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The Revelations of 1967

New Research on the Six Day War and Its Lessons for the Contemporary Middle East

WHAT LESSONS DOES ONE LEARN FOR THE PRESENT
FROM THE JUNE WAR OF 1967?

ONE MAY BEGIN TO SEARCH for instructive insights by looking at a scenario that will probably sound familiar to most observers of the Modern Middle East. The scenario begins with an Arab leader who, though beloved by much of the Arab world, is feared and hated by other Arab leaders. He is a military dictator who is widely rumored to have stockpiled weapons of mass destruction—who has used non-conventional weaponry even against his fellow Arabs. He has openly defied UN resolutions, and evicted UN observers from his territory. He poses a fundamental challenge to the West—and one Western country accepts that challenge and goes to war.

The fighting proceeds far more swiftly than anybody anticipates. The once-thought-formidable forces of the Arab dictator rapidly collapse. And as the Western army advances, it is greeted by much of the local population, not as occupiers, but as liberators. That situation does not obtain indefinitely, however. Soon there are acts of armed resistance against the occupation force—acts viewed throughout the region as legitimate attempts to achieve liberation, but seen by much of the West as acts of terror. Does that scenario sound familiar? Of course it does. To anybody following America's involvement in Iraq it certainly should. Yet the circumstances just described pertain not only to America's year-old intervention in Iraq, but to events that transpired 37 years ago—in May–June 1967—in the period leading up to the Six Day War.

Then, as now, there was an Arab dictator—not Saddam Hussein, but Gamal Abdul Nasser, the president of Egypt—who was beloved by many people throughout the Arab world, but feared and hated by other

Arab leaders. Nasser was rumored to have stockpiled weapons of mass destruction, and was the first Middle-Eastern leader to introduce non-conventional weaponry into the region, using poison gas against the Saudis during the Yemeni civil war in 1962. Nasser had defied UN resolutions and evicted UN observers from his territory. He therefore posed a fundamental challenge to the West—to one Western-style country in particular, the State of Israel.

Nasser threatened to wage a war of annihilation against Israel and to cast its Jewish inhabitants into the sea.¹ Israeli leadership did not wait around to see if Nasser was serious about that threat. On 5 June 1967, Israel acted preemptively. It attacked Egypt and its Arab allies, and the war proceeded far more rapidly than anybody anticipated. Nasser's forces crumbled; and though it is hard to imagine today, in many areas they captured, Israeli forces were greeted as liberators.² That situation did not last long, however. Soon the Israelis became targets of acts of resistance—acts viewed as legitimate throughout the region, but seen by Israel and its allies as acts of terror.

Since that period (May, June 1967), every major event, every milestone in the Arab-Israeli conflict—the War of Attrition, the Yom Kippur War, the Lebanon War, the whole peace process, the question of Israeli settlements in the territories, the status of Jerusalem—all of these events have been the direct outcome of 6 days of intense fighting 37 years ago. There does not seem to be another example in history of an event that was so short and so limited geographically that has had such profound, long-term regional, and indeed global, ramifications. It seems safe to say that, for statesmen and military leaders, both in the Middle East and beyond, the Six Day War never really ended. For historians, it is only just beginning.

It is only just beginning thanks to the declassification of tens of thousands of formerly top-secret documents in archives across North America, in Great Britain, in Israel, and even in the former Soviet Union, and the publication in Arab countries, Jordan in particular, and in England, of memoirs of former decision-makers and military commanders. These new sources provide us with unprecedented insights into the decision-making process before, during, and immediately after the war. They supply us with very poignant portraits of the colorful figures that made those decisions—leaders such as Moshe Dayan, Yitzhak Rabin, King Hussein of Jordan, President Nasser of Egypt.

Together a picture emerges of a region deeply submerged in a context of conflict. This conflict was occurring on many levels: on the international level in the cold war between the United States and the Soviet

Union; on the regional level between the progressive and the conservative Arab regimes—bitter and often fatal rivalries; on the bilateral level, in the intractable Arab-Israeli conflict, which was a perennial source of instability throughout the region.

In such a context, little was needed to start trouble between opponents. The smallest spark sufficed to set off a regional conflagration.

Such a spark was ignited six months before the war, on 11 November 1966. On that day, three Israeli soldiers patrolling along the border between Israel and the West Bank (then under Jordanian control) stepped on a mine. The mine was planted by the al-Fatah organization of Yasser Arafat, and the three Israelis were killed.³ Two days later, 500 Israeli paratroopers, in the largest Israeli retaliation raid since the 1956 War, crossed into the West Bank with the objective of striking into an al-Fatah stronghold in the village of al-Samu'a. But something went awry in the Israeli plan: a battalion of Jordanian soldiers that wasn't supposed to be anywhere in the vicinity all of a sudden crossed the Israelis path and shots were exchanged. When the smoke cleared, 14 Jordanians lay dead. Instantly Jordan's Palestinian majority rose up in riots complaining that Hussein was not doing enough to defend the country—that Hussein was a traitor in league with the Zionists and should be violently overthrown.⁴ Hussein, whose rule was never particularly secure in Jordan, panicked. He quickly sought to deflect this criticism from himself and onto his arch-nemesis, Nasser of Egypt. Hussein started claiming that Nasser wasn't doing enough to defend the Palestinians, that Nasser was secretly in league with Israel, and that Nasser was "hiding behind the skirts"⁵ of UN peace-keeping forces that had been placed in the Sinai peninsula as a buffering force between Egypt and Israel at the end of that previous Arab-Israeli war in 1956.

Mortified, Nasser now sought an excuse to get rid of the UN forces in the Sinai. That pretext was supplied by the Soviets on May 12, 1967 when they reported to the Egyptians—we now know it was not true—that they had learned of an Israeli plan to invade Syria and to capture the Syrian capital of Damascus.⁶ Nasser quickly seized on this pretext. He sent 100 thousand troops into Sinai, 500 aircraft, a thousand battle tanks. He evicted UN forces and closed off shipping to Israel's Southern port of Eilat.⁷ From that point on, it was only a matter of time and circumstance before the Israeli government decided to react to this threat and to strike preemptively. Thus began what became the Six Day War. All this happened because of Israel's raid on the village of al-Samu'a.⁸

Now one can learn from the recently declassified documents that the raid on al-Samu'a should never have occurred; in fact, it could have been

easily prevented. To understand this, one needs to rewind to 11 November 1966. In his rhetoric, King Hussein of Jordan was as anti-Zionist as any Arab leader of his day, but secretly, Hussein had managed to reach a *modus vivendi* with Israel. He met clandestinely with Israeli emissaries on a regular basis and had open channels to the Israelis through the American and the British Embassies. As soon as he heard about the death of the three soldiers along the border, he sat down and penned a personal letter of condolence to the Prime Minister of Israel, Levi Eshkol in which Hussein promised to do his utmost to prevent future attacks like this.⁹

The King gave the letter of condolence to the American ambassador in Amman who passed it on to his counterpart in Tel-Aviv, a gentleman by the name of Walworth Barbour. Barbour was an interesting man: six foot six, 300 pounds, a substantive presence, who had lived all his life with his sister. Colorful though he might have been, Barbour was a beloved and seasoned diplomat, who had spent 9 years as ambassador in Israel. Hussein's letter of condolence reached Barbour's desk on the afternoon of 11 November, which was a Friday. Anybody who has ever visited Israel knows what happens in Israel on Friday afternoon: everything closes down. Barbour looked at his watch, said, "It's too late to pass on this letter, it can wait till Sunday, Monday"¹⁰ and he shelved it. On Sunday, Israel launched its raid on al-Samu'a.

Had Israel received that letter of condolence with the imprimatur of the American Embassy, the raid would never have been mounted. And so a case can be posited that the Six Day War broke out, not because of Israeli activism, not because of Nasser's nefariousness, but because of the procrastination of one man, an American, a diplomat who waited, in deference to the Jewish Sabbath, to pass on a letter of condolence.

Now the same type of quirky twisted events prevented Egypt from launching the same type of surprise attack against Israel that Israel had mounted on 5 June, and perhaps with even equal consequences. The operation was code named in Arabic *al-Fajar*,¹¹ the Dawn, and it was the brain-child of the Egyptian army's Field Marshall Abd al-Hakim Amr.

Amr was quirky in his own right, but in a negative way. He was a notorious philanderer and a substance abuser. He had elevated political corruption in Egypt, which is saying something, to an entirely new art form.¹² Amr had fared very poorly in the 1956 war; he had failed also in Egypt's disastrous involvement in the Yemenite civil war. He was looking for some way to restore his tarnished honor and he saw this operation, the Dawn, as a means of achieving that. The operation called for a massive surprise aerial strike against all of Israel's strategic targets, airfields, refineries,

bases, and power plants, to be followed up by an armored thrust through Israel's Negev Desert northward, to literally cut the Jewish State in half.

Nasser did not support the operation,¹³ but he was afraid of Amr. Amr had tremendous power within Egypt, but, more to the point, Nasser also loved him. Amr was his best friend. He wasn't just his most feared political rival; he was his dear comrade. They lived next door to one another; their family members married one another; they went on vacation together. And this combination of fear and affection prevented Nasser from standing up to Amr.¹⁴ Nasser would have preferred that Israel fire the first shot. He wanted to provoke Israel into firing the first shot so that Israel would be saddled with responsibility for that war. But Amr said no, that Egypt should start the war, and Nasser did not stand up to him. The result was operation Dawn, set to go off fittingly at dawn 27 May 1967.¹⁵

Except that it did not happen. The truly interesting question is, why? Because the day before, on 25 May, Foreign Minister of Israel, Abba Eban, arrived in Washington with the goal of ascertaining from American leaders their position in the event of an outbreak of war in the Middle East. As Eban landed, he was handed an ultra-secret cable directly from Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol, which stated that Israel had learned of Egypt's intention to attack Israel within the next 48 hours to lead a war of annihilation and Eban was now to find out what the Americans intended to do about it.

Eban presented this intelligence to American leaders, to Secretary of State Dean Rusk, to Defense Secretary McNamara, and finally to President Johnson himself on the evening of 26 May in the Yellow Office of the White House. The American response to this situation was virtually uniform. Listen, the Americans said, we cannot corroborate this warning; our own intelligence sources tell us that the Egyptian deployment in Sinai remains defensive. We have no evidence that Egypt plans to attack Israel in the next 48 hours.

Eban left the White house distraught; but after he had gone, President Johnson sat with his advisors, scratched his head, turned to his advisors, and said, "What would happen if they're right and we're wrong? What if their intelligence sources are better than ours and Egypt does plan to attack? Let's hedge our bets."¹⁶ Johnson fired off a hotline message to his counterpart in the Kremlin, Premier Alexei Kosygin. In that message Johnson said, "We have learned from the Israelis, and, though we can't corroborate this information, they say that the Egyptians plan to attack Israel in the next 48 hours. If that's so, you had better do your utmost to intercede with your ally and prevent that from happening because you, the Soviets, will be held responsible for starting a war in the Middle East."¹⁷

The results of this message came at 2:30 in the morning, when the Soviet Ambassador in Cairo, Dmitri Podjidaev, knocked on the door of Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser. Nasser came to the door in his pajamas, and Podjidaev read out a sharply worded message from Premier Kosygin: that the Russians had learned from the Americans who had learned from the Israelis that Egypt planned to launch an attack at dawn. The ambassador then gave Nasser a stern warning: “don’t do it,” because, if Egypt was held responsible for starting a war, the Soviet Union would not stand behind its ally. They could not support Egypt in such a situation.¹⁸

Nasser panicked; he quickly convened his generals and said to them, “Friends, there’s been a leak; whatever you have planned for sunrise this morning is canceled.”¹⁹ Amr said, “Not so fast.” This was Amr’s big opportunity; the *Dawn* operation was his brainchild. He quickly called the head of Egypt’s air force, Major General Sidqi Mahmoud, and he said to him, “Sidqi, how long will it take to launch the operation?” Sidqi responded, “The pilots just now are climbing into the cockpits—45 minutes.”²⁰

The fate and the future of the Middle East hung in the balance. During that three-quarters of an hour, Amr consulted with his own sources in the Kremlin and they confirmed the substance of Kosygin’s message to Nasser that if war broke out and Egypt started it, the Soviet Union would not back Egypt.²¹ Despondent, Amr called Sidqi back and said, “Sidqi, tell the pilots to climb down, the operation is canceled.”²²

We know from released Israeli sources that, had the Egyptians launched that surprise aerial attack, there was little that Israel could have done to prevent it. Twice on 24 and 25 May, Egyptian MIG fighters penetrated Israeli airspace over the Negev and photographed Israel’s most strategic sight, the Dimona nuclear reactor. Israeli forces fired missiles at the jets and also sent up jets to pursue them. None of these touched the Egyptian jets; they all got away scot-free.²³ This simply demonstrated, that, had the Egyptians launched the surprise attack, Israel was vulnerable and the Egyptians could have caused extensive damage—perhaps the same type of damage that Israel caused to Egypt when Israeli planes attacked Egypt 9 days later on 5 June.

Now, that operation—which we now know as the Six Day War—was conceived by Israeli planners as a two-day war. A 48-hour surgical strike, it had only two objectives: the first was to eliminate Egypt’s air force on the ground in a surprise attack; and the second, was a ground operation to neutralize the first of three Egyptian defense lines in Sinai.²⁴ That’s it. No taking the entire Sinai Peninsula down to the Suez Canal. No occupying the Gaza strip. No climbing and seizing the Golan Heights. No entering

the West Bank. No capturing, or liberating, however one chooses to say it, the old city of Jerusalem.

How that two-day, very limited operation snowballed into this master war that trebled Israel's size in six days is an extraordinary story, and telling it in its entirety is beyond the scope of this article.

Just one episode in that saga, however, will suffice to show the uniqueness of those events and their particular salience for today. The episode in question relates to how Israel came in control of the West Bank and ultimately East Jerusalem and the Old City with its holy sites. Israel did not want the war with Jordan.²⁵ The Jordanian border was Israel's longest and most vulnerable. Israel had its hands full with Egypt, and the last thing it wanted was a war with Jordan. Before 5 June, strict orders went out from the Israeli command not to open fire on Jordan, even if Jordan opened fire on Israel.²⁶ The notion was that, if Hussein has to prove his Arabness, "by firing off a few shells,"²⁷ Israel was going to let him do it and was not going to react. For his part, King Hussein did not want war with Israel; there is no question about that. He sought every possible way not to enter into this war, but he faced a terrible dilemma. If the Egyptians went to war and the Egyptians lost the war, and Hussein had not aided the Egyptians, then the Palestinians in Jordan in particular, and the Arab world in general, would hold King Hussein guilty of treason: his life and kingdom would not be worth much. But if Nasser went to war without Hussein and proceeded to win the war, once the Egyptian army had cut across the Negev to reach the Jordanian border it would continue on to Amman, and then Nasser would kill him for having sat out the war.²⁸ It was a terrible dilemma from which the King extricated himself in an ingenious way. He decided to aggregate responsibility in general for the crisis by placing his army under direct Egyptian command. Thus, on 1 June, Egyptian General Riad arrived in Amman to take command of the Jordanian army.²⁹

On 5 June, Israel began its attack against Egypt. At 10:30 in the morning, Israel sent a message to the Jordanians, directly to King Hussein, in which Israel stated very clearly its intent: "you don't open fire, we don't open fire, let's just let this thing blow over. It's none of our business [to fight you]. It's between us and Egypt."³⁰ But at 10:00 in the morning, Jordanian planes strafed Israeli coastal cities and Jordanian Long Tom guns, situated around the city of Jenin, began shelling the outskirts of Tel-Aviv. Then at 11:15 A.M., Jordanian guns in East Jerusalem opened fire on West Jerusalem and lobbed thousands of shells into the west of the city causing extensive damage and killing 20 people.³¹ With all of this provocation, with all of this shelling, Israel still decided not to react. Just as the orders had stated

before, Israel was going to let this just go by. As far as they were concerned, Hussein was trying to prove his Arabness. The shooting was not offensive, but defensive: the King was protecting himself from Nasser's wrath by proving his pan-Arab credentials rather than engaging in a serious offensive war effort against Israel.

But something strange happened. At 10:30 in the morning of 5 June, Jordanian radio announced that Jordanian soldiers had taken Government House Ridge at the southern entrance of the city.³² To the contemporary observer, the place looks idyllic: where Government House Ridge is today, there is a beautiful promenade with a view of the Old City. Back in 1967, however, Government House Ridge was a UN demilitarized zone, a highly strategic area because it controlled the access to all the neighborhoods in southern Jerusalem. So strategically sensitive was the location, that Israel had a secret observation point just off the ridge. When this announcement came on Jordanian radio, Israel's central command called up the outpost and ordered them to confirm it, asking the commander there if he saw any Jordanian soldiers approaching. The outpost reported no movement: everything was quiet.³³ At 1:30 in the afternoon, however, Jordanian soldiers attacked and occupied Government House Ridge. Whereupon Jordanian radio announced that Jordanian soldiers were then attacking Israel's enclave on Mt. Scopus in the northern part of the city.³⁴ Central command in Israel called up the Mt. Scopus command post and asked the same question: were there Jordanian soldiers in sight attacking the Israeli enclave. Central Command got the same, negative response: all was quiet at Mt. Scopus.³⁵

Quickly the central command concluded that there was no coordination between Jordanian radio and Jordan's army, and that the radio was actually announcing the intentions of the Jordanian army in advance. At this point it was only fair to ask what was going on over on the Jordanian side. Why were the Jordanians doing this? The answer is in a misleading telegram that General Riad, who was commanding the Jordanian army, received from Field Marshall Amr in Cairo at 10:30 A.M. that same morning.³⁶ In that fateful note, Amr reported the situation on the battlefield exactly the opposite of what it really was. He reported that 75 percent of the Israeli air force had been destroyed, that an Egyptian column had broken through the Israeli lines, had cut through the Negev, was now proceeding northward, up the spine of the West Bank, from Hebron to Bethlehem and would soon enter southern Jerusalem. It was therefore incumbent on the Jordanian army to guard the eastern flank of this approaching column by taking Government Hill Ridge. Assuming that the Israelis would try

to reinforce the city through Mt. Scopus, General Riad concluded that he also had to take Mt. Scopus.³⁷

The Israelis knew that 75 percent of their air force had not been destroyed on the ground; and they knew that there was no Egyptian column proceeding up the spine of the West Bank about to enter southern Jerusalem. But what the Israelis feared as they saw Jordanians taking Government Hill Ridge and moving toward Mt. Scopus was a recurrence of the Jordanian siege of West Jerusalem in 1948, when a hundred-thousand Jews were put under siege for months on end. Not only was the siege of Jerusalem a lingering trauma for Israel's military leaders, but the event in 1948 had started with the same two-pronged offensive in the south and in the north. Israel had to act immediately to prevent the recurrence of that siege. Central Command therefore proceeded quickly to send forces with the order to retake Government Ridge, and for paratroopers to be brought up through Sinai to link up with Mt. Scopus. The paratroopers met their Jordanian counterparts near Mt. Scopus in the fierce and bloody battle at Ammunition Hill.³⁸

Two days later, by the morning of 7 June, Israeli forces had entered the West Bank to silence the guns of Jenin, and had spread on from there, to take most of the West Bank. Meanwhile, in Jerusalem, Israeli paratroopers had effectively circled the city.

At that point, the Israeli government was presented with a fateful question, the answer to which still weighs heavily on the present predicament of the region: would Israeli forces enter the Old City of Jerusalem with its holiest Jewish sites, including the Western Wall? Or would they stay out? It was really only within several hundred yards of the forward Israeli position outside the walls of the Old City. Thinking back to 1967 pictures of the paratrooper standing by the wall, one would assume that the answer would be, "Oh, there's no question here—send them into the Old City." The fact of the matter is that the Israeli government deliberated painfully, extensively, for nearly twenty-four hours whether or not to enter the Old City of Jerusalem.³⁹ There was a deep fear among many Israeli ministers interestingly enough—especially among the religious ministers and then Defense Minister Moshe Dayan—that to enter the Old City of Jerusalem, with not only its Jewish holy sites, but with its Christian holy sites, including the Holy Sepulcher, would complicate Israel's relationship with the Christian world, and could even risk of the severance of diplomatic relations between Israel and the Catholic countries. It was at that fateful juncture that Moshe Dayan famously said, "I don't need that Vatican; leave it alone."⁴⁰

Levi Eshkol, the Prime Minister was a warm and witty man, and a leader with a great sense of the nation's Jewish past. He was not just Israel's Prime minister: he was truly a Jewish leader.⁴¹ He had had a very strict Jewish upbringing, and he desperately wanted to reunite Israel with its holy sites, to reunite the city under Israeli sovereignty; but he appreciated the diplomatic risk involved. And so it was that he opened up the cabinet meeting on the morning of 7 June with the words, "Nu, what are we going to do about King Hussein?"⁴² It was Eshkol, in the end, who devised a risky and brilliant gamble. He sent a letter to King Hussein through the British Embassy. Just one copy of it exists in the British archives.⁴³ In this letter he addressed the King with the following offer: "If you, Your Majesty, expel the Egyptian commanders of your army, if you regain control of your armed forces, if you accept a cease fire unconditionally, if you begin a process of peace talks with us, we will not take the Old City of Jerusalem."⁴⁴

Assessed in the context of the times, this was truly an extraordinary offer: the millennial realization of the Jewish vision of returning to Zion in its most practical, physical sense was within hands' grasp; and yet Israel's Prime minister was willing to gamble it away in return for the possibility of a peace process with Jordan. The letter went out at 8:30 in the morning; two hours passed and there was no answer. At 11:30 in the morning Israeli paratroopers broke through Lion's Gate into the Old City. Two more hours passed, until the Israeli paratroopers charged with the operation reported in the words that continue to reverberate throughout Israel and the Middle East, that "Har Habayit Biyadeynu," "The Temple Mount is in our hands."⁴⁵

So if the Six Day war broke out because one letter—from King Hussein to Levi Eshkol—was not delivered on time, the West Bank and ultimately Jerusalem came into Israel's possession because yet another letter was delivered—a letter from Field Marshal Amr to General Riad with false information—and still another letter from Prime Minister Eshkol to King Hussein for which an answer was never received.

What kinds of conclusions can one draw from these episodes? Rather than a product of rational decision-making, of a cogent analysis of events on the battlefield, the Six Day war transpired as a result of vicissitudes that were unpredicted, the vagaries of war chants, and often just plain dumb luck. This realization is particularly pertinent for today, because the Middle East in 2004 is again caught in a multi-layered context of conflict such as existed in 1967. There is this global fight between Western civilization and

extreme militant Islam. There are internal rivalries between Arab countries, and there is still an Arab-Israel conflict lingering on, which means that there remains a source of instability in the region. In this conflict, one does not need very much to set the place on fire. One needs but a misperception, a miscalculation, a lie, and the entire region will be ablaze. There has been ample evidence of that in 2003 alone.

For an historian, that type of conclusion is very interesting, for it makes it a pleasure to write a book about it: it is riveting; it is compelling; it is exciting. But for a citizen of Israel, a resident of Jerusalem, for a person who, like me—even at this advanced age—is still serving in the Israeli reserves, and, more crucially, for a person who has a son now serving in the Israeli army, the realization of that randomness is very sobering and frankly it is quite frightening.

NOTES

1. Robert Stephens, *Nasser, A Political Biography* (London, 1971) 479; BBC Archive, SWB ME 2 477/A/3–5.
2. For example, in Bethlehem, 7 June 1967. See Michael Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Oxford, 2002) 255.
3. ISA (Israel State Archives), 4030/6, Diplomatic Contacts and Security Council Debate on the Samu'a Operation: Harman Conversation with Symes, 14 Nov 1966; 3977/20, 'Relations with the United States, Mr. Bitan's Visit, 29 November 1966.
4. ISA, 3998/5, Diplomatic Relations with Iran: Y. Rabin to Military Attachés, 15 November 1966.
5. Asher Susser, *On Both Banks of the Jordan, A Political Biography of Wasfi al-Tall* (London, 1994) 55.
6. ISA, 3977/22, Relations with the United States: Conversation with Ambassador Chuvakhin, 13 May 1967; Anwar El-Sadat, *In Search of Identity: An Autobiography* (New York, 1977) 171–2; Muhammad Fawzi, *Harb al-Thalath Sanawat* (Cairo, 1980) 69–70 [Arabic]; Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, *1967: Al-Infijar* (Cairo, 1990) 458–9 [Arabic]; 'Abd al-Muhsin Kamil Murtagi, *Al-Fariq Murtagi Yarwi al-Haqa'iq* (Cairo, 1976) 49–53 [Arabic]; Suliman Mazhar, *I'tirafat Qadat Harb Yunyu: Nusus Shahadatihim Amama Lajnat Tasjil Ta'rikh al-Thawra* (Cairo, 1990) 51–2 [Arabic].
7. Stephens, *Nasser*, 471–3.
8. For a more comprehensive account of those events, refer to my book *Six Days of War*, 33–60, 81.

9. ISA, 3977/20, MFA, Relations with the United States, Mr. Bitan's Visit, 29 November 1966; 4030/6, Diplomatic Contacts and Security Council Debate on the Samu'a Operation; Harman Conversation with Symes, 14 November 1966.

10. ISA, 3977/20, Relations with the United States, Mr. Bitan's Visit, 29 November 1966; ISA, 4030/6, Diplomatic Contacts and Security Council Debate on the Samu'a Operation.

11. Mazhar, *I'tirafat Qadat Harb Yunyu*, 228; Fawzi, *Harb al-Thalath Sanawat*, 106–09.

12. Fawzi, *Harb al-Thalath Sanawat*, 52–4; P. J. Vatikiotis, *Nasser and His Generation* (New York, 1978) 159, 161.

13. Heikal, *Al-Infijjar*, 659, 573–74; Berlinti 'Abd al-Hamid, *Al-Mushir wa-Ana* (Cairo, 1992) 211–22; Fawzi, *Harb al-Thalath Sanawat*, 71, 76–80, 105–09; Murtagi, *Al-Fariq Murtagi Yarwi al-Haqa'iq*, 67.

14. El-Sadat, *In Search of Identity*, 168–9; Fawzi, *Harb al-Thalath Sanawat*, 33–45. 'Abd al-Hamid, *Al-Mushir wa-Ana*, 201–05; 'Abdallah Imam, *Nasir wa-'Amer* (Cairo, 1985) 5–13, 39–41, 67–86; Heikal, *Al-Infijjar*, 818–22.

15. Mazhar, *I'tirafat Qadat Harb Yunyu*, 228; Fawzi, *Harb al-Thalath Sanawat*, 106–09.

16. LBJ, National Security file, History of the Middle East Conflict, box 20: United States Policy and Diplomacy in the Middle East Crisis, 15 May–10 June 1967, 56–9; Oral history interview with Robert McNamara, 16 February 2000. NSC Histories, Middle East Crisis, box 17: Rusk to Johnson (handwritten note), 26 May 1967; The President in the Middle East Crisis, 19 December 1968 (President's diary).

17. LBJ, National Security file, History of the Middle East Crisis, box 17: Kosygin to Johnson, 27 May 1967; PRO (Public Records Office, UK), PREM 13 1618, Kosygin to Wilson, 27 May 1967.

18. Fawzi, *Harb al-Thalath Sanawat*, 93–4. Muhammad Al-Sabbagh (ed), *Mudhakkirat Qadat al-'Askariyya al-Misriyya, 1967–1972 fi A'qab al-Naksa* [Arabic] (Cairo, in press) 1–3.

19. Heikal, *Al-Infijjar*, 573–4; Murtagi, *Al-Fariq Murtagi Yarwi al-Haqa'iq*, 91–3.

20. Mazhar, *I'tirafat Qadat Harb Yunyu*, 141–2.

21. Murtagi, *Al-Fariq Murtagi Yarwi al-Haqa'iq*, 91–3. Richard B. Parker, *The Six Day War* (Jacksonville, FL, 1997) 45.

22. Mahmud Riad. *Mudhakkirat Mahmoud Riad 2* (Beirut, 1987) 63; Al-Sabbagh, *Mudhakkirat Qadat al-'Askariyya al-Misriyya*, 5, 18–19, 24–5; Fawzi, *Harb al-Thalath Sanawat*, 115–26; Heikal, *Al-Infijjar*, 573–4; Mazhar, *I'tirafat Qadat Harb Yunyu*, 141–2; Murtagi, *Al-Fariq Murtagi Yarwi al-Haqa'iq*, 91–3.

23. Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York, 1998) 259–76.

24. IDF (Israel Defence Forces Archives), 710/70, General Staff Discussion: 19 May 1967; IDF, 1977/1786, The Regular Paratrooper Brigade in the Six-Day War, Commander 35th Brigade, 619; Matitahu Mayzel, *Ha-Ma'arakha al*

ha-Golan–Yuni 1967 (Tel-Aviv, 2001) 51–2; Eitan Haber, *Ha-Yom Tifrotz Milhama: Zikhronotav shel Tat-Aluf Yisrael Lior, ha-Mazkir Hatzvai shel Rashei ha-Memshela Levi Eshkol ve-Golda Meir* (Tel-Aviv, 1987) 155, 166–9, 244–6.

25. Haber, *Ha-Yom Tifrotz Milhama*, 222–4.

26. IDF, 901/67/1, Central Command: The Six-Day War, Concluding Discussion I, 43–5.

27. Haber, *Ha-Yom Tifrotz Milhama*, 222.

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