Army from its bases of supply; it could threaten Cairo, and, most important, it would create havoc among the Egyptian missile batteries, most of which remained on the west bank. With the missile forces weakened, the sky would be open to the Israeli Air Force and with control of the skies, the collapse of the Egyptian Army could be within reach.

These were the general objectives of the Israeli penetration into Egypt which began early in the second week of the war. Partly for reasons mentioned above, this operation also unfolded cautiously and with uncharacteristic slowness. The Egyptian reaction was, however, even more sluggish. At first the Egyptian command seemed to have misunderstood the intentions of the Israeli task force on the west bank, and later it underestimated the task force's size.

Although the Israeli task force met with

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stubborn resistance throughout the operation, the Egyptians failed to take effective countermeasures. Consequently, by the time the fighting died out in the beginning of the fourth week of the war, the Egyptian Third Corps, a force variably estimated between 20,000-30,000 men, became completely encircled by the Israeli maneuver.

Why the Egyptian command allowed this force to become trapped when it still possessed the option to evacuate it will probably remain an enigma for some time. Three possible explanations come to mind. First, the Egyptian communication and intelligence system had probably broken down due to inaccurate, or misleading, reports by the local commanders. This phenomenon had taken place in all previous wars between Israel and Egypt. If this happened then the high command lacked an accurate picture of the situation on the field. Second, the high command may have known the true state of affairs, but feared that a withdrawal of Egyptian troops under pressure might result in disorder and end as a rout. As a third possibility, President Sadat may have decided to keep the Third Corps on the east bank for political considerations even when he knew that he risked its encirclement. Since it is commonly agreed that the entire purpose of the war was political, it would appear reasonable that the Egyptian leader counted heavily on his troops holding as much as possible of the eastern bank so that he could negotiate from a position of strength.

The War at Sea. It is interesting to note that Israel's performance on the sea was the most successful aspect of its operations in the war. The navy had always found itself in Israel as an auxiliary and supportive branch. Until 1967 the Israel Navy lagged at the bottom of the nation's defense priorities and, as a result, it fell considerably behind the Arab navies in equipment

and manpower. But several tragedies, especially the sinking of the destroyer *Eilat* in 1967, resulted in a growing concentration on developing Israel's naval forces.

To be sure, the navy in Israel still comes far behind such vaunted arms as the air force and the tank corps. Nevertheless, fresh thinking, the allocation of greater budgets, and the concentration on technologically intense weapon systems made the Israeli Navy a respectable force for its size. The Israeli designed—and some also locally built—missiles succeeded remarkably and demonstrated clear-cut superiority over their Soviet-built counterparts.

The most spectacular achievement of the Israeli Navy may well have been the events that did not happen. The quiet that prevailed over their highly vulnerable coastline with its rich targets of population centers, power stations, and essential oil installations resulted from Israel's superior performance on the sea.

The naval war with Syria had two phases; open sea engagements and harbor entrance confrontations. The initial combat at sea occurred on the first night of the war, 6 October 1973, at 2230, when five Israeli missile boats met a Syrian torpedo boat, a minelayer, and several missile boats in Syrian waters near Latakia. In this successful encounter the Israeli force learned that proper maneuvering, well aimed fire, and electronic countermeasures could deter enemy missiles. Two nights later, on the 8th and 9th of October after further Syrian losses in the battle of Damiet, the Egyptians and Syrians realized the advantages of fighting Israeli boats under the cover of shore batteries rather than on the open sea. They also used merchant ships as a buffer for hiding, firing, and cover at the entrance of harbors.

This second phase of the naval war, fighting at the mouth of enemy harbors, began on the 10th and 11th of October. The Syrians proclaimed their waters as a

battle zone and closed navigation. Pressure from the sea on the Syrian coast did not ease until the end of the war.

Israeli naval forces encountered the same two-phase behavior with the Egyptians. In addition, they faced a third phase of static defense supported by naval missile launchings, activated coastal guns, and coastal defense missile batteries. However, these did not deter Israel from shelling various targets between Port Said and an area west of Alexandria.

In the southern region of the Red Sea, the Egyptians enforced an effective blockade by placing destroyers in the Bab El Mandab Straits and submarines in the center of the Red Sea. However, with the single exception of a missed torpedo firing at a tanker bound for the Israeli port of Eilat, no naval engagements took place in that area. In the northern region, from the Gulf of Suez to Safaga, Israeli attacks on commando and auxiliary vessel concentrations thwarted Egyptian maneuvers. Israel's *Swift* patrol boats dominated the entire Gulf of Suez. In addition, several Israeli Commando naval raids on the forward base of Hurghada sunk half of the Egyptian missile boat force in the Red Sea and prevented the Egyptians from using it in the second half of the war.

At the cease-fire, it was clear the Egyptians had mined the Jubal Straits. Since the cease-fire, the Egyptian blockade continues with destroyers at the Bab El Mandab Straits and submarines in the Red Sea.

The naval war was decidedly one sided. Israel naval superiority totally restricted enemy naval offensive activities and gave Israel freedom of action on the sea. The Egyptian submarines deployed in the Mediterranean did not succeed in attacking Israeli merchant shipping. Continuous Israeli naval pressure on the enemy coasts forced them to redeploy their vital troops from the frontlines to defend the coastline. Sea and air cooperation succeeded in

keeping the enemy far from the Israel coast throughout the war.

Israel's success may have weakened the idea that the day of surface vessels, other than nuclear-powered aircraft carriers or submarines, are numbered. It further illustrates that even small countries can afford to maintain punchy, if modest, navies capable of repelling forces many times their size.

Summary. From the purely military point of view, the fighting ended with a clear-cut Israeli victory. Syria's forces not only were driven back, but Israel occupied important territories, giving it additional strategic advantage. In the south, Israel's military gains on the west bank of the Suez Canal, and especially the encirclement of the Third Corps, far outweigh its territorial losses.

Nevertheless, the war ended without a crushing victory as in 1956 and 1967. At the time of writing, the Arab armies still held their field positions and their material losses are being rapidly replenished by a generous patron. These facts combined with the scrambled cease-fire lines on the Suez Canal, untenable to both Egypt and Israel, keep the present situation highly flammable. Whether this will lead to peaceful negotiations or to a renewal of hostilities will become clearer as times goes on.

In the meanwhile we may draw several conclusions. First, we should not draw a simple comparison of this war to the one of 1967. In 1967 Israel fought under optimal military conditions. From mid-May and until the beginning of June 1967, the Israeli reserve army had some 3 weeks to mobilize, organize, become properly equipped, and even allow its men some last minute training. In addition, from the very beginning of the campaign, Israel held the initiative.

In 1973 it was the Arabs who fought under optimal conditions. They had fully mobilized and held the initiative at least during the first stages of the war. It is therefore a moot question whether

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the Arab soldier became a better fighter. What is clear is that under the circumstances of the last war, he fought better. Surprise and initial success served him well and undoubtedly boosted his morale. He was perhaps even more motivated than in previous wars not so much because "he fought for his own land," but because of a more intensive indoctrination for this particular confrontation.

Perhaps more significant, this war demonstrated that the Arabs can narrow the intrinsic "qualitative gap" between them and Israel through the massive supply of sophisticated yet "foolproof" and simple to operate weapons. The initial success of the Arabs owed heavily to Soviet doctrines and planning up to the last minute detail. Apparently, however, the Soviet advisers did not cross over the Israeli lines with their Arab students, and after the initial successful stages, the fumbblings and hesitations of the Arab command became evident. As in past wars, the Arab command betrayed a lack of initiative and not much capability for improvisation and maneuver on the front.

As far as Israel is concerned, it has lost its "mood of complacency," or "Israel cockiness," for a long time to come. Also, some of its military conservatism and "chivalrous" concepts, such as "armor against armor" warfare, will come under very close scrutiny. As much as it may hurt its "fighting mys-

tique," Israel may have to put some greater stress on "gadgets" and change its fighting methods.

But, above all, Israel may find it necessary to create new and well defined institutions for policy planning and decisionmaking on issues of national security that will leave no room for future mistaken assumptions.

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Comdr. Samuel W. Sax, USNR-R, did his undergraduate work at the University of Illinois and is a graduate of the Graduate School of Banking, University of Wisconsin; the Senior Bank Officers Seminar, Graduate School of Business, Harvard University; and the Senior Reserve Officers Course at the Naval War College. Commander Sax is a member of Public Affairs Company 9-2 and serves as a Special Assistant to the Chief of Naval Information. He is president of the Exchange National Bank of Chicago, the only American Bank in Israel with branches in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and the institution which acts as the fiscal agent of the U.S. Government in Israel.

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Professor Avigdor Levy, a native of Israel, received his B.A. from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and his Ph.D. from Harvard University. He is a professor of Middle Eastern history and politics at Tel Aviv University and served as visiting professor at Brandeis University and the University of Chicago. He is a reserve officer with the Israeli General Staff and served in this capacity during the last war.

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