

SPECIAL MILITARY REPORT

AN ANALYSIS OF THE 1973 OCTOBER WAR IN THE MIDEAST

Nov. 13 (IPS)--Despite a press campaign designed to convince readers that unbridled feverish nationalisms in the Mideast inevitably will lead to another major war, the actual location and content of any Arab-Israeli or Iran-Iraq conflict comes straight from the drawing boards of the CIA and David Rockefeller's fascist world planning body, the Trilateral Commission. The current scenario for nuclear war in the Mideast, though in certain respects a qualitative escalation of previous CIA-staged encounters, is of the same general order as the October 1973 war--a complete set-up from start to finish. How this set-up works becomes clear from an examination of the military aspects of these armed confrontations, using the 1973 October War as a paradigm.

The function of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war to camouflage the centralization of world liquidity in Rockefeller-controlled banks, via his puppet sheikhs, has been documented extensively in New Solidarity and IPS. With minor exceptions, the script of the war itself was played as written by the Trilateral Commission and coordinated by the CIA.

To anyone with some knowledge of the Middle East situation, it had been obvious for most of 1973 that a war was in the making:

*A continuous series of meetings had been taking place in Damascus and Cairo, involving the very highest ranking military and political figures of the Arab world.

*It had been announced publicly that plans were being drawn up for "unified political and military action" against the Israelis. These moves were facilitated by the reactivation of the Jordanian front, which involved extensive military cooperation between Syria, Jordan, and Egypt.

*Huge arms buildups were underway, particularly in Egypt with the establishment of heavy air defenses along the Suez involving Soviet SAM-6 and SAM-7 missiles and Soviet technicians to operate them. U.S. satellite surveillance of the area revealed 20 Soviet SCUD missiles, having a range roughly of the distance from Northern Egypt to the key Israeli population centers such as Tel Aviv. Presumably this buildup was in response to the Israeli-developed Jericho missile which has a 300 mile radius. (Both the Jericho and SCUD missiles can be fitted with nuclear warheads, which conclusively are possessed by the Israelis and possibly also by the Egyptians, thus providing a frightening backdrop for the next war.)

*For months, Egyptian maneuvers involving massive amounts of armored equipment and bridging devices had taken place at regular intervals along the Suez. The Israelis had responded to each

maneuver with a high degree of vigilance, including the preparations for rapid mobilization of the Israeli Defense Force. On the last, largest such maneuver, however, no such preparations took place. Why?

The Israeli Vulnerability

To understand the susceptibility of the Israelis for a CIA set-up on this occasion, the Israeli mobilization procedure must be explained. First of all, with limited manpower resources in their relatively tiny nation, the Israelis do not have the forces or economic base to maintain a large standing army. Therefore, they must rely on a heavy mobilization of reserves, a process which takes 72 hours and which severely disrupts the economy as a whole, even if carried out only partially. Thus, the decision to mobilize is not taken lightly. In view of this process and considering the frequency with which the Egyptians had previously cried "wolf" on offensive maneuvers, Israeli intelligence was relieved to learn from what they termed "friendly intelligence sources" that this time the movement of Egyptian arms and men was a simple training maneuver which could be safely disregarded as a threat. The CIA (the intelligence source in question), of course, knew exactly what the score was, having detailed intelligence on the size and quality of the buildup. They knew as well that Russian advisors and families had been evacuated in large numbers in the few days before the outbreak of fighting. While Israeli intelligence, Shin Beth, watched the buildup with growing alarm, they received repeated assurances from Washington, including many from Kissinger himself, that this maneuver was nothing to worry about. Finally, in the 24 hours or so before the initial strike, a debate was raging in the highest Israeli political and military circles on whether to carry out a mobilization. The debate finally resulted in the decision to prepare for war, but it was days too late.

It must be understood that for a small, highly vulnerable nation like Israel, surrounded by a massive arms buildup on two fronts, the only rational military tactic is to launch a pre-emptive strike, trying to sabotage the offensive capabilities of the enemy before they can be activated. In other words, the point is to catch the enemy in its staging areas, as the Israeli air force did in 1967 when it knocked out the entire Egyptian air force while the Egyptian planes were still on the ground. By not exercising this pre-emptive option, the Israelis were in real difficulty in the opening days of the engagement.

The Initial Attack

Oct. 6 at 1400 hours a simultaneous offensive was launched against Israel by Syria in the north and Egypt in the south across the Suez. Due to the lack of mobilization, the Israelis were badly outnumbered on both fronts and in immediate danger in the north. The Israelis had two understrength armored brigades in the Golan Heights, along with 150 tanks, backing up several

infantry positions, each of platoon strength, with a total strength of less than a brigade. The Syrians, on the other hand, had a force of two armored and three mechanized divisions, along with a commando brigade and approximately 1,000 tanks, for a total force of 45,000 men. Thus, they outnumbered the Israelis by 10 to 1.

The Syrians sent a heavy armored thrust down the Damascus-Quneitra Road, accompanied by attacks along the north and south of the road. Simultaneously, Syrian commandos dropped from helicopters, hitting the rear of the key Israeli observation posts on Mt. Hermon. They wiped out these posts, threatening North Galilee, taking control of the position which dominated the area along which any Israeli counterattack would have to come.

The armored attack along the Damascus-Quneitra Road was designed to penetrate as far and as fast as possible, ignoring potential Israeli threats to exposed flanks. At Quneitra, the Syrians split into two heavy combined-arms columns, one to the north and west of Quneitra and the other south toward the Jordan River Valley, south of the Sea of Galilee. In the northern thrust the Syrians bogged down not far beyond the 1967 cease-fire line. The southern thrust took heavy losses as it ran into the Israeli defenses, consisting basically of mine fields and an anti-tank ditch (two to three meters deep and eight to 10 meters wide with the dirt piled up on the inside edge). The Syrians had bridging equipment capable of dealing with this obstacle. However, at each point where a crossing was necessary, an extremely narrow shooting gallery was created for the accurate Israeli artillery and tank fire. Hundreds of Syrian tanks were lost in these ditches. Although by Sunday night the Syrian forces were within seven miles of the Jordan River, it was at an enormous expense. Eight hundred Syrian tanks were lost to mines, anti-tank weapons, other tanks, and, increasingly, as the Syrians pushed past the cover of their anti-aircraft fire, to the massive Israeli airpower.

By Monday morning, Oct. 8, the Israelis had mobilized sufficiently to launch a counterattack consisting of three armored divisions and to begin a mop-up operation which drove the Syrians back onto defense lines outside Damascus by Oct. 12. On Oct. 13, the Israelis began transferring resources to the Sinai, and except for a fierce battle on the Golan Heights on Oct. 22, this sector was largely static for the rest of the war.

The Suez Front

In order to follow the action on the Suez front, it is necessary to have a basic understanding of the fortifications along the Canal itself. During and following the 1969-70 war of attrition, both the Egyptians and Israelis had constructed large fortified walls of sand running parallel to the canal on their respective sides. The Israeli wall was called the Bar-Lev line. Basically it consisted of 35 to 40 "strong points," each supported

by two observation posts. Manned by about 50 men each, these strong points had only company level infantry support weapons such as machine guns, anti-tank weapons, and some mortars. Further back behind the wall were steel-fortified logistics and command posts, connected by an artillery road.

In front of the wall, the Israelis had mine fields and wire, along with a system of hoses through which oil and flammable chemicals could be sprayed onto the canal to turn it into a sea of flame. These hoses were never used, although the chemicals had been placed in position two days before. Their use was an issue in the intense debate raging in top political-military circles--whether to go ahead and spray the chemicals, so that in event of an attack a match could be thrown which would drastically hamper the Egyptians' canal-crossing operations.

Journals about the war explain that the hoses were not used because the wily Egyptians had sneaked in the night before a force of commandos who cut or plugged the hoses. While this is true, it does not explain what actually happened--that the Israelis, although seriously contemplating the use of the hoses, held back on the advice of the CIA and veiled threats from Kissinger. Kissinger hinted at a cut-off of aid because use of the hoses would constitute the outlines of a pre-emptive strike. Thus the commando action was effective only in the context of the CIA-induced decision of Israel not to use the hoses, a decision made before the commandos had the opportunity to cut the hoses. (It should be noted that the chemical-fire attack was the only marginally sane action the Israelis could have taken under the circumstances.)

At the same time the hoses were cut, the Egyptians placed explosive charges on the Bar-Lev Line. As their attack began at 1400 hours Oct. 6, these charges were detonated, and water cannons, some of the first pieces of equipment ferried across, were used to blast holes in the sand dunes which constituted the Bar-Lev. Through these holds poured the tanks, which were ferried across and the armored personnel carriers, most of which were amphibious. Bridges supported on plastic boats were constructed in a matter of minutes, and infantry rapidly followed the armor--all with artillery barrages and air strikes on the Bar-Lev.

Against one understrength brigade of Israeli reservists holding the line, supported by an armored brigade of 240 M-48 Patton tanks, the Egyptians threw three mechanized divisions, one at each of the three assault points on the Bar-Lev. These were followed by two more armored divisions, for a total of five Egyptian divisions, along with paratroop and commando units. The Israelis had estimated that it would take 24 to 48 hours to cross the Suez, but within hours most sections of the Bar-Lev had crumbled and hundreds of Egyptian tanks were in the Sinai. During the Canal-crossing operations, the Israeli air force was attacking, but it took very heavy losses from the Russian-built SAM 2, 3, and 6 missiles. To the extent that

the Israelis flew low enough to avoid the radar network on which these missiles operate, they were vulnerable to the shoulder-fired heat-seeking Sam-7's or multi-barreled air defense guns.

Within 24 hours, the Egyptians had 500 tanks in the Sinai. Part of the reason for this is clear--the Israeli Sinai armored brigade was back at Bir Gifgafa, several hours away. It was not brought forward to the Bar-Lev as would have been the normal policy, after the Israelis saw the type of mobilizations the Egyptians mounted.

WHY EGYPT DID NOT PRESS ITS ADVANTAGE

The Israelis did launch an armored counterattack on the first night, but it was largely destroyed, while still on the road toward the Bar-Leve, by Egyptian commandos who came across with the first wave and kept going past the Bar-Lev using the RPG-7 and wire-guided Sagger anti-tank missiles. By late Sunday afternoon, the Israelis had lost 150 of 240 tanks. At this point, before Israeli reserves could have been brought up, the Egyptians could have launched a major offensive with their five divisions toward the three key passes which would provide a clear road to Tel Aviv 20-30 miles distant. However, the Egyptian command did not launch that attack, which from a military point of view, was absolutely the rational move.

The cover story frequently reported to explain the Egyptians failure to attack at this point is that they would have outrun their air cover and thus have been susceptible to Israeli air strikes in the open desert. While undoubtedly this fact had to be taken into consideration, the real reasons for not considering such an attack lie elsewhere. The Soviets knew from intelligence gained by the Cosmos satellite they launched two days before the war that the crucial passes of Mitla, Khatmia, and Giddi were practically undefended by the Israelis, and that it would have been child's play for the Egyptians the charge across the desert, outnumbering the Israelis almost ten to one. However, the Soviets realized that the U.S. might get excited were such a threat to the very existence of Israel carried out. Therefore, it is most probable that the Soviets never even gave the Arabs intelligence on Israeli troop strengths and concentrations. Instead, they preferred to structure the war from the outset simply as a static war of attrition where the Arabs would win back prestige and a certain portion of the Sinai, no more.

The point to be made here is that the CIA, from its psychological profiling of the Soviets, knew exactly what the Soviet perception of U.S. actions would be for various contingencies, and the U.S. took this profile into account in their plans for a staged war. Rockefeller knew that there was no inherent threat of the war getting out of hand with the Arabs, because he knew the mind of the Soviets completely. Ultimately, this psychological warfare is the key to plans for the tactical nuclear war in the Mideast that Rockefeller has on the drawing boards now.

Using the psychological techniques of brainwashing, Rockefeller has established an aversive environment by out-flanking the Soviets in every major political battle over the past few years. This year, that process of psychological manipulation has been escalated. Rockefeller has manipulated the Soviets' perceptions of his actions on them, to the point where he and his CIA-RAND programmers are able to predict exactly what the Soviet response will be to any particular move the Rockefeller forces make. This then establishes the basis for carrying out a successful "limited nuclear war." The Clausewitzian conception of bending one's opponent to one's will in war, does not in this age refer in any important sense to who has bigger muscles or a bigger nuclear arsenal, but to whether or not, through psychological warfare, you can induce your enemy to make a series of apparently-tactical retreats, one after the other, until he has been driven into a strategically indefensible position.

The Israelis Did Not Take Cairo

Though the Arabs were completely predictable as to the manner in which they would fight, it is possible that the Israelis, for a very brief moment, threatened to throw a wrench into Rocky's war scenario. On Oct. 14 and 15, after Israeli armored reserves had time to be mobilized, a fierce series of battles took place in the Sinai. Israeli forces, through superior handling of tanks and decided air supremacy, inflicted heavy losses on the Egyptians. In this period, both the U.S. (which start-d its own air resupply of the Arabs on Oct. 10) drastically stepped up the rate of supplies and weapons to the front. Although they inflicted heavy losses on the Egyptians, the Israelis had been taking insufferably high losses themselves, particularly in respect to their small manpower. A war of attrition, instead of a fast-striking war of maneuver, was exactly what the Arabs desired. This would minimize Israeli tactical skill while maximizing Egyptian quantitative manpower superiority. In an effort to break out of this trap, around midnight Oct. 15, the Israelis launched a daring attack across the Canal. The operation involved three tank brigades: one to launch a diversionary attack on the Egyptian Second Army at the juncture of the Egyptian Second and Third Armies, one to hold the crossing area open, and one brigade to cross. The men crossed in rubber boats (rather than helicopters, to avoid radar), and the tanks were ferried across on barges. Israeli folk hero Arik Sharon and a small staff personally conducted operations. Dividing the elite paratrooper brigade of 1,600 into seven or eight columns and supporting each with one or two tanks, Sharon sent them after the SAM sites along the canal. By noon October 16, a full armor brigade crossed a rapidly constructed pontoon bridge, followed by four more armored brigades. By night Oct. 16, nothing stood between Sharon's forces and Cairo but open road.

With only 50 miles northeast to go to the enemy's capital and no enemy forces of consequence in sight, the audacious and reasonably intelligent Sharon commanded his forces to turn south. Why? Here again, a few uninteresting cover stories have been proposed. The first is that Sharon would overextend his communications

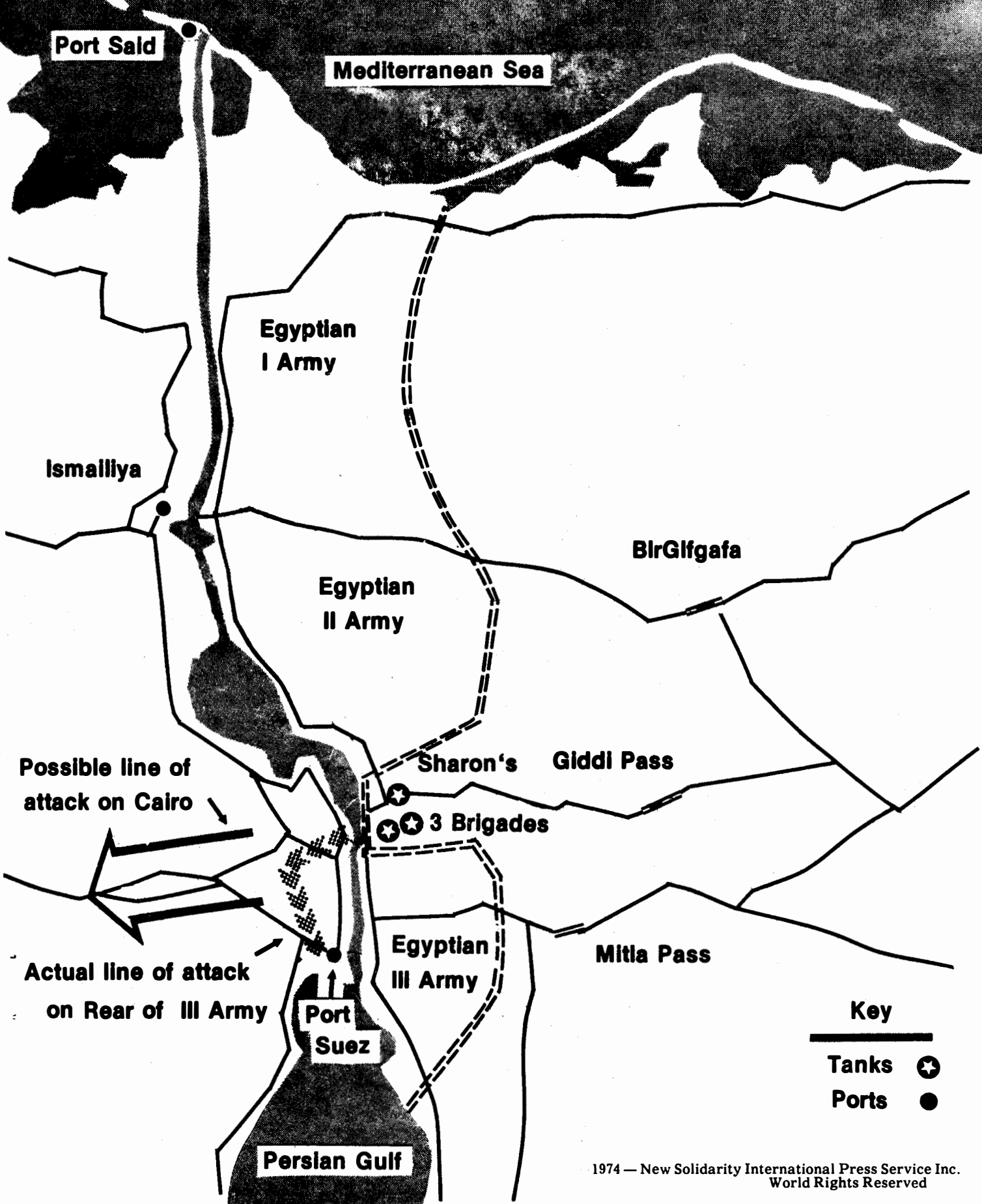
line by going a mere 50 miles in a single thrust. To anyone familiar with the armored thrusts of World War II, covering larger distances in more difficult circumstances, this is ridiculous. It is especially silly since enough SAM sites had been knocked out to give the Israeli Air Force relatively free rein of the skies and thus a possibility for a key supporting role in a blitzkrieg thrust to Cairo.

The other story in circulation is that Sharon was performing the critical task of cutting the logistical lifeline of the Egyptian Third Army in the south. However, this conveniently ignores the fact that the majority of the Third Army at that point was on the wrong side of the Canal, and that part on the west bank posed no immediate threat to the strength of Sharon's invasion force. The fact is that Rockefeller's game plan for politically strengthening Sadat and pulling the Arab rulers closer together for the necessary oil hoax would not have been served by an Israeli attack on the Egyptian capital.

The last war represented a \$50 billion tax on the world's working class. This one, in all likelihood nuclear, represents still higher stakes--a direct strategic and massive psychological attack on the Soviet Union, regardless of who fights the war, Egypt and Israel or Iran and Iraq. The point to be made is that any future wars absolutely cannot be analyzed from the internal dynamic of the countries involved or a military study of which tanks knocked out what. The proper mode of analysis is one which takes into account the glaring military discrepancies in the October War and answers the question--how will Rockefeller benefit?

Oct 1973

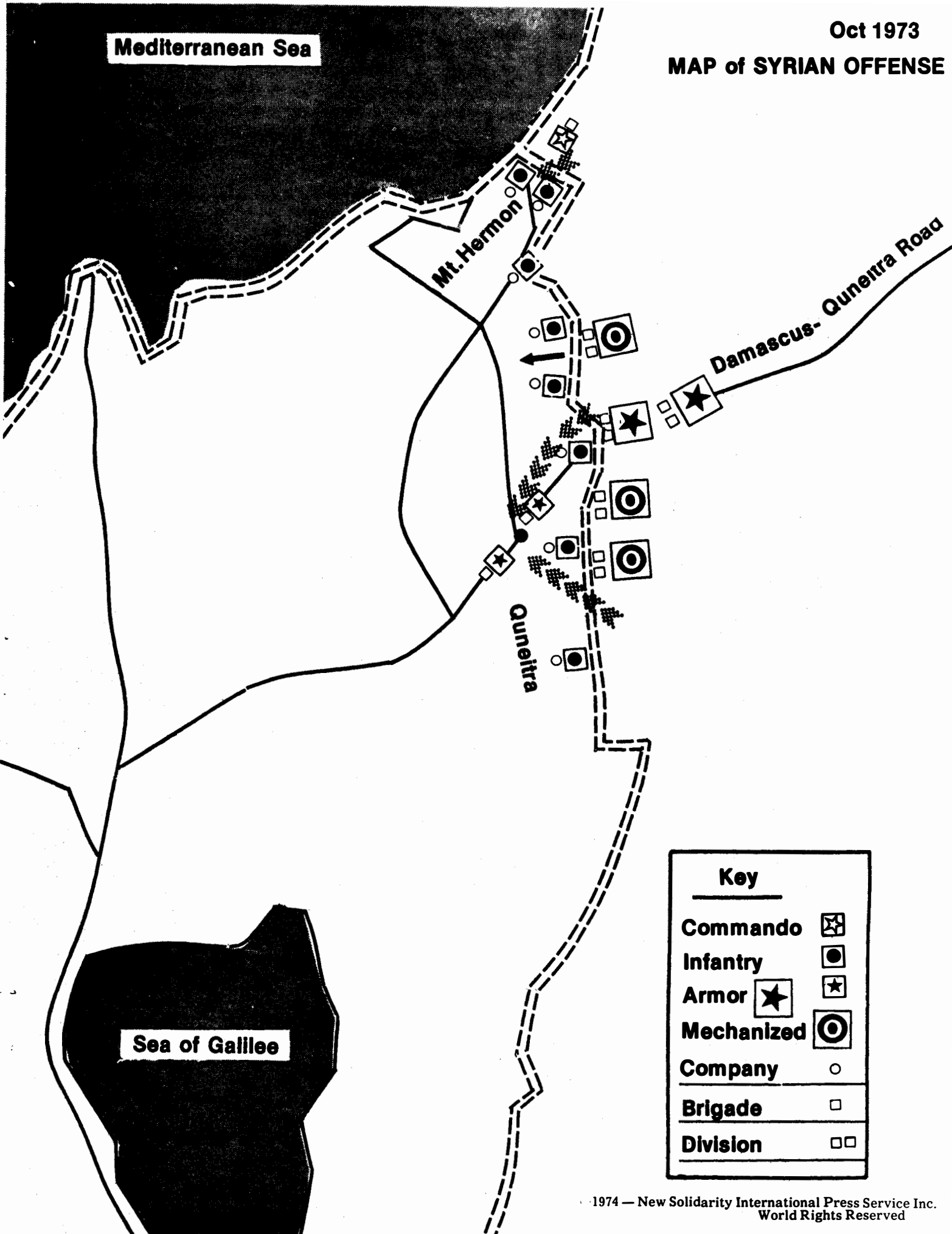
MAP of ISRAEL COUNTERATTACK on SUEZ FRONT



Key
Tanks ☆
Ports ●

Oct 1973

MAP of SYRIAN OFFENSE



Mediterranean Sea

Mt. Hermon

Damascus-Quneitra Road

Quneitra

Sea of Galilee

Key	
Commando	☐★
Infantry	☐●
Armor	☐★
Mechanized	☐⊙
Company	○
Brigade	☐
Division	☐☐



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ARAFAT GETS CLEANED UP TO DO ROCKY'S DIRTY WORK