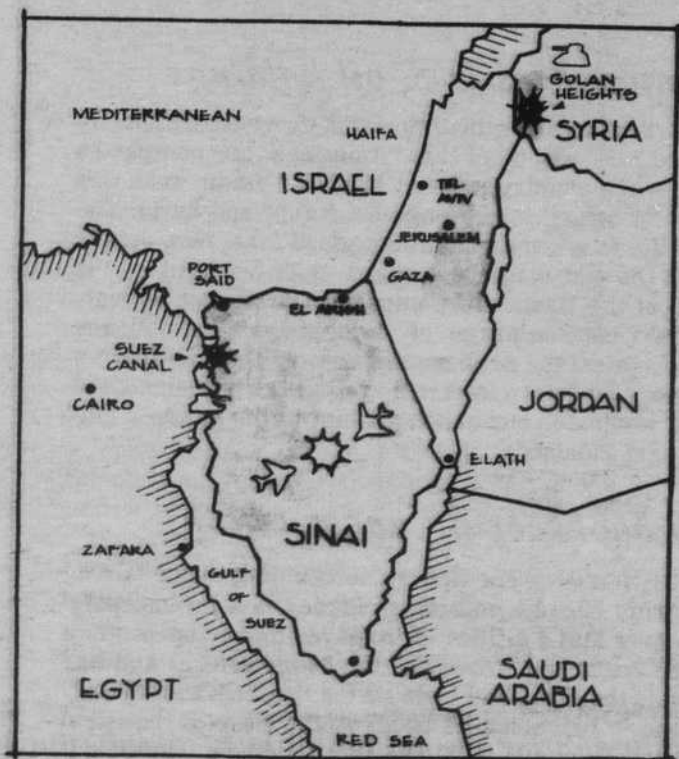


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Mid-East conflict rages

UN security session asked by US leaders

UNITED NATIONS (UPI)—The United States Sunday night broke a two-day period of indecision and on instructions from President Nixon himself called for an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council on the Middle East.

Diplomats and U.N. sources agreed such a meeting would not be held before this afternoon although consultations were to begin this morning.

There was some doubt, diplomats said, whether the meeting could be organized at all as the Soviet Union and China (and possibly other pro-Arab members of the 15-nation body) were expected to oppose it.

Neither the Arabs nor Israel had sought a Security Council meeting this time—the first time in the long history of U.N. involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The development came after a U.N. spokesman announced that Saturday night the chief of staff of the U.N. Truce Observation Organization (UNTOO) in the Middle East, Maj. Gen. Ensio Wsiilasuvuo of Finland, issued an appeal for cease-fire in the field to both the Arabs and Israelis and received no response.

This appeal was backed by U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim who "naturally supports efforts to this end" by the UNTOO General, the spokesman said.

Russian Reaction

The Soviet Union said it "resolutely supports" the Arab states against Israel but, unlike in the 1967 war, gave no hint that it might intervene in fighting.

A government statement carried by the Tass news agency said responsibility for the war rests with the Israeli government and "external reactionary circles" encouraging its "aggressive ambitions".

Observers noted that the statement, the first official Soviet reaction to the new fighting, was markedly milder than its initial comment on the Arab-Israeli War six years ago.

Arab firepower offset by Israeli training

LONDON (UPI)—Recent military surveys of the Middle East show that, on paper, Israel is outnumbered and outgunned by both Syria and Egypt, just as it was in 1967, when it scored a decisive victory in the Six Day War.

Fully mobilized, Egypt and Syria have a 946-to-488 superiority in planes and can field a combined army of more than 1 million men and 3,300 tanks against Israel's 275,000 men and 1,700 tanks, according to military strategic experts.

The most modern tanks made by the Soviet Union spearhead the Arab armies while Israel relies mostly on obsolete armor supported by about 150 American-made M60 tanks.

Balanced against this, military sources say Israeli forces are better trained and have a major advantage of terrain along the Suez Canal.

To bring its superior armor into play, Egypt must not only get its tanks across the waterway, but keep them resupplied with fuel by boat and pontoon bridges open to destruction from the air.

By contrast, the Israelis, as the defensive force, probably have sufficient stockpiles near their second line of defense to hold out for several days, military sources say.

The Arabs suffer a further handicap in the fact that October generally provides some of the best flying weather in the Middle East. Most analysts believe Israel will be able to maintain air superiority despite being outnumbered by the Arab air forces because of higher skills among its pilots and the longer range of the country's basic plane, the F4 Phantom fighter-bomber.

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Egypt, Syria forces still advance

Israel blows bridges, strands tanks

From UPI reports

Israeli troops battled the armies of Syria and Egypt today in the third straight day of fierce fighting, claiming full mastery of the skies but conceding Arab troops still held sections of the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights.

An Israeli military correspondent at the scene reported artillery duels along the Suez Canal during the pre-dawn hours as Israeli warplanes tried to knock out two remaining Egyptian assault bridges over the waterway.

Israel announced Sunday night that it had smashed nine of the 11 pontoon bridges set up by Egypt across the Suez Canal, trapping 400 tanks on the east bank without supply lines.

The Egyptian military command denied it.

On the forbidding plateau terrain of the Golan Heights, Syrian forces also reported further advances. Damascus radio, broadcasting in

four languages including Hebrew, urged Israeli troops to surrender.

An Israeli military spokesman called the situation fluid but said both the Egyptian and Syrian attackers in Israeli territory were suffering heavy losses on the ground while being unwilling or unable to challenge Israeli pilots hitting their air bases and ground defenses.

"Good results" were reported in the air strikes.

There was no indication how far the Egyptians had penetrated across the Suez Canal — one report from the scene said they were stopped at the water's edge — but the Syrians were said to be holding a bridgehead in the Golan Heights.

The national radio said Israeli losses were "not insubstantial" in some areas while heroics, including one tank knocking out 17 Syrian tanks, were commonplace.

Ministers exchange barbs

Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban said Sunday he had been in

touch with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger "two or three times before fighting broke out" in an effort to avoid the renewal of war.

Eban said the withdrawal of several hundred Soviet advisors and the concentration of Arab troops along the cease fire lines were indications that an attack was forthcoming.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohammed Hassan el-Zayyat said Sunday his country started the ground attack across the Suez Canal cease fire line after an alleged Israeli incursion earlier Saturday.

Zayyat, speaking to newsmen after a taping for ABC-TV's "Issues and Answers" program, said the Israeli attack came at 1 a.m. Cairo time at the port of Sukhna but was repulsed by Egyptian jet fighters.

Eban heatedly denied Zayyat's charge of prior Israeli incursion and said, "my only consolation is that he's much too intelligent to believe a single word of what he said."