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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to reassess the widespread accepted criticism of Moshe Dayan's functioning as defense minister towards and during the 5 Yom Kippur War. Now that most of the archival documents have been opened to public view, we can better assess his performance during the war. This reassessment changes the picture: Dayan did not collapse, and the professional opinions he expressed were generally sound when accounting for the information available to him; however, there is no doubt that he allowed his subordinates to see his disturbed emotions and shook their confidence – a failure of leadership..

'In the October War we avenged 1967.

It was a personal matter between Dayan and me.

Now we took our revenge from Dayan. When I say Dayan, I mean Dayan.

I hated Dayan more than Sharon or Bar Lev.'

Field-Marshal Mohamed Abd el-Ghani el-Gamasy,

Chief of Operations, Egyptian Army, 1973.¹

Introduction

Moshe Dayan, the general with the black eye-patch, was one of Israel's most iconic figures from the 1950s to the 1970s. He first established his fame as Israel Defense Forces' (IDF) Chief of Staff (COS) leading a victorious campaign against Egypt in Sinai 1956, and later as Israel's defense minister when Israel won its greatest military victories in June 1967. Dayan became a local hero and an international celebrity. After the war, he continued to serve as defense minister, enjoying a special authoritative status. The Israeli public considered him to be 'Mr. Security' and felt confidence in his leadership. In the 1973 elections for the eighth Knesset (Israel's Parliament), the slogan used by the Labor party – Dayan's party – was: 'Our situation has never been better'.

Therefore, the results of surprise attack on 6 October 1973 and the initial defeats of the Yom Kippur War came as a devastating shock to the leadership of the nation and to Dayan himself. The post-war Agranat Commission investigated the events that led to the intelligence and military blunders before and during the first days of the war and found Dayan's conduct to be reasonable and vindicated him while pointing its finger at the military leadership. However, Dayan did not escape the verdict of public opinion which put the blame squarely on him.

The objective of the following article is to reassess Dayan's role as supreme commander during the Yom Kippur War. The justification for such a reassessment is the release in recent years of key

archival materials (minutes, recordings and deliberations of the main protagonists) and many new studies of the war based on these materials which allow for a reassessment Dayan's role during the war.² While this article does not present new findings, it does rely almost exclusively on source material available only in Hebrew that has not been translated into English and has not, by and large, been analyzed in English in relation to Moshe Dayan.

The article is structured as follows: it begins by discussing how Dayan's performance is presented in recent historiography of the war. It then follows Dayan's key decisions and actions in the period prior to the war until 14 October when Israel's bad fortune reversed. The next section analyzes and discusses the finding in the previous section. In order to analyze Dayan's performance as a supreme commander it utilizes the definition of command/generalship used by western militaries. The analysis challenges the accepted historiography.

In the decades after the war Israel's official archives were closed to researchers. As a result, the first war histories were written by historians who had special access, either to the people involved or to classified sources related to the war. In these early works, Dayan has been described, particularly in first days of the war, as someone who succumbed to panic and despair and consequently lost his famous sound judgment. In these works, in contrast to Dayan, Golda Meir, Israel's Prime Minister, and Lt. General David (Dado) Elazar, the IDF Chief of Staff (COS) were depicted as cool headed and balanced.

Two notable examples that shaped the historical narrative for years to come were Chaim Herzog's *The War of Atonement* first published in 1975, and Hanoch Bartov's biography of the David Elazar, *Dado*, published in 1978.

Herzog points out Dayan's failures: on the morning of 6 October Dayan vetoed Dado's request for a full mobilization of the Reserves. On 7 October, he visited the fronts only to spread pessimism and gave defeatist advice for deep withdrawals on the Golan and in Sinai. On 10 October, he hesitated over whether to initiate a counteroffensive into Syria and left the decision to Prime Minister Meir.³ In general, Dayan was in shock, his authority was shattered after 7 October and until the end of the war he was marginalized.

Bartov's biography aimed to clear Dado's name after his early death. Indeed Dado, who was forced to resign by the Agranat Commission, became the tragic hero of the war. While responsible for a few mistakes at the beginning of the war, he recovered from the shock of the first days and navigated the ship to safety. However, it seems that in order to highlight Dado's achievements Bartov found it necessary to contrast these with Dayan's failures. Bartov had argued that following the dramatic cabinet meeting in the afternoon of 7 October, Dayan lost much of his authoritative status for the remainder of the war, both in the eyes of Prime Minister Golda Meir and her ministers, and was replaced in their trust by Dado.⁴

In a more recent study, two more researchers, Uri Bar-Joseph and Rose McDermott, argued that Dayan performed poorly in the first days of the war. Specifically, they critique his decisions on 7 October.⁵ Following his visit to the northern front, Dayan called the Israeli Air Force (IAF) Commander Major General Benny Peled and told him to immediately cease the essential Operation *Tagar*, aimed at destroying Egypt's frontline air-defenses, that had just started, and to divert all his resources to the Golan. The authors describe this order as 'probably the single worst decision made throughout the war'. Furthermore, during a visit to the Egyptian front, Dayan 'gave Maj. Gen. Shmuel Gonen "ministerial advice" to abandon the Bar Lev line and to make a deep withdrawal into the Sinai. The extent of the suggested withdrawal is not clear'.⁶ Had this advice been obeyed, Israel would not have been able to execute the canal-crossing, war-winning, counter-offensive. In other words, Israel would have been forced to end the war in an inferior situation. These decisions, they argue, 'revealed signs of panic'.⁷

The path to war: April 1973 – 14:00, 6 October 1973

In early 1973, Dayan was alert to the possibility that Egypt might initiate a war. On 1 December 1972, Dayan opened a meeting with the General Staff declaring that they must assume that Egypt would

resume fighting in 1973.⁸ 'Resume fighting' deliberately left open the strategy to be chosen by Egypt – a renewed War of Attrition, a massed cross-canal offensive, or something in between. However, his view contrasted with that of the IDF Intelligence Director, General Eli Zeira who insisted that the 'probability that Egypt would initiate a war (of any kind) are low and the probability they will cross the canal is close to zero'.⁹

Dayan's view was that Zeira might be correct now, but he suspected Sadat's intentions, therefore he said 'this (war) may not happen tomorrow but could happen'.¹⁰ To deter the Egyptians, Israel requested the US to warn Egypt that it would respond to any Egyptian aggression in kind. It was then that the US warned Israel not to be the first one to shoot.¹¹

Sometime in mid-November 1972, Sadat directed his military to prepare for war.¹² Sadat was still hoping the US would pressure Israel for withdrawal from the territories captured in June 1967, under the terms he dictated. A few months later, when he realized that the negotiation had reached an impasse, Sadat made up his mind to go to war.

During April 1973, Dayan's assessment diverged further from his Director of Intelligence Zeira. While Zeira held the opinion that Sadat would not go to war in any circumstance, Dayan, who read the raw intelligence reports, found serious reasons to believe that war was a viable option for Sadat, who was not seeking a complete victory but rather a limited achievement.¹³ Dayan challenged Zeira and said: 'Sadat will sleep well even if he loses 20,000 soldiers'.¹⁴ At this stage, Dayan and David (Dado) Elazar, the IDF Chief of Staff, both assumed that it was feasible that Egypt would go to war.¹⁵

On 18 April 1973, Dayan also took part in a meeting with Golda Meir's security cabinet (known as 'Golda's kitchen cabinet') joined by Dado, Zeira and Tzvi Zamir, the Mossad director. In the meeting Dayan stated, 'If you ask me ... I believe they are going to war'. Dayan's argument was that the Egyptian war aims were limited, designed to change the political situation. 'They rely more on the Soviets, Americans and the Arab oil than on their commando units'.¹⁶ On 20 April, Dayan said that Egypt was on the war path.¹⁷ Reinforcing Dayan's and Dado's concerns were the reports from Israel's top Egyptian spy, Ashraf Marwan, who warned that Sadat intended to initiate a war. As a result, the IDF declared a high state of alert and improved its readiness, executing a program called 'Blue and White'. From May to August the IDF undertook a series of steps to improve its readiness for immediate war. The IDF mobilized additional armor and air defense units, formed new ground units, moved storage depots closer to the front and other measures.¹⁸

On 21 May, Dayan stated that there was a high probability of Egypt and Syria initiating a war towards the end of the summer. Jordan would probably stay out of the war, Iraq, Libya and other Arab states would send reinforcements. He turned to the IDF General Staff and said: 'Gentleman, we, the government, say to you: prepare for war ... be ready this summer'.¹⁹

'Blue and White' ended on 12 August 1973, no war had broken out, Zeira had been vindicated. From then until 6 October, Dayan and Dado relied on Zeira's assessment. The Israelis were unaware that around the time that 'Blue and White' had ended the Egyptians and Syrians decided on 6 October as the date to launch their joint attack.²⁰

On 13 September, tension peaked on the Golan, the Israel–Syria border. The Syrian air force attempted to intercept an Israeli reconnaissance flight over the Syria–Lebanon border that might have revealed Syrian preparations for war. Twelve Syrian jets and one Israeli jet had been shot down. This event had unintended negative consequences on the Israeli side: from then until 6 October, war preparations on the Syrian side were interpreted by the Israelis as part of a Syrian plan for a limited incursion or a large raid to retaliate for losing its fighter jets.²¹ On 24 September, fear of a large Syrian retaliation brought General Yitzhak Hafi, commander of Northern Command, to demand reinforcements for the Golan. These were taken from the quiet Egyptian front. Furthermore, even when the Syrian offensive started on 6 October, IDF units deployed on the Golan believed it to be a limited retaliation action that would last only a few hours.

Though Syria was weaker than Egypt, its forces were much closer to Israel's civilian residential areas and therefore posed a greater risk if able to cross the Golan (20–25 kilometers). While Dado felt

that Hofi's fears were exaggerated, Dayan ever careful, supported Hofi. Hofi's concerns coupled with a warning from Jordan's King Hussein that Syria was planning a war – though still interpreted on the Israelis side as the limited attack they were expecting – led Dayan to pressure the General Staff to further reinforce the Syrian front.²²

To sum up, in the six weeks from the end of 'Blue and White' until 30 September 1973, Israel's senior leadership believed that an all-out war with Egypt and Syria was highly unlikely. Dayan was extremely concerned about a Syrian incursion or a large raid aiming to capture an Israeli settlement or some chunks of territory but was convinced by Zeira that a combined Egyptian – Syrian attack was not probable.²³

From 1 to 5 October, a number of intelligence reports indicated preparations for war, but they were swept aside by Zeira and his senior staff who firmly stuck to their version of events; that the Egyptian mobilization and deployment was part of the annual autumn exercise as publicly declared by the Egyptians.²⁴ While both Dado and Dayan followed Zeira's assessment, Dayan was still uneasy about a possible Syrian attack and kept asking the General Staff about preparations in the North.²⁵ In fact, both Dayan and Golda Meir felt uneasy but were reassured time and again by Zeira's confident assessment that war would not break. On the night of 30 September–1 October, the Mossad received a report that an offensive would begin the next day. When this did not happen, normal activities were resumed.²⁶

On 5 October, Dayan received the latest reports on the Egyptian – Syrian military buildup and said to Dado and Zeira, 'just looking at the numbers [of tanks, artillery etc. assembled forward] one can get a stroke' and then added 'you are not taking the Arabs seriously'. Zeira responded by saying that indeed the newly begun evacuation of the Soviet military advisors' families, a clear indication that something is going on, did cast some doubt on his assessment but he still insisted that Egypt had no intention going to war.²⁷

Only then did Zeira tell Dayan and Dado that earlier that day Marwan had sent Zamir a message, between the 4th and the 5th of October, that he must meet with Zamir. Marwan sent with the message the code for a general warning about a coming war. In fact, Marwan sent a general warning on 2 October and again a more detailed message on the night of 4–5 October.²⁸ Zamir had not bypassed Zeira to directly inform the government of Marwan's warning and after the war the Agranat state committee noted that this had been a mistake.²⁹ In their meeting on the night of 5 October, Marwan told Zamir that the war would break sometime during the late afternoon of 6 October.

Dayan, acting on the suggestion of his senior advisor, Lt. General Tzvi Tzor (a former Chief of Staff), advised Golda Meir to deliver a message to Egypt through the Americans in order to deter Egypt. The message said that Israel does not intend to attack Egypt but will respond in kind if Egypt attacks. For unknown reasons the Americans delivered the message to the Egyptians only at 13:05 on 6 October, less than an hour before the beginning of the Egyptian – Syrian combined attack.³⁰

Dayan also asked Zeira about the 'special means', the top-secret listening devices that could, upon activation, monitor communications between Egyptian headquarters. However, as their activation could lead to their exposure. Zeira reported to Dado on 1 October that the devices had been activated, so when Dayan asked Zeira: 'in all this communication traffic, there is nothing special [suspicious]?' he assumed the Egyptians' high command communication had been monitored now for a few days. Zeira's answer was: 'totally quiet'. What Dayan did not know was that Zeira, who was convinced that Egypt would not attack, decided not to activate these devices and did not report it to his superiors, who continued to believe they were working.³¹

In a cabinet meeting on 5 October, with Dado and Zeira present, Dado reported to the Ministers³² that he believed that the intelligence assessment was correct, and the enemy was deploying defensively.³³ A CIA arriving in the evening of 5 October, also strengthened the impression that nothing unusual was happening on the Egyptian front.

IDF Historian Shimon Golan concluded that during 4 and 5 October Dayan raised doubts *vis-à-vis* the intelligence assessment, but his doubts did not shake Zeira's solid conviction that Egypt did not

intend to initiate war at this time. Dayan did not overrule Zeira's assessment yet decided to take diplomatic precautionary steps: to ask the Americans to check through the Soviets why the advisers' families were being evacuated; if such an inquiry would uncover an Egyptian plan to attack, then to ask the Americans to inform the Egyptians that their plans have been exposed and Israel and the US are ready for such a development. Working through the Americans, Dayan hoped to strike two birds with one stone: to deter the Arabs and to create an American obligation to support Israel in case deterrence failed.³⁴ It seems that at this point Dayan as defense minister relied on the military assessment and saw his main role on the diplomatic level, communicating threats and securing US support mainly through advising Golda Meir.

Dayan probably had in mind the incident in 1960 in which Israel practiced an emergency mobilization which almost deteriorated to a regional crisis and war, and tried to maneuver between a possible war and the possibility that an extreme Israeli reaction could unintentionally lead to war.³⁵

On 5 October, Zamir went to London to meet with Marwan. Only then was Golda Meir informed of Marwan's warning.³⁶ Zamir met with Marwan in London on the 5th of October at around midnight, Israeli time. Marwan told him that Egypt and Syria were to launch a joint attack on 6 October, late afternoon (sunset was at 17:20). Zamir pressured Marwan on whether he was sure. Marwan replied he was never sure; it was a decision of one man, and this man, Sadat, could always change his mind at the last minute.³⁷

Zamir delivered the information to the Mossad in Israel who passed it on to the prime minister's and defense minister's personal assistants, who then handed it in person to Golda Meir and Dayan, and telephoned Dado at about 04:30. Somewhere along this chain someone changed the word 'sunset' to 18:00.³⁸

The information that came from Marwan in the early morning hours convinced Dado that war is inevitable, but Dayan still had his doubts and hoped that an attack was not imminent. 'We had such warnings in the past but at the end nothing happened, if Sadat will find out his plan was exposed, he will probably cancel', he explained after the war.³⁹

All this while, the Israeli senior leadership was not aware that the 'H' hour for the attack was not sunset as Marwan said, but 14:00. Marwan did not know that two days prior to his meeting with Zeira, the Syrians and Egyptians decided to change the 'H' hour to 14.00 for operational reasons.⁴⁰ The Israelis had counted on an early warning of at least 48 hours and at a minimum 24, now they believed they had 12 but in fact had 8. The minimum time computed to be required for emergency mobilization of reserve units to the front was 48 hours to the Syrian front and 72 hours to the Sinai, Egyptian front. To the failure of Israeli intelligence to understand what was coming was added a similar American failure, which reinforced the Israeli misinterpretation.⁴¹

At 05:50 on 6 October, Dado and Dayan, accompanied by their personal assistants, met to discuss the forthcoming war. Dado requested that Dayan approve a number of steps: an immediate general mobilization of the entire IDF Reserves (approximately 80% of the IDF's combat manpower); to send aerial photography missions over the Egyptian side of the canal; and to launch a preemptive air-strike against Syria. Dado hoped to strike Syria and quickly force it out of the war. The priority target for the preemptive strike was the Syrian anti-aircraft missile system. However, at 06:30, the weather forecast showed heavy low clouds over the Golan, so Dado proposed first to attack Syrian airfields deeper in Syria and only after, if weather permitted, go after the air-defense missiles. This way the Israeli air force would quickly win air superiority and would be free to support the ground forces. The IAF commander told Dado he would be ready from 12:00 and Dado's intention was probably to launch the attack between 14:00 and 15:00, about three hours before the expected 'H' hour.

Dayan was against a preemptive strike. He argued that it would be impossible to prove that Egypt and Syria planned to attack, and Israel would take the blame for starting a war unprovoked. Dayan agreed to launch an immediate strike in Syria upon the first bullet fired from either Egypt or Syria. The same logic applied for aerial photography above Egypt. Recently, in September, such a reconnaissance in Syria had led to escalation. Now that tension was high, he wanted to avoid any hint of provocation.⁴²

Dayan was also against full mobilization of the Reserves. He explained that a full mobilization might cause escalation and bring the other side to preemptively attack, even if it had no prior intention to attack. He agreed to mobilize two divisions: one to the Golan and one to the Sinai to boost defenses. Dayan, most likely, was still skeptical about the unavoidability of a war. However, Dado explained he planned to start an offensive shortly after war broke out and therefore insisted on a full mobilization. As the two men could not reach an agreement, Dayan decided to bring their differences to Golda Meir to make the last call.⁴³

At least part of the gap between Dayan's and Dado's positions on these issues could be explained from their respective positions. Dado as COS wanted to ensure the best military position possible. Dayan as defense minister had to accommodate other considerations, primarily relations with the US and domestic issues such as the effect of full mobilization on the economy; as a politician he might also have considered the public discontent over a decision for a full mobilization and the impact it might have on the coming election – especially following the severe public criticism during the 'Blue and White' mobilization of a few months before.

At 08:05 Golda Meir and the cabinet, consisting of ministers Yigal Alon, Israel Galili and Moshe Dayan, and Dayan's senior assistant Lt. General (ret.) Tzvi Tsur, were joined by Dado and Zeira. Zeira opened by presenting the American intelligence assessment which pointed out that the Egyptian – Syrian armies were deployed offensively but also added that there was no reason to assume they were planning an attack. 'Sadat does not have to go to war' said Zeira. Dayan then explained that the air force could strike only if Egypt or Syria fired first. Golda Meir agreed with Dayan not to launch a preemptive strike but did not take the option off the table completely; she still hoped she could persuade the Americans and gain their support for a preemptive strike. As for mobilization, she accepted Dado's request for full mobilization of the Airforce plus four armoured divisions (against Dayan's proposal for two divisions). Dayan did not like the decision but did not dissent either.⁴⁴

Towards noon Dayan received reports on the advancing mobilization. Looking at the numbers he asked, 'what happened if a war will not begin?' This remark shows he was still unconvinced that war was inevitable. At this stage the IDF General Staff was calm, feeling secure that the air force was ready to launch a strike, the regular army was alert and deployed on the front lines, and mobilization was in process. Moreover, Zeira and his officers still believed the probability for war to be low.⁴⁵

Full mobilization started at 09:25 and the General Staff started to roll out war plans, still under the assumption that the attack would take place at 18:00. At 11:00 the plans were presented to Dayan. Dayan was told that the Egyptian army would face three armoured brigades. What Dayan did not know (nor did Dado) was that Zeira had convinced the commander of the Southern Command, Major General Shmuel Gonen, that there would be no war. Furthermore, Zeira warned Gonen that if he deployed his two rear brigades (one was already forward) to the canal too early the Egyptians could interpret it as an Israeli plan to attack and would open fire to defend themselves. Consequently, Gonen ordered his two rear brigades to begin moving to their forward positions near the canal only at 14:00, to arrive by 17:00 – an hour before the Egyptian attack was supposed to begin. However, the war started at 14:00. By 17:00, when the rear brigades belatedly began to arrive at the front, their positions were already occupied or at least covered by thousands of Egyptian infantry saturated with a plethora of anti-tank weapons and supported by tanks and more anti-tank weapons from the Egyptian side of the canal.⁴⁶

At a government meeting at noon, Dayan told the rest of the ministers that war was expected that evening. The Egyptians planned to advance about 20 kilometers in the Sinai towards the strategic passes and the Syrians would try to capture the Golan. Dayan said he was more worried about the situation on the Golan because of the proximity of civilian settlements to the border.⁴⁷ In response to the question 'what would happen if attack will begin earlier than 18:00?' Dayan replied not to worry as the air force was alert and would quickly respond to any development.

At about the same time, Peled, the Israel Air Force (IAF) commander, was informed that a preemptive strike had not been approved. At 13:00 Peled gave the order to reconfigure the

weapons on the fighter jets to close air support.⁴⁸ Peled did not inform Dayan and Dado of his directives. The transformation process normally takes a couple of hours, and at 14:00, the IAF was caught by surprise in the middle of the process, its planes on the ground not ready for battle.⁴⁹

To sum up, when the attack started at 14:00, Dayan and Dado believed they had three brigades deployed forward in Sinai, two on the Golan and the air force ready for an immediate strike. These forces were to hold back the Egyptians and Syrians until the Reserves arrived. In fact, at 14:00 two of the southern armoured brigades had not yet begun to move to the canal, and the air force was caught on the ground reconfiguring its planes for the new mission.⁵⁰ This lethal combination had catastrophic consequences. Thus, Dayan's flawed situation assessment was to a large extent a result of his overreliance on the intelligence estimate and mistakes by commanders further down the chain of command.

6th–8th of October 1973: calamity

At 13:55 the joint Egyptian-Syrian attack commenced. In the first hours of the war in Sinai, four Israeli battalions, later reinforced by six more, supported by 28 guns fought more than 80 Egyptian battalions supported by 1,600 artillery pieces; on the Golan seven Israeli battalions supported by 44 guns fought 54 Syrian battalions supported by 900 artillery pieces.⁵¹ At 14:30 Peled reported that he could not carry out the attack on the Syrian airfields.⁵² The fog of war was heavy, and it was hard to assess the situation. In the first few hours, it seemed things were going as planned and that the lines on both fronts were holding despite some expected localized Egyptian successes. The mood within the high command and the government at this point can be described as one of cautious optimism.⁵³

Following deliberations in the evening, Dayan and the General Staff decided to execute airforce plan *Tagar* the following morning to neutralize the Egyptian air defenses.⁵⁴ Dayan preferred to attack the bridges on the canal to assist the ground forces; however, he succumbed to Dado and Peled who insisted that the IAF should focus first on the anti-aircraft missiles and subsequently be more effective in assisting the ground forces.

At about 03:00 as more reports came in, the severity of the situation on the Golan gradually became clear to the General Staff. It seemed as if Dayan's greatest fears were being realized. Dayan asked about the air force's ability to support the ground forces on the Golan in the morning and was told that only one squadron was allocated for that mission.⁵⁵ At 05:00 Dado updated Dayan that the Syrian forces had broken through, but in Sinai things were looking a bit better.⁵⁶

Dayan, as always, preferred to be where the action was and went to Northern Command headquarters. At 06:00, he was there and was told by General Hofi that the Syrians had broken through into the southern Golan and there were no IDF forces to stop them from advancing into Galilee. Dayan instructed Hofi to concentrate any available forces to block the main routes descending from the Golan plateau. Unable to reach Dado, Dayan phoned Peled and desperately asked him to send some planes to stop the Syrian advance, though most of the air force was committed in operation *Tagar* in Egypt.⁵⁷ 'Benny, the third Temple is on your shoulders' he said to Peled. At 06:30, he reached Dado and asked him to commit the General Staff's last ground reserve, the 146th armour division, to the Syrian front. Dado, who 15 minutes earlier had reached the same conclusion, told Dayan he had already given the order.⁵⁸ This was a critical decision – if the unexpected happened and Jordan too joined the war there would be a very small and ill-equipped force to defend against the Jordanian army. Fortunately, the Jordanians, for their own reasons, did not open another front and by day's end the 146th division had turned the situation on the Golan around. Meanwhile, Hofi was preparing the demolition of the bridges over the Jordan River, the last line of defense west of the Golan. Dayan told Hofi he was against this action as he believed that reinforcements would arrive within hours and enable a counterattack.⁵⁹

At 07:00, reacting to the crisis on the Golan, Dado and Peled decided to abort *Tagar* and instead execute its sister plan for the Syrian front, plan *Dogman*.⁶⁰ Executing these operations properly

required eight hours preparation from the decision to do so. *Tagar* had been properly prepared and was initially successful, but *Dogman* was executed within only four and a half hours from the decision. This decision was proven wrong – *Tagar* was never completed, and the hasty execution caused *Dogman* to fail. After the war Dayan was accused of having panicked, that he had considered evacuating the entire Golan⁶¹ and had pressured the air force commander to unnecessarily abort *Tagar* and over-hastily initiate *Dogman*.⁶² The available documentation of the operational debates disproves these claims.

Back in Tel Aviv at 08:35, Dayan told Dado that he believed the air force could hold the Syrian advance in the southern Golan until ground reinforcements arrived. As for the Sinai – the news was not good, Dayan believed it was necessary to form a line of defense further back and acknowledge that the Bar Lev line was lost to the enemy.⁶³

Shortly after, further reports came in about the worsening situation in the south. Dayan arrived at Southern Command headquarters at 11:45 and was briefed by General Gonen. At 12:20, he was informed that *Dogman* in the north had failed.⁶⁴ Dado also informed him that the Reserve units would not reach the Sinai front before evening.⁶⁵ Dayan therefore told Gonen that if this was the case, he must form a new defensive line. He gave Gonen the freedom to decide where, even way back at the Sinai mountain passes about 40 kilometers east of the canal, should it be necessary – so be it, as long as he formed a strong defensive line.⁶⁶

At 12:30, Gonen reported to Dado that he could no longer hold the artillery road line (10 kilometers from the canal) and therefore intended to retreat to the Sinai mountain passes to await the arrival of the Reserves.⁶⁷ At this point, Dayan left the Southern Command back to Tel Aviv. At around 13:00, while Dayan was still in transit to Tel Aviv, the 143rd division commander, General Sharon, reported that a large force from his division had arrived earlier than expected and was ready to join the battle. In light of the new information, Gonen reassessed the situation and informed Dado he intended to hold the artillery road line instead of retreating to the passes.⁶⁸ After the war, Dayan would be criticized for this too.⁶⁹ Carmit Guy, General Bar Lev's biographer, wrote that it was Dayan's assessment that the IDF could not hold the artillery road, ignoring the fact that Dayan had relied on Gonen's assessment.⁷⁰

Sharon's update on the arrival of his units had a dramatic effect on the situation assessment and transformed morale both in Southern Command and in General Staff headquarters. Instead of talking of retreat the commanders were now discussed counterattacking and, if successful, using the momentum to cross the canal.⁷¹

Dayan, incommunicado en route to Tel Aviv, was not aware of this latest turn of events. He returned to Tel Aviv deeply pessimistic from what he had seen – as far as he knew, on both fronts the defensive lines had been penetrated and the air force had failed to neutralize the enemy's air defenses. Dayan entered the COS office at about 14:30, and interrupting a senior staff debate discussing the next steps he shared his deep concerns: 'This war is now for Israel's survival' he said. He feared that the war was developing into a contest of attrition and at the current rate of losses the IDF would not be capable of maintaining it for long.⁷² Dayan then turned to Dado and asked him for his assessment. Dado replied that he agreed with Dayan and that the plan to withdraw to the Sinai passes was congruent with IDF contingency plans. However, he believed the Syrians were losing momentum and that the Egyptians could be checked where they were. Dayan left the room, leaving a deep impression on everyone present – it was not the Dayan they knew. His special assistant, General Rechavam Zeevi, who was beside him the entire day, said Dayan was better now than on the way to and from the fronts, when he constantly spoke about 'the destruction of the Third Temple'.⁷³ His personal assistant, Aryeh Braun, who was also present, testified he never heard Dayan say this.⁷⁴ However, Dayan in his autobiography confessed that 'he cannot recall a time he felt so apprehensive and fearful'.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, Zeevi told the officers present that he believed Dayan may be right and they were too optimistic.⁷⁶ He explained that what they saw at the fronts left a difficult impression.

It is highly probable that the gap in perception between Dayan and his staff and the COS and the officers who stayed in Tel Aviv was created by the latest reports that neither Dayan nor Zeevi were aware of.

From the COS's office Dayan went to a cabinet meeting at 14:50. He presented a grim assessment: that the IDF would not be able to regain its former positions along the Suez canal – he would be proven correct on this point. He also acknowledged that he had underestimated the enemy's prowess. 'The Arabs are fighting well this time', he said, 'employing anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles, neutralizing Israel's air force and armor advantage', – on this too he was correct. Dayan then proposed retreating to a new defensive line in the Sinai, reorganizing and securing US material assistance as he feared it would be a long war. He then added that he 'might be too pessimistic', which indicates he was aware his view of the situation was a bit harsh.⁷⁷ As for the Syrian front, he said he believed that the Syrians were now checked and therefore, most likely, if Jordan joined the fray it would send its forces to Syria and would not open another front.⁷⁸ To Golda Meir he said he was against requesting a ceasefire, but if it happened, he would not be sorry. The main thing now was to keep losses low as attrition was the main problem.⁷⁹

His last statement on accepting a ceasefire is a strong indication of his pessimism at that point. It is true that others had also offered gloomy and pessimistic assessments, including the Prime Minister, but it is safe to say they hoped to draw encouragement from Dayan. His gloomy appearance had deeply shocked the ministers. They too could not recognize the Dayan of old. Minister Israel Galili asked to call in the COS Dado to hear another assessment. Dado entered the meeting; his calm and confidence immediately changed the atmosphere in the room. By and large he agreed with Dayan's assessment, but added he was against withdrawing to the Sinai passes at this stage. Encouraged by the latest proposals to counterattack, that had just arrived from Sharon and Gonen, he suggested delaying any decision until he visited the front to see for himself whether to withdraw to the passes, form a defensive line next to the artillery road, or counter-attack. The feasibility of latter two options, he stated, were in question, but the first option was a great sacrifice; therefore, he wanted a few hours before deciding.⁸⁰ Dayan, having learned by now that more reinforcements had arrived at the front, supported Dado's proposals.⁸¹

The two meetings, with the General Staff and the kitchen-cabinet, were significant in terms of Dayan's stature and authority from this point. Dayan was to be seen and portrayed during the war and after, including in the historiography, as pessimistic, lacking perspective and unable to make decisions. Conversely, Dado was seen as exuding confidence and optimism and shoring up morale. Dado was to be portrayed as the actual leader during the war while Dayan was pushed aside with his authority shaken and challenged.

There was another incident in this meeting that was used by Dayan's critiques as proof he had lost his nerve. According to a testimony given years after the war by Arnan Azaryahu who served at the time as an advisor to government minister Israel Galili, the minister told Azaryahu that towards the end of the difficult government meeting on 7 October, just as the ministers were ready to leave the room, Dayan suddenly turn to them and proposed discussing what it would take to arrange a small nuclear demonstration if things continued to deteriorate, to signal to the Arabs that Israel had that capability. This idea was rejected at once by Golda Meir and the other ministers. This story has since been used by some to prove that Dayan lost his nerves.⁸²

However, the story is to be found nowhere in the protocols and is based on just one indirect testimony, by Galili who was a political rival to Dayan. This story was used by Galili and Alon to reinforce the narrative that Dayan lost his nerve and could not be trusted. Nevertheless, assuming the story is true, Dayan was a man of many ideas and open to many notions. His request to discuss the feasibility of such a move with his peers does not prove anything other than that he was willing to think of a worst-case scenario. Once he was told that the topic was not for discussion he did not press on. A discussion of a small nuclear test in such a situation, while problematic, is not something completely off the play book – it does show that Dayan believed the situation could be worse if the war continued and at current rates of loss Israel could not keep up. He briefly raised the idea and

once refused never raised it again. In later years Dayan supported a change in Israel's nuclear ambiguity policy, advocating Israel should openly declare its capabilities – this can shed another light on his attitude to the topic.

Later, at 18:45, Dayan's field commanders convinced him they were able to execute a counterattack. The objective was not to cross the canal but to disrupt the Egyptian forces around the crossing points and halt their offensive momentum.⁸³ For the morning of 8 October, Dado decided on simultaneous counterattacks against both the Syrians and Egyptians, hoping to change the tide of the war. Just before midnight he reported his decision to Dayan. Convinced by Dado's confidence, Dayan gave his approval.⁸⁴

Initial reports suggested the counterattacks on both fronts were progressing as planned. Morale in the IDF headquarters in Tel Aviv was high and Dado asked to issue a public statement declaring a turning point in the war.⁸⁵ However, while on the Golan the situation was gradually improving, the fog of war distorted the real situation in Sinai. At a press conference in the evening Dado promised that 'we shall attack and keep attacking, we will inflict blows and break their bones ...'⁸⁶ Dado and Dayan both reported on good news to the government in the morning, both were unaware of the failure in Sinai, nor its extent, until late in the day. They then flew together to Southern Command.

9th–10th of October: recovering

At 00:25 on 9 October, Dayan and Dado arrived at Southern Command and realized that the Southern Command's counter-attack had suffered a resounding defeat.

This is not the place to analyze the reasons for this failure, suffice to say that poor planning, miscommunication and miscoordination, mostly by Southern Command, were the main reasons. When he learned of the failure Dayan responded: 'We have to relearn reality ... our assumptions about what the air force and our armor can do have collapsed, there are no quick solutions and we will have to fight until decision is reached'. Dayan then outlined a strategy for the following days and repeated it later, back at General Staff headquarters: Syria first – full pressure on Syria, the weaker enemy, to force it out of the war. On the Egyptian front – defend at minimum cost without any offensive action.⁸⁷

The realization that Israel was facing a long campaign of attrition slowly sunk in. The correctness of Dayan's gloomy prediction on the second day of the war became evident. None of the options on the table to bring the war to an end seemed like good ones. If Israel requested a ceasefire, it meant acknowledging defeat. To continue the war in this way meant an attrition rate Israel could not afford. At this stage, Israel could not count on aid from the Europeans who were under the threat of an Arab oil embargo, while American materiel support had not yet been secured. In addition, there was the risk of other Arab countries joining in and sending more forces.

In light of this, Dayan spoke to both the General Staff and the Cabinet of preparing for a long campaign and favored telling the public the truth. He still believed the IDF should prepare a second line of defense deep in Sinai, but when Golda Meir asked him how long could the IDF hold there, he replied 'forever'.⁸⁸ Nevertheless, he did not order such a move, rather he instructed that on the Syrian front, there would be no retreats, 'not even an inch', and on the Egyptian front, the regional command should assess what were the best lines of defense.

Now it was Dado's turn to be pessimistic. He told the General Staff that the 'situation is bad and hard',⁸⁹ whereas Dayan was slowly regaining confidence and had come to terms with the new reality – 'there is a new reality ... we need to get organize accordingly ... we have to accept the fact we cannot push the Egyptians back across the canal'.⁹⁰ He then defined the objective: attack into Syria to bring the Syrians to stop fighting, even without an official ceasefire agreement, in order to isolate the Egyptians. Dayan instructed Dado to look at the different options to pressure Syria into requesting a ceasefire, including bombing targets in Damascus and national infrastructure. The initial targets chosen were the Syrian General Staff headquarters in Damascus and a few electricity facilities. These strategic targets were then approved by Golda Meir.

As to the Egyptian front, Dayan and Dado agreed that crossing the canal was imperative to achieve an acceptable conclusion to the war.⁹¹ But Dado was pessimistic as to the possibility of achieving this. Two Egyptian armor divisions were still on the Egyptian side of the canal, waiting for orders to cross and resume the advance eastwards. If they remained on the Egyptian side any Israeli crossing, necessarily in limited force, would be highly vulnerable to counterattack. He preferred to wait for them to cross, annihilate them in Sinai and only then launch an Israeli crossing.⁹² This plan had a major caveat: he did not know if and when the Egyptians intended to send these two divisions across the canal. Meanwhile, time was against Israel so that 'if we are offered a ceasefire we should take it, I can't see how we can improve the situation', he said.⁹³ Conversely, Dayan believed time was working for Israel and a ceasefire should be deferred and told Golda Meir to ask US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger for this.⁹⁴

Meanwhile, on 9 October, the Golan counterattack continued to gain ground and the following morning, 10 October, Northern Command reported it had recovered all the lost territory on the Golan Heights aside from Mount Hermon. A new option was now available to compel Syria to request a ceasefire – a ground offensive towards Damascus, 60 kilometers from the border.

11th–14th of October 1973: turning the tide

However, forcing the Syrians to request a ceasefire proved a difficult task. On 11 October, IDF ground forces penetrated almost 20 kilometers towards Damascus, but the Syrian army did not break. On 12 October, Dayan offered his resignation to Golda Meir. Dayan explained that he had failed to assess the strength of the enemy; however, he believed he could still contribute significantly if she asked him to stay. She requested that he stay in office.⁹⁵

On the positive side, defensive lines were stabilized and there was no longer an existential threat. However, Israeli casualties were accumulating and irreplaceable; there were no more reserves, whereas Egypt still had two fresh divisions while two fresh reinforced Iraqi divisions had begun arriving in Syria and Jordanian troops were expected too. On both fronts, Israeli units were considerably outnumbered. In Sinai fighting diminished somewhat allowing Israeli forces some rest and recuperation, but the Israeli units on the Golan had been fighting continuously without respite and most tank units had lost half their strength. They slowly gained some ground during the day but barely withstood an initial Iraqi counterattack. Furthermore, Dado was under intense pressure from IAF commander Benny Peled, who reported that the air force was nearing its 'red line' in terms of its losses and would have to drastically reduce its actions within a couple of days at most. Later, it was revealed that Peled had exaggerated in order to pressure Dado to order an offensive in Sinai immediately, while the air force was available, however he achieved the opposite effect.⁹⁶ On 12 October, Dado estimated that by the 14th, the IDF would reach its culminating point, beyond it there would be no more achievements.

The looming challenge was how, despite the developments described above, to compel Egypt and Syria to ask for a ceasefire with sufficiently favorable terms for Israel.

Dayan had hoped that a direct threat to Damascus would bring the Syrians to look for a way out, and that Egypt would prefer to follow so as not to fight on alone. However, the Syrians had not budged and continuing the ground offensive against them in face of the changing balance of forces seemed too costly.

Against Egypt it was believed that a counter-offensive of IDF units into Egypt could have the desired effect too. However, as long as the Egyptians kept their two strong armor divisions on the Egyptian side of the canal, the risk that crossing Israeli forces would be annihilated was very high. In this situation Dayan could not see how a crossing could bring the Egyptians to request a ceasefire. He pressed Dado on this point, but all Dado could say was that the crossing might achieve military dividends, but he could not guarantee it would result in an Egyptian capitulation. Dayan was also concerned about the logistical aspect: how the forces across the canal would be supported and sustained. He decided he should again visit the front line and speak with the commanders on the

ground.⁹⁷ Dayan's position was to support the crossing if he could be convinced it would improve the military situation.

Dado was not content with Dayan's position. He was running out of options and felt he needed full government backing to initiate a cross-canal offensive, especially if he could not guarantee this would result in Egypt requesting a ceasefire.

Dado requested a cabinet meeting and at 14:30 on 12 October, the cabinet convened for a dramatic decision on whether to approve the crossing of the canal. Dado began the meeting by explaining to the ministers that Israel's forces were in a state that required a cease fire in a few days. The big question was whether the crossing, with all its risks, could serve to increase the prospects for securing a ceasefire.⁹⁸

This difficult dilemma was resolved by intelligence information received in the nick of time. Just as the other senior officers had finished presenting their opinions and before the ministers had a chance to respond, as if in a well-scripted Hollywood drama, two reports came in. The first was that Damascus was within IDF artillery range – a clear message to Syria. The second, provided by Tzvi Zamir, head of Mossad, was more critical; its content suggested that the Egyptians were planning to start the second phase of their offensive which also meant they intended to send their two armor divisions to the Israeli side of the canal in order to advance to the Sinai passes. 'Zamir had just concluded the discussion for us' said Golda.⁹⁹

The way forward was clear to everyone in the room: wait for the Egyptians to cross, annihilate their attacking forces and then cross to the Egyptian side. Dayan said he now had more confidence than Dado and Bar-Lev that the IDF could defeat the Egyptian forces. Dayan also suggested that Israel should not reject the American-British cease-fire initiative. He assumed that the Egyptians would reject it anyhow, and by not refusing Israel would win some credit from the Americans.¹⁰⁰ His position was accepted but it later led to some confusion as Israel's Foreign Minister Abba Eban and Israel's Ambassador to Washington, Simcha Dinitz, had not been informed as to Dayan's rationale and were shocked to read the telegram that Israel was not against the ceasefire initiative.¹⁰¹ Kissinger was surprised too; believing the Israelis were surrendering, he urged Dinitz to tell Jerusalem to keep up the fight. However, events developed as Dayan predicted; the Egyptians, preparing to attack, rejected the ceasefire proposal and Israel won some diplomatic credit.¹⁰²

At 21:00, Dayan traveled again to Southern Command to learn from the commanders at the front how they assessed the chance of success. 'If you reach a definitive conclusion that we ought to cross, I will bring it to the government, and we will approve it' he told them.¹⁰³

The Egyptian attack commenced on the morning of 14 October. In a fierce battle more than 200 Egyptian tanks were destroyed in what was later considered to be the turning point of the war on this front. At 21:00 on 14 October the cabinet gave its final approval for the crossing. The following night, 15–16 October, an Israeli tank brigade cleared a route and a paratrooper brigade with tanks crossed the canal. Over next few days, two armored divisions followed. Heavy fighting was still ahead but on 24 October, when a final ceasefire was declared, Israeli forces on the Egyptian side of the canal had completely encircled the entire Third Egyptian army – forcing Egypt to request a ceasefire. Egyptian forces still held a strip of the Sinai, but only because Sadat had fired his Chief of Staff Shazly for demanding a complete withdrawal. Syria had lost all its initial gains and the Israelis held a salient pointing to Damascus.

Discussion and analysis

Western military doctrine dissects the term *command* into a number of related categories. British Army doctrine defines *command* as the 'authority vested in an individual for the direction, coordination, and control of military forces'. According to U.S. Army doctrine, command includes *leadership* and *decision-making*. *Leadership* entails 'influencing people by providing purpose, direction and motivation', while *decision-making* signifies 'selecting a course of action as the one most favorable to accomplish the mission'.¹⁰⁴

These two analytical constructs, decision-making and leadership, provide a useful framework for the purpose of analyzing Dayan's performance as one of Israel's supreme commanders in the war. The analysis shows that, contrary to what some of his critics contend, Dayan's decision-making during the war was generally sound; however, his failure was evident in leadership.

An important aspect for the analysis is Dayan's position as defense minister. As such he had to take into account not only the military situation but also the broader aspects of national security such as relations with the US, domestic morale and so forth. The different perspective between Dayan and Dado, the COS, is evident – the latter focused solely on the military situation.

As was shown at the beginning of this article, in the months leading up to the war Dayan was initially alert and apprehensive, but gradually, as nothing happened, he slowly succumbed to the confident assessment of Zeira and his intelligence officers. His fear of a Syrian retaliation on the Golan led to a critical reinforcement of that front. On the morning of 6 October, it is most probable to assume that he would have altered his decisions regarding the Reserve mobilization if he had possessed a crystal ball that showed him war was imminent. But he didn't have one, so he tried to minimize risks for the two possible scenarios, aware that if Israel overreacted it could also lead to war, even if the other side was not planning one. Indeed, Israel was caught in a trap that the Arabs used well for their benefit.

Unlike what some of his critiques such as Herzog, Bartov and Bar-Joseph and McDermott suggest, Dayan did not panic, and his decisions were based upon the information he received from the commanders on site. On 7 October, Dayan visited the front lines in both theatres. He arrived when they were at their lowest points of the war. The pessimistic situation assessments he provided to the government and the General Staff, which colored post-war assessments of his performance, were not his own, he was echoing those he heard from the commanders on the ground. He responded to his subordinates' quandaries by suggesting ways to improve the situation. In Sinai, he told Gonen he should prepare a rear defensive line and gave him the freedom to decide the location of that line. On the Golan he called for air support to slowdown the Syrian advance in the southern sector. When he arrived back in Tel Aviv, he did not yet know that Southern Command was reporting a dramatic improvement of the situation and entered the cabinet meeting believing that everything is going the wrong way.

In contrast to everyone else who believed that Israel's forces would rebound quickly, Dayan understood that this was not the case. He quickly observed that Israel was surprised twice: first by the timing of the attack, and second by the battle performance of its adversaries. Dayan realized as early as 7 October that this was going to be a long and bloody war, something his colleagues in the government and the IDF would only realize after the failure of the Sinai counterattack on 8 October.

While it is probably true that his leadership status and authority were weakened after 7 October, the minutes of the debates clearly show he still played a major role, side by side next to Dado. One of the most difficult decisions in the war was to which front to commit the only General Staff reserve division. Both Dayan and Dado reached the same conclusion independently – the Golan. From evening of 8 October, Dayan led the decision to focus on Syria. He was deeply involved in the discussion on crossing the canal into Egypt and it was his idea to not refuse the ceasefire on 12 October as a diplomatic maneuver – transferring the onus for refusal to Egypt, a proposal that Meir approved. To conclude, Dayan was not peripheral in any of these deliberations; to the contrary, taking into account the information available to him before each decision, these were sound even if not always correct or first-rate. To his credit, when he was not sure, such as in the case of the Reserve mobilization or the counterattack on 8 October, he did not impose his own ideas. Later on, this would be regarded as a sign of his weakness.

Dayan's major failure in the war was in leadership. In stark contrast to his performance on the eve of the Six Days War, he did not have a 'Churchillian moment', thus lifting his people from their depression at a time of great distress. Dayan was, after all, a world-renowned expert on security, the general who led Israel from one great victory to another. As Israel's foreign minister at the time wrote: 'Israeli citizens could sleep soundly at night, knowing that the defense system was at high

pitch of vigilance and efficiency'.¹⁰⁵ Of course he was fully aware of his status and that he had failed his people. He knew his international reputation was tarnished and he lost the confidence of leaders such as Kissinger. Add his remorse to his profound understanding of the severity of the situation and the outcome was a disturbed Dayan never seen before. His colleagues and subordinates, as many testimonies affirm, witnessed the fall of a demigod and to say it did not help morale is probably an understatement.

Instead of rising above the occasion, rallying everyone to the flag, to use historian John Keegan's metaphor, Dayan allowed himself to drop his 'mask of command' and exposed his true feelings. General Yigal Yadin, Israel's second COS, who was also a member of the Agranat Committee, summed it up: 'Dayan stood on his feet, he did not collapse, in fact he was more optimistic than me. I have one complaint to him: a leader should give a sense of hope, that we will win, Dayan did not say that'.¹⁰⁶ Another Israeli general, Mussa Peled, who commanded a Reserve armor division in the war added: 'I know that sometimes a person who is a hero in one situation is not necessarily a hero in a different situation. Dayan blamed himself for not mobilizing the army and felt that his decisions had caused the disaster. It must be remembered that he was not an ordinary defense minister, he was a figure of tremendous authority and power. Therefore, he felt the shock much more terribly than did we'.¹⁰⁷

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to reassess the widely accepted criticism of Dayan's functioning as defense minister prior to and during the Yom Kippur War. The trauma of that war led many Israelis to look for a guilty party to blame for the tragedy and the partial availability of documentation on what happened in the decision-making processes created a dependence on the flawed memories of participants in these activities. Now that most of the documents have been directly or indirectly opened to public view, we can better assess Dayan's statements, opinions and considerations as expressed in the official discussions of Israel's government and high military command. This reassessment challenges the claims in the existing literature: Dayan did not collapse, and the professional opinions he expressed were generally sound when accounting for the information available to him from intelligence reports and by his commanders' assessments, at each point in time; however, there is no doubt that he allowed his subordinates to see his disturbed emotions and shook their confidence – a failure of leadership.

Notes

1. Field Marshall Gamasi in an interview with Stein, *Heroic Diplomacy*.
2. Most notably, Golan, *Decision Making of Israeli High Command in the Yom Kippur War*. Golan, as senior researcher in the IDF history department, has compiled and edited a rich collection of primary resources that are not otherwise available to the public, many documents cited in the original form. Other important works include Tal and Yair, *Chapters from the Yom Kippur War*. Israel Tal was the Deputy Chief of Staff during the war. His book was published by his son after he died. Other works include Azov, *Decision: Who Won the Yom Kippur War*; Azov, *Crossing*; Zoref (ed.), *Golda Meir, 4th Prime Minister*; Shafir, *The Yom Kippur War – A Different Outlook*.
3. Herzog, *The War of Atonement* and a similar view in Zeev Schiff, *Earthquake in October*.
4. Bartov, *Daddo* in Bar-Joseph, and Yossef, "The Hidden Factors that Turned the Tide": 'Following this crisis and throughout the rest of the war Meir tended to accept the course of action suggested by the Chief of Staff rather than Dayan'. Similar description of Dayan is in See in Guy, *Bar Lev – Biography*.
5. Bar-Joseph and McDermott, "Personal Functioning under Stress".
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Defense Cabinet meeting, 1 December 1972, in: Braun, *Moshe Dayan*.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Government meeting 3 December 1972, in Braun.
11. Memorandum from Henry Kissinger to President Richard Nixon, 1 December 1972, in Boumfeld, *To Take the Plunge*.

12. Ibid.
13. Bar-Joseph, *The Watchman Fell Asleep*.
14. Tal and Tal, *Chapters from the Yom Kippur War*.
15. Bar-Joseph, *The Watchman Fell Asleep*, 172.
16. Ibid.
17. Braun, *Moshe Dayan*.
18. Golan, *Decision Making of Israeli High Command*.
19. Gelber, "The Collapse of the Israeli Intelligence's Conception".
20. Ibid.
21. "Memorandum, General Staff, Operations Branch", September 1973, in Golan.
22. Personal Communication with Dr. Shimon Golan, Tel Aviv, 28 December 2020.
23. Kahana, "Early Warning Versus Concept".
24. "General Staff Discussion, 1 October 1973", in Golan.
25. "Cabinet meeting, Tel Aviv 3 October 1973", in Golan.
26. Bar -Joseph, *The Watchman Fell Asleep*.
27. 'Weekly Meeting, Minister of Defense Office, 5 October 1973', Golan.
28. Bar-Joseph, "A Question of Loyalty".
29. 'Agranat Committee Partial Report, Volume 1, 1974', in Tal and Tal, *Chapters from the Yom Kippur War*.
30. Rom, "The Yom Kippur War, Dr. Kissinger, and the Smoking Gun".
31. Bar-Joseph, *The Watchman Fell Asleep*. Also see: Ofer Aderet, "Secret Document Reveals how Aman's Director Misled the Government Regarding the "Special Devices" in 1973", Haaretz, 9 May 2020. Zeira instructed to turn them on and then to turn it off after a short time, so technically he said the truth.
32. There was no formal Cabinet, other than the usual 'Kitchen' members, Golda, Dayan, Galilei and Alon three additional ministers were present.
33. 'Government Meeting, Tel Aviv, 5 October 1973, 11:30', in Golan.
34. See note 18 above.
35. Bar- Joseph, *The Watchman Fell Asleep*.
36. Agranat Committee Partial Report, Volume 1, 1974, in Tal and Tal, 174–175. Zamir and Dayan's relations were uneasy, Zamir later argued that he did not report his trip to Golda as he worried that Dayan might ask for a meeting to find out more about Marwan's message and Zamir wanted to leave with no further delays.
37. Bar-Joseph, *The Watchman Fell Asleep*.
38. Tal and Tal; Golan.
39. Moshe, *Story of my Life*.
40. Bar-Joseph, *The Watchman Fell Asleep*. Each for their own tactical reasons the Egyptians wanted sunset, the Syrians wanted dawn – they compromised.
41. Eiran, "Dangerous Liaison".
42. The account of this meeting is based on minutes recorded by Avner Shalev, Personal Assistant to the COS and Brigadier General Shlomo Gazit who was called into the meeting at 05:50 6 October 1973 in Golan, *Decision Making of Israeli High Command*. Gazit's personal testimony of the meeting can be found in in Gazit's autobiography, Gazit, *Key Points of Time*, Gazit points the finger towards Dado and Avner Shalev for not immediately initiating the mobilization of the two divisions Dayan approved right at end of the meeting and therefore wasting valuable time. Shalev, on his part, said Dayan never gave an explicit approval and only agreed to bring the matter to the PM to make the final call. Shalev claimed that Gazit added Dayan's approval to the minutes after the war. As there is no audio recording of this meeting it is impossible to reach a verdict.
43. Ibid.
44. "Minutes COS personal assistance, 6 October 1973, 08:05", Golan.
45. 'Intelligence Summary: Analysis Department and Air Force Intelligence, October 1973', in Golan.
46. Testimony of Major General Gonen to IDF History Department, in Golan. Also see Dado testimony to IDF History Department in Golan. Each of the five Egyptian divisions had approximately 340 tanks, anti-tank guided missile launchers and anti-tank guns plus approximately 450 RPG launchers.
47. 'Government Meeting, Noon 6 October 1973, State Archives', in Golan.
48. Air Force Commander Statement at Senior Commanders Meeting, 12 February 1974, in Golan.
49. Shmuel Gordon, *30 Hours in October* (Tel Aviv: Ma'ariv, 2008).
50. Chief of Staff Statement at General Commanders Meeting, 12 February 1974, in Golan.
51. These were just the forward units of the rival armies.
52. Gordon.
53. 'Minutes from the Ministry of Defense and from the COS Personal Assistant's Diary', in Golan. 'Government Meeting, 22:00 6 October 1973', in Golan.
54. 'Minutes from the Ministry of Defense and from the COS Personal Assistant's Diary', in Golan.
55. 'COS Personal Assistant's Diary, in Golan.
56. 'Minister of Defense Personal Assistant's Diary', in Golan, 352–354.

57. Notes taken by Lt. Col. Lavie, in Golan.
58. COS Personal Assistant's Diary, in Golan.
59. 'Minister of Defense Personal Assistant's Diary', in Golan.
60. 'Recording from Air Force Commander's War Room', in Golan.
61. Zeev Schiff, 'On the Second Day Dayan Considered a Full Evacuation from the Golan Heights', *Haaretz*, 10 October 2006 [Hebrew]. Schiff, one of Israel's senior military correspondents, refers to notes from the Northern Command war-diary. A similar claim is made by Guy, *Bar-Lev – Biography*. Conversely, Shimon Golan from the IDF History Department told me he is not aware of this document nor of any other record of a similar call by Dayan. Personal Communication, Shimon Golan, 28 July 2020. What is clear is that in his meeting with Dado at 14:30 after he returned from both fronts, Dayan said that the line in the Golan Heights should be kept no matter the cost, defending it is the only way to defend the north of Israel. He repeats this statement at a government meeting at 14:50. on minutes by Prime Minister Secretary, Golan.
62. Bar-Joseph, *The Watchman Fell Asleep*. In another article Bar-Joseph claims Dayan was responsible for aborting *Tagar* and the failure of *Dogman* even though Dayan was not involved in that decision and merely asked for more planes for the Golan front: Bar-Joseph and McDermott. "Personal Functioning Under Stress. These claims on aborting *Tagar* and a withdrawal from the Golan are repeated in Guy, *Bar-Lev – Biography*.
63. 'COS Personal Assistant's Diary', in Golan.
64. 'Recording from the COS Office, in Golan.
65. *Ibid.*
66. *Ibid.*
67. See note 63 above.
68. 'Diary of Operations Room, Southern Command', in Golan.
69. Slater, *Warrior Statesman*.
70. Guy, *Bar Lev – Biography*.
71. See Golan. It should be noted that Golan listened to the actual recordings of meetings and could therefore sense the atmosphere in these meetings.
72. 'Recordings from the COS office', Golan.
73. Recordings from the COS office, Golan; See also Sasar, *Conversations with Rechavam 'Ghandi' Zeevi*.
74. See note 17 above.
75. Golan is quoting from the uncensored draft manuscript of Dayan's autobiography *Story of My Life*.
76. See note 18 above.
77. 'Notes by Minister of Defense Personal Assistant', in Golan.
78. *Ibid.*
79. *Ibid.*
80. Description of this debate according to: Notes by Eli Mizrahi, COS Personal Assistant's Diary, Notes by Minister of Defense Personal Assistant, in Golan.
81. *Ibid.*
82. The Avner Cohen Collection, Interview with Arnan Azaryahu <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/arnan-sini-azaryahu>; Cohen, "When Israel Stepped Back From the Brink," *The New-York Times*, October 3, 2013. Accessed: 23 August 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/04/opinion/when-israel-stepped-back-from-the-brink.html>.
83. *Ibid.*
84. 'COS Personal Assistant's Diary' and 'Notes by Minister of Defense Personal Assistant', in Golan.
85. 'Recordings from COS office', Golan.
86. IDF History Department, Press Conference, 8 October 1973. In Golan.
87. See note 63 above.
88. See note 18 above.
89. 'Recording from COS Office and notes from head of IDF History department present in the meeting', in Golan.
90. Dayan at a meeting 07:30 9 October 1973, in Golan.
91. 'From Dayan's visit in Southern Command, Minister of Defense Personal Assistant's Diary' and, 'Southern Command Commander's Personal Assistant's Diary', in Golan.
92. 'Recording from the COS Office', in Golan.
93. 'Recording from COS office, 10 October 1973, 20:00', in Tal and Tal.
94. 'Meeting with the Prime Minister, 09:30 10 October 1973, Golan.
95. See note 17 above.
96. Tal and Tal.
97. See note 18 above.
98. 'Cabinet Meeting, 14:30 12 October 1973', in Golan.
99. *Ibid.*
100. See note 18 above.
101. On the surprising telegram see Eban, *An Autobiography*.
102. Golan; Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval*.

103. 'Meeting in Southern Command War Room, 21:00, 12 October 1973' and 'Notes by Minister of Defense Personal Assistant', in Golan.
104. Shamir, *Transforming Command*.
105. Eben, *An Autobiography*.
106. See note 69 above.
107. Guy, *Bar Lev*.

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