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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

October 6, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM: WILLIAM QUANDT ^{w.B.2}
 DONALD STUKEL ^{→H}

SUBJECT: WSAG Meeting--Middle East, Saturday,
 October 6, 1973, 3:00 p.m.

The purpose of this meeting is to review the situation as it has developed since Arab-Israeli hostilities began this morning and to determine what actions the USG should take.

You will want to cover the following:

- A. Review the present situation. (CIA and JCS will be prepared to brief.)
- B. Measures to minimize threats to US interests
- C. Soviet moves
- D. Consequences of a major Arab defeat KK

Each of these topics is dealt with in Sections A through D. Talking points are provided.

The Tabs cover the following topics:

Tab 1 - Evacuation

Tab 2 - Oil

Tab 3 - State Talking Points

Tab 4 - Status of US Forces

Tab 5 - Order of Battle

Tab 6 - Relevant cables

Tab 7 - SNIE 35/36-73 Arab-Israeli Hostilities and Their Implications

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A. Situation

--Ask Mr. Colby to brief on developments during the day. [Fighting broke out at about 2:00 p.m. local time, and the weight of evidence suggests that it resulted from a coordinated Egyptian-Syrian initiative. There is still some uncertainty on this score, however. Most of the fighting has been concentrated along the Suez and Golan fronts. The Israelis have not struck deep into either country or against air bases, but seem to have gained superiority in the air. The Egyptians have acknowledged the loss of ten aircraft. On the ground the Egyptians have managed to make a limited crossing of the Canal at several points, and will probably fight hard during the night to maintain their toeholds. The Syrians have advanced, but have not passed the Israeli anti-tank defenses. The prospect is for continued fighting during the night as the Israelis try to oust the Egyptians from Sinai. If this is not successful, and if diplomatic efforts do not succeed in restoring the cease-fire, Israel will probably consider a large-scale air strike against Egyptian positions tomorrow morning.]

Talking Points

- If diplomatic efforts fail to restore the cease-fire on a status quo ante basis, the Israelis will probably hit hard tomorrow. Do we have an interest in trying to dissuade them?
- What position have the Soviets been taking during the crisis? How are they likely to come out of this in terms of their position in the Middle East?
- Are there any indications that Arab oil producers have threatened an embargo?
- Do we have any reports of hostility directed at US citizens in Arab countries, especially Libya, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon or Kuwait?

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- Activate oil task force to evaluate contingency of Arab embargo.
Contact Shah of Iran about emergency oil arrangements.
- Alert U.S. forces for possible evacuation, with particular emphasis on contingency of Libyan Government actions against American citizens.
- Use UN machinery and bilateral consultations to bring about cease-fire on basis of status quo ante.
- Public posture of calling for ceasefire without taking sides.

Talking Points

- Could we consider contacting Bourguiba as a channel to Qadhafi if U.S. citizens seem to be endangered in Libya?
- If a ceasefire in place is accepted by the Arabs but refused by the Israelis, would we have an interest in trying to persuade the Israelis to reverse their decision?
- How long would an Arab oil embargo have to be in effect to hurt us or our allies? (See Tab 2 for more information on oil.)
- Are there any indications that we should evacuate U.S. citizens from any of the involved countries? (See Tab 1 for more information on evacuation.)

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C. Soviet Moves

--Yesterday the Soviets evacuated dependents from Egypt and Syria, suggesting that they saw war coming.

--Soviet media have carried Arab accusations of Israel attacking Syria and Egypt but have generally not gone beyond reporting the fighting from Arab sources.

--This morning only one Soviet naval ship (a destroyer in Alexandria) was in an Egyptian port and no ships were in Syrian ports.

--The Soviet surface forces are now beginning to concentrate in the Eastern Mediterranean, but most of the submarines are in the Western Mediterranean.

Talking Points

--If the Soviets knew that hostilities were imminent, did they take any steps to discourage their clients?

--Did Soviet rumors last week of an imminent attack contribute to hostilities, on the pattern of 1967?

--Will the Soviets be likely to conclude that they should cut their losses if the Arabs are defeated, or will they try to seize on the opportunity to rebuild their eroded positions in Egypt and Syria?

--How can we best take advantage of this crisis to reduce Soviet influence in the Middle East?

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D. Consequences of a Major Arab Defeat

- Setback for Soviet-Arab relations.
- Attacks on U.S. interests throughout the Arab world.
- Probable elimination of chances for negotiated Arab-Israeli settlement.
- Use of Arab oil as a weapon to reverse military defeat, especially by Libya.
- Intensification of pressures against moderate Arab regimes.

Talking Points

- Could we expect that a post-war atmosphere might be more, rather than less conducive to peace negotiations? If Arab loss of face could be minimized, would the chances for a peace settlement increase?
- How could we support moderate regimes against the pressure from radicals?
- What could we do to offset Arab efforts to use oil against us?

WITHDRAWAL SHEET (PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARIES)

FORM OF DOCUMENT	CORRESPONDENTS OR TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
1. Report	Intelligence Memorandum (5pp.)	10/6/73	A
2. Report	Intelligence Memorandum (3pp.)	10/6/73	A
3. Report	Situation Report (4pp.)	10/6/73	A
4. Telegram	Amemb Beirut to SecState (2pp.)	10/6/73	A
5. Telegram	To SecState (2pp.)	10/6/73	A
6. Telegram	King Faysal to HAK (1p.)	Undated	A
7. Report	Intelligence Memorandum (5pp.)	10/6/73	A
8. Report	Arab-Israeli Hostilities and Their Implications (16pp.)	10/6/73	A

FILE LOCATION

W S AP Meeting Middle Pgs 2
 10/6/73 7:30 AM
 H Files Box H-94 Folder 1

RESTRICTION CODES

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