

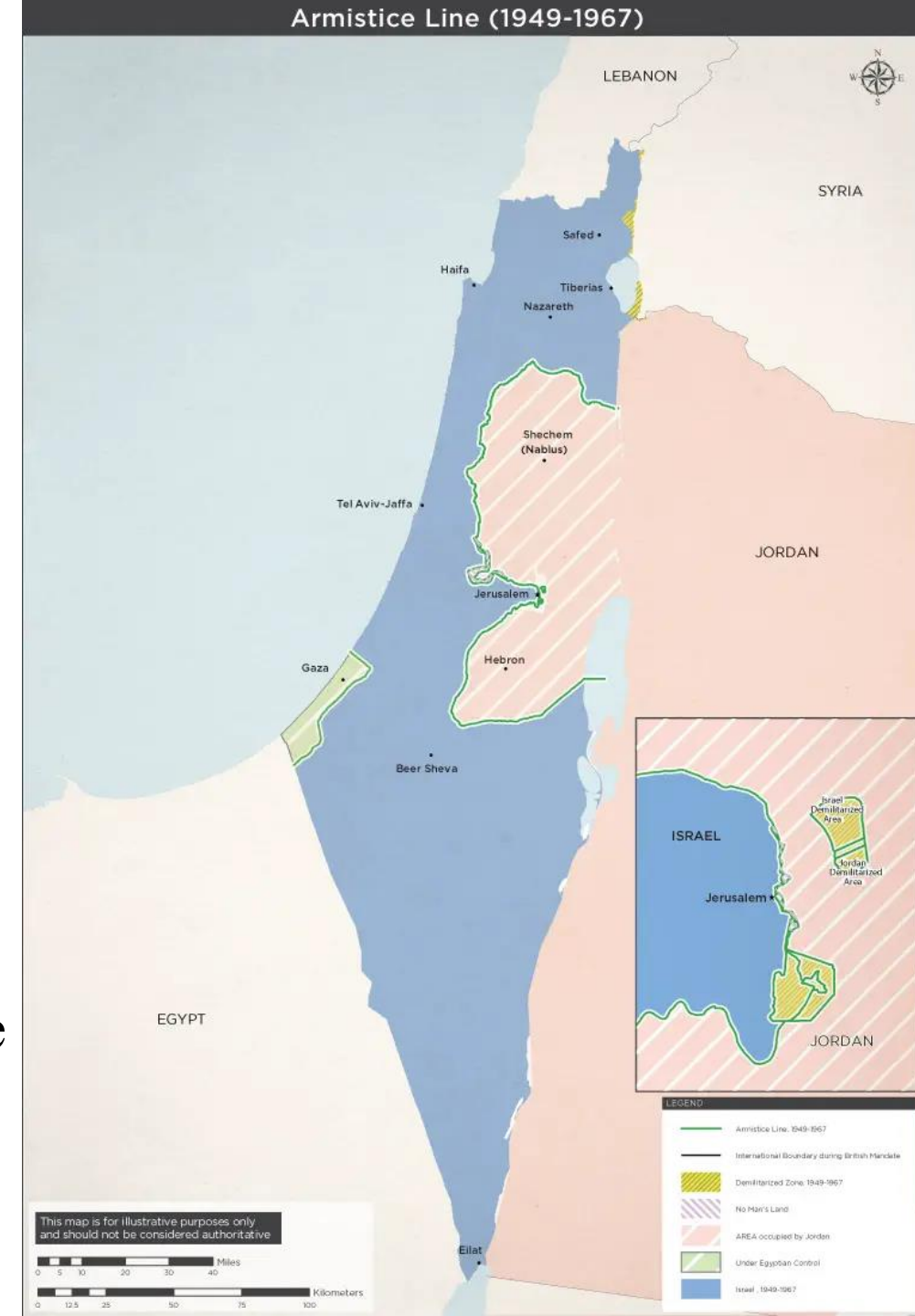
Mirage III & Six-Day War

David Karan II-10

- Mirage III is a supersonic fighter developed by French company Dassault Aviation.
- Entered service in the early 1960s, single-engine, delta wing that gives it great manoeuvrability and enables it to reach very high speeds, in excess of Mach 2.
- 15 metre length and 8.22 metre wingspan, designed for air superiority, interception and ground support missions.
- IAF acquired several Mirage IIIs (known locally as Shahaks) in the early 60s.
- Adapted to Israel's requirements, modifications to the navigation and communications equipment.
- Atar 9B engine, maximum power of 60 kN on afterburner, enabling it to climb rapidly **to intercept** enemy aircraft at high altitude.



- After the 1956 Suez Crisis, Egypt agreed for UNEF troops to be stationed in the Sinai to ensure that the 1949 Armistice Agreements are being respected.
- Due to border clashes, Syria signed a mutual defense agreement with Egypt.
- Then, due to guerilla activity from the PLO, the IDF attacked the village of as-Samu in the West Bank.
- In May 1967, Gamal Abdel Nasser received false reports from the Soviet Union that Israel was massing on the border, he expelled the UNEF from Gaza and Sinai and he occupied UNEF positions overlooking the Straits of Tiran, he then closed the straits to Israeli shipping on May 22-23.
- On 30th May Jordan and Egypt signed a defense pact, the next day Iraqi troops deployed in Jordan.
- On the morning of June 5th Israel launched Operation Focus, starting the Six-Day War.



- Israel including reservists had 264000 troops cl.
- Against the West Bank, Israel deployed 40000 troops and 300 tanks (8 br)
- ICC consisted of 5 br, 1st 2 perma at Jerusalem (Jerusalem and mechanized Harel Brigade)
- 55th Paratroopers Brigade was summoned from the Sinai front
- 10th Armored Brigade was stationed north of the West Bank.
- INC comprised a division of 3 br led by Major General Elad Peled stationed in the Jezreel Valley north of WB.

- Egypt amassed 100000 of it's 160000 troops in the Sinai (7d) (4 inf, 2 arm, 1 mech), 4 independent inf br, 4 independent arm br.
- A 3rd of those soldiers were veterans from the then ongoing North Yemen Civil War, 3rd reservists.
- They had 950 tanks, 1100 APCs, and more than 1000 artillery pieces.
- Syria's army had a total strength of 75000 and was deployed along the border, but was fractured due to previous coups, attempted coups, purges, fracturings and uprisings.
- JAF included 55000 (11br) of which 9 br (45000 troops, 270 tanks, 200 artillery pieces) were deployed in the West Bank and 2 in Jordan Valley.
- The RJAF consisted of 24 British-made Hawker Hunter fighters, 6 transport aircraft and 2 helicopters.
- According to the Israelis, the Hawker Hunter was on par with the Dassault Mirage III.
- 100 Iraqi tanks and an inf d were deployed at the Jordanian border and 2 squadrons consisting of Iraqi Hawker Hunters and MiG-21s were rebased near the border.
- Saudi Arabia also deployed 2 inf bat in Jordan's southernmost city, Ma'an
- Due to suffering massive losses on the first day, the Arab AFs were reinforced by aircraft from Libya, Algeria, Morocco, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia and were aided by volunteers from PAF.



5th June at 7:45, IAF Operation Focus, 200 operational jets, 12 not launched and rest launched a mass attack to destroy Egyptian airfields, no hardened aircraft shelters.

IAF planes low over the Mediterranean sea or the Red sea.

Egyptians shut down air defense systems, fear that rebel Egyptian forces would shoot down the plane with Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer and Lt-Gen. Sidqi Mahmoud, en route from al Maza to Bir Tamada, Sinai to meet the commanders of the troops stationed there.

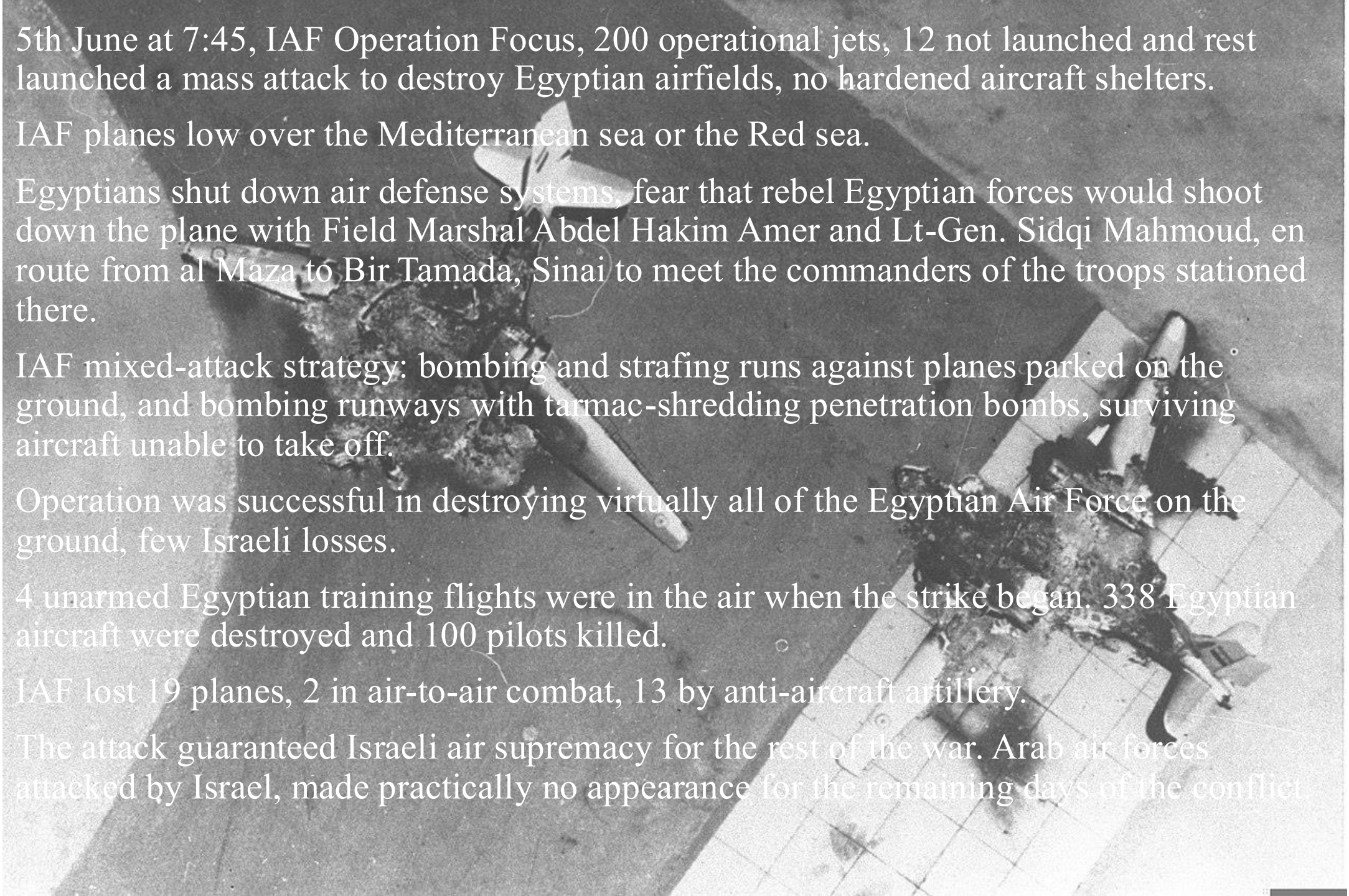
IAF mixed-attack strategy: bombing and strafing runs against planes parked on the ground, and bombing runways with tarmac-shredding penetration bombs, surviving aircraft unable to take off.

Operation was successful in destroying virtually all of the Egyptian Air Force on the ground, few Israeli losses.

4 unarmed Egyptian training flights were in the air when the strike began. 338 Egyptian aircraft were destroyed and 100 pilots killed.

IAF lost 19 planes, 2 in air-to-air combat, 13 by anti-aircraft artillery.

The attack guaranteed Israeli air supremacy for the rest of the war. Arab air forces attacked by Israel, made practically no appearance for the remaining days of the conflict.



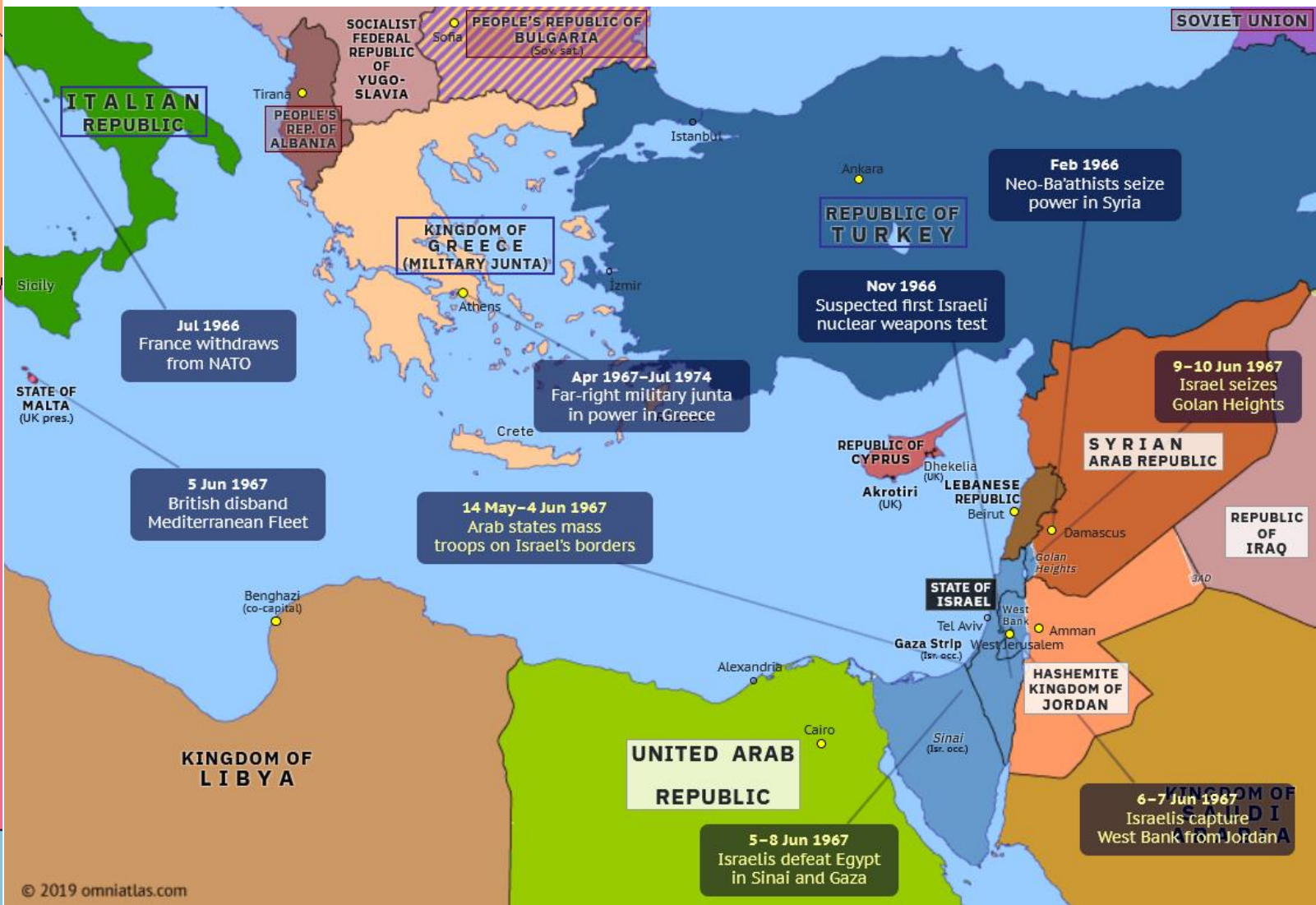
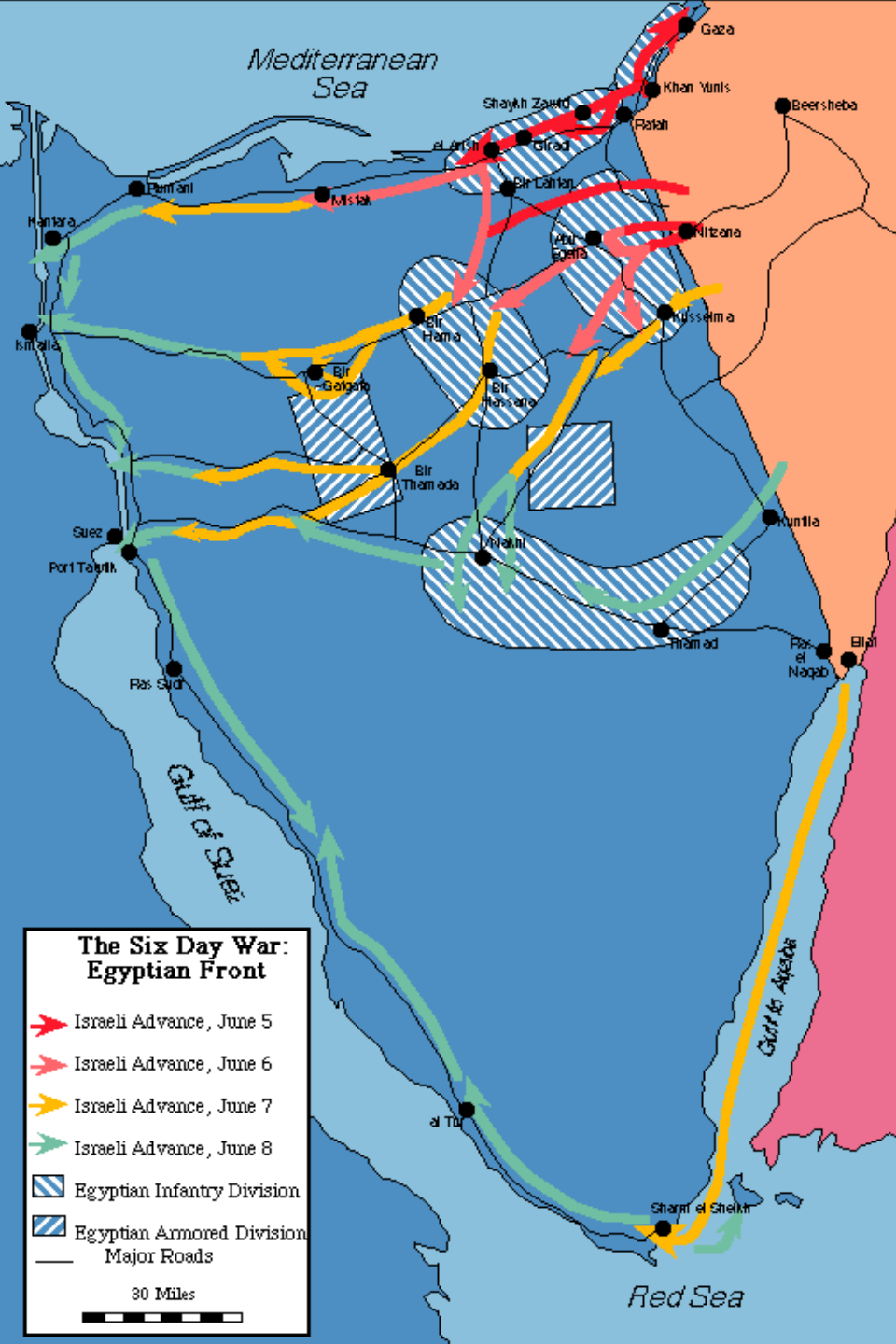
- While the other Mirage IIIs were executing Operation Focus, 12 of them were deployed to defend Israel itself.
- 4 were permanently in the sky, while 8 were at high readiness on the ground.
- After neutralising the Egyptian air force, the Mirage IIIs were redeployed to attack Syrian and Jordanian forces.
- In addition to bombing and interception missions, the Mirage IIIs also carried out reconnaissance missions, monitoring enemy troop movements.
- Out of a claimed total of 58 Arab aircraft shot down in air combat during the conflict, 48 were by the Mirage pilots.
- Limited range and lack of in-flight refueling restricted operational flexibility, especially over Syria.
- Due to its weak ground attack capability required support from other aircraft like the A-4 Skyhawk for strike missions.



- Israeli forces on the border with Egypt included 6 arm br, 1 inf br, 1 mech inf br, 3 paratrooper br, total of 70000 men and 700 tanks, organized in 3 arm d. They had massed on the border the night before the war.
- Israeli plan:
 - surprise the Egyptian forces in timing (attack coinciding with the IAF strike on airfields),
 - in location (via northern and central Sinai routes, opposed to the Egyptian expectations of a repeat of the 1956 war, when they attacked via the central and southern routes)
 - and method (combined-force flanking approach, rather than direct tank assaults).

- 5th June, Israeli forces launched a multi-front offensive.
- Gen. Tal's d through the Rafah Gap, with Gonen's and Aviram's brigades surrounding Khan Yunis, while paratroopers took Rafah.
- Despite strong resistance, Israel captured Rafah, Sheikh Zuweid, and Arish after heavy fighting, with Egypt losing 2000 men and 40 tanks.
- Israeli troops also pushed through the Jiradi defile and took Bir Lahfan and Jabal Libni.
- Simultaneously, the 8th Arm Br captured Kuntilla, securing Sharon's flank.
- That same day, despite Defense Minister Dayan's orders to avoid Gaza, IDF Chief Rabin sent the 11th Mech Br in after Palestinian attacks.
- Gaza City fell on 6 June with support from the 35th Paratroopers Br, intense combat and high casualties, including journalists and UNEF personnel.
- On 6 June, Gen. Sharon attacked Um-Katef, defended by Egypt's 2nd Inf D, using a combined force of tanks, infantry, paratroopers, artillery barrage.
- The battle ended with the Israeli capture of Abu-Ageila; Egypt suffered 2000 casualties and lost 40 tanks, Israel lost 42 dead, 140 wounded, and 19 tanks.
- Meanwhile, 2 Israeli reserve brigades under Yoffe captured key Sinai junctions and repelled Egyptian counterattacks.
- After the fall of Abu-Ageila, Field Marshal Amer panicked and ordered a disorganized retreat, sealing Egypt's defeat.

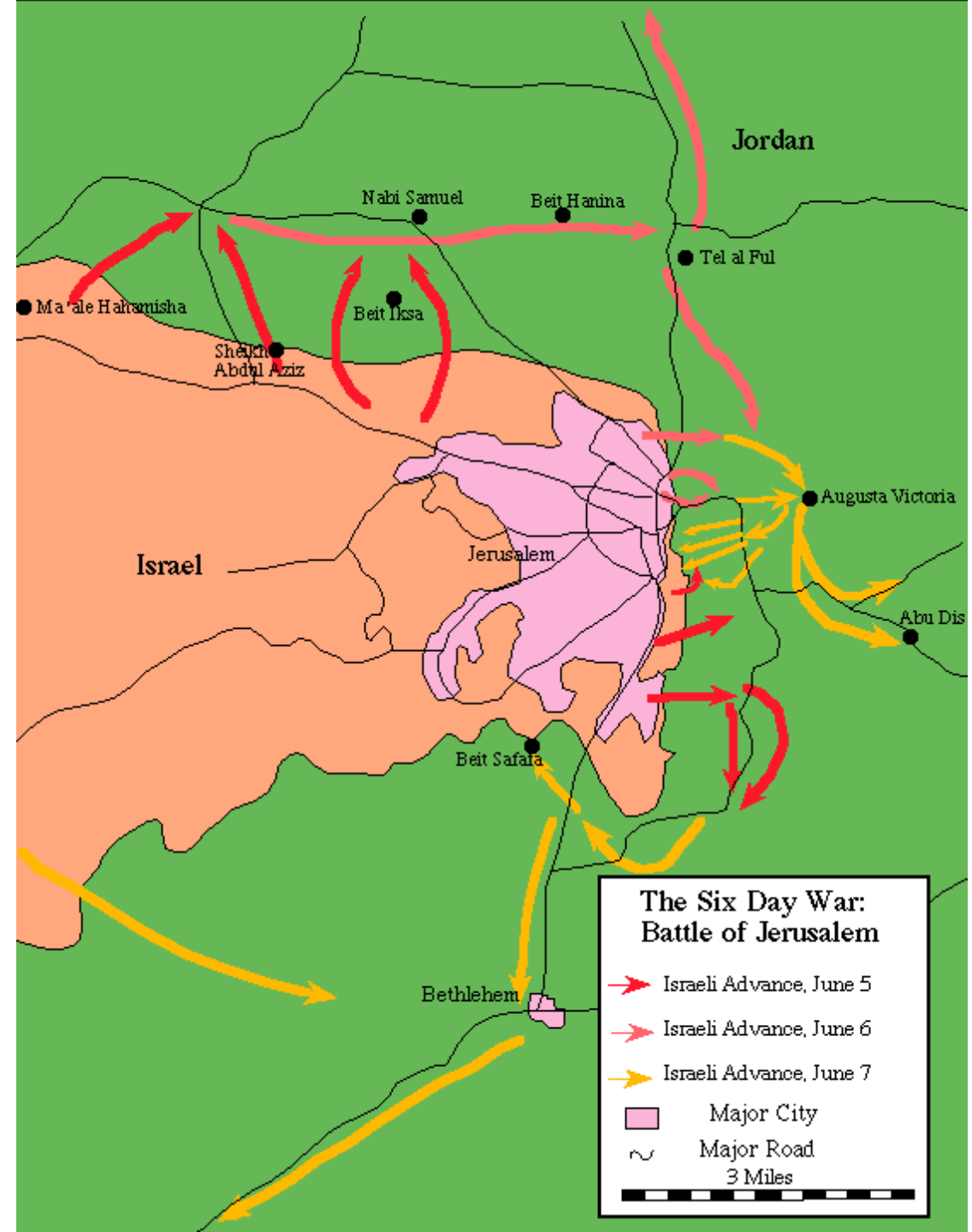
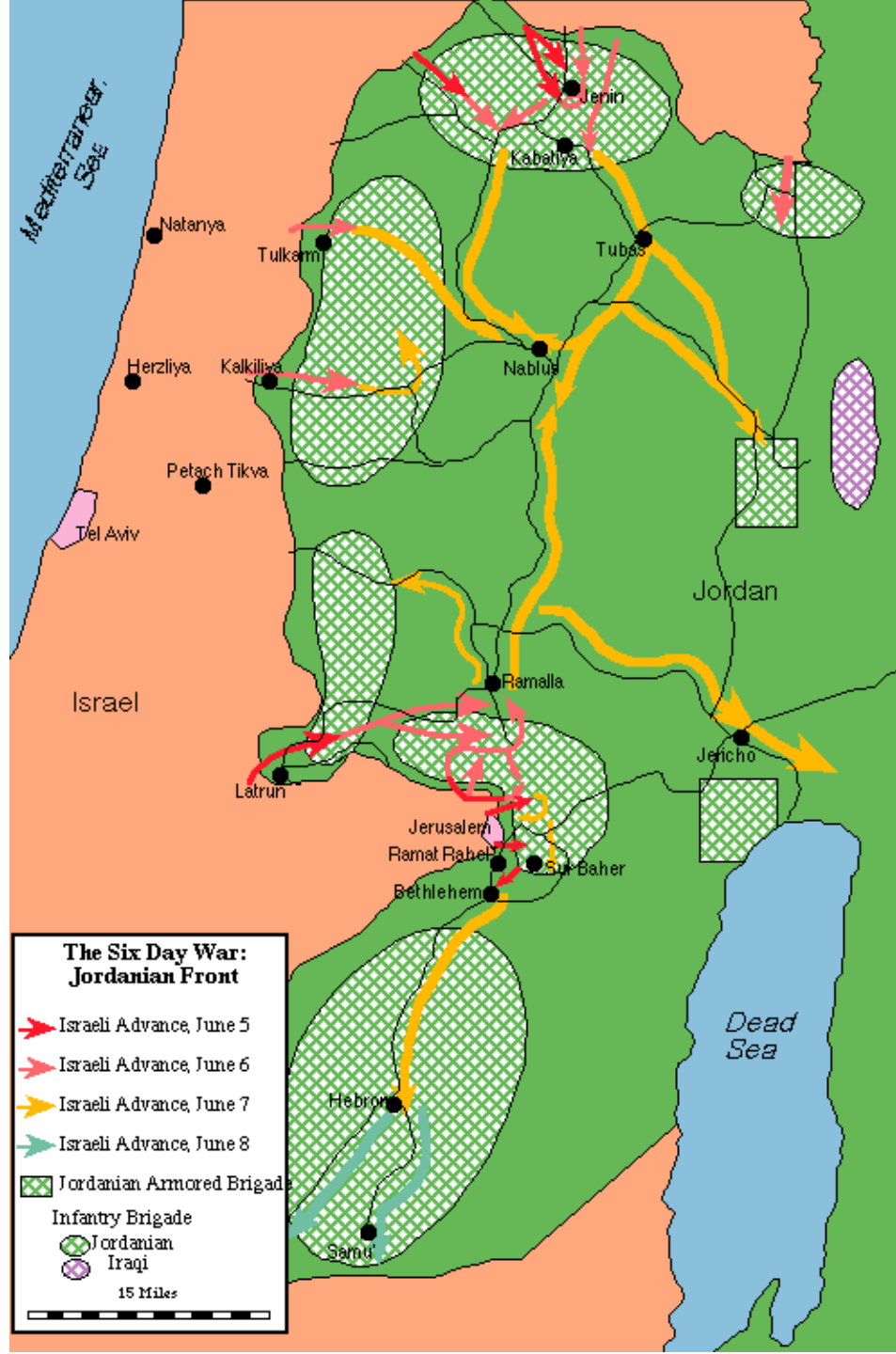




- As Egyptians retreated, Israeli aircraft and artillery inflicted massive losses using napalm and airstrikes.
- At Jabal Libni, Egyptians were mistakenly shelled by their own artillery.
- Israel chose to bypass retreating forces and destroy them in the mountain passes.
- On 6–7 June, reinforced Israeli divisions (Sharon, Tal, Yoffe) rushed west.
- Sharon moved via An-Nakhl to Mitla Pass; Yoffe helped block the Gidi Pass.
- These passes became deadly ambush zones for Egyptian troops.
- Up to 10000 Egyptians were killed in one day, many others died of thirst.
- Tal's forces reached the Suez Canal.
- Though some Egyptian units escaped, many retreated in chaos, abandoning equipment.
- Thousands of soldiers died walking to the canal; others surrendered.
- Israel could not handle the volume of prisoners and only held senior officers.
- Israeli naval commandos sank an Egyptian minesweeper in Alexandria but were captured; others failed to find targets in Port Said.
- On 7 June, Israeli forces attacked Sharm el-Sheikh, securing the Straits of Tiran.
- By 8 June, Israeli inf reached Ras Sudar, completing the capture of Sinai.

- 1st June, King Hussein handed Jordanian forces command to Egyptian General Abdul Munim Riad in Amman.
- Egyptian Field Marshal Amer prematurely ordered an early attack on 5 June.
- Jordanian brigades advanced into Hebron to join Egyptians;
- Israel stayed defensive on that front, focusing on Egypt.
- Fighting in Jerusalem began at 9:30 am, with Jordanian shelling on Tel Aviv suburbs and Jerusalem killing 20 and wounding over 1000 Israeli.
- Iraqi and Jordanian air raids targeted Israeli airfields and towns.
- Israeli cabinet debated but delayed an offensive on Jerusalem; meanwhile, IAF destroyed all Jordanian Hawker Hunter jets and hit Iraqi and Jordanian brs.
- Jordanian bat took the UN Government House area; Israel recaptured it after heavy fighting.
- 5th June afternoon, Israel started encircling Jerusalem with tanks, artillery, and paratroopers.
- Fierce battle at Ammunition Hill, heavy casualties but Israeli victory.
- Israelis linked with Mount Scopus.
- Jordanian tanks lost half their strength near Latrun and Ramallah.
- Jordanian reinforcements were heavily damaged by Israeli air and ground strikes.
- Dayan forbade entry into the Old City to protect holy sites and avoid international backlash.
- On 7 June, facing a UN ceasefire threat, Dayan ordered the capture of the Old City without cabinet approval; Israeli paratroopers entered with minimal resistance, avoiding use of armor to preserve the site.



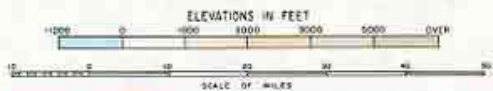


- 5–8th June: Syria initially stayed out of the conflict. False Egyptian reports of success encouraged Syria to join by shelling Israeli settlements and sending aircraft.
- On 5 June, Israel destroyed two-thirds of the Syrian Air Force.
- Syrian ground attacks on 6 June failed due to poor leadership, inadequate equipment, and Israeli air strikes.
- 7–8th June: Israeli leaders debated attacking the Golan Heights.
- Defense Minister Dayan initially opposed it but changed his mind after assessing collapsing Syrian defenses and low Soviet intervention risk.
- On 9th June at 7 a.m., Israel launched the attack without formal government approval.
- 9th June: Israel launched air strikes on Syrian positions and began ground attacks with 4 br.
- Heavy, close-quarters fighting, especially at Qala and Tel Fakhr.
- Israelis took key positions despite losses.
- By evening, they reached the plateau and brought in reinforcements.
- 10th June: Israeli forces advanced overnight under resistance.
- Syrian positions gradually collapsed, with mass retreats and abandoned equipment.
- By morning, most strongholds deserted.
- Syrians blew up their bunkers and broadcast false reports of defeat, damaging morale.
- Israeli troops secured strategic positions up to the "Purple Line" (future ceasefire line).

ISRAEL

THE SIX DAY WAR

Battle of Golan Heights, 9-10 June 1967



→ 9 June
→ 10 June



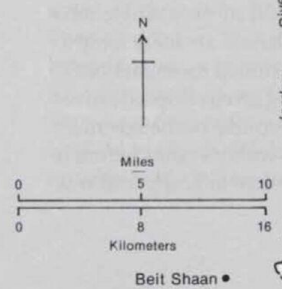
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SYRIA

JORDAN



- By 10th June, Israel ended its final offensive in the Golan Heights, and a ceasefire was signed the next day. Israel had captured the Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, West Bank, and Golan Heights, placing about one million Arabs under its control.
- Palestinians: 280000–325000 displaced; ~200000 fled the West Bank; 70000 from Gaza emigrated to Egypt/Arab states.
- Syrians: 80000–130000 fled/expelled from Golan Heights.
- Israel annexed East Jerusalem and applied its laws there and in Golan Heights (1981); most local Arabs declined Israeli citizenship.
- Partial return of displaced persons was allowed but limited (14000 of 120000 applicants returned to West Bank).
- War triggered national pride and economic growth.
- Sparked Jewish immigration from the West and USSR
- Violence and expulsions intensified across Arab states (Libya pogrom).
- Thousands of Jews fled Arab countries and Eastern Europe (Poland 1968)
- Egypt launched the War of Attrition along the Suez Canal.

Israel after the Six Day War (10 June, 1967)

