

Despite dictums such as “maintenance is a command responsibility,” the commander might confide in the XO that he hates motor pools and wants the XO to take that lead with that task. The XO should do so, but he should structure things so the commander shows up at key times and is always set for success. The XO should never knowingly allow the commander to be embarrassed.

Command Sergeant Major

The XO should become the CSM’s partner. These two are the commanding officer’s closest allies and constant bearers of the torch. They should discuss issues daily and provide the commander with solutions, suggestions, and assistance. The two have unique perspectives, insight, and information that the commander might not have. The XO and the CSM should make a pact to

share information, be it good or bad, and to always be bound by a search for the best solution for the unit.

Values

Values are important. The statement, “When in doubt, do the right thing,” is perhaps trite, but it has enormous meaning. The values, ethics, and morality of the Army and the American people bind the right thing. The military bears special trust and confidence from American citizens in that it is given their most precious commodity—their children and family members—to care for and to nurture. All XOs must be true to their oaths and bear true allegiance to the U.S. Constitution. I have always been struck by, and used successfully, the moral hierarchy of American prisoners of war in the Hanoi Hilton. Their system of priorities asked, “What is best for my God (in the moral-ethical

sense), my country, my service, my unit, and (last) me?” This translates into the fact that what might be best for Company A might not be best for the battalion. This is not bad advice for an XO.

Time spent as an XO can be some of the most rewarding, fun, and valuable time of a career. The tips I offer here work, and, yes, I have tried or seen them all. Executive officers would do well to take them to heart.

Lieutenant General George A. Crocker, U.S. Army, Retired, is a Senior Mentor with CUBIC Applications, Inc. He received a B.S. from the U.S. Military Academy, an M.S. from Duke University, and he is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the National War College. He has served in various command and staff positions in the continental United States, Hawaii, and Panama.

MR Almanac

The Yom Kippur War: Indications and Warnings

Lieutenant Youssef H. Aboul-Enein, U.S. Navy

The 1973 Yom Kippur War ranks high in the annals of intelligence failures. Although the Israelis scored a tactical victory against the Syrians and the Egyptians, the victory came at a high cost in men and materiel. Syrian forces penetrated the Golan Heights and came within 10 kilometers of securing a key bridge that would have left northern Israel vulnerable to attack. On the southern front, Egyptian forces broke through and overwhelmed the Bar-Lev Line. This surprise attack brought down the government of Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir and severely dented the reputation of Defense Minister General Moshé Dayan.

Israeli Security Doctrine

Despite winning three wars prior to 1973, the Israelis had to cope with how to address security needs with their small population. Compared to

Egypt and Syria, the Israelis could not economically field a huge standing army on its borders and could not sustain a protracted war on four fronts (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria). Thus, the Israeli concept of security was based on deterrence, early warning, and air supremacy. The rapid mobilization of its reserve forces depended on early warning, taking the battle to the enemy, and reaching a rapid decision on the political front.¹

Egyptian Security Doctrine

The Egyptians took great pains to study Israeli doctrine. Soon after the 1967 Six-Day War, they began to restructure their offensive and defensive techniques. Their objective was to fortify the western Suez and lay

All Arabic sources were translated by the author and represent his translation. —Editor

out plans for capturing the Sinai. Unlike previous wars in which national objectives were not outlined and weapons systems did not match doctrine or the education of the troops, the Egyptians began to clearly define the ways, means, and ends for the eventual liberation of the Suez Canal and parts of the Sinai. They broke their objectives down into three phases: defiance, active defense, and war of attrition. A fourth phase resulted from the cease-fire brokered by U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers.

The defiance phase (June 1967–August 1968) was to provide politically favorable conditions for the reconstruction of the armed forces and defense of the western side of the Suez Canal. The active defense phase (September 1968–February 1969) consisted of harassing Israeli forces and delaying their fortification of the east-

ern side of the Suez. Egyptian troops began to probe the Sinai and to draw plans for crossing the Suez and penetrating Israeli fortifications. The war of attrition phase (March 1969-August 1970) projected day and night raids into the Sinai that would eventually reach company strength. This was augmented with constant exchanges of artillery fire across the canal and imbued the Egyptian fighting soldier with a sense of confidence. Harassment tactics also included Egyptian frogmen who were to sink transports at the port of Eilat. (This action occurred in November 1969 and again in February 1970 and was the catalyst for using high-pressure water to breach the Bar-Lev Line.) As the result of the cease-fire, a fourth phase was developed and labeled "No War, No Peace" (August 1970-October 1973).

In spite of the cease-fire, the Egyptians continued to collect information and plan for a massive campaign, should political negotiations fail to return the Sinai. In November 1972, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat made the official decision to go to war.²

Egyptian Deception

The Egyptian deception plan can be divided into three components: economic, political, and military. A flood of communiqués and reports on Egypt's economic instability and its inability to afford another war were made public. The reports stressed the importance of a political solution to return the Sinai. Political deception stressed the status quo through the "No War, No Peace" slogan. The Egyptians highlighted their acceptance of the Rogers Plan and publicly expelled Soviet advisers. Many believed Sadat was working toward Western rapprochement. An element of the Rogers Plan stipulated that the United States would not look kindly at an Israeli first strike. This would cloud the Israeli decision to react in spite of growing intelligence indicating an attack. Military deception, the final component, involved a series of military exercises designed to act as fairs for the real attack.³

The concept of surprise occupied a large portion of the Egyptian general command's planning. Coordination with Syria occurred 6 months before D-Day (6 October). Militarily, the plan was to deceive Israel as to the intention of launching an offensive operation. The Egyptians also had to be concerned with concealing its main assault's timing, size, and direction. An emphasis on the defense was undertaken as part of the deception. After enduring four wars, the Israelis had become accustomed to the Egyptians and Syrians fortifying and conducting defensive operations. Thus, preparations for defensive operations continued as normal and were even heightened because the Arabs knew that Israel expected this. This defensive strategy was heavily emphasized in military radio traffic. False reports of negligent standards, faulty missile systems, and the difficulty of absorbing tons of Soviet equipment were exchanged on open radio to deceive Israeli signals intelligence operatives.

The Egyptian military staged exercises with different force structures and sizes along the Suez so as to hide the true order of battle for the Suez Canal crossing. They assembled troop concentrations for the actual attack over a 4-month period, with crack units being moved three weeks before D-Day under the pretense of massive engineering projects for defensive fortifications of the western side of the canal. Crossing equipment was brought from the rear to the front and back again, along with incidental moves of combat engineer units, to deceive the Israelis into believing this was simply movement training. They conducted well-practiced mobilization of reserves in a way in which the maximum number of forces would be ready for zero hour. Forty-eight hours before H-Hour, 20,000 reservists were demobilized as Israeli monitors watched.⁴

Perhaps the simplest, yet most effective, deception plan was the use of a company of the most undisciplined soldiers in the Egyptian Army one day before D-Day. They were to further reinforce Israeli contempt of

Egyptian forces by washing their clothes along the canal and loitering about in an undisciplined fashion. Israeli reports indicated that they were pitiful in their appearance. They were eating oranges, swimming, and sucking on sugar cane stalks. Other deceptions included a public announcement by the War Ministry accepting applications from armed forces personnel wishing to make a mini-pilgrimage (Umrah) to Mecca during the holy month of Ramadan.⁵

An Egyptian destroyer squadron deployed in August 1973 under the pretence of an overhaul in India and Pakistan with port visits scheduled for Sudan, Yemen, and Somalia. Their operations order, delivered on 1 October, directed the squadron to blockade the Bab-el-Mandab Straits that connect the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea.⁶ The squadron's objective was to deprive Israel of needed petroleum products being shipped from Iran.

Who knew and when? The Arabs practiced extraordinary operations security. In Egypt, only Sadat, War Minister Field Marshal Ismail Ali, and a dozen generals of the General Command knew the plan. In Syria, not more than 10 people were told of the plans. Egyptian and Syrian divisional commanders were told of the war on 1 October. Brigade and battalion commanders of both sides were told of the war on 5 October while most troops and officers were informed no more than 2 hours before H-Hour.⁷

What failed and why? The seeds of Israeli intelligence failure were sown in the tactical success of the Six-Day War. Israeli military intelligence developed a concept (the

Lieutenant Youssef H. Aboul-Enein is a student at the Joint Military Intelligence College. He received a BBA from the University of Mississippi, and an MBA and MHSA from the University of Arkansas, Little Rock. He is also a graduate of the U.S. Naval War College and the U.S. Marine Corps University Amphibious Warfare School. He is a prolific writer and has a regular column about the Middle East in the Foreign Area Officer Journal. He is a frequent contributor to Military Review.

The following two review essays are also by Lieutenant Aboul-Enein.

“Conceptzia”), which stipulated that an Arab-Israeli war would occur only if certain conditions were met. A combined Arab attack would not occur unless Arab forces possessed the means to simultaneously attack all Israeli airfields. Hence, 1975 was deemed the year of attack. Egypt was acquiring long-range Soviet fighter-bombers and would have adequate pilots and aircraft for the attack by 1975. Here, the Israelis practiced mirror imaging, a cardinal intelligence sin.

Another aspect of the concept was that the Suez Canal, with the formidable Bar-Lev Line, would be a sufficient barrier to give the Israelis enough time (48-hours) to mobilize. They did not expect an attack during Yom Kippur, the Jewish High Holiday, when only a skeletal force was deployed and mobilization was difficult. Finally, it was believed that the Arabs would not attack unless they possessed enormous stockpiles of weapons and equipment and that they were only capable of guerrilla warfare, not conventional attacks, as evidenced by their performance in three wars. This concept was adopted fully by Israel’s chief of military intelligence, and he squashed any indicators that violated these “rules.”⁸

Israeli intelligence is divided into five branches, with a focus on Aman, which according to the Agranat Commission that looked into the Israeli military’s failures, was responsible for the national intelligence estimate and bore responsibility for the intelligence failure. Israeli intelligence was vulnerable to the Conceptzia.

Since 1963, reorganization led to Aman being arranged along strict military lines. Officers were assigned at Aman for 6 to 7 years. By the early 1970s, no outside thinking took place, and no contradiction of analysis was made within this strict military hierarchy.⁹ A searing example of this is the story of Lieutenant Benjamin Simon-Tov, who 5 days before the war argued that Egyptian exercises and deployments were a camouflage for a real assault. His report sat on the desk of his commander, Lieutenant Colonel Gedaliah.¹⁰

What did not help was Sadat’s declaration that 1971 would be the Year of Decision. The year came and went with Sadat being seen as crying wolf. His threats in 1972 and 1973 were not taken seriously.

Indicators and Distractions

Israeli and U.S. estimates analyzed Egyptian and Syrian exercises over the course of several years, and each year the exercises grew larger, finally involving division-size maneuvers. Landlines were installed between Cairo and the Suez, which negated the need for radio traffic. There were civil defense exercises and the stockpiling of war materiel. In addition, elite Egyptian commando units were detected along the front. Even with such indicators, Aman was still distracted.

From 1969 on, Israeli intelligence distracters included a new emphasis—terrorism. The Palestinian Liberation Organization was active in 1972. The Lod Airport was attacked, the Munich Olympics was disrupted, an Israeli diplomat was killed in London with a letter bomb, the Israeli Naval attaché was gunned down in front of his home in Maryland, and a train carrying Soviet Jews on their way to Israel through Austria was hijacked. Many intelligence specialists were drained from other sources to form a new antiterrorism cell, which affected Israel’s ability to concentrate on Syrian and Egyptian maneuvers.¹¹

In May 1973, at a cost of \$10 million, the constant deployment of Egyptian and Syrian forces caused a mass mobilization of Israeli reserves. The attack never came, and there was criticism within the government regarding frivolous deployments. The most intriguing warning came from King Hussein of Jordan, who personally warned Meir that a combined Egyptian-Syrian attack was imminent.¹² Hussein had an interest in keeping Damascus weak through Israeli clashes. His message went unheeded.

The results of the war that Israel failed to imagine was 2,700 Israeli dead, the majority of whom died in

the first two days of combat. Israeli losses in tanks and armor were so enormous that Israel beseeched the United States for an immediate airlift. The Egyptians, used to advancing under a timetable, stopped and did not advance toward the Giddi and Mitla Passes. This allowed the Israelis to mobilize an effective counter-attack and surround the Egyptian Third Army.

Aman is guilty of several violations of intelligence analysis, including building an impregnable psychological barrier through adherence to strict concepts. Instead of influencing policymakers, Aman was influenced by disinformation.

The Israeli military establishment lacked private strategic think tanks to provide checks and balances on intelligence appraisals. The Israelis had no contingency plans for a surprise attack. They relied solely on the competence of their early warning apparatus. All force mobilizations were based on the success of their intelligence organizations. Israeli defense forces’ mobilization plans were based on having 48-hour warning, not the 10 hours that occurred during this war.¹³

When B. Lidell Hart visited Israel in March 1960, he stressed to Israeli officers that the Israeli Defense Force’s greatest danger lay in its success; victorious armies become overconfident.¹⁴ Hart’s prophetic warning became reality 13 years later. **MR**

NOTES

1. Colonel Michael Herzog in Chaim Herzog, *The War of Atonement: The Inside Story of the Yom Kippur War, 1973* (London: Lionel Leventhal, 1998), xiii.
2. Hassan el-Badri, *The Ramadan War, 1973* (Fairfax, VA: Dupuy Associates, 1978), 9-14.
3. Manaal Nour-al-Din, *Butulaaat Waraa al-Sittar* [Heroism Behind the Lines] (Cairo: Egyptian Writer’s Association, 1997), 29-30.
4. Badri, 46-47.
5. Abd-al-Ghanny Al-Gamassy, *Muzakiraat Al-Gamassy: Harb Oktoober Thallathah wa Sabeen* [Memoirs of Al-Gamassy: The October War 1973] (Cairo: Egyptian Writers Association, 1998), 287.
6. Al-Gamassy, 90.
7. Doron Geller, “Israeli Intelligence and the Yom Kippur War,” *The Department for Jewish Zionist Education, Lecture Series* (April 1999), online at <www.jajz.ed.or.il/justice/service/week11.html>, accessed 29 January 2002, 2.
8. Steven Stewart, *The Spymasters of Israel* (New York: MacMillan, 1980), 295.
9. Insight team, *London Sunday Times*, 94.
10. Herzog, 46-47.
11. Lester A. Sobel, *Israel and the Arabs: The October 1973 War* (New York: Facts on File, 1974), 8-39.
12. Geller, 5.
13. Zeev Schiff, *October Earthquake: Yom Kippur 1973* (Tel Aviv: University Publishing Projects, 1974), 29-37.
14. *Ibid.*, 29.

The Yom-Kippur War: Memoirs of Egyptian Generals

Lieutenant Youssef H. Aboul-Enein, U.S. Navy

During the last decade, Egyptian generals have written prolifically about the 1967 Six-Day War and the 1973 Yom Kippur war. Many articles and books have appeared explaining the strategic and tactical aspects of these wars with particular interest in how Egypt, rising from the ashes of the defeat of the 1967 Six-Day War, was able to accomplish the total surprise of crossing the Suez Canal. Mohammed Al-Jawadi's book, *Al-Nasr-al-Waheed, Muzakiraat Al-Qaada Al-Askariya Al-Masriyah Alf wa Tisoomeah Thalathah wa Sabeen* [The Only Victory, Memoirs of Senior Egyptian Army Commanders in 1973] (Cairo: Dar-al-Khiyal Press, 2000), features the collective memoirs of five flag officers in the Egyptian army who participated in the strategic planning or tactical execution of the 1973 Yom Kippur War. The book offers valuable insight into Egyptian military planning, strategic thought, and perceptions of military strengths and weaknesses.

The book represents a purely Egyptian perspective of the 1973 war. To many Egyptians the war was a political and military victory even though the reality was that Israeli units surrounded the Egyptian 3d Army and that Israeli units crossed to the western side of the Suez Canal. For a much broader study, read Chaim Herzog's *The Arab-Israeli Wars* (London: Lionel Leventhal, 1982) and Michael Oren, *The Six-Day War* (London: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Field Marshal Abd-Al-Ghani Al-Gamassy

Former Field Marshal Abd-Al-Ghani Al-Gamassy, who graduated from the Egyptian military academy

in 1939 and remained on active duty until 1978, is considered to be a military hero by most Egyptians. He was director of operations for all forces participating in the 1973 Yom Kippur War. The book focuses on the key posts that prepared Gamassy for command. In 1961, he was assigned as an armored brigade commander. In 1966, he assumed the post of chief of operations for Egypt's land forces. During 1967 he attempted to conduct a land campaign with General Ismail Ali, who became war minister in 1973. Gamassy was deputy director of military intelligence until 1970 when he became chief of operations for the combined Arab forces during the War of Attrition. In 1971, he assumed the additional duty of head of military training, and by 1972, he was chief of operations of the Egyptian General Staff.

Gamassy's memoir opens with his opinions about civil-military authority: "I know very well that war is a continuation of politics by another means. I also believe that politics have their leaders and thinkers who can explain Egypt's political situation between 1967 and 1973 better than I can. That is why my memoirs focus on the military aspects of the campaign and how policymakers utilized the military option as part of a grand design to achieve Egypt's national interest."

Gamassy wishes to set the record straight about the selection of 6 October 1973 as the start date for the war. Many feel that this date was chosen because it fell during the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur. He states that there were multiple factors regarding the selection of D-Day and that the Egyptian General Staff contemplated several possible dates dur-

ing September and October 1973. The Jewish holiday was a factor, but not the single driving issue that decided the date of attack.

The General Staff looked for a date when hydrological and meteorological conditions and the amount of moonlight offered the best environmental factors for the initial attack. With these conditions in mind, Gamassy, using pencil, pen, and paper to ensure maximum secrecy, formulated several dates for D-Day. He delivered his handwritten report to War Minister Ismail Ali, who discussed the matter with President Anwar Sadat at his Burg-al-Arab Retreat in Alexandria in the first week of April 1973. Gamassy credits his operations staff with formulating the best month for attack and does not take the entire credit for the proposal to attack on 6 October.

Gamassy's report was shared with Syria's President Hafez-al-Asad, who was in Cairo for secret talks with Sadat about the pending war plans. The possible start dates occurred during May through August or September through October 1973. The Syrians pushed for an October through November attack, agreeing that the joint attack would not occur until the Syrian and Egyptian chiefs of staff met in August 1973 to put the finishing touches on the war plan and to agree on a precise day of attack.

The 1967 Six-Day War had shaken the foundations of Egyptian society and its armed forces, in particular, which almost immediately began a critical self-examination of military and political failures. Candid discussions about the failures that led to that debacle could only be discussed within the armed forces. The discussions led the Egyptian General Staff

Operations Center to establish a cell to address specifically the issue of national military preparedness. Representatives from key ministries were asked to make proposals of what their plans would be should war break out between Egypt and Israel.

One benefit to this brainstorming was a key understanding of the Foreign Affairs Ministry position. Gamassy points out that the planning that occurred with the Ministry of Petroleum was invaluable. They were able to assess what petroleum reserves were needed to feed Egypt's war machine in case of attack should Israel succeed in targeting key installations. The Ministry of Infrastructure educated the armed forces on what was needed to protect key dams and other locations that led to a complete defensive plan of the Aswan High Dam. The cell resolved many issues, including the operation of civil aviation during the opening of hostilities and protecting electrical power to cities.

On 13 December 1972, the Council of Ministers, coordinating with the Defense establishment, created an Emergency Coordination Committee under the direction of General Abdullah Abd-al-Fatah, Deputy Minister of War. The committee was to address issues of how to operate the government and supply the population with energy and food while the army was engaged in war. The organization would make decisions within the civil sector to balance military and civilian needs during the war.

What also helped Egyptian military planners was that many high-level commanders, such as Gamassy, Admiral Fuad Abu Zikry (Head of Egyptian Naval Forces), and Ismail Ali (War Minister), had been students together in the 1965 Nasser Higher Military Academy class. They knew one another's strategic thinking, had participated in group wargaming, and had shared the humiliation of the 1967 war.

Gamassy assumed the role of chief liaison to the Syrian Armed Forces in 1970 and retained this responsibility while changing billets even during his assignment as Director for Operations during the 1973 war. Aside from his operations staff, he created a

separate cell of officers who helped coordinate militarily with the Syrians. For 3 years, the group arranged exchanges and meetings with the focus of understanding respective chains of command and military doctrines as well as assessing each other's command and control abilities. Gamassy also required honest assessments of each other's strengths and weaknesses to plan the military campaign. What the Egyptians did not want was the typical military cooperation that was mainly for political show but did not have any military value or substance.

Among the most sensitive issues Gamassy talks about is U.S. military aid to Israel during the 1973 war. Because Israel's air fleet was not sufficient to resupply Israel with warfighting materiel, it needed help from the United States to make up for horrendous losses incurred during the opening days of the battle. Gamassy lays the blame for Egypt's inability or failure to regain the Sinai squarely on U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. Gamassy believed Kissinger made a deal with Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir. According to Gamassy, the airlift lasted 33 days (from 13 October to 14 November) and transported a total of 22,497 tons of military materiel, with an estimated 5,500 tons being transported by Israeli civil aviation.

Gamassy also discusses the sealift of military equipment to Israel after the war, but his memoir does not address the greater Cold War issues of Soviet support to Syria and Egypt and U.S. support to Israel. The focus is on U.S. intervention that denied victory to Egypt and her Syrian ally.

One of the most controversial issues of the 1973 war involved a dispute between General Saad-Al-Deen Al-Shaazli and Sadat. The dispute revolved around Shaazli's wanting to withdraw four brigades from the Sinai to reinforce positions that Israeli forces were attacking on the western side of the Suez Canal.

On the evening of 19 October, Sadat arrived at the operations center to receive his regular briefings from the war minister and members of his staff, which included Ibrahim Fuad Nassar, director of military intelligence; Gamassy as director of

operations and head of artillery, air force, and navy; and Shaazli, the army chief of staff. During a 1-hour conversation with the war minister, Ismail Ali was told of Shaazli's decision to withdraw four mechanized infantry divisions from the Sinai back to the western side of the Suez Canal. Sadat, noting the difference in opinion between Shaazli and Ismail Ali, decided to convene a roundtable meeting and be briefed by each flag officer.

Ibrahim Fuad Nassar, director of intelligence, explained that the battle with the Israeli Army had spilled onto the western side of the Suez Canal with battles in the Egyptian cities of Suez and Ismailliah. Gamassy explained that Egyptian forces were well entrenched in the Sinai and that withdrawing any divisions from there would give the impression of a retreat, which would have a dreadful psychological effect on Egyptian forces. When Shaazli's turn came to speak, he remained silent. From this, Sadat concluded that no units were to be withdrawn from the Sinai. Although not mentioned in Gamassy's memoir, Western accounts of the events reveal that Shaazli's brooding over the matter caused him to suffer a nervous breakdown and subsequent removal from command.

Gamassy includes in the book a discussion of the strategic directive Sadat issued to his war minister, post-dated 5 October 1973, which articulates his intentions down the military chain of command. The document details that, based on political-military guidance issued on 1 October 1973 and the strategic-political situation, Sadat decided to task the armed forces with accomplishing the following strategic objectives:

- Change the military stalemate by breaking the UN-brokered cease-fire.
- Overwhelm enemy defenses and inflict the maximum amount of military casualties.
- Liberate occupied territory in stages, based on the armed forces' capability and the campaign's development.

Egyptian armed forces were to accomplish these objectives alone or in collaboration with Syrian armed forces. Ismail Ali insisted that Sadat produce these objectives in writing

to clearly demonstrate that this was a political decision by Egypt's president. The document also would demonstrate that Sadat's intention was not to liberate the entire Sinai but to change events on the ground that would lead to an eventual favorable settlement regarding Egyptian territory that Israel occupied.

A key question that plagues Egyptian military thinkers who assess this campaign is, "Why did the Egyptian Army not press the attack beyond the Suez Canal and into the Gidi and Mitla Passes until 14 October?" Gamassy explains that overwhelming the Bar-Lev Line, securing the Suez Canal, and pressing the attack east toward the passes were all part of the military plan that he, Shaazli, Ismail Ali, and Sadat formulated and agreed to. Securing the passes would be crucial to denying Israeli ground units the ability to easily reinforce or regain the Bar-Lev Line.

Gamassy outlines three major obstacles in preparing Egyptian forces for combat that preoccupied Egyptian military planners. One was switching the mentality of the entire armed forces from the defensive to the offensive. This particular obstacle included expunging political intrigue from the army so senior leaders could concentrate on tactical planning for the liberation of occupied Egyptian territory. Political intrigue was not to be tolerated. This housecleaning was to begin at the general staff level and trickle down to unit commanders. The second obstacle was to plan the war using weapons and capabilities in the Egyptian inventory, not with those promised by the Soviets. This would serve the Egyptians well in their deception campaign, as the Israelis refused to believe an attack was imminent unless the Egyptians acquired state-of-the-art Soviet fighter-bombers. The third and final obstacle was the need to coordinate with Syrian armed forces over a period of stages from the political (Sadat-Asad) level to senior military commanders.

Gamassy's book continues with his observations on how the Egyptians for the first time truly studied Israel's mobilization, command structure, and the former Arab-Israeli Wars, paying particular attention to

the 1967 Six-Day War and the 1956 Suez Crisis. Their victory during the 1973 Yom Kippur War showed that the Egyptians had learned from past mistakes.

General Saad-Al-Din-Al-Shaazli

General Saad-Al-Din-Al-Shaazli, who graduated from Egypt's Military Academy in 1940, witnessed events at El-Alamein first hand as a junior officer accompanying King Farouk to the front. Through the association with a senior mentor, Shaazli joined the paratroopers and eventually commanded a paratroop unit before the 1967 Six-Day War. In the Yemen War (1962-1967), he led special forces units against guerrilla tribesmen loyal to the Yemeni monarchy. Shaazli's unit was recalled to Egypt during the 1967 Six-Day War, but it arrived too late to participate in any engagements. Sadat named Shaazli Army Chief of Staff in 1971.

Shaazli is one of the more controversial figures in modern Egyptian military history. After disagreeing vehemently with Sadat and members of the general staff over the relocation of forces to help repel Israeli incursions into the western side of the Suez Canal, he was relieved of command and sent into political exile. He remained an outspoken critic of Sadat and eventually took refuge in Libya, even dabbling in the Islamist movement.

In formulating the overall objectives for the 1973 war, Shaazli wanted to only focus on capturing the Suez Canal and go no more than 15 kilometers (km) east of the canal. This offered protection for Egyptian forces under the umbrella of its extensive network of surface-to-air missiles (SAMs). Ismail Ali pressed Shaazli to plan for an attack beyond that range to convince the Syrians to enter the war simultaneously with Egypt. According to Shaazli, he was not directed to develop plans to secure the passes in central Sinai until April 1973, and the entire plan was drawn up hastily for the sole purpose of keeping the Syrians on the Egyptian timetable of attacking on 6 October. Shaazli remarks, "We prepared a new plan based on an old one labeled Operation Granite which was

developed to address how to proceed beyond the canal and secure the passes; we labeled this one Granite 2 after making minor revisions. This plan was then added to Operation Badr (the crossing of the Suez Canal), and it was presented to the Syrians as one plan. The Egyptian High Command, however, understood Operation Badr to have two phases with the second phase (Granite 2) to be executed based on the military and political developments of the campaign."

Shaazli wanted to withdraw four brigades from the Sinai to relocate them on the western side of the Suez Canal to help repel Israeli units attacking the cities of Suez and Ismailiah and to help prevent Israeli units from crossing to the western side of the Suez Canal. Shaazli admits that he did not speak out during the evening conference with Sadat and the General Staff. He felt that Sadat had already made up his mind (backed by Ismail Ali and Gamassy) not to withdraw a single soldier from the Sinai. Shaazli says, "I was not aware until that second of the political game, and I thought that Ismail Ali's reluctance to withdraw forces was merely tactical stubbornness and not part of the wider political game. So I decided to take the case directly to President Sadat." In another instance, during a discussion with Ismail Ali about withdrawing the 25th Mechanized Brigade, Shaazli recounts, "It became apparent to me that the War Minister had been directly given instructions from Sadat, that their decision had already been made and that further opening or mentioning this issue would incur his displeasure."

On the night of 19 October, as they waited for Sadat to arrive, Shaazli again beseeched Ismail Ali to be forthright about the issue of countering Israeli forces entering the African side of Egypt. According to Shaazli, Ismail Ali said that he did not want to bring up these issues, became agitated, and threatened immediate court martial if Shaazli continued to highlight these problems. Shaazli felt that this decision was Ismail Ali's, not Sadat's. Ismail Ali did not want to reveal Egyptian weaknesses to Sadat.

Egyptian military officers continue to debate this situation, and it has been featured in several Arabic books on the war. Some writers are critical of Shaaзли, others consider Sadat's and Ismail Ali's decision a tactical blunder.

Unlike other generals, who focus on tactics, and unlike Gamassy, who looks into the campaign's strategic aspects, Shaaзли's account contains many statistics about the men, materiel, and equipment used for each phase of the war. Crossing the Suez Canal and breaching the Bar-Lev Line on 6 October 1973 are considered brilliant feats of combat engineering and tactical surprise. The breach occurred in 18 hours with the loss of 5 combat aircraft, 20 tanks, and 280 men. In that time, three mechanized and one infantry brigade crossed the canal into the Sinai. Of over 100,000 troops who crossed the canal—

- 32,000 crossed on rubber boats.
- 5,500 crossed inside tanks, armored vehicles, trucks, amphibious vehicles, and Jeeps on floating platforms and were ferried across the Bitter Lake and Lake Timsah.
- 1,500 crossed using light pontoon bridges.
- 61,000 crossed using heavy pontoon bridges.

Another item that occupied Shaaзли after the initial success of overwhelming the Israelis on the Bar-Lev Line was the quality of tanks. He explains that the Israeli tank was superior to the mix of Egyptian tanks that crossed into the Sinai. The Israelis had 960 tanks in the Sinai. Egypt had over 1,000 tanks, but they were a mix of T-62s, 54s, and 55s. Only 200 Egyptian tanks were T-62s, equal in range and quality to Israeli tanks equipped with 105-millimeter (mm) guns as well as excellent range-finding equipment. Egyptian military planners wanted to counter the Israeli advantage by not employing their weaker tanks in open desert where range dictated the outcome of a tank battle. Instead, they hoped to combine antitank SAGGER missiles with their inferior tank force to equalize the battlefield. Egyptian planners understood that Israeli doctrine called for tank-on-tank battles

with no reliance on infantry. Egyptian strength was the reverse, and Egypt planned accordingly.

Shaaзли's memoir details the equipping of Egyptian forces by the Soviet Union and the disagreements over tactics and strategy. Gamassy and Shaaзли offer a complete account of the military strategic perspective of the 1973 war from the Egyptian viewpoint and no doubt serve as required reading for Egyptian senior officers attending the Nasser Academy for Higher Military Studies.

General Abd-Al-Minaam Khaleel

General Abd-Al-Minaam Khaleel was of the same generation as Gamaasy and Shaaзли, having graduated from the Military Academy in 1941. He assumed command of the Egyptian 2d Army during the 1973 war. His memoir details the study of the 1956 Suez Crisis as a template for infantry tactical planning for the 1973 war. He says, "Among the battles carefully analyzed was the one at Abu Ageila in which I read Moshe Dayan's account that this battle was the most difficult for Israeli Infantry Divisions on their way to the Suez Canal." Khaleel's careful analysis of Israeli performance during the 1956 Suez War was used to develop the initial tactics of using antitank weapons to strengthen Egyptian infantry. Khaleel was first to delineate between the successful victory of the initial assault then to admit that the Israelis seized the initiative after 14 October when his forces were beyond SAM protection.

Beginning in May 1971, Shaaзли gathered the senior commanders of the Egyptian 2d and 3d Armies along with Gamassy and their respective staffs to create an offensive plan to regain the Suez Canal and, potentially, portions of the Sinai. Breaching the Bar-Lev Line, dealing with mines, logistics, and the mechanics of the actual crossing were discussed with each member, who were given 4 weeks to solve tactical problems and propose new ones for the next meeting.

In dealing with breaching Israeli mines, the Egyptian combat engineers borrowed heavily from tactics

learned during the 1962 Yemen War, where they had to contend with guerrilla ambushes and where they developed systems whereby a tank was equipped with de-mining equipment. Their efforts were put in writing in a classified document known simply as Official Circular Number 41. This document also detailed how the Egyptians could not advance 8 to 10 km beyond the eastern side of the Suez Canal forces because they would not be protected from Israeli air assaults.

Khaleel discusses the debates among the General Staff on issues such as the need to advance to the passes immediately after securing the Suez Canal because any delay would result in Israeli reserves being called up to reinforce the region. Egyptian tanks would only encounter Israeli tanks, because the Israeli air force would be occupied with Syria, dealing with the classic tactical problem of defense in depth.

General Yousef Afifi

General Yousef Afifi's memoir offers more of a ground view of the 1973 war. He commanded the 19th Infantry Brigade, one of five that crossed the Suez Canal into the Sinai on 6 October 1973. His particular unit crossed from the city of Suez into the Sinai. He lists the officers who had commanded each of the five brigades and discusses the military challenges he faced in scaling the Bar-Lev Line. He outlines methods by which infantry units trained as they would fight and discusses the endless exercises that involved scaling a 22-meter (m)-tall model of the Bar-Lev Line while carrying gear and weapons. The soldiers also practiced setting up water cannons and penetrating replicas of sand barriers.

During operations, Afifi's 19th Infantry Brigade scaled the Bar-Lev Line and remained in the Sinai for 26 hours before the bulk of tanks and armored vehicles crossed the Suez Canal. Afifi's brigade used antitank and light weapons to keep the Israelis suppressed in their reinforced bunkers. Egyptian artillery also kept up an unending barrage during the crossing of Egyptian forces into the Sinai.

Many of Afifi's men scaled the Bar-Lev Line at the same time the engineers were using high-pressure hoses to penetrate the sand barrier. He recounts how the water made going up the barrier extremely difficult. Some soldiers abandoned their portable ladders and climbed on each other, forming a human ladder on the side of the fortification.

Afifi also recounts how his unit undertook night operations while knowing that the Israelis had perfected this type of warfare. This was the first time Egyptian forces had conducted night combat operations. Infantry units reached as far as the Mitla Pass, one of three main passes in the center of the Sinai connecting Egypt and Israel. Afifi's detailed daily account of his unit's fight in the Sinai outlines the difficulties of command and control during infantry engagements between Israeli and Egyptian forces.

Colonel Bgen Adel Yussri

Colonel Bgen Adel Yussri and his 7th Infantry Battalion represent the concept of valor to many Egyptian army personnel. His unit endured fierce fighting as they pushed 19 km

past the Suez Canal into the Sinai. Yussri lost a leg, and many of his soldiers were posthumously and personally decorated for valor. His unit helped capture of the 190th Israeli Tank Brigade and its commander Colonel Asef Yagouri.

Yussri's unit received orders on 14 October to proceed toward the Gidi and Mitla passes. Their mission was to relieve pressure on the Syrian front, to destroy Israeli logistics bases in the Sinai, and to advance from 10 to 40 km inland. They were to keep Israeli armored units from entering the passes and to begin a counteroffensive against Egyptian forces in the western Sinai.

Yussri and his force witnessed a punishing Israeli air offensive on 15 October. On the night of 15-16 October, Israeli forces began a counteroffensive, which ended with an Israeli penetration between the Egyptian 2d and 3d Armies and the envelopment of the 3d Army. Yussri also admits the effectiveness of the Israeli Air Force in destroying Egyptian SAM sites. Israeli fighters eventually dominated the sky.

Yussri treats readers to his strategic opinion of why the Israelis did

not press their attack and dislodge Egyptian forces from the Sinai. The Egyptian 3d Army would eventually be decimated by starvation if not resupplied. Yussri explains that the Israelis also had problems. They had a 300-km-long logistic trail; they suffered massive losses in tanks and materiel; and they expended the majority of Israeli reserves on the Syrian front. So a tenuous stalemate ensued in which Gamassy negotiated humanitarian relief of the Egyptian 3d Army and the eventual cease-fire with the Israelis.

Conclusion

While this article gives only a glimpse of the actors and actions of the 1973 Yom Kippur War, many other untapped Arabian sources of information await military historians. The Syrians, who are the most enigmatic combatants of this war, have yet to produce any major literature about their participation. My hope is that more analyses and translations of works from Arabic to English will occur to enrich the understanding of combat tactics and military strategy from the Arab perspective.

The Saudis: Inside the Desert Kingdom

Lieutenant Youssef H. Aboul-Enein, U.S. Navy

With rumblings about possibly ejecting U.S. forces from Saudi Arabia, it is important to dust off some old books regarding the Desert Kingdom to understand where America's relationship with Saudi Arabia has been and where it is going. Journalist Sandra Mackey's 1987 book *The Saudis: Inside the Desert Kingdom* (Penguin Books, New York) is one such old book. From 1978 to 1980 and again from 1982 to 1984, Mackey lived in Saudi Arabia with her husband, who worked as a dermatologist at King Faisal Specialist Hospital.

During her sojourn, Mackey wrote an anonymous column for the *New York Times* in which she described Saudi society and politics. Mackey also landed a job at the Saudi Min-

istry of Planning and was privy to that nation's 5-year plans to modernize the infrastructure and to deal with the problems that were impeding industrialization.

When writing on Saudi Arabia one cannot rely on open-source information. To penetrate the inner circle of princes, tribesmen, and religious scholars, a journalist must be armed with a sharp memory and an unassuming manner. Although Mackey's book is not what I would call scholarly, it does point out major problems of Saudi society in a kind of tell-all narrative.

The book begins by humorously describing Saudi customs and Draconian methods of implementing moral views on an unsuspecting group of travelers arriving in the

Kingdom. Mackey insightfully points out the lack of education, the need to dominate, and finally the efforts to keep impurities such as pork, alcohol, Christian bibles, and crosses out of the country. The book is filled with anecdotes about foreigners roughing it in Saudi Arabia, but once the reader wades through those, he will find important nuggets of information to help him understand the Kingdom's customs.

Mackey delves into the history of Saudi Arabia's founding, a truly remarkable story of how Abdul-Aziz Al-Saud left exile in Kuwait to lead several dozen warriors to liberate his ancestral home of Riyadh. By 1932, through tribal alliances, war, and marriage, he had unified Saudi Arabia into its present form.

The Al-Saud family had to make two alliances with radical Islam. One alliance occurred in the 18th century with Muhammad ibn Abdul-Wahab, a revivalist Muslim scholar who wanted to purge Arabia of pagan practices and the influence of Islamic mysticism (Sufism). The rulers of central Arabia saw in this the potential of winning political and religious tribal support through religious legitimacy. The second alliance was made in the 20th century when Abdul-Aziz was trying to unify the country. Abdul-Aziz used the Ikhwan, a group of militant Islamic warriors living in Northern Arabia, as a lightning strike force in his campaigns. However, by 1929, they were challenging his authority and religious beliefs. This led to a serious revolt in which Abdul-Aziz subdued the rebels with machine guns.

The tie between the Al-Sauds and Abdul-Wahab can be seen today in marriages and connections between the Royal Family and the family known as Al-Ashaykh, who are descendants of Abdul-Wahab, from which the word Wahabism comes. What Mackey does not discuss is that calling a Saudi a Wahabi is not polite. Saudis usually refer to themselves as Muwahidun (those who preach unity with God) or simply Muslims. The Muwahiduns are considered one of the most conservative sects of Sunni Islam, and elements of Arabian tribal tradition has found its way into their religious laws. Only with a thorough understanding of the Shariah (Islamic Law) can a person distinguish between tradition and law.

Mackey lists the many princes and princelings of the Royal Family and shows how the line of power directly relates to the person's relationship to Abdul-Aziz and to the person's competence, age, and matrilineal line. Mackey illustrates her point by discussing the ascent of Fahd to Crown Prince and of his full brothers' occupation of key positions in the Saudi government. Nicknamed the Sudairi Seven, the brothers are the major decisionmakers in Saudi Arabia. Among their numbers are Naif, the interior minister; Sultan,

the defense minister; and Salman, the governor of Riyadh and deputy governor of Mecca. The current regent, Abdullah, is not a Sudairi, and cracks in the royal family can be seen in the resentment family members feel in not sharing the Sudairis' wealth, prestige, and power.

Mackey was privileged to attend a royal wedding. She describes the princesses' range of tastes and education, from the elite, well-dressed, and well-educated Al-Faisal line, from which Foreign Minister Saud-Al-Faisal comes, to the gaudier members of the family.

One of the titles the Saudi king has assumed is Guardian of the Two Holy Mosques of Mecca and Medina. This authority was challenged in November 1979, when Juhaiman Al-Utaibi and 200 followers seized control of the Grand Mosque of Mecca and held hostages for a week during which a microphone blared about the corruption of the Al-Sauds. One week of serious hand-to-hand fighting occurred before this crisis was resolved. Mackey capably describes the events as well as the mood of the Saudi Arabian people during and after the incident.

After the crisis, many Egyptians, Yemenis, and Sudanese nationals were executed or implicated in aiding Juhaiman and his followers. A statement made by Abdul-Aziz El-Tuweijery, Deputy Commander of the National Guard, is revealing. He stated that the weapons Juhaiman used came from a National Guard arsenal. This is significant because Juhaiman served in the National Guard, and this military unit, recruited exclusively from the Najd (Central Arabian) tribes, is considered by the Royal Family to be the most loyal fighters. Although not covered in the book, the National Guard is charged with overseeing any dissension within the Regular Army and is controlled by Prince Abdullah.

Mackey tells interesting stories about life as an expatriate, including ways she got around conservative Saudi laws. One permanent fixture of life in Saudi Arabia is the Mutawain (religious police) who roam the streets in search of those who

might offend their version of morality. Typically, the Mutawain are young males, who derive pleasure and empowerment from physically harassing people, such as shopkeepers who do not close promptly during prayers or women who are not properly veiled. Mackey describes an incident in which she was assaulted by Mutawain for showing too much of her bare arms. [As a child, a Mutawain confiscated my roller skates because they offended his sensibilities.] Many foreigners get around alcohol prohibitions by brewing their own beverages, including moonshine called Siddequi (my friend).

Mackey ably highlights the business elite, including the Al-Rajhi, Al-Kaki Bin Mahfouz, and Bin Laden families, who built empires in trade, construction, and banking, respectively. The "Bin" in front of the last name denotes families from Yemen. They possess shrewd business skills, which are combined with sharing profits with the Royal Family to gain concessions and to further their fortunes in Arabia.

Mackey ends the book with a discussion about the Al-Saud quest for turning money into security through its multibillion-dollar investment in King Khalid Military City. The project, which began in 1976, is designed to house 70,000 troops. Many U.S. defense and construction companies, such as Bechtel Steel, benefited from this element of the Saudi's third 5-year plan. By the time Iraq leader Saddam Hussein threatened Saudi Arabia, the U.S. military had a city that was compatible with U.S. equipment. Many Saudi Muslim radicals see this investment as another way in which the United States has encouraged the squandering of Saudi petroleum wealth.

Although Mackey's book is important, I recommend Robert Lacey's *The Kingdom: Arabia and the House of Sa'ud* (New York: Harcourt, 1982), which is one of the best histories of modern Saudi Arabia. Unlike Mackey's book, *The Kingdom* is more scholarly in its approach and dispenses with the cute anecdotes of expatriate life in Arabia.