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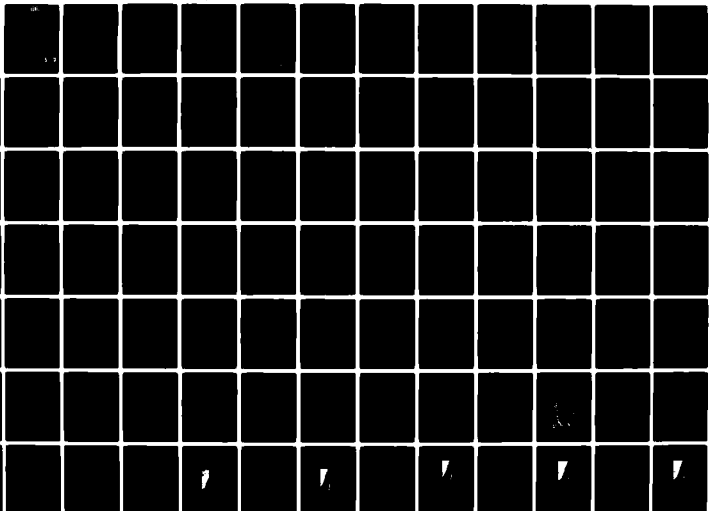   JUN 80   J FIVAZ

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DOES ISRAEL HAVE A NEED TO RETAIN THE GOLAN HEIGHTS?

(THE VIEW FROM ISRAEL)

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

by

JURG FIVAZ, LTC, GS, SWITZERLAND
B.S. (Mechanical Engineering), College of Engineering
State of Berne, 1959
Military Academy, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology,
Zurich, 1966

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the need of Israel to retain the Golan Heights from the viewpoint of Israel. · Geographical and economic background factors are discussed, followed by political and military factors in terms of this area.

Since World War II, the Arab-Israeli dispute has erupted into five wars and keeps the region in a constant state of tension. The former British mandate of Palestine, which is subject to claim by two different nations, Arabs and Jews, has been the area of persistent conflict. The recent Arab-Israeli war in 1973, was not limited to a war between the opponents, but resulted in an oil embargo against the western industrial nations by the Arab oil producing countries and nearly caused a confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The Arab initiative in the last war was an effort to force a fresh political effort to alter the "status quo" of the area. One of these unsolved problems constitutes the boundary disputes between Israel and her neighbors. The focus of current Arab demands is the problem of land lost in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The recently completed peace treaty between Israel and Egypt has settled the land dispute in the Sinai, however the problems of the Golan Heights, the West Bank and Jerusalem remain. The Golan Heights occupied by Israel in the 1967 War characterizes a very controversal problem between Israel and her neighbors. ○

The analysis of the background and the political/military environment reveals that, in fact, Israel has legitimate reasons for retaining the Golan Heights for the foreseeable future.

DOES ISRAEL HAVE A NEED TO RETAIN THE GOLAN HEIGHTS? (THE VIEW FROM ISRAEL)

Jurg Fivaz, LTC GS, Switzerland
U.S. Army Command and General Staff College
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027

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Approved by:

_____, Thesis Committee Chairman
Major Hayden E. Boland, B.A., M.A.

_____, Member, Graduate Faculty
LTC Ralph D. Pedersen, B.S., M.S.

_____, Member, Consulting Faculty
Major Jesse W. Miller, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the need of Israel to retain the Golan Heights from the viewpoint of Israel. Geographical and economic background factors are discussed, followed by political and military factors in terms of this area.

Since World War II, the Arab-Israeli dispute has erupted into five wars and keeps the region in a constant state of tension. The former British mandate of Palestine, which is subject to claim by two different nations, Arabs and Jews, has been the area of persistent conflict. The recent Arab-Israeli war in 1973, was not limited to a war between the opponents, but resulted in an oil embargo against the western industrial nations by the Arab oil producing countries and nearly caused a confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The Arab initiative in the last war was an effort to force a fresh political effort to alter the "status quo" of the area. One of these unsolved problems constitutes the boundary disputes between Israel and her neighbors. The focus of current Arab demands is the problem of land lost in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The recently completed peace treaty between Israel and Egypt has settled the land dispute in the Sinai, however the problems of the Golan Heights, the West Bank and Jerusalem remain. The Golan Heights occupied by Israel in the 1967 War characterizes a very controversal problem between Israel and her neighbors.

The analysis of the background and the political/military environment reveals that, in fact, Israel has legitimate reasons for retaining the Golan Heights for the foreseeable future.

iii

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Events in the last three years have indicated the most hopeful development toward peace in the Arab-Israeli dispute since Israel's Proclamation of Statehood on 14 May 1948.[1] The direct negotiations between the leadership of Israel and Egypt overcame years of hate and deeply rooted psychological barriers. Still, an overall peace in this region remains far away. With the occasional exception of Egypt, the Arab countries continue to wage the military, diplomatic, economic and propoganda war they have pursued against Israel since the foundation of the Jewish state. They have developed a vast mythology in terms of denying Israel's right to exist, the status of Jerusalem, the problem of the Palestinian Arab refugees, their own refusal to negotiate with Israel, and the future boundaries between Israel and her neighbors if Israel is to exist.

In terms of future boundaries, the borders along the Golan Heights constitute a key problem in the relationship between Israel and her northeastern neighbors. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze the background and the circumstance of <u>Israel's need to retain the Golan Heights</u> by researching literature.

The boundaries of Israel and her northeastern neighbors of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan are defined by the Golan Heights.[2] The Golan plateau borders on the Mount Hermon range on the north, the upper Jordan Valley and the Sea of Galilee in the west, the Yarmuk Valley in

1

the south, and the Ruqqad River in the east. The Golan Heights, about
1,500 square kilometers, rises from 400 meters in the south to 900
meters in the north. Topographicallly, the area is characterized by
volcanic terrain and by deep stream beds (wadis) on the western edge.
Approximately 9,500 Druse and Moslem inhabitants and about 2,500 Jewish
people live in numerous small villages and Israeli settlements in this
area. A limited number of routes lead up from the Jordan Valley and
connect northern Galilee in Israel with Damascus in Syria. Two main
routes, running from north-west to south-east, cross all west-east pas-
sages and connect Lebanon with southern Syria.

As mentioned above, the Golan Heights constitute a very contro-
versal problem for Israel and the adjacent Arab states. The following
examples of the broad field of national interests underline the im-
portance of this area to all the states involved.

The northern part of Israel contains the most fertile and culti-
vable area and the major water resources. The coastal strip with the
Gaza Zone and the West Bank comprises a heavily industrialized urban
region and a concentrated population. The southern part contains ex-
tensive desert areas.[3] Thus the parts of Israel close to the Golan
Heights are the most valuable and possession of the Golan Heights
guarantees control over these vital water and food resources.

Possession of the Golan Heights also negates the opportunity for
a surprise attack against Israel from Lebanon, Syria or north Jordan.
A successful attack would gain access to Israeli communication centers
and industrial zones, could liberate the occupied areas, or ultimately
destroy Israel. On the other hand, the Golan Heights characterizes a

link in the ability to launch a pre-emptive strike by Israel throughout this area, to attack through Lebanon or north Jordan, or to form a pincer movement through both countries against Syria. Last, but not least, posession of the Golan Heights enables control over the base of terrorist actions in southern Lebanon.[4]

The historical development over the last thirty years shows several major factors in terms of the importance and instability of this area.

During the first Arab-Israeli War (1947-1949), the Syrian Army successfully exploited the topographical advantages of the Golan Heights to attack Israeli positions and settlements. Syria utilized the first cease-fire in 1948 to establish her hold on three small areas of former Palestine by fortifying and consolidating her positions. In 1949, the Syrians agreed to withdraw their forces on the condition that these areas be demilitarized.[5]

The dispute between Israel and Syria concerning the Jordan River and the demilitarized zones in the upper Jordan Valley during the period 1949 to 1967 resulted in a number of violations of the armistice agreement.[6] Syria, with the support of the other neighboring Arab countries, created and began implementing a plan to divert the head-waters of the Jordan River which delivers a large part of Israel's water supply. Most of the sources are located on the Golan Heights or in its neighborhood. The situation was worsened by incidents con- cerning the exploitation of cultivable land in the demilitarized zones between Israeli and Arab settlers. Periodically, the Syrians led fire attacks or counter-fire attacks against Israeli villages in this area

and attempted to disrupt Israeli agricultural projects and fishing in the Sea of Galilee. The Syrians used the advantages of the Golan Heights, fortified the region and used the dominating positions overlooking the upper Jordan Valley and north Galilee to emplace artillery units. Syria was the first Arab state to support the terrorist movements carried out from the neighborhood of or the Golan Heights itself into Israeli territory.[7] These Palestinian guerillas had their major bases in Syria and kept alive the emotional attachments of the refugees to Palestine as the national homeland.

During the Six Day War, 1967, the Golan Heights fell into Israeli hands and Israeli forces firmly established themselves there.[8] Since 1967, the Golan Heights has remained under the control of the Israeli Military Government which is responsible for the security and welfare of the areas 12,000 inhabitants.

A limited breakthrough of massed Syrian forces followed by a counterattack and exploitation operations by Israeli forces characterized the war in 1973.[9] The question of territorial revision and disagreement over the true meaning of Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967 have been points of contention ever since. (Resolution 242 simply endorses the principle of withdrawal of Israel's armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict, and interrelates this with the principle that every state in the area is entitled to live in peace within "secure and recognized boundaries"[10].)

Throughout history, the concept of attaining perfect and lasting security, whether through the expansion of borders or through some other traditional means has been a great and most persistent delusion. Unstable and unreliable balance of power systems have never, on their

own, provided permanent security. History has demonstrated that the harsher the peace terms imposed on a defeated party, which has the potential power to challenge the victor some day, the greater the chances for future wars. Therefore, Israel's future security might depend on a comprehensive study of her vital courses of action, on a courageous and tolerant leadership, and on lasting reconciliation with her neighbors.

It is obvious that the region of the Golan Heights, the one area in the world that has been subject to persistent conflict since World War II, has a great impact of future developments in the Middle East. There are compelling reasons why the conflict of the Golan Heights should be a matter of study for the military officer because both Israel and Syria consider this occupied Syrian terrain vital to the defense of either state.

To analyze the importance of the Golan Heights the basic technique of the historical research method is used. The major aspects of geographic and economic background factors, political and military factors, and environments are examined in subsequent chapters. Conclusions are consolidated in the final chapter.

Included in the geographic and economic background factors are a description of this specific geographical area, a research of the historical border problems and settlements, a military-geographic terrain analysis, and an examination of economic involvements. Important factors in the political field are the impact of the Arab-Israeli dispute, the influence exerted by other states, international organizations, world opinions, and the influence of traditions, national policy, and other interest or pressure groups. Military aspects are

examined in terms of defense requirements from an advanced technological viewpoint applied to the strategic importance of the Golan Heights and its tactical meaning. Finally, the principles of defensive and offensive operations are examined in the framework of these requirements and the Golan Heights.

CHAPTER I

ENDNOTES

[1]Map: The Middle East, <u>USACGSC</u>, Appendix A.

[2]Map: Israel, <u>USACGSC</u>, Appendix B.

[3]Headquarters Department of the Army. <u>Israel: A Country Study</u>. DA Pam 550-47, 1971, pp. 108-113.

[4]Jureidini, Paul. "The Abating Threat of War." <u>International Interactions</u>, Vol 3, No. 3 (June 1975), pp. 226-228. Kaplan, Morton A. "Negotiations in the Mideast Dispute." <u>Armed Forces and Society</u>, Vol 1, No. 4 (Summer 1975), pp. 511-512. O'Ballance, Edgar. <u>No Victor, No Vanquished</u>, The Yom Kippur War. San Rafael, California: Presidio Press, 1978, pp. 126 and 193.

[5]Depuy, Trevor N. <u>Elusive Victory</u>: The Arab-Israeli Wars, 1947-1974. New York: Harper & Row, 1978, pp. 100-104.

[6]Khouri, Fred J. <u>The Arab-Israeli Dilemma</u>. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1976, pp. 191, 222, 225.

[7]Khouri, Fred J. <u>The Arab-Israeli Dilemma</u>. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1976, p. 229.

[8]Dupuy, Trevor N. <u>Elusive Victory</u>: The Arab-Israeli Wars, 1947-1974. New York: Harper & Row, 1978, p. 316.

[9]Herzog, Chaim. <u>The War of Atonement</u>. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1975, pp. 102-103, 119.

[10]Herzog, Chaim. <u>Who Stands Accused?</u> New York: Random House, 1978, p. 219. UN Security Council Resolution No. 242 (1967) of 22 November 1967--Special Representative to the Middle East, Appendix C.

CHAPTER II

GEOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND FACTORS

The region north-east of the Sea of Galilee in the northern portion of Israel is dominated by the Golan Heights which contains the major headwaters of the Jordan River and includes a border area between the states of Israel and Lebanon in the north, Syria in the east, and Jordan in the south.[11]

This piece of terrain looks on the map like an elongated parallelogram extending approximately 70 kilometers north to south and 25 kilometers west to east.[12] The northern boundary of the plateau is the towering ridge of Mount Hermon, which forms a natural barrier between Lebanon and Israel/Syria. The western boundary consists of steep slopes leading to the upper Jordan Valley and the Sea of Galilee on the Israeli side. The southern boundary is another escarpment, falling from the plateau to the Yarmuk River, a tributary of the Jordan River. The cease-fire line of the 1973 war connects in a north-south line, Mount Hermon and the Ruqqad/Yarmuk Valleys, and constitutes the current eastern border. The plateau rises itself gently from south to north, with upper regions reaching altitudes between 400 and 900 meters above sea level. Mount Hermon, rising to 2814 meters above sea level, is snowcapped throughout the year.

The Golan Heights is characterized on its western edge by steep cliffs descending into the upper Jordan Valley and to the Sea of Galilee. The eastern side, facing the Damascus Plain, is more open and has a rolling nature. It is an undulating stretch of countryside,

interspersed with volcanic outcrops. Some of these outcrops rise from the plateau like huge mounds to become the dominating features of the landscape. The rest of the ground is characterized by basalt rock outcrops and patches of lava, with some vegetation and trees. Both winter and summer, a cool breeze, sometimes rising to gale force, sweeps constantly across the plateau from northwest to southeast. There is some cultivation on small stony fields, some of which are terraced, but the economy of the area is essentially pastoral.[13]

Approximately 12,000 people live on the Golan Heights, of which about 9,500 are non-Jewish people (January 1978 estimate).[14] The non-Jewish people consist mainly of Druse, a heretical sect that broke away from Islam in the twelfth century, and a few Moslems. These inhabitants who live in the northern part of the plateau are all that is left of the original 75,000 Syrian residents of the Golan. After the 1967 War the Druse and a few others voted to stay and live under Israeli military administration. In the meantime, the Israelis have established 25 settlements, most of them initially as para-military outposts by the Nahal (Young Pioneer) branch of the armed forces.

The Golan Heights geographical location and its topographical and economic difficulties do not favor traffic. The two historical strategic routes, the sea road (Via Maris) along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and the King's Way on the Trans-Jordan Plateau from Homs--Damascus--Amman to Aqaba, and the main road from Homs--Biqa Valley (Lebanon)--Jordan Valley--Elat on the Red Sea, bypass the Golan. Otherwise, an important side branch of the coastal roads characterizes the historic trade route from Damascus through the Golan

to Cairo. Most of the other existing roads are of only local im-
portance and connect major centers of the settlements. A typical com-
munication center constitutes the "dead city" of Kuneitra inside the
United Nations Disengagement Observer Force Zone (UNDOF). The ancient
road system was more confined by topographical considerations, while
the modern and improved system shows the influence of military opera-
tions and of armistice lines.

The earliest complete description of the boundaries in the
region of the Golan Heights is the limit of the Egyptian province of
Canaan as established in the peace treaty between Ramsees II and the
Hittites (c. 1270 B.C.).[15] The province of Canaan included the
entire area west of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea from Tripoli
(Lebanon) to El Arish (Sinai), as well as the area east of the upper
Jordan River with the Golan and the adjacent territory of Damascus in
Syria. No subdivisions of this area are known, and the system of
Canaanite city-states did not lend itself to any clear administrative
organization.

The occupation of Canaan by Israeli tribes, their unification,
and the territorial expansion of the kingdom under David and Solomon
during the 10th Century B.C. resulted in continuous external boundaries
and in a subdivision into districts, unequal in size, but equal in
economic importance.[16] The entire territority of the Golan Heights
and the adjacent area, under one sphere of jurisdiction, guaranteed the
geographical unit between the Mediterranean Sea and the access to the
Euphrates. In addition, the possession of the Golan plateau made it
possible to control the important caravan route leading from Damascus
to the network of levitical cities.

The Roman proclamation of Herod as king in the discussed region (40 B.C.) brought a change in the borders and in the administrative subdivision, but not a change of external boundaries in the specific area of the Golan Heights.[17] The latter became a strong connecting link between the eastern and western parts of the Jordan River and underlines, with the above examples of the biblical period, the realization of a geographical and political unit of the entire area of the Golan Heights.

The Crusaders (end of the 11th Century) first established themselves on the coast and on the west side of the Jordan River.[18] At the zenith of their power, their kingdom included the whole area west of the Jordan River, the Jordan Valley, and southern parts to Elat on the Red Sea. North of the Yarmuk River no border divided the territories of the Crusaders from their Damascene neighbors and in particular, the Golan Heights was subject to the joint authority of the Crusaders and the Moslem rulers of Damascus.

The Ottoman sultans became lords of Palestine after the defeat of the Mamluks in 1517.[19] The Ottoman empire was divided into provinces. Palestine and southern Syria were formed into one province and ruled from Damascus. On the other hand, the governor from Acre (Lebanon) held all the territory west and north of the Sea of Galilee. His territory included, in addition, a strip of the Golan Plateau east of the Sea of Galilee. The river line of the upper Jordan River constituted a natural boundary, and the river line with the strip east of the Sea of Galilee guaranteed an easy defense position at that time against the rival governor of Damascus.

The demarcation of the "modern" boundaries in the area of the Golan Heights actually began with the limitation between British-mandated Palestine and the French-mandated territories of Syria and Lebanon during and after World War I. According to the Sykes-Picot Treaty of 1916, the northern boundary of Palestine was defined from Acre on the Mediterranean coast to the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee.[20] The area to the north was assigned to the French, while the area south of this line was to come under an international regime, except for a British enclave around the Bay of Acre.

Toward the end of World War I and the following years there was much political activity in terms of the final location of this border. Strenuous efforts were made by the Zionist movement to induce the British and French governments to move the border further to the north.[21] This correction of the boundary would correspond to the northern frontier of the biblical Land of Israel and encompass the valley of the Litani River and all the headwaters of the Jordan River.

The Franco-British agreement during 1920-1923 resulted at last in a boundary that lead from Rosh ha-Nikra on the Mediterranean coast in a easterly direction to Sasa then north to Metullah. From here it ran in a southeasterly direction to Banias and east of the upper Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee to the bed of the Yarmuk River.[22] This solution meant that the Banias Springs—one of the main sources of the Jordan River—the Golan Heights, and the main track connecting the Golan with Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea passed from the British to the French and later to the Syrian controlled area.

The Armistice Demarcation Lines of 1949, the de facto boundaries of the State of Israel, were defined after the War of Independence and

Israel's foundation in 1948 in a series of armistice agreements with the neighboring states on the basis of the cease-fire lines.[23] While the boundary between Israel and Lebanon remained like that of Palestine under the British Mandate, the Syrian-Israeli armistice demarcation lines changed from the mandatory borders in some areas east of the Jordan River and the Yarmuk Valley in Syria's favor. The agreement provided for the formation of demilitarized zones along most of the demarcation lines. These zones were the occasion for much friction and numerous incidents, mainly due to Syrian interference with Israeli development works and the cultivation of land by Israeli farmers in these zones.

The Cease-Fire Lines of 1967 were created after the end of the Six Day War of 1967 with the acceptance by Israel's neighbors of the Security Council's call for a cease-fire.[24] Israel declared that the armistice solution had collapsed as a result of repeated Arab violations. Therefore, Israel would maintain the cease-fire lines until the establishment of agreed, secure, and recognized borders as part of permanent peace settlements with her neighbors. The Syrian-Israeli cease-fire line extended from the Lebanese-Israeli border to the upper Jordan Valley near Al Ghajar, reaching the peaks of the southern ridge of Mount Hermon and continuing in a general southerly direction passing east of Kuneitra and Ar Rafid and running along the Ruqqad and Yarmuk Valley to the Jordan River. The Israelis gained control of the entire Golan Heights and impeded the Syrian artillery dominance of the valley to the west.

After the Yom Kippur War, on 31 May 1974, a disengagement agreement was signed between Israel and Syria.[25] Israel agreed to give up

all the territority it held east of the 1967 cease-fire lines. A De-
militarized Zone (DMZ) held by United Nations forces, which was faced
on each side by defensive zones in which thinned-out forces were
permitted, was established. Israel therefore retained control over the
entire disputed area of the Golan Heights.

Concerning the historical development of boundaries in this
disputed area, one can summarize that the borders expanded or con-
tracted over a thousand years and only the core area of the Golan
Heights remained. The geopolitical importance of the Golan Heights was
well known centuries before the Proclamation of the State of Israel.
During some periods, the geographical and political unit between the
Mediterranean Sea and the Euphrates River was realized, or the entire
area was under joint authority, or political decisions in terms of
security interests without respect for geographical factors in this
specific area resulted in disputes or wars. The alignment of the upper
Jordan River and the Sea of Galilee characterizes a natural boundary,
but an indefensible border because of the capacity of modern fire
weapons. The varied boundaries in this area do not confirm any claim
of Israel to the Golan Heights for an incorporation in her geographical
territory. In addition, a claim of Israel on the basis of settlements
does not exist because there are no specific ties of Israel to histori-
cal settlements which would justify a need for the Golan Heights.

In terms of a military-geographical terrain analysis of the
Golan Heights, however, there are important factors concerning observa-
tion and fields of fire, concealment and cover, obstacles, key terrain
and avenues of approach of specific interest to Israel.

The Mount Hermon ridge and the high ground of the Golan Heights permit an almost unlimited view from the Mediterranean Sea in the west, to Damascus in Syria in the east, and to the Hula Valley down to the Sea of Galilee in the south. Fields of fire from the western slopes to the upper Jordan Valley with flat trajectory weapons are excellent. Long-range artillery fire throughout the area to south Lebanon, north Israel and on the Plain of Damascus is possible. Numerous volcanic hills scattered across the plateau offer observation and fields of fire on the Golan plateau itself. The area also favors the installation of electronic ground and air surveillance devices.

Topographically, the area is characterized by volcanic terrain of basalt stone. A large number of boulders, like giant ant hills, dominate the lava covered plateau. This configuration and manmade features like the destroyed town of Kuneitra in addition to numerous settlements guarantee some degree of concealment of ground movement from ground observation. In addition, the boulders and buildings offer some cover from small-arms fire and shell fragments.

The character of the above described topography impedes cross-country movements and limits use of certain avenues of approach. The plateau is much flatter and less rocky in the south, where much of the surface is grassland and easily traversable. The settlements throughout this area do not present significant obstacles even when destroyed by blast. During the period of occupation, the Israelis had constructed a system of obstacles and fortifications, most of them along the eastern edge of the plateau. The natural defiles and manmade obstacles provide ideal ambush sites.

Mount Hermon dominates the avenues of approach from the west and from the east to the Golan Heights. Its seizure is essential to the integrity and security of forces firing and maneuvering in this area. The hilly area of Kuneitra controls the major avenues of approach in the eastern part of the Golan and would be key terrain for a main attack in that region. The settlement of Naffak, in the center of the plateau, is the third key objective because it controls the main route from the Golan to Israel, which crosses the Jordan River by the Benot Yacov Bridge, north of the Sea of Galilee.

Only one main avenue of approach enters the Golan plateau from central Syria, that is from Damascus to Kuneitra, continuing in a southwesterly direction and crossing the Jordan River near Gadot by the Benot Yacov Bridge.[26] There are a number of other secondary roads crossing the Golan plateau and there is a network of motorable tracks made by the Israeli army and the settlers.

Four other lateral roads, crossing the Jordan River over good bridges, run from east to west across the plateau. The northernmost connects the kibbutz Dan with Baniyas and Mas'adah. After June 1967, the Israeli's continued this road to the ski lift they had erected near the Druse village of Madal Shams at the foot of the Mount Hermon massif. To the south of the Mas'adah route another lateral road extends from kibbutz Gonen, near the Jordan River, to Kuneitra in the Demilitarized Zone. There is a road from the Arik Bridge, just south of the Sea of Galilee, climbing the steep slope and passing Khushniyah. Finally, in the south, a road starting from En Gev and the southern end of the Sea of Galilee, winds up the Yarmuk escarpment through El Al to Ar Rafid.

Two main roads run roughly from north to south. One, following

parallel the alignment of the 1967 Cease-Fire Line, connects Mas'adah

in the north with Ar Raffid in the south. The other north-south road

runs alongside the Trans-Arabian pipeline (TAP), the oil pipeline from

Saudi Arabia which comes from Jordan across the Golan plateau into

Lebanon. The pipeline was finally closed after the 1973 War. Another

north-south road runs alongside the Jordan River at the foot of the

Golan plateau. There are no roads over Mount Hermon, only a few donkey

tracks and footpaths which are impassable during the winter months.

In terms of this military-geographic terrain analysis one can

conclude that the major controlling terrain of the Golan Heights con-

sists of Mount Hermon, the surfaced and most direct avenue of approach

(Damascus--Kuneitra--Benot Yacov Bridge--Tel Aviv) connecting Syria

with Israel, and the road/pipeline from Ar Rafid north to this main

avenue of approach. While the best defensible terrain is in the

northern part of the Golan Heights, the least hindering terrain with

adequate maneuver space is located in the southern part of the plateau

and favors the lateral roads in this area. The topographical advantage

of the Golan Heights favors a defender and prevents uncontrolled move-

ment and concentration of threat forces on the Plain of Damascus or in

north Israel. The topography also facilitates a surprise attack both

by Israel and Syria without including territory of the neighbor

states. The western slope of the escarpment of the Golan Heights domi-

nates the upper Jordan Valley and the area of the Sea of Galilee.

During a "cold war period" between neighbors, and with the assumption

of a natural boundary along the upper Jordan River, there is a vital

psychological threat to the population in this region. Additionally,

the peaks of the Mount Hermon range enable Israel to control
Palestinian terrorist groups in southern Lebanon, where there are
starting points for hostile actions against Israeli settlements and
towns in northern Israel.

Water resources are, for Israel, a matter of national security
and the water shortage is a built-in weakness of its economic struc-
ture.[27] Questions of water management in the upper Jordan Valley and
the Golan Heights (two of the three sources of the Jordan River) have
made the availability of water a matter of crucial importance in the
Arab-Israeli negotiations. However, there is an even broader per-
spective. Water has always been a scarce resource in the Middle East.
As development takes place and incomes rise, demand for water for agri-
culture, industry, and personal consumption increases. In many areas
like Israel and her northeastern neighbors, however, there are few
remaining undeveloped water resources.

Water is a scarce resource in Israel because of the typically
Mediterranean climate.[28] Rainfall occurs only in the winter months,
and decreases from north to south. There are also considerable fluctu-
ations from year to year. Farming based solely on rainfall would be
limited, risky and unproductive. The advanced state of Israeli agri-
culture is therefore partly the result of extensive development of the
country's limited water resources. The integrated national water
system utilizes more than 90% of the available water. The major com-
ponents of this water system are the upper Jordan River and its tri-
butaries (including the Sea of Galilee) and groundwater formations in
northern Galilee. The Hasbani, the Dan, and the Banjas Rivers converge

in the northern part of the upper Jordan Valley and form the headwaters of the Jordan River. The Hasbani River originates in Lebanon, the Dan and the Banjas springs are located on the Golan Heights. Regulation of cyclical and seasonal fluctuations is achieved by the Sea of Galilee for the Jordan River, while the groundwater formations serve as the main cyclical held-over storage of the national water system.

Rainfall throughout the country of Jordan is exceedingly variable, not only in the total for any given year, but in the amount falling during any particular period within a year.[29] Jordan, as a basically agricultural country, is therefore limited in its development of agriculture by the existing water resources. The expansion of irrigation facilities to enable extension of the usable area, as well as increased intensiveness of cultivation, was generally considered to be the country's major immediate agricultural problem.

The most striking feature of the climate in Syria is the contrasting influence of sea and desert.[30] The annual precipitation is scanty in most parts of the country and seasonal varying. Despite the continuing economic growth and diversification, the country's major natural resource is its agricultural land. The dependence of agriculture on rainfall has been alleviated by irrigation. Numerous rivers, especially the Euphrates River and its tributaries, are the most important water resources. The construction of a combined irrigation and hydroelectric power plant on the Euphrates River provides an increasing crop yield and stabilizes the output of agricultural production.

Lebanon has a Mediterranean climate characterized by a long, hot, dry summer and a cool rainy winter.[31] Although rainfall is

seasonal, there are many rivers and streams which flow throughout the year, providing a source of irrigation water for agriculture. The supply of water is generally adequate and there are no limits for economic growth.

After signing the 1949 Armistice Agreements, in which future warlike or hostile acts had been denied, the Arab states progressively broadened the scope and the intensity of an all-embracing range of economic hostilities.[32] Throughout those years the water resources of Israel were a prime target for their economic offensive. The controversy, in terms of water resources, had been launched even before the State of Israel was created. In the late 1930's and early 1940's, the Zionist movement, anxious to settle as many Jewish immigrants as possible in Palestine, developed a regional project for diversion of the Jordan and Litani Rivers.[33] The development program did not take into consideration that the Litani Rivier was within Lebanese territory.

By the early part of 1950, the Israeli government, using these basic plans, devised a Seven-Year-Plan which provided water from the Jordan River (north of the Sea of Galilee) to a proposed power plant in north Israel and to the Negev in south Israel. On September 3, 1953, Israel started digging a diversion canal in the Demilitarized Zone north of the Sea of Galilee, partly on Arab-owned land. Despite Arab opposition and some shooting incidents, Israel continued her digging operations. The United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), backed by the United Nations and the United States, forced Israel to stop all work on Arab-owned properties. Based on growing difficulties with the United Nations and Syria in 1956, Israel decided to divert the water from the Sea of Galilee, instead of from the upper Jordan River itself in the disputed Demilitarized Zone.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) commissioned an
American engineering firm to study the water problem in 1952-53.[34]
The resulting plan recommended a regional and unified development pro-
gram for the entire Jordan River area. But the Arab and Israeli
governments did not accept these new proposals. Also the influence of
the United States could not overcome the serious political and psycho-
logical obstacles between Arab and Israeli officials. While the Arabs
insisted that the United Nations must be fully involved in the imple-
mentation of any agreed water program, Israel distrusted the United
Nations and opposed any United Nations supervision. The 1956 Sinai War
destroyed all further hope of obtaining Arab-Israeli acceptance of any
regional water proposal. After the 1956 War, both sides felt free to
develop their own unilateral projects.

From 1958 to 1963, Jordan, with American financial help,
achieved the East Ghor Canal to irrigate land along the eastern banks
of the lower Jordan River by means of a gravity diversion of Yarmuk
River water.[35] In addition, Jordan initiated work on a larger Yarmuk
River project to increase the irrigation on both sides of the lower
Jordan River and to supply Jordan and Syria with electric power. As a
consequence of the Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights in 1967,
this latter project was partly unrealized and especially the construc-
tion on the Yarmuk Dam was suspended.

In the meantime, Israel completed her national water system
which conveys the surplus water from the Sea of Galilee to the water-
deficient urban centers and to the Negev. By 1960, the Arab states
showed mounting anxiety over the substantial progress by Israel's car-
rying out her plans.[36] They were concerned that the Israeli project

deprived Jordan of greatly needed water. Also, this irrigation allowed
Israel to absorb large numbers of Jewish immigrants. These people in-
creased the potential of military power and impeded the repatriation of
Arab refugees. The Arab League discussed a plan for diverting the
headwaters of the Jordan River which were located in the neighboring
Arab states (Lebanon, Golan Heights of Syria). By late 1963, as
Israel's project neared completion, the Arab leaders supported Syria's
call for the use of military power to compel Israel to interrupt her
diversion efforts. But they had to realize that their armies, at the
time partly engaged with fighting in Yemen and in the Kurdish areas of
Iraq, were too weak for a confrontation with Israel's forces or a pos-
sible intervention of Western powers in favor of Israel. At a summit
conference in Cairo in the middle of January, 1964, the leaders of
Lebanon, Syria and Jordan--with the support of the rest of the Arab
League--decided definitely to divert the flow of the major headwaters
and tributaries (Hasbani, Banjas, and Yarmuk Rivers) of the Jordan
River.[37] This scheme would substantially decrease the amount and
greatly increase the salinity of the water left in the Jordan River for
Israel's use. Such action would have seriously affected Israeli agri-
culture and her vital economic interests. After some delay, the pre-
liminary work was began to divert the Hasbani and the Banjas Rivers,
crossing the Golan Heights by a canal and reaching the Yarmuk River
near the junction of the Ruqqad River. As the work began, Israeli
artillery frequently harrassed the construction sites and in November
1964, the Israeli air force also began to attack those parts of the
project out of artillery range. By the end of the year the project was

abandoned, because it had become evident to the Arabs that its continuation would mean all-out war with Israel, and none of them felt ready for such a confrontation.

Since the end of the first Arab-Israeli War in early 1949, there had been sporadic incidents, besides the Jordan River controversy, along the cease-fire line between Israel and Syria.[38] While most of the fire attacks were conducted by Syrian forces, the United Nations records and the published reports suggested that in most cases Syrian fires were in response to illegal Israeli cultivation actions in the three small Demilitarized Zones along the cease-fire line (extremely fertile land with two crops a year).

Difficulties also persisted over the Sea of Galilee. Israel insisted upon denying the use of the lake to the Syrian and Demilitarized Zone Arabs until they had obtained special permits from her. On the other hand, Israeli fishing and patrol boats had been harrassed by Syria. In early 1962, these incidents expanded to fire exchanges between Israeli patrol boats and Syrian military positions near the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. An Israeli large scale assault against Syrian military posts and villages aggravated the situation.

These frequent incidents along the demarcation lines continued to occur until the outbreak of the Six Day War in 1967.[39] The Syrian-Israeli situation became especially critical when Palestinian terrorists damaged Israeli water installations and carried out raids against Israeli farmers from Syrian territory. One of their primary goals was to keep alive the emotional attachments of the younger refugees to Palestine as a national homeland. Israel again decided to

deal with her border problems by resorting to her military power rather than to the United Nations. During the Six Day War of 1967, Israel scaled the escarpment and occupied the Golan plateau, an area crucial for the safety of Israel's settlements and the preservation of her water resources.

Summarizing the results of the historical events concerning water resources and cultivation of Israel, the topographical advantages of the Golan Heights afforded the Syrians, until June 1967, the ability to threaten the cultivation of Israel in the upper Jordan Valley (Israel's project to drain the Hula swamps) and her fishing in the Sea of Galilee at close range. The possession of the Golan Heights also enabled Syria to attempt the diversion of the sources of the Jordan River and to threaten one third of Israel's vital water supply which comes from the Sea of Galilee. This project would have transferred Israel's cultivated zones into a desert. Besides, Israel's main pumping station on the Sea of Galilee which supplies the national water carrier would be within point-blank range of Syrian guns and only 10 kilometers from a hostile force.

Considering the geographic and economic background factors of the Golan Heights discussed above, the following conclusion can be addressed:

The geopolitical importance of the Golan Heights during the past centuries was well known by the different rulers of the times. Boundaries in this region never did conform to the areas of Jewish settlements which varied over time and do not justify any historical claim of Israel in terms of the Golan Heights.

The Golan Heights favors a defender because of its depth, the defensible terrain of the natural features, and the constraints of an attacker in terms of avenues of approach. In addition, the possession of the Golan Heights prevents uncontrolled movement and concentration of threat forces in the access to the plateau. The geographical situation and the topography of the Golan Heights also facilitates a surprise attack either by Israel or Syria against the other without including territory of the neighboring states.

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CHAPTER II

ENDNOTES

[11]Map: Israel, USACGSC, Appendix B.

[12]Map: Golan Heights, USACGSC, Appendix D.

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[16]Atlas of Israel. Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1970, p. IX/4. Map: The limits of the kingdom of David and Solomon (10th Century B.C.E.), after Y. Aharoni, Carta's Atlas of the Bible, Appendix F.

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[19]Atlas of Israel. Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1970, p. IX/11. Map: The land of Israel under Ottoman rule, 17th Century C.E., after Atlas of Israel, Survey of Israel, 1970, Appendix H.

[20]Atlas of Israel. Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1970, IX/12. Map: Sykes Picot Agreement, 1916, after Encyclopaedia Judaica, Appendix I.

[21]Map: Zionist Movement frontier proposals, 1919, after Encyclopaedia Judaica, Appendix J.

[22]Map: Franco-British Agreements, 1920-23, after Encyclopaedia Judaica, Appendix K.

[23]Atlas of Israel. Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1970, p. IX/12. Armistice demarcation lines, 1949, after Encyclopaedia Judaica, Appendix L.

[24]_Atlas of Israel_. Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1970, p. IX/12. Map: Israel and its neighbors after the Six Day War, after _Encyclopaedia Judaica_, Appendix M.

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[36]Khouri, Fred J. _The Arab-Israeli Dilemma_. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1976, p. 226.

[37]Dupuy, Trevor N. _Elusive Victory_: The Arab-Israeli Wars, 1947-1974. New York: Harper & Row, 1978, p. 224. Map: Diversion of the Jordan River/Israeli water national system, _carta Jerusalem_, Appendix N.

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CHAPTER III

POLITICAL FACTORS

The present situation between Israel and her neighbors is one of preparation for war and hope for peace. It is a situation in which Israel is hoping for her unanimous recognition and the understanding of her security problems and policy. Israel has repeatedly stated her willingness to negotiate the return of territories in exchange for recognition and normalization of relations.[40] Among the unsolved problems, the Golan dispute is one of the most difficult and misunderstood of all issues between the Arabs and Israelis. The Golan Heights constitutes not only a specific problem in terms of its geographical situation and its economic involvements, but also characterizes a difficult problem in the political-military scenario.

The viewpoint which Israel has developed concerning security by means of retaining certain strategic positions, notably the Golan Heights, is a deeply rooted one. It is based upon the historical hostility of her neighboring Arab states. The most frequently proposed solution would result in an Syrian-Israeli agreement.[41] But leaders of both Israel and Syria have expressed great skepticism about the feasibility of an agreement on the Golan Heights, except in the framework of an overall settlement. In the absence of such a settlement Israel is unlikely to be willing to abandon the fortified hills and kibbutzim close to the present cease-fire line while Syria seems under no circumstances to be satisfied with the "status quo". Therefore, the purpose of the following is to analyze the political background and the

28

development of possible terms of a settlement between Israel and her
neighbors. In other words, an analysis of the political aspects of the
Golan Heights can be only discussed in connection with the whole scope
of Israel's policy and the additional influence exerted by the two
superpowers and the United Nations.

Since the end of World War II, the one area in the world that
has been subject to persistent conflict has been that which includes
the former British mandate of Palestine. Small in size and devoid of
resources, the area is subject to claim by two different groups--Arabs
and Jews--whose ties to the land, though diverse in historical, legal,
and emotional claim, are equally profound.

The history of Israel's relations with her adjacent neighbors is
a succession of disputes. In all, Israel has been forced to fight five
wars against the Arab states since the foundation of the state in 1948,
the War of Independence 1948/49, the Sinai Campaign 1956, the Six Day
War 1967, the War of Attrition 1967-70, and the Yom Kippur War 1973.
The periods between the wars have been punctuated by terrorist ac-
tivity, encouraged and financed by the Arab states neighboring Israel.

Israel's War of Independence began with a series of Arab attacks
on the Jewish community, in open defiance of the United Nations reso-
lution of November 29, 1947, partitioning Palestine into a Jewish and
an Arab state.[42] Successful military operations by Israel resulted
in an increase of her territory, nearly a third more than the amount
allocated to her by the United Nations partition resolution and in
separate armistice agreements between Israel and her neighbors. These
agreements were signed in the course of 1949, and stated that the

purpose was "to facilitate the transition from the present truce to permanent peace."[43] But the military defeat of the Arabs in 1948 was a severe blow to Arab national pride and greatly intensified their fears and resentment of Israel. Among the many difficulities which were created, especially the problem of Palestinian refugees has been especially difficult to resolve.

The Sinai Campaign of 1956 was an outgrowth of an Arab policy to nationalize and then to close the Suez Canal and to weaken Israel by terrorist infiltrations launched from the Sinai and Gaza strip. In addition, Egypt blocked the Tiran Straits severing Israel's economic link with East Africa and the far East. These events led to an Anglo-French invasion of Egypt and an occupation of the Sinai and Gaza Strip by Israeli forces, which supported Great Britian and France in their attack on Egypt. At United Nations insistence, forced by the United States,[44] Israel subsequently withdrew, receiving promises that Egyptian forces would not return to the Gaza Strip, that Israeli economic traffic would be allowed through the Suez Canal and that the United Nations emergency force in Sinai would prevent another confrontation. In violation of these promises, Egypt infiltrated armed forces in the Gaza Strip the day Israel pulled out, and the future development of events will point out that the economic and territorial integrity of Israel remained an unsolved problem.

The Six Day War of 1967 came after a period of illusory calm and border clashes along the Israeli-Syrian frontier. During the period before the war the Arab states reorganized and rebuilt their military power. After a military alliance between Egypt, Syria and Jordan, a concentration of Egyptian forces in the Sinai, and the new blockade of

the Tiran Straits by Egypt, Israel launched a pre-emptive air strike on
Arab airfields. Additionally, Israeli forces disastrously defeated the
Arab armies and occupied the Sinai, the West Bank with Jerusalem and
the Golan Heights. This third Arab-Israeli war did not result in any
direct negotiations between the opponents, because of the old anti-
Israel ideology was not to be changed by the Arab leaders. On the
contrary, it was to be more systematically and intensively applied.
President Nasser of Egypt declared that what had been taken by force
would be returned by force. An Arab state summit conference in Sep-
tember 1967, underlined this policy by the issues: No peace, no recog-
nition of Israel, no negotiations and no territorial bargaining with
Israel. On November 22, 1967, the United Nations Security Council
adopted Resolution 242[45] as a step towards "a just and lasting peace
in which every state in the area can live in security." The resolution
also called for "withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories
occupied in the recent conflict" and for "termination of all claims or
states of belligerency and respect for and acknowledgement of the
sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every
state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and
recognized boundaries, free from threats or acts of force." Since that
time, there is a disagreement over what Resolution 242's statement of
principles means. The Arabs hold that Israel must withdraw from all
territories, while Israel and the United States disagree, pointing to
the fact that the resolution deliberately avoided the use of the word
"all". The American Ambassador, Arthur J. Goldberg, who led the United
Nations delegation in 1967, submitted an authoritative interpretation
of the meaning of United Nations Resolution 242.[46] Explaining that

the resolution is not self-implementing and that its goal is an ac-
cepted and agreed upon settlement, Goldberg denied that the resolution
calls for complete Israeli withdrawal.

A massive Arab rearmament program was initiated which resulted
in the War of Attrition 1967-70. Simultaneously there were clashes
between Israel and Jordan and an increased terrorist activity against
Israel. Attempts to arrange a settlement by United States Secretary of
State William Rogers and by United Nations mediator Gunnar Jarring came
to nothing, largely because the Arabs refused to accept the idea of
negotiating peace with Israel.

The Yom Kippur War of 1973 took Israel by surprise and kept the
Israeli forces off balance for the first stage. Egypt succeeded in
crossing the Suez Canal, and Syria advanced into the Golan Heights. At
the outset of the war, the Soviet Union launched a massive sea and air-
lift, providing arms and ammunition to resupply the Egyptian and Syrian
arsenals, while the United States began to airlift supplies for Israel
a week after the war started. By the time fighting ceased on Oc-
tober 24, eighteen days after it had started, Israeli forces had
counter-attacked across the Suez Canal, and held a substantial piece of
Egyptian territory, in the process isolating the Egyptian Third Army on
the eastern bank of the Suez Canal, and controlling the main avenue of
approach to Cairo. In the north-east, the Israeli counter-attack had
brought the forces thirty-five kilometers from Damascus. At the United
Nations, the Security Council adopted Resolution 338,[47] which called
for an immediate cease-fire and for the implementation of Resolution
242. In addition, Resolution 338 explicitly required negotiations
"between the parties."

The disengagement of forces on the Syrian and Egyptian fronts with Israel introduced a new element into the conflict. Not only did the disengagement agreements render more difficult the resumption of hostilities, but they also locked the Arabs and Israel into a diplomacy oriented towards a settlement for the first time. Then, in November 1977, there was the beginning of a development of a fundamental change in the attitude of Egypt. President Sadat paid a state visit to Israel for talks with Prime Minister Begin and other Israeli leaders. As a result of President Sadat's courageous initiative and Prime Minister Begin's enthusiastic response, Arab and Israeli negotiators are engaged in face-to-face talks aimed at a comprehensive peace agreement.

Although the disputes between Israel and her neighbors had a great impact upon all participants, the aftermath probably affected Israel more than others. Her vulnerability was demonstrated in the 1973 War, when Egypt and Syria staged their surprise attack, driving Israeli forces back into the Sinai and the Golan Heights. The international image of Israel as a hegemonic power suffered heavily and the need for comprehensive arms transfusion revealed the dependence on the United States. Within Israel the impact of the war was reflected psychologically in an erosion of confidence in the political leadership. An electorate, fractionalized by religious disputes and by a wide spectrum of parties weakened the ability of Israel's government to act decisively. This fact, especially, provides great problems for the Israeli leadership in future negotiations with the Arab states. These negotiations, including the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from occupied territories like the Golan Heights, necessitate that Israel seriously examine her acquisition of territories. Her expansionist

foreign policy springs from the imperative security requirements of a
geographically vulnerable state, whose existence constantly is jeopard-
ized by hostility from her neighbors. On the other hand, the statement
of Israeli General Peled, "the security of Israel is not based on the
quality of borders, but of the quality of the army, and not of the
height of any particular piece of territory, but on establishing stable
relations with her neighbors," may point out some doubts to Israel's
official political course. Therefore, only an Israeli government and
political leaders that would relax some of their implicable conditions
and become more tolerant will successfully represent Israeli security
interests under close international scrutiny.

Uncertainty about the future policies in terms of the settle-
ments in the occupied territories further weaken Israel's position in
the current negotiations with Arab states. Although Israel has con-
tended that she needs the Golan Heights to protect her settlements in
north Galilee, shortly after capturing this area she began to establish
settlements there, including some close to the new cease-fire
line.[48] At the beginning of 1978, there were 25 settlements besides
five Arab villages on the Golan Heights. Each settlement is populated
by representatives of one of a variety of para-military (the most
important being Nahal), political, religious or labor oriented organi-
zations. Many of the para-military settlements were transferred to
civilian organizations after their initial development. Security
interests are traditionally cited as the primary motivation for these
settlements. On the other hand, the argument that settlements dis-
courage infiltration and act as a first line of defense were negated by
events during the 1973 War. The settlements on the Golan Heights not

only had no defense value because of the high enemy firepower, but
actually were an obstacle to effective Israeli military actions. Dur-
ing the repulse of the Syrian invasion, essential time was lost by the
evacuation of women and children. General Itzhak Hofi, head of
Israel's intelligence agency, underlined these problems with the state-
ment: "The settlements on the Golan Heights are not a factor of
strength for power between Israel and Syria, and cannot play any role
in resolving or balancing the military problems." Therefore it may be
assumed that the strategic significance of the settlements had become
secondary to their political importance, either as a bargaining object
in future peace negotiations or as an indication of Israel's intention
to retain these areas.

For almost twenty five years the United States has been actively
involved in the Middle East.[49] Based on a common democratic heritage
and a shared desire for lasting peace in the Middle East, the relations
between Israel and the United States have been an example of developing
friendship. In 1950, the United States began to provide financial and
military aid that would enable Israel to defend her territory and to
build up her military strength to the point where her armed forces
could deal with all foreseeable combinations of Arab military threat.
The United States also tried to limit the expansion of the Soviet
Union's influence in this area by supporting friendly Arab states,
especially those providing the greater part of the western oil supply
as well as members of North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Central
Treaty Organization in this area. The aim of the United States in the
Arab-Israeli conflict was to work for an agreed political settlement.

That is, an acceptance of the state of Israel by the Arab states within borders which recognized some of Israel's views of her security needs. The policy took great account of Israeli military superiority to assume that a major Arab attack on Israeli forces was very unlikely and would not succeed if it were launched.

Between 1955 and 1973 the Soviet Union had a different view of the Middle East.[50] She had long regarded it as a neighboring area important to her security in strategic terms, over which it would be desirable to extend some form of influence or even control. The whole region was an area of increasing nationalism, where western powers (especially the former colonial or mandate powers) would be vulnerable to the results of skillful Soviet diplomacy. The Soviet policy towards this area included programs of economic aid to a number of countries, a firm political commitment to the Arab cause in the Arab-Israeli dispute, and especially military aid to Egypt, Syria and Iraq. In 1970, at the top of Soviet military involvement in the Middle East, Soviet air defense troops were stationed along the Suez Canal, and naval air forces deployed at Cairo and Aswan, carrying out air surveillance against NATO activities in the Mediterranean Sea. Simultaneously, political penetration of the Arab Socialist Union was underway. At that time the leadership in Egypt changed because of the death of President Nasser. Although at first little seemed to change in the Soviet Union involvement, Egypt under her new President Sadat, forced the Soviet Union into a defensive posture. In 1971, the Soviet penetration of the Arab Socialist Union was halted and a year later almost all Soviet military personnel in Egypt were expelled. On the other hand, Egypt continued to press for more and improved arms supplies,

exploiting the leverage provided by the Soviet Union's need to retain as much of her threatened position in the Middle East as possible.

The Soviet-American summit meetings of 1972 and 1973[51] began to arouse President Sadat's suspicions about the developing relationship between Moscow and Washington. Based on this situation, the leaders of Egypt and Syria made their decision to launch a major combined attack on Israeli positions on the Suez Canal and the Golan Heights. By the outbreak of the 1973 War, both superpowers, in hurrying to the practical support of their friends, were reacting to events, rather than controlling them. The decision of the Soviet Union to turn to the United States for a joint crisis-control action through the United Nations was largely because of Israel's military exploitation.[52] The opponent Soviet readiness to unilaterally dispatch troops to Egypt, which could escalate the conflict to a direct Soviet-American confrontation, originated in the movement of events outside Soviet control. The American response--a worldwide alert of American strategic forces--was accepted as a warning by the Soviets not to proceed with their plan. The speed with which the crisis escalated to a direct Soviet-American confrontation probably contributed to the pressure which both powers brought to bear on their friends (especially that which the United States exerted on Israel, whose forces were on the road to a resounding victory) in order to ensure acceptance of the final United Nations resolutions.

Since the end of the 1973 War, American and Soviet diplomacy was to hold multi-lateral talks to settle the problem,[53] but, as it turned out, it fell to the United States to mediate directly--first

between Israel and Egypt and then between Israel and Syria—and to conduct negotiations which led to successful disengagement agreements on the two main fronts. This process was the result of a dynamic and successful American policy of negotiations with the warring countries. President Carter has emphasized that the United States does not intend to impose a settlement on the nations in the Arab-Israeli dispute from outside. However, the United States will assist the parties in negotiating a just and lasting peace. Meetings of the United States President or his Secretary of State with most of the heads of government of the states of this region underline the efforts in the search for peace. Meanwhile the Soviets concentrated their policy again towards Iraq and also intensified relations with the Palestine liberation organizations, which would appreciate Soviet support in future crises. There is some doubt that the United States wants to carry the burden of an Arab-Israeli settlement alone, and wants to involve the Soviet Union in the next stages of Arab-Israeli negotiations. If the Soviet Union is not involved, it would mean that interim or permanent peace settlements in the Middle East would not have Soviet support. It would also increase Soviet resentment against the United States and make future efforts at crisis control more difficult.

Without underestimating the enormous difficulties ahead, it seems that a breakthrough has occured in Arab-Israeli relations and that with patient negotiations a long-term solution will be found which would involve Arab acceptance of the State of Israel within agreed borders, uninterrupted oil supplies for the United States, and a Soviet presence in this area which would be limited to activities unlikely to place United States interests in danger.

Soviet influence has been on the wane in Egypt and to a lesser extent in Syria.[54] Still the Soviet Union is convinced that her achievements in the Middle East are more impressive and longer-lasting that her setbacks and Soviet influence must continue to be built on their former enormous investments in this area (Syria/Iraq). Her maximum goals probably includes the exploitation of the western energy problems, the political isolation of Israel, and the achievement of Arab claims in the Arab-Israeli dispute. The Soviet Union could also hope for the return of Soviet anti-NATO forces to an Arab country in the Mediterranean area, and for a unified Palestinian organization responsive to Soviet policy. As a minimum goal, the present Soviet leadership could hope to hold on to existing Soviet gains and to protect vested political, economic and military interests. These gains could also include exploitation of the strategic advantages for Soviet military power of a restored link between the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean by the reopened Suez Canal. In fact, the Soviet Union will probably adopt policies which fall between those required to attain her maximum and minimum aims. She is unlikely to want a final settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute, which could lead to an elimination of her influence. On the other hand, she probably does not want another major round of hostilities with its unpredictability of outcome. It seems that her best strategy lies in continuing economic and military aid to Arab countries on a selective basis thus demonstrating support for the Arab cause and at the same time cooperating with the United States in the field of crisis control in this region.

The United Nations has played a significant role in the dispute between the Arabs and Israel.[55] The United Nations has laid down

some of the basic principles for a settlement in Security Council
Resolutions 242 in 1967 and 338 in 1973 and still maintains indispensa-
ble peace-keeping forces along the cease-fire lines in the Sinai and on
the Golan Heights. Nevertheless, since 1967, the United Nations has
neither displayed the capacity nor commanded the trust of the parties
sufficient to bring about a general settlement. It seems even less
likely to do so in the future, although it could have a consequential
role in the implementation of a settlement through the use of United
Nations forces in political, economic, and social programs resulting
from a settlement.

The Palestinians, whose attitude toward Israel differs funda-
mentally from that of the Arab states, are still in the phase of
national assertion and organization.[56] The foremost party to suffer
from the new balance of forces, both politically and militarily, was
the Palestinian resistance movement. Its rise had been in great part
the product of the failure of the 1967 War although the Arabs redeemed
themselves in the October 1973 War. The movement had become in former
years the catalyst of Arab nationalism and revolution, but as the in-
fluence of the radicals waned, the Palestinian guerrillas found them-
selves in a position of isolation. Today, the Palestinians are afraid
they may be forced to choose either to accept a political settlement
based on the recognition of Israel, or to reject any settlement and
risk opposition to Arab states in a new "status quo." Some Palestinian
guerrilla organizations, particularly the Popular Front for the Libera-
tion of Palestine, have remained firmly opposed to negotiations with
Israel. Their opposition is based not only on ideological reasons but

also on the fact that they negotiate from a position of weakness. None
of their strategic goals have been achieved. The stage of people's war
has not been reached, organized popular resistance has not been fully
developed in the occupied territories, and no Palestinian territory has
been liberated by armed struggle. Under the present circumstances
their interests depend on the extent to which Egypt and Syria are will-
ing to commit themselves to Palestinian claims (the right to repatria-
tion or compensation, political and civil rights, the right to self-
determination) and on the extent to which the two superpowers are
willing to accommodate these claims.

Given the situation today, the first requirement can achieve
little in the foreseeable future beyond the repatriation of a few
thousand Palestinians. Compensation for property taken by the Israelis
may become a central issue. The Palestinians living in Israel may ob-
tain some improvement in their political and civil rights as well as in
their judicial, educational and economic lots. The third demand which
is the principal one, the right to self-determination and the exercise
of national sovereignty, requires the establishment of a Palestinian
state. The legitimate rights of the Palestinian people must be recog-
nized, and they must be able to participate in the determination of
their own future. At the moment, the Palestinians depend heavily on
Arab states and outside support but they also possess a considerable
potential for undermining the stability of the whole region. In future
courses of action the Arabs might need to press for a settlement which
satisfies the largest number of Palestinians. This intention may, how-
ever, prove to be a two-edged sword, useful to the Arabs in settlement
discussions now, but following a settlement there may be problems with
internal subversion in the other Arab states.

The use of Arab oil as a political weapon has been a recurring theme in Arab policy.[57] There had been two main attempts prior to the 1973 War to use oil as a political instrument. But both attempts failed to produce significant or lasting results.

The first attempt took place following the Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt in 1956, when the flow of oil from north Iraq to the Mediterranean coast was interrupted as a result of the blowing up of one of the pump stations of the Iraq Petroleum Company pipeline system across Syria. Significantly, the decision to cut off the oil in this instance was taken by a transit country (Syria), without prior consultation with the source country. The second attempt occurred when several Arab oil-producing countries imposed an embargo on oil supplies to the United States, Great Britain and West Germany following Israel's attack on Egypt in 1967. In both cases, the Arabs were engaged in hostilities with Israel and were on the verge of defeat. Their resort to the use of oil as a political weapon was an attempt to stabilize a worsening military situation through the application of economic pressure on third-party states which has a special relationship with Israel.

By 1973, the Arab situation had changed in several ways. The improvement in Egypt's relations with Saudi Arabia, the growing Saudi disillusionment with American Middle Eastern policy, the economic strength of the major Arab oil exporting countries and the fact that two principal Arab combatants (Egypt and Syria) were involved in a liberation war against Israel, created the necessary moral pressure for an efficient deployment of the oil weapon by the non-combatant Arab states. The Arab oil embargo was probably the main reason for the change towards a more realistic American policy in the Middle East,

represented by the current efforts to promote a peace settlement. During and after the 1973 War there was considerable movement on the part of the European Economic Community countries of Europe and of Japan towards a closer identification with the Arab interpretation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 242. The European-Arab dialogue may provide the two communities with a very real opportunity to cement their relations in political, economic and technological fields. An increased dependence of the European Economic Community and Japan on oil from the Middle East could also constitute less understanding of Israel's policy in the dispute with her neighbors.

The emergence of the Arabs as a cohesive power bloc has become much more probable as a consequence of the recent shift in importance in the international political and economic order from economic access to markets to access to resources. The world power structure has begun to change in favor of the resource-rich countries of the world, and the central resource of the Middle East, oil, is one on which world dependence is expected to continue to increase in the near future.

To sum up, one can conclude that the dispute between Israel and the Arab states has not receded very far and that there is no recognized and stable "status quo" to which the parties to the dispute adhere.

Israel's prime and understandably obsessvie objective is to survive. At present, most analysts agree that she can do this because of the possession not only of the best-equiped but also the best trained forces in this region. On the other hand, the Arabs are steadily increasing their quantity of manpower and equipment and the

quality of their armed forces. Given their greater numbers and in-
creasing wealth, it is only a matter of time before they will be able
to credibly threaten the existence of the State of Israel. Addition-
ally, Israel is dangerously isolated in the political field and faces
isolation in the economic field as well. She has lost Third World
support and that of almost all advanced states except for the United
States.

Israel's future security may depend not on mere power or terri-
torial size but on achieving a just and lasting reconciliation with her
neighbors. If negotiations are to be successful, they must be inspired
by a recognition that all nations in the area have a right to exist in
peace. A comprehensive settlement must therefore contain the nature of
the peace to be established, withdrawal of troops from occupied terri-
tories and agreement on recognized secure borders for all states and a
resolution of the recognition of the Palestinian question.

As a result of the discussed political field, there are five
major conclusions which are in Israel's primary interest.

First, Israel needs peace based on normal relations among the
parties to the peace. This means that her government and political
leaders must relax some of their implicable conditions and become more
tolerant in security interests.

Second, recognized, secure borders are needed. A solution to
territorial questions like the Golan Heights can only be found in a
environment of friendly nations. Unfortunately a historical develop-
ment and the present political situation points out, an agreement with
Syria in the foreseeable future is hardly believable.

Third, the settlements on the Golan Heights are not a factor of strength for power between Israel and Syria and cannot play any role in resolving military problems. Therefore, these settlements reflect political importance as a bargaining object in future peace negotiations or constitute the intention of Israel to retain this geographical area.

Fourth, the United Nations, maintaining peace-keeping forces along the cease-fire lines on the Golan Heights, should display more capacity to overcome the mistrust of the parties and to force a settlement.

Fifth, adquate security arrangements are, in fact, crucial to an Israel that has fought for its survival in each of the last four decades. The commitment of the United States to Israel's security must be unquestionable.

CHAPTER III

ENDNOTES

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CHAPTER IV

MILITARY FACTORS

Until today, war was still a usable instrument of policy in the Middle East. Nuclear weapons did not play any role in the strategic balance or on the battlefield between Israel and the Arab states. The risk of a nuclear war could only result from a confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union which constrained their roles in this region. Israel's probable nuclear capability, the identification of the United States with the survival of Israel and the American involvement with the Sinai agreement are therefore vital components of Israel's deterrence and may influence future security equations to alter territorial boundaries by war.

The basic problem for Israel in a framework of a continuous state of belligerency with her Arab neighbors is an extreme disproportion in geographical size, natural resources, in population, and military forces. A specific problem is the lack of depth to her territory in the east-west dimension. This means a serious problem in terms of defensible frontiers which incourages Arab attempts to cut Israel into sectors to hasten her destruction. Logically, Israel's strategy of defense has rightly used offensive operations as the best form of defense. Additionally, the question of a sufficient defensive glacis by seizing preventive territories which have depth, have played throughout the historical development of Israel an important role. Concerning Israel's limited resources, Israel must avoid protracted wars and her tactics have to ensure a quick destruction of enemy forces.

Since the 1967 War, Israel has had better defensive conditions using occupied territories like the Golan Heights in the north-eastern part of the country. How much the Golan Heights are worth to Israel in future security equations is examined by a comparison of modern defense requirements and the military situation of Israel. Defense requirements from an advanced technological viewpoint include timely assessment of threats, efficient battlefield surveillance and reliable intelligence, secure command and control systems, high tactical and logistic mobility as well as night and all-weather long range target acquisition. Such defense-oriented characteristics are needed to maintain a flexible defense and call for an exploitation of strategic or tactical situations where possible, for counter-offensives or counter-attacks.

The first requirement, timely assessment of threats, which calls for an assured early warning in the face of deception and concealment to provide sufficient time for mobilization and deployment is a most critical element of defense. This assessment especially influences the dimensions, proportions and readiness of a regular army and a reserve.

Potential threats to Israel consititute a major factor in a discussion in terms of the value of the Golan Heights. The 1973 War was a combined campaign of Syrian and Egyptian forces, simultaneously achieved, on Israel's northeastern and southwestern front, without Jordan taking a direct part on her very long border facing Israel. The events since the 1973 War, the negotiations between Egypt and Israel concerning a settlement, the political and military cooperation of Jordan with Syria and the endless civil war of Lebanon and her partial occupation by Syrian forces have created a new main threat for Israel on her northeastern border.

In addition, some main military characteristics of the development in the Arab states increase the scope of threat.[58] A first element is the accent on qualitative rather than quantitative development. This means more sophisticated weapon systems, better and more mobile formations, improved quality of manpower and more emphasis on training and exercises.[59] First steps were recognized during the 1973 War by the use of effective anti-tank and anti-aircraft systems. The second element is the Arab endeavor to be capable of hitting Israel's rear area, especially the civilian urban centers.[60] During the 1973 War, the Syrians used the Soviet-supplied surface-to-surface missiles (FROG-3 and FROG-7) for long range attacks on settlements and border positions inside Israel. Although of limited military significance, these targets were of great psychological value. The actions failed to achieve any tactical advantage and must therefore be considered as a strategic effort on the part of the Syrians to lower Israeli morale. A third obvious element is the intensive Arab endeavor to achieve nuclear capability.[61] Practically all Arab countries try to develop their own infastructure in nuclear science and technology to put up nuclear reactors. Libya, for example, has offered enormous sums for a nuclear device from anywhere in the world, and is financing Pakistan's effort to build a nuclear weapon. Although today a nuclear attack by the Arabs is still out of any military consideration, it may be appreciated in future long term considerations. The fourth element is the increased power of Arab multi-national forces.[62] In previous wars, with the exception of the 1973 War, practically all units from non-direct Arab combatants arrived too late. But during the last war, there were at least four non-Syrian divisions engaged in fighting on the Golan Heights.

As a result of these factors, Israel today may be faced with a broader and larger confrontation than in former wars. Although Lebanon does not present a real threat to Israel, the Syrian occupation forces constitute an indirect danger. The relationship between Syria and Jordan, probably based upon mutual political differences with Israel and upon military considerations may overcome former conflicts between these two Arab states. Therefore, the worst situation for Israel would be disputes which include a threat along her whole northern and eastern borders, composed at least of the potential of Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Under these circumstances as well as in a dispute only between Syria and Israel (recognizing the sovereignty of the adjacent states), Israel probably has vital interests on the Golan Heights which characterizes an important political-military key terrain.

The second requirement, an efficient battlefield surveillance and reliable intelligence combined with the timely acquisition of information are necessary for the reduction of decision errors and the correct utilization of task forces. The importance of these elements is made obvious by considering the fighting capabilities under multi-dimensional aspects on a rapidly changing battlefield.

Based on these factors, the essence of the security problem for Israel in this threatening environment is an assured early warning to gain time for mobilization and deployment of her armed forces in the face of a conventional surprise attack. Israel's time problem is expressed in a very short count-down duration, dependent on how early a warning is received. On the other hand, Israel's reserve citizen army needs sufficient time for mobilization and deployment while the enemy

assault is gaining momentum because of surprise and the existence of a standing army.

Concerning the description of the topography of the Golan Heights in the second chapter one can summarize that the Golan Heights with Mount Hermon, a multi-peaked mountain rising to an elevation of 2,814 meters at its highest point, completely dominates the surrounding terrain. The Israelis holding the southwestern peak for observation and communication purposes control the area beyond Damascus in the east, to adjacent parts of Jordan in the south and to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

In October 1973, the Arab countries and armies achieved a great strategic advantage due to the element of surprise at the start of the war.[63] This element of surprise enabled them to enjoy a certain measure of success during the first days. The Syrian goal was to re-capture the whole of the Golan Plateau within thirty hours because they believed the Israelis would need twice that amount of time to mobilize their reserves. Israeli intelligence sources factually reported exten-sive buildups along the Golan Heights area to set the stage for the decision to mobilize. Within a period of 48-72 hours, a reserve force comprising approximately 275,000 men and women was not only assembled but was deployed in defense of Israel. In fact, the first reserves were mobilized within 24 hours and these reserves finally blocked the Syrians on the southwestern Golan Heights. In addition, reserve di-visions began to achieve counter-attacks on the Golan Heights 48 hours after mobilization.[64]

In all, the events of the 1973 War and the development of sophisticated weapon systems point out that the geographical situation

and topographical features of the Golan Heights do not favor any timely
warning on the strategic level. That is, the small size of the Golan
Plateau and the close distance to Israel's main centers do not allow
any exploitation of advanced technologies because of short reaction
times. The danger of a surprise attack by means of an air force and
missiles against Israel might not be restrained. The preparation of
counter measures against air force and missile attacks requires a
certain dimension of terrain to give adequate time to react. Despite
this fact, early warning devices on the Golan Heights are imperative
because of advantages on the tactical level. A timely reporting of
enemy buildups makes it possible to conduct delay operations by Israeli
covering forces on the Golan Plateau against an enemy ground attack to
ensure a timely mobilization and deployment of the bulk of Israel's
army.

The third requirement, a secure command and control system con-
tains the nervous system needed for orchestrating in time and space the
elements of a limited defending force and for controlling that force
when faced with short reaction times.

Such a command and control system must be based on an efficient
strategy which contains more than one military option. The lack of
depth to Israel's territory and her lack of manpower and resources
underline such an endeavor.[65] Paucity of territory in connection
with shortage of warning time is militarily unacceptable in a defensive
strategy because it leaves no flexibility as, for example, in with-
drawals to gain time. Therefore, Israeli pre-emptive strikes might be

not excluded in the future. In this case, the Golan Heights character-
izes a glacis which enables Israel to build up forces to gain a larger
maneuver area in the most threatened sector and to gain a favorable
starting position to overcome enemy centers of power. The geographical
barrier of the Golan Heights enables Israel to choose a military option
which is more adaptive to a shortage of manpower and budgetary con-
straints because of the defensible terrain of the Golan Plateau. More
man-launched guided anti-tank weapons can be used there instead of
armored forces which could better be used in an offensive capability in
major rolling areas along the northeastern border.

The annual climatic extremes of the Golan Heights[66] bring out
another aspect in terms of command and control. There are serious con-
straints on warfare during the winter because of the heavy rains on the
Golan Plateau in November and the snow on the Mount Hermon range in
December. In other words, the conditions during the winter months
favor the defense for Israel and constrain air and ground operations of
an attacker.

The non-possession or early loss of the Golan Heights would mean
that a threat force could build up there anti-aircraft systems. An
installation of such sophisticated long range air defense systems might
limitate Israel in the use of her air force because of the close dis-
tance to the northern airfields. The partial loss of Israel's decisive
weapon systems inside her own borders would heavily constrain her
freedom of action and her ability to defend timely.

The rapidity of reactions in the initial deployment stages and
in tactical battlefield situations, calls for the fourth requirement,

high tactical and logistic mobility. Lateral mobility is desirable in dealing with sudden, fast penetrations by the enemy, as well as for effectively exploiting favorable situations. To examine the application of these principles on the Golan Heights, it is necessary to remember the natural features of the plateau and the major factors of the 1973 War.

Summarizing the natural features of the Golan Heights, as described in the second chapter, the terrain controlling the Golan consists of Mount Hermon, the surfaced road leading from Syria through Kuneitra to the Benot Yacov Bridge over the Jordan River and on to Tel Aviv, and the road/pipeline from Ar Rafid north to the main avenue of approach. From the tactical viewpoint, the volcanic cones that dominate the high speed avenues of approach are also key terrain. Below Mount Hermon, the northern part of the Golan is one of the world's largest lava flows. This barren, rocky, windswept area is completely devoid of vegetation and is crisscrossed with volcanic cracks. Therefore, in this area vehicles are restricted to the roads and their immediate shoulders. In the Ar Rafid area on the southern Golan the land is more rolling, allowing for cross-country trafficability in some parts. Moving west to the high ground toward the Sea of Galilee, the terrain becomes a series of east-west, steep-sloped fingers and wadies, forming deep canyons which canalize east-west movements.

After the 1967 War, the Israelis constructed a series of fortifications that were positioned along the critical avenues of approach into the Golan Heights.[67] These platoon-sized positions, which were built from large rocks and capable of withstanding direct hits by heavy

artillery fire, provided excellent observation of the Syrian posi-
tions. Between all of the strongpoints, protected platforms were con-
structed to serve as elevated firing positions to cover the cease-fire
line. These positions also provided covering fire for a system of
minefields and obstacles that were constructed to take advantage of the
rugged terrain and to close the gaps between the fortifications. The
system, consisting of strongpoints and barriers, was designed so that
any armor attempt to penetrate would be canalized into killing zones.
An anti-tank ditch, leading from Mount Hermon to Ar Rafid, was con-
structed to strengthen the whole system. South of Ar Rafid, open ter-
rain precluded the effective, economical use of minefields and other
obstacles. Behind their defensive positions the Israelis built an
elaborate road system that extended throughout the Golan Heights and
provided rapid access and route flexibility for forces deployed to any
location, besides lateral movement in the area.

The 1973 War pointed out the nature of modern battle.[68] Arabs
and Israelis were equipped with the latest weapons and the conflict
approached a destruction rate of weapon systems once attributed only to
nuclear arms. Heavy armor and high-performance strike aircraft played
there, and play today, a central role. The improvements in anti-tank
and air defense weapons are threatening the cost-effectiveness of
armored assaults and air-delivered firepower in numerous situations.
As an example, one must remember that within a space of two weeks dur-
ing the 1973 War, Israel lost half of her armor force (a major part to
missiles) and a quarter of her air force (mainly through missiles).
These facts and figures underline the crucial importance of both anti-
tank and anti-aircraft missiles. In examining offensive and defensive

tactics, one can find areas like the Golan Heights where defense based
on modern technology has an advantage and offers alternative options
for decisive offensive operations. Offensive doctrines are based on
massing forces and concentrating firepower to achieve deep and fast-
moving penetrations. They emphasize tanks, while defense can substi-
tute anti-tank weapons for some of them. Offense requires exposure of
forces, while defense can rely on predisposed fortifications and bar-
riers. Finally, offense requires numerous large units to absorb casu-
alties and to maintain movement, while defense can rely on concepts of
"economy of force," replacing manpower with firepower and trading large
forces for precision destruction capability.

In line with Soviet doctrine, the Syrians launched a three-
echelon attack on the Golan Heights.[69] Three infantry divisions com-
posed the first two echelons and were to penetrate the initial Israeli
defensive positions followed by armor forces consisting of an armored
division and separate armored brigades in exploitation. The main
weight of the attack was in the south, avoiding the stronger Israeli
defensive positions in the northern area and taking advantage of the
better terrain approach in the Ar Rafid area and then along the road/
pipeline, branching off westward down to the Jordan River as the
lateral roads were reached. An additional breakthrough north and south
of Kuneitra, which itself was to be initially bypassed, supported the
main attack. Syria's primary objective was to reoccupy the Golan
Plateau including the western escarpment and to gain a foothold on the
west bank of the upper Jordan River. The attack was planned as a
tactical surprise, and supported by an air strike on targets on the
plateau, and a destruction of the Israeli observation post on Mount

ermon. After a certain measure of success and deep penetrations into
Israel's defensive dispostion, the Syrian attack failed because of lack
of confidence and realization of the vulnerability of their armored
forces once beyond the air defense barrier. Reinforced Israeli forces,
which had recovered from their initial shock, started a successful
counter-offensive.

Examining the partial breakthrough by Syrian forces on the Golan
Heights, one can conclude that the Israelis were able to defend de-
cisively until reserve forces began to achieve their counter-attacks.
The success of Israel's defense is based on her flexible tactics, the
exploitation of the defensible terrain and the pre-war preparation. In
addition, the depth of the Golan Heights enabled the Israeli forces to
block a Syrian breakthrough. If the Syrians had been able to begin
their attack from the 1949 armistice lines and had made the same ten to
fifteen kilometers penetration as on the Golan Heights, one can see
that northern Galilee might well have been lost by Israel.

The fifth requirement characteristic, night and all-weather long
range target acquisition capability designed to detect, identify and
position targets is a critical element needed to guarantee accurate
hits. Accurate hits are needed by a defense based on terrain, small
units and limited logistics in order to destroy crucial segments of
offensive forces. Mission success depends on correct exploitation of
natural features of the terrain and man-made dynamic barriers and
mobile elements of the combined arms which force the enemy into high
density concentration and block his penetrations by precise hits.

A major element in the success of Israel's forces during the 1973 War was the intimate familiarity of all commanders and most of the troops with the terrain.[70] The advantages and disadvantages of every piece of high ground were instinctive knowledge to the various commanders. The area had been prepared for battle. All the necessary range tables and the various ramps and alternative positions on all the hills had been prepared to give maximum advantage to an outnumbered force in fighting a defensive battle.

Tanks are usually thought of as offensive weapons, but it was in the defense during the first days on the Golan Heights that they stood out.[71] The Israeli tank crews had three distinct and complementary advantages over the attacking Syrian armor. These were superior material, superior training, and superior organization on the ground. This combination of advantages proved decisive in the tank battles. The Israelis demonstrated the deadly effectiveness of tanks in prepared defensive positions. These positions were on dominating terrain with clear fields of fire that overlooked the minefields and the barriers. The obstacles served to canalize the attacking Syrian armor into killing zones where exact ranges were known. The Israeli tanks were concealed behind platforms and achieved kill ratios up to 20 to 1.[72] The infantry in the strongpoints were integrated into this defense. However, they lacked at that time modern anti-tank weapons and were partly bypassed by the Syrian armor. With advanced portable anti-tank weapons, the anti-armor defense in small units of combined teams or task forces probably has been greatly increased.

Based on these factors, one can conclude that the terrain of the Golan Heights favors a defender. The natural features which canalize

an enemy force and give a combat ratio in favor of a defender make an
economy of forces possible. The exploitation of terrain of the Golan
Heights and the use of the new generation of shoulder-launched weapons
with longer range, shorter flight time, higher terminal lethality and
lower costs, increase the combat value of the individual soldier and
the small unit. That is, the replacement of expensive armor units
partially by less expensive infantry units, is without constraints in
terms of the combat power possible.

Foregoing military resultants in terms of the Golan Heights can
be summarized in two categories, the military strategic level and the
tactical level. In the framework of the strategic level the following
significant features can be addressed:

The Golan Heights characterizes a political-military key terrain
considering the potential threat of Israel at that time and in a fore-
seeable future.

The retention of the Golan Heights by Israel guarantees an in-
crease of military options. In the case of pre-emptive strikes by
Israel, the Golan Heights constitutes a glacis which allows Israel to
build up armed forces in the most threatened sector, and to maximize an
attack against enemy centers of power. The Golan Heights as a geo-
graphical barrier with defensible value for Israel, enables her effec-
tively to economize on defensive forces in one place in order to con-
centrate heavier forces in other decisive areas. On the other hand,
the possession of the Golan Heights does not guarantee any timely warn-
ing against a surprise attack on the strategic level because of its
small size and close distance to Israel's main centers.

On the tactical level there are three major characteristics:

The occupation of the Golan Heights by Israel ensures a timely reporting of enemy build ups and secures the conduct of covering force operations while mobilization and deployment of the bulk of the armed forces are going on.

The depth of the Golan Heights results in a tactical sense in the possibility of blocking enemy penetrations and gaining time for preparations of counter-attacks or a counter-offensive.

Finally, the Golan Heights constitutes a defensible terrain, a defensible boundary of Israel based on natural features and reinforcements in terms of pre-war preparations.

CHAPTER IV

ENDNOTES

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[63]Insight Team of the London Sunday Times. <u>The Yom Kippur War</u>. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1974, p. 63-76.

[64]U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. <u>Selected Readings in Tactics</u>: The 1973 Middle East War. RB 100-2, Vol. I, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1976, p. 5-20.

[65]Map: Israel, <u>USACGSC</u>, Appendix B.

[66]Headquarters Department of the Army. <u>Israel: A Country Study</u>. DA Pam 550-25, 1979, pp. 108-109.

[67]Dupuy, Trevor N. <u>Elusive Victory</u>: The Arab-Israeli Wars, 1947-1974. New York: Harper & Row, 1978, pp. 437-439.

[68]O'Ballance, Edgar. <u>No Victor, No Vanquished</u>, The Yom Kippur War. San Rafael, California: Presidio Press, 1978, pp. 122-123.

[69]Herzog, Chaim. <u>The War of Atonement</u>. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975, pp. 102-103. Maps: III-V, Golan Heights Campaign, <u>USACGSC</u>, RB 100-2, Vol. I, Appendix P.

[70]Dupuy, Trevor N. <u>Elusive Victory</u>: The Arab-Israeli Wars, 1947-1974. New York: Harper & Row, 1978, pp. 443-444.

[71]U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Selected
Readings in Tactics: The 1973 Middle East War. RB 100-2, Vol. I.
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1976, p. 5-14.

[72]U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Selected
Readings in Tactics: The 1973 Middle East War. RB 100-2, Vol. I.
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1976, p. 5-14.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November,
1967, forms the guidelines for a peaceful settlement between Israelis
and Arabs. It states two major principles for the "withdrawal of
Israeli armed forces from territories of recent conflict", and "termi-
nation of all claims or states of belligerency and respect for and ac-
knowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political
independence of every state in the area".[73] A peaceful and accepted
settlement in accordance with these principles of the resolution 242
compels Israel to analyze her courses of action in terms of the need to
retain some occupied territories of the 1967 War, including the Golan
Heights. The disengagement agreement between Israeli and Syrian Forces
on the Golan Heights, signed on 31 May, 1974,[74] represents a first
breakthrough in territorial concessions to Syria, but future negotia-
tions between Israel and Syria must continue. One must keep in mind
that the element of time in the frame of future negotiations is deci-
sive because the disengagement agreement can prevent war only as long
as there are expectations for further progress towards a settlement and
because opposition to settlement gains strength with time as hardline
positions in both camps solidify and become more prevalent. What
chance these expectations may have in future negotiations towards a
settlement of the Golan Heights issue is summarized in ten conclusions.

First, the Golan Heights characterizes a key terrain in terms of
Israel's hostile neighbors and her own vulnerability to invasion. The

analysis to the balance of power between Israel and her new axis of
Arab opponents results in a main threat to Israel on her north-eastern
boundary. Both Syria and Iraq, denying the legitimacy of a Jewish
state, constitute major powers in this area. The other Arab states
(except for Egypt) join with Syria and Iraq to a greater or lesser
degree in hostility toward Israel. This potential threat and Israel's
geographical vulnerability confirm her security policy of retaining the
Golan Heights.

Second, historical boundaries or settlements in this specific
area do not justify any claim of Israel for an incorporation of the
Golan Heights in her territory. Although the importance of the Golan
Heights as a link between the Biqa Valley (Lebanon) and the Yarmuk
Valley was well known during the centuries before the Proclamation of
the State of Israel, the borders in this region never did conform to
the areas of Jewish settlement at any period of time.

Third, the retention of the Golan Heights by Israel guarantees
an increase of military options. In the case of pre-emptive strikes by
Israel, the Golan Heights constitutes a glacis which allows her the
option of building up forces in the most threatened sector and to maxi-
mize a strike against enemy centers of power. On the other hand, the
Golan Heights as a geographical barrier with defensible features, en-
ables Israel to minimize her shortage in manpower and economic
problems. The defensible terrain of the Golan plateau makes the de-
ployment of smaller and less expensive infantry units possible, while
expensive armor units with offensive capability can be concentrated in
other decisive areas.

Fourth, the possession of the Golan Heights points out that any
timely warning against a surprise attack on the strategic level is not

possible. The small size of the Golan plateau and the close distance to Israel's main centers do not allow any exploitation of advanced technologies in terms of short reaction times. The preparation of counter measures against air force and missile attacks requires a certain dimension of terrain to give an adequate amount of time.

Fifth, the occupation of the Golan Heights by Israel ensures a timely reporting of enemy building ups on the tactical level, and secures the conduct of covering force operations, while mobilization and deployment of the reserve armed forcese are going on. Timely reporting and a successful covering force operation are essential to Israel because the bulk of her armed forces are reserve units which need sufficient time for mobilization and deployment.

Sixth, the depth of the Golan Heights results tactically in the possibility of blocking enemy penetrations and of gaining time for preparations of counter-attacks or a counter-offensive. At the beginning of the 1973 War, the Syrian attack penetrated in several places to a depth of 10 to 15 kilometers. With the assumption that this attack would have taken place from the former armistice lines of 1949 (upper Jordan River), northern Galilee would have been overrun.

Seventh, the topographical advantages of the Golan Heights favors Israel's defensive operations. The exploitation and reinforcement of the terrain in combination with the use of the newest weapon systems guarantee canalization and destruction of enemy forces by an economic combat ratio. The concept of Clausewitz and Moltke (to fight one enemy with as little as possible in order to make available superior forces with which to crush the other) are still tactically valid.

The Golan fortified hills, even though not remotely comparable in defensive power to World War II fortified zones, saved the Israelis from an early and devasting defeat in 1973.

Eighth, the pressure of rising demand for a limited supply of water and food production constitutes the vital need of Israel to secure the major headwaters of her water rescurces and to protect her most cultivated region in northern Galilee. The boundaries, based on the armistice agreements of 1949, did not guarantee any control over these resources. Despite desalination of seawater, future development in the economic fields of Israel depends on the natural water resources and the security of Israel's installations in the Golan Heights—northern Galilee area. The ability of Syrian forces to threaten Israeli cultivation projects in northern Galilee at close range does not exist when Israel occupies the Golan Heights.

Ninth, the Israeli settlements on the Golan Heights not only have no defensive value, but are also an obstacle to effective Israeli military operations. Therefore, it may be assumed that the tactical significance of the settlements had become secondary to their political importance, either as a bargaining object in future peace negotiations or as an indication of Israel's intention to retain these areas.

Tenth, within this regional Arab-Israeli dispute only a close relationship between the United States of America and Israel and a strong commitment to Israel's security and wellbeing guarantee an acceleration of a peace settlement. It seems that the prospects of peace for the near future look increasingly discouraging. The negotiating positions of both Arabs and Israelis have hardened, the gap between

them, always very large, has progressively widened concerning territorial questions. Adequate security arrangements should give Israel the assurance to recognize territorial solutions and to prevent Syria from unilateral actions to alter the "status quo" on the Golan Heights.

The need of Israel to retain the Golan Heights may remain until a fundamental reassessment of policies and of goals has taken place within Israel to determine how she can move toward peace while assuring her security, and how the great powers can guarantee the political and territorial integrity of all states in the former Palestine area.

CHAPTER V

ENDNOTES

[73]Herzog, Chaim. _Who Stands Accused?_ New York: Random House, 1978, pp. 219-220.

[74]Herzog, Chaim. _Who Stands Accused?_ New York: Random House, 1978, pp. 226-230.

APPENDIX A

Names and boundary representation
are not necessarily authoritative

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APPENDIX B

Israel
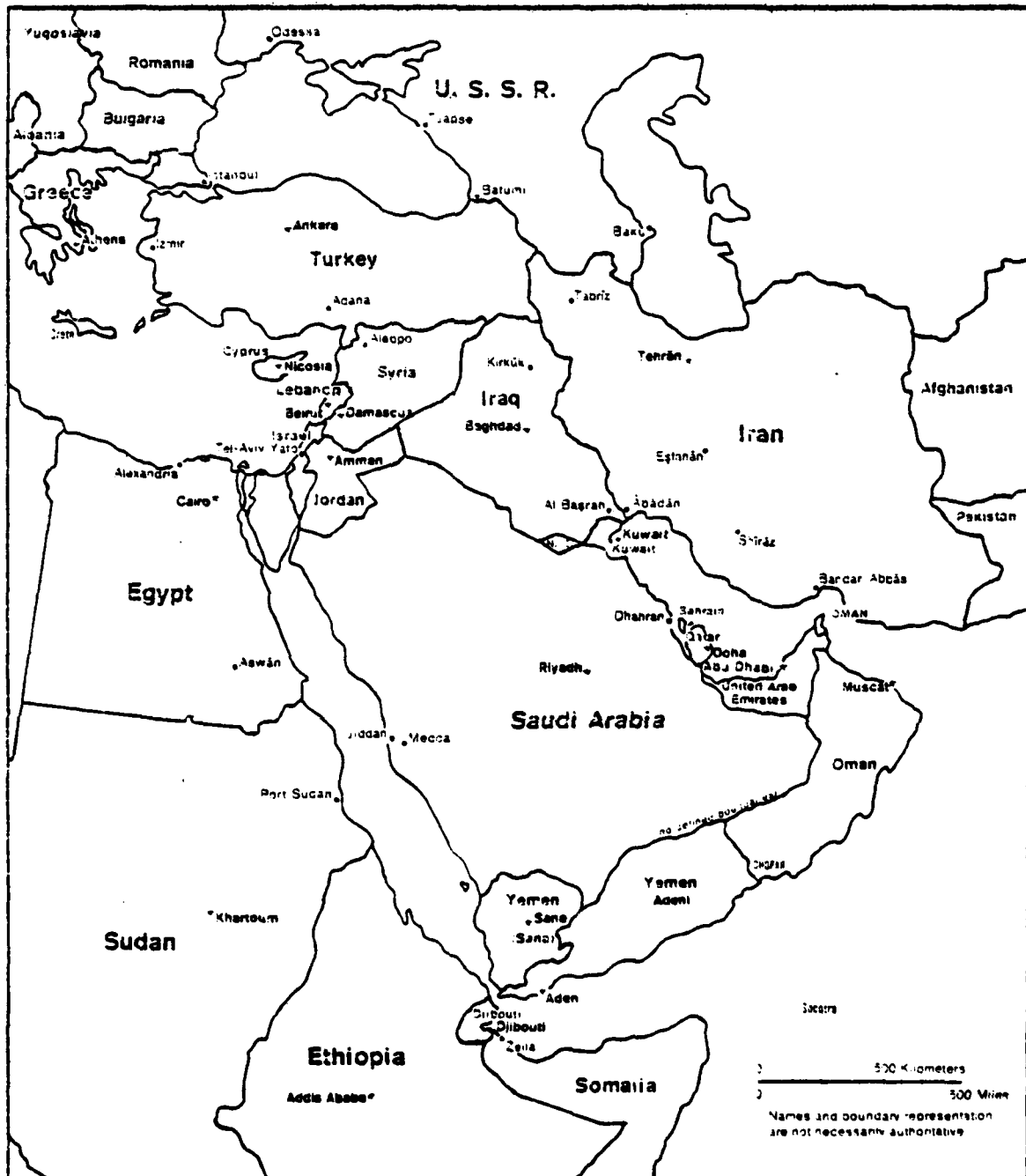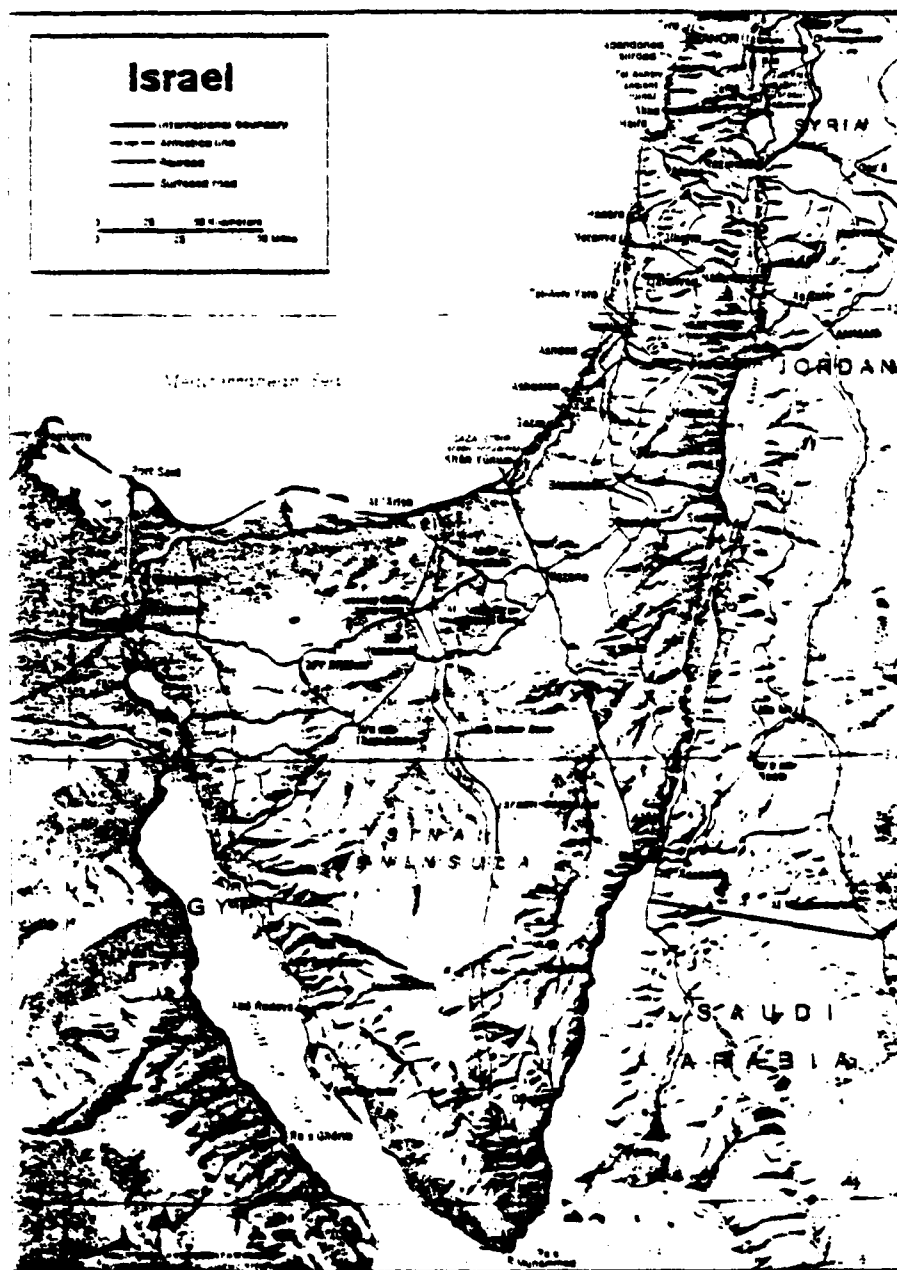
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APPENDIX C

UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 242 (1967) OF 22 NOVEMBER, 1967--
SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE TO THE MIDDLE EAST

The Security Council

Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation in the
Middle East,

Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory
by war and the need to work for a just and lasting peace in which every
state in the area can live in security,

Emphasizing further that all member states in their acceptance of
the Charter of the United Nations have undertaken a commitment to act
in accordance with Article 2 of the Charter,

1. Affirms that the fulfillment of Charter principles requires
the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East which
should include the application of both the following principles:

(i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories of
recent conflict;

(ii) Termination of all claims or states of belligerency
and respect for and acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial
integrity and political independence of every state in the area and
their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries
free from threats or acts of force:

2. Affirms Further the necessity

(a) for guaranteeing freedom of navigation through inter-
national waterways in the area;

(b) for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;

(c) for guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and
political independence of every state in the area, through measures
including the establishment of demilitarized zones;

3. Requests the Secretary General to designate a special repre-
sentative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain con-
tacts with the states concerned in order to promote agreement and
assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accord-
ance with the provisions and principles in this resolution,

4. Requests the Secretary General to report to the Security
Council on the progress of the efforts of the special representative as
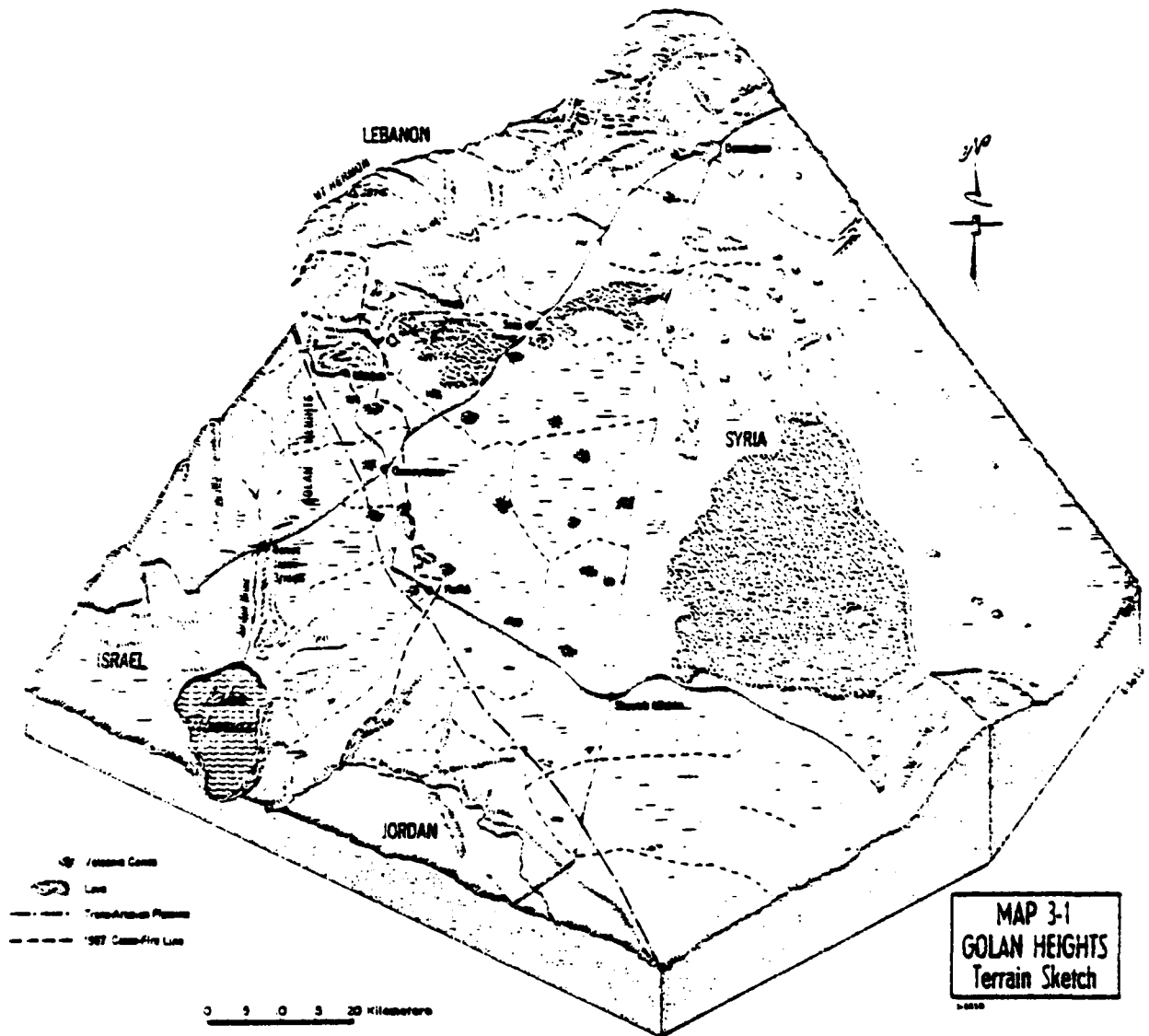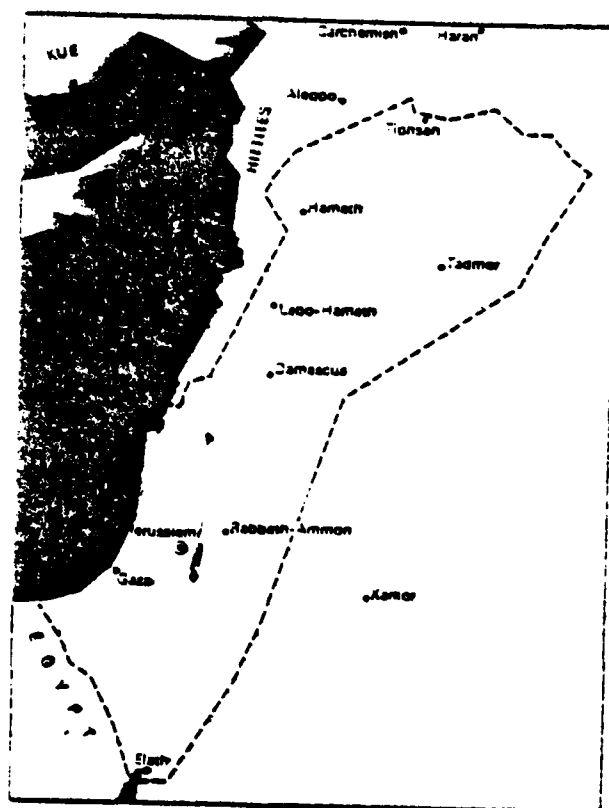soon as possible.

APPENDIX D

Golan Heights
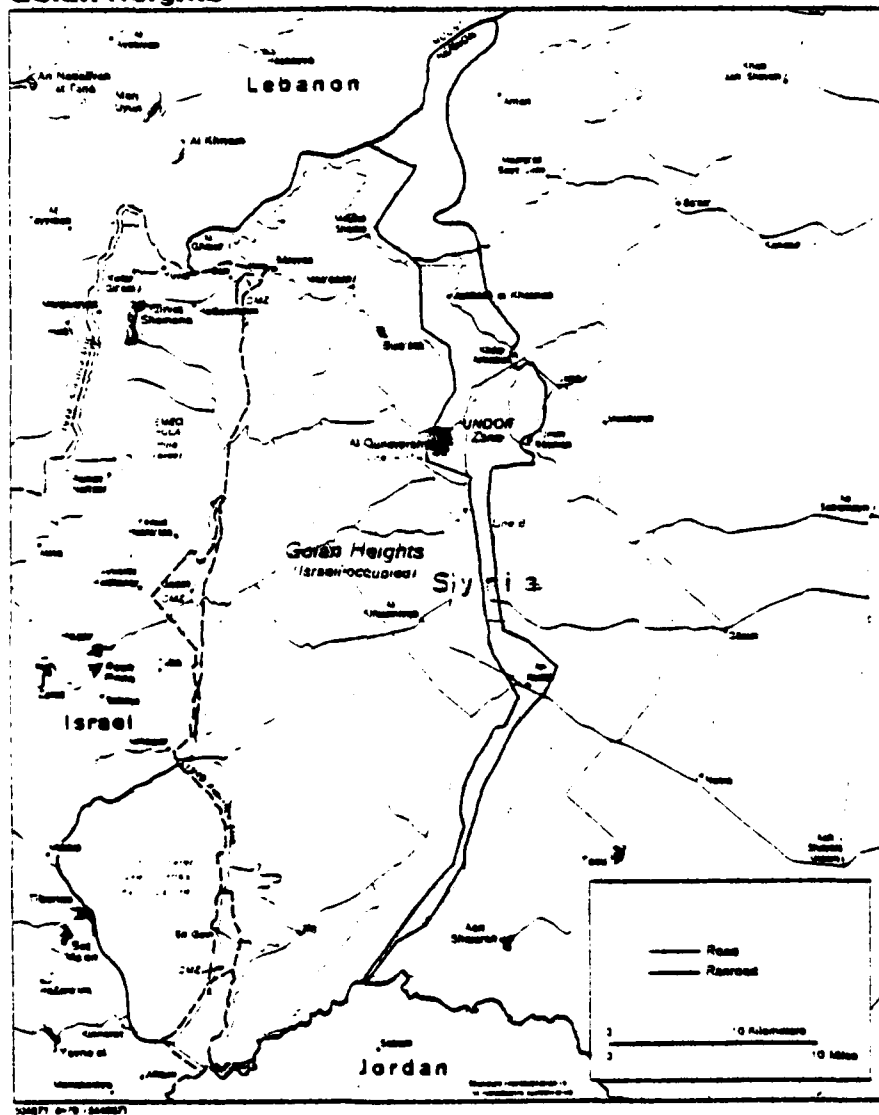
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APPENDIX E

LEBANON

SYRIA

ISRAEL

JORDAN

MAP 3-1
GOLAN HEIGHTS
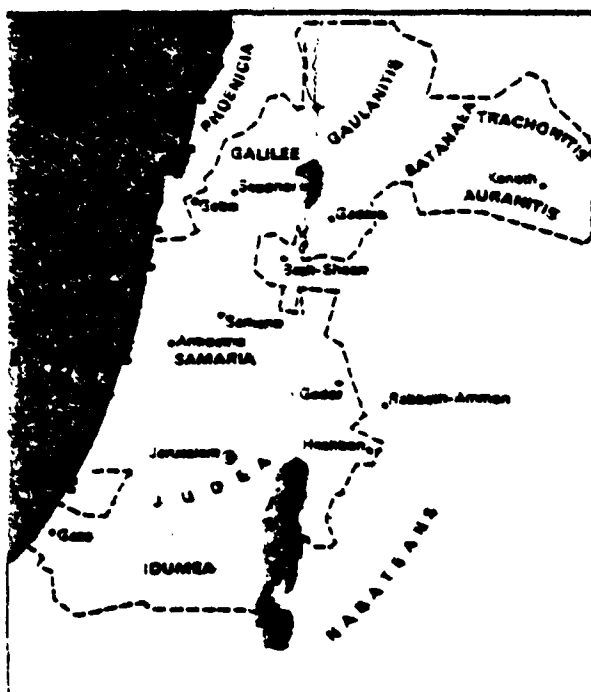Terrain Sketch

0   5   .0   5   20 Kilometers

U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Selected Readings
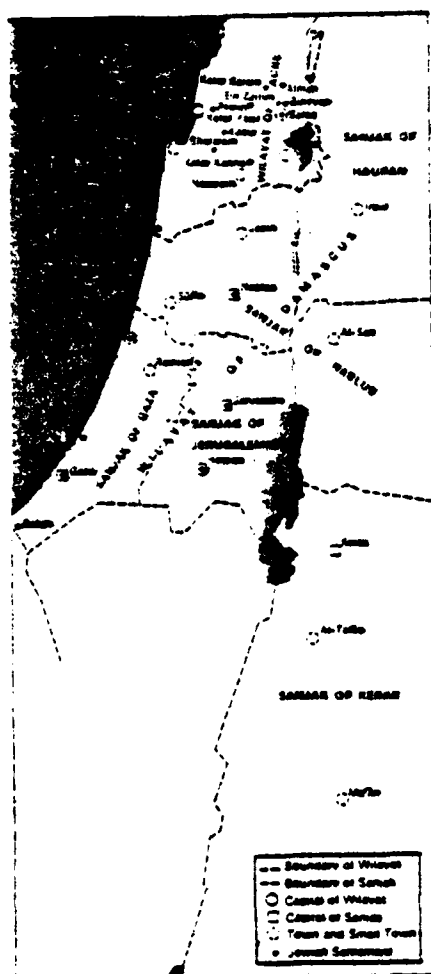in Tactics: The 1973 Middle East War, RB 100-2, Vol I, 1976.

APPENDIX F

The limits of the kingdom of David and Solomon (10th centruy
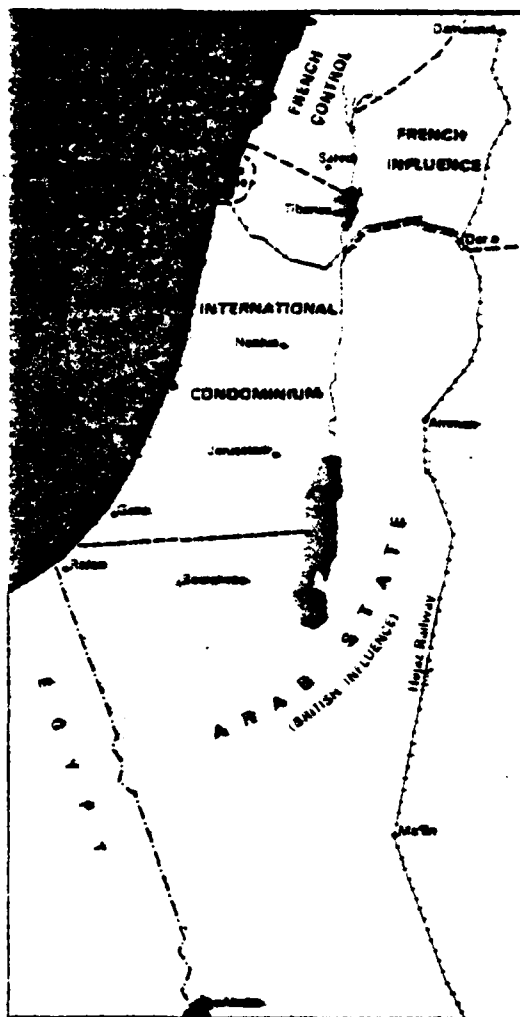B.C.E.). After Y. Aharoni, Carta's Atlas of the Bible.

APPENDIX G

The borders of the kingdom of Herod (37-4 B.C.E.). After M. Avi-Yonah, Carta's Atlas of the Period of the Second Temple, the Mishanah and the Talmud.

APPENDIX H

The Land of Israel under Ottoman rule, 17 century C.E. After
Atlas of Israel, Survey of Israel, 1970.

APPENDIX I

Sykes-Picot agreement, 1916. After Encyclopaedia Judaica.

APPENDIX J

Zionist Movement frontier proposals, 1919. After Encyclopadeia Judaica.
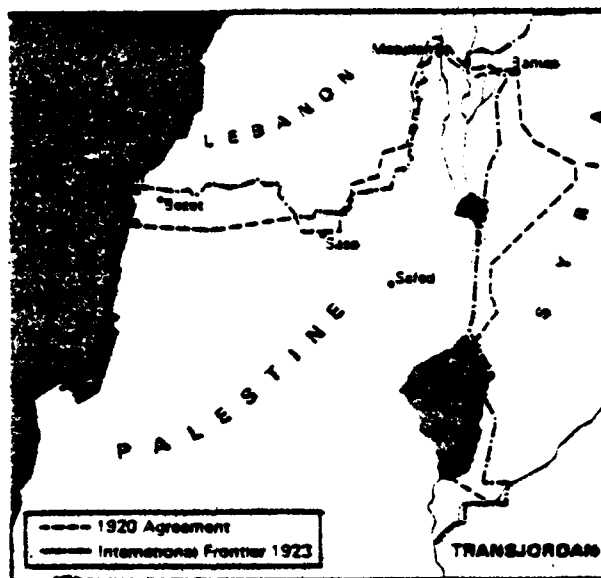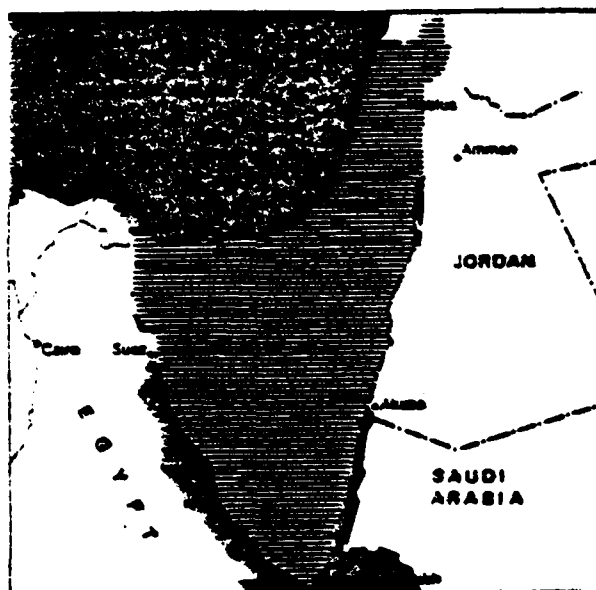
APPENDIX K

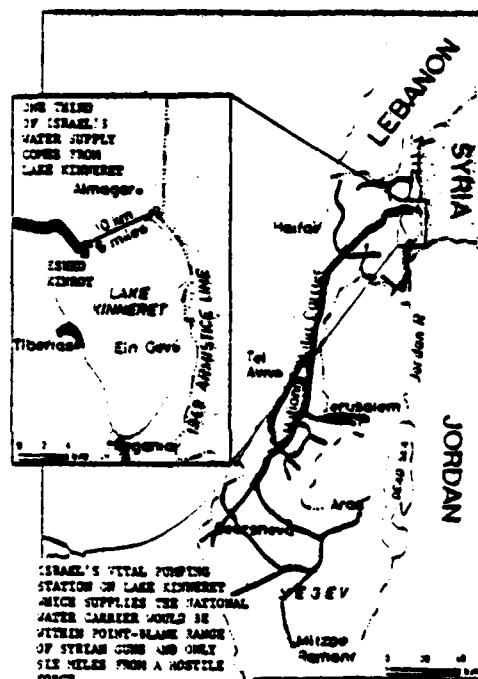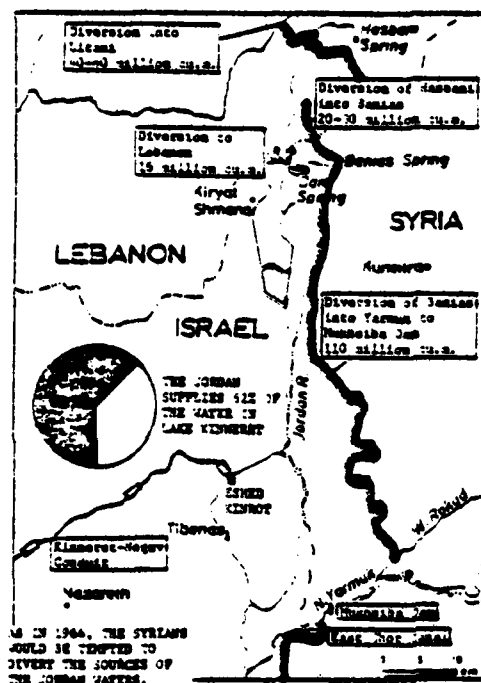Franco-British agreements, 1920-23. After Encyclopaedia Judaica.

APPENDIX L

Armistice demarcation lines, 1949. After Encyclopaedia Judaica.
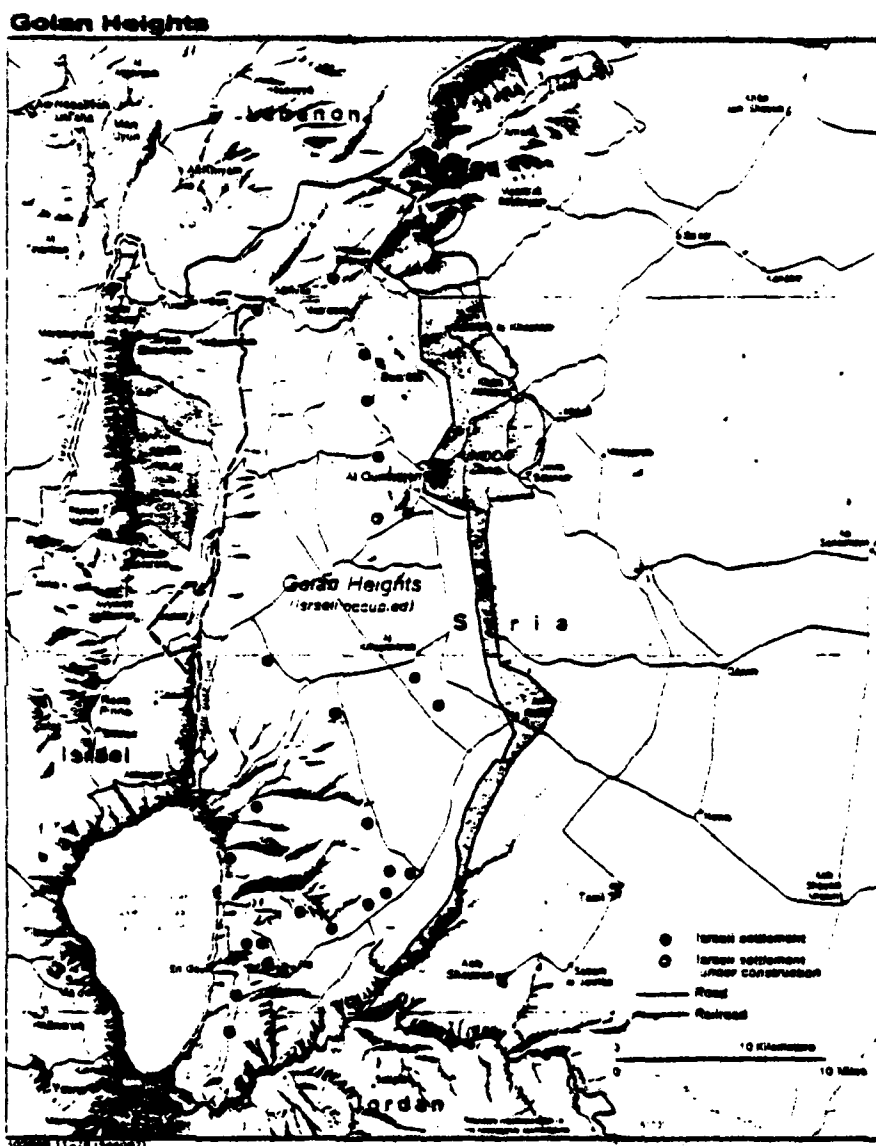
APPENDIX M

Israel and its neighbors after the Six-Day War. Shading
indicates area within 1967 cease-fire lines. After Encyclopaedia
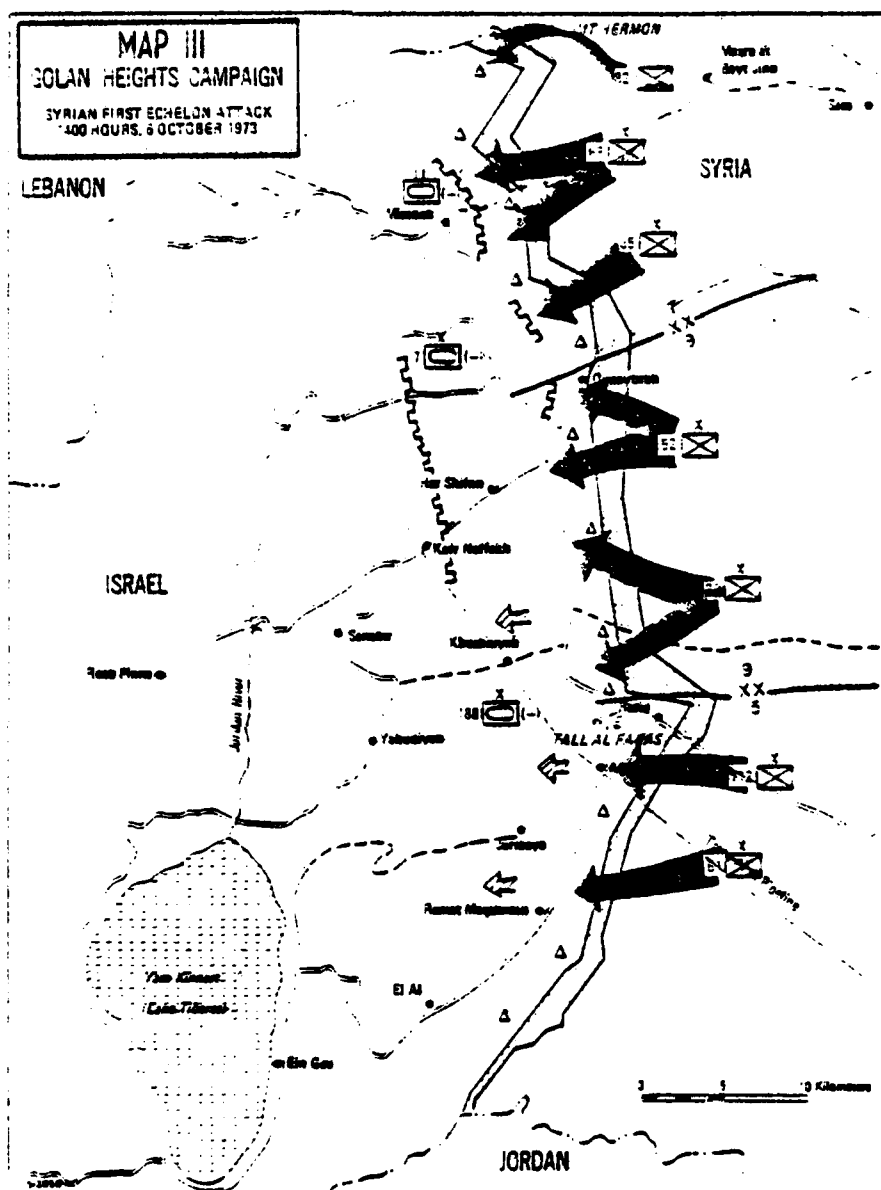Judaica.

APPENDIX N

Diversion of the Jordan River/Israeli water national system.
Carta Jerusalem.

APPENDIX O

Golan Heights

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APPENDIX P

MAP III
GOLAN HEIGHTS CAMPAIGN
SYRIAN FIRST ECHELON ATTACK
1400 HOURS, 6 OCTOBER 1973

U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Selected Readings
in Tactics: The 1973 Middle East War. RB 100-2, Vol. I, 1976.

MAP IV
GOLAN HEIGHTS CAMPAIGN
SYRIAN SECOND ECHELON ATTACK
MIDNIGHT, 6 OCTOBER 1973

U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Selected Readings
in Tactics: The 1973 Middle East War. RB 100-2, Vol. I, 1976.

MAP V
GOLAN HEIGHTS CAMPAIGN
SYRIAN THIRD ECHELON ATTACK
7 OCTOBER 1973
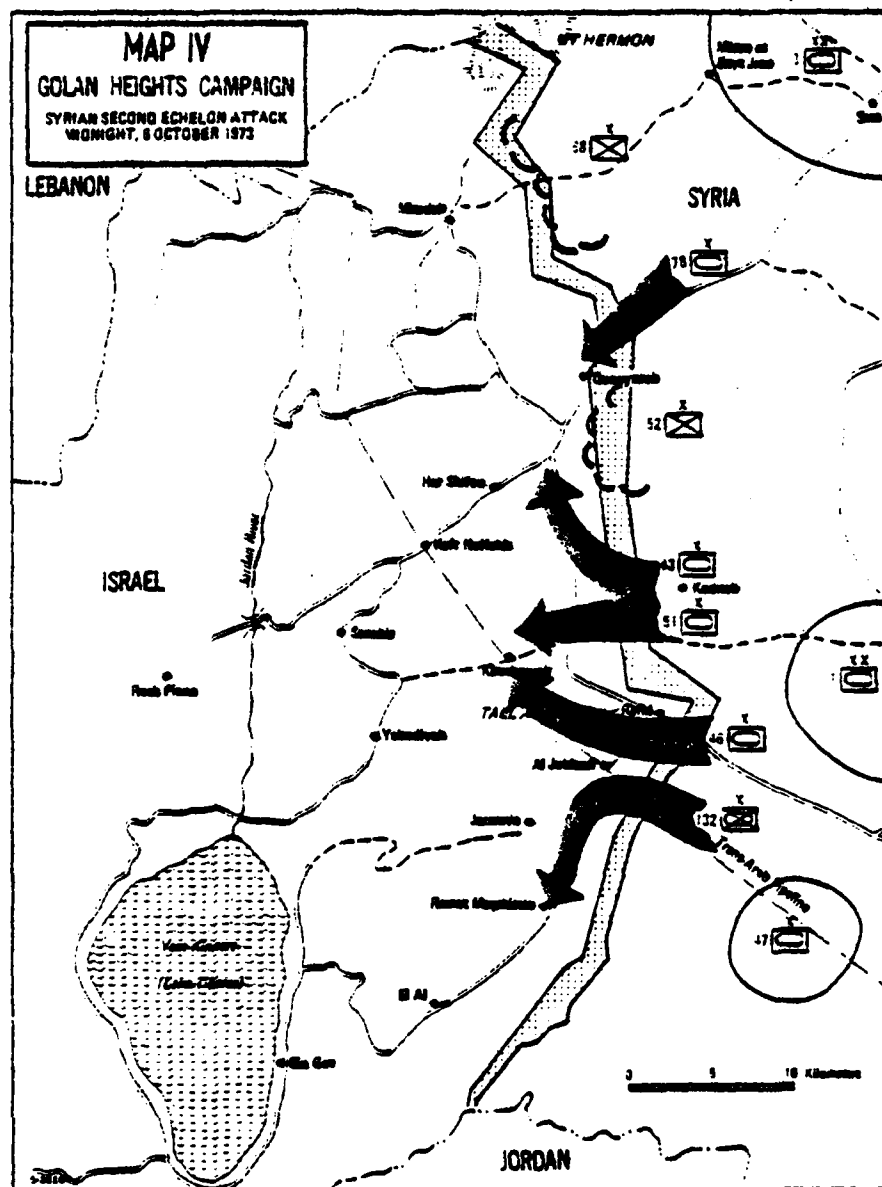
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109

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