



**Activation of the Blue and White alert.
This alert was operational
from May - August 1973
a half year before the war**

As a result Israel prepared for war. Eli Zeira assessed that there would not be a war since Egypt still did not have the strength to defeat Israel and capture the Sinai. Dayan, Elazar, and Zamir believed war would break out in the summer of 1973.



In September 1970
Gamal Abdel Nasser,
president of Egypt, died.
Anwar Sadat was appointed
the new president.



The army and the government relied on the
“special means”
and were confident that they would
receive a 48 hour warning before the
outbreak of a war

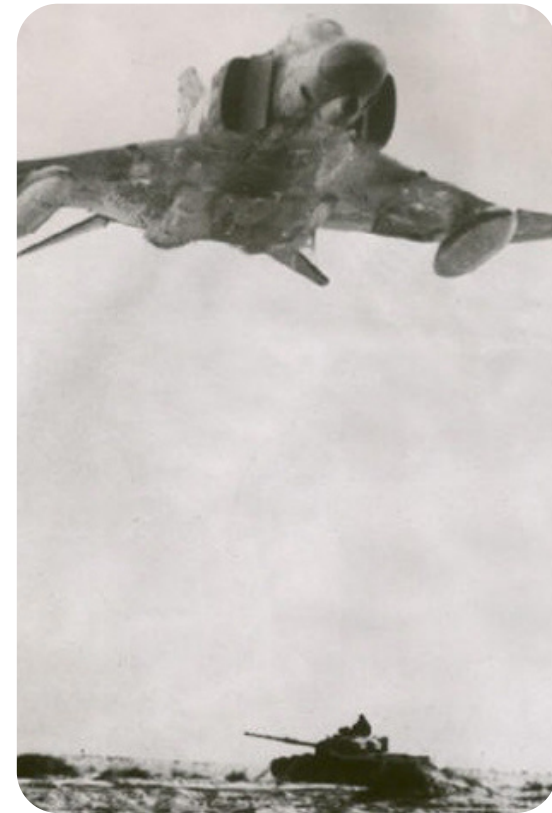
The “special means” were very advanced
listening devices that enabled Israeli intelligence
officers to listen in on telephone discussions
between Egyptian military commanders and
their political leadership. These devices were
planted deep in Egyptian territory by
Israeli special forces.



On September 25, 1973
King Hussein of Jordan met secretly with
Golda Meir in a very urgent meeting.
Hussein reported that the Egyptians and
Syrians were preparing to attack Israel
and that he declined to join them.
Golda Meir passed this information to the
defense minister, Moshe Dayan, and to the
head of military intelligence,
Major General eli Zeira.



The Information and Foreign Ministries of Egypt updated the world that the military activities on the Canal and the mobilization of reserves were part of training exercises.



On October 4 at 10:00 PM AMAN received information that Soviet advisors and their families were leaving Syria and Egypt and returning to the Soviet Union.



**A warning was received
from Ashraf Marwan
that war was about
to break out.**

Sadat was determined to execute a military operation to capture territory lost by Egypt in the Six Day War. He convinced Syria to partner with him. He ordered his generals to prepare battle plans to capture the Sinai or at least a large part of it to shock Israel.

Anwar Sadat was perceived as a weak leader. This added to Israel's feeling of security.

Recency Bias causes humans to disproportionately rely on recent and readily available information when making decisions. Sadat was viewed as a hesitant leader. Israel relied on this assessment and did not test this assumption.

It is likely that the war alert in May was correct but the Syrians opposed attacking them, since they did not yet receive the modern T-62 tanks and the SA-6 anti-aircraft missiles.

The “Blue & White” alert was activated and the reserves were mobilized despite Eli Zeira claiming there would not be a war. There was not a war and the alert was canceled after two months.

As a result of this incident Eli Zeira’s opinion grew in value and received more weight by Dayan and Elazar in October before the war broke out.

Groupthink. This manifested itself by the senior leadership trusting Eli Zeira’s assessment that there was no reason to be on war alert, Because of her lack of military experience Golda followed her security advisors evaluation and did not mobilize the reserves in early October despite evidence contradicting their opinion.

Eli Zeira, was so sure that war would not break out he did not activate the “special means” listening devices.

Thus, not all intelligence gathering means that Israel had at her disposal were actually used.

The Israeli leadership was deceived into thinking that the “special means” were activated (in fact they were only activated for a few hours to test them). Zeira refused to activate them despite being asked to do so to verify whether the Egyptians were preparing for war or just performing drills. He finally activated them in the morning of October 6.

Overconfidence Bias. This bias manifests itself when people become overconfident in their opinions. Eli Zeira suffered from this and therefore did not activate the “special means” before the war in an effective manner.

Disconfirmation Bias: This manifests itself by dismissing evidence that contradicts one's beliefs.

Dayan and Zeira fell victim to this bias and thus dismissed Hussein's warning.

King Hussein's information was correct.

Moshe Dayan and Eli Zeira calmed Golda Meir and claimed that the warning King Hussein delivered was based on a faulty source.

Israeli intelligence officials interpreted the expulsion of Soviet advisors as Sadat's effort to get close to the United States and reach an agreement with Israel. As such, they believed this move indicated a lessening in the chances of war.

Confirmation Bias. This is the tendency to rely on information that confirms one's beliefs and to interpret information as confirming one's beliefs. This manifested itself when Israel intelligence analysts interpreted Soviet advisors leaving as proof that war would not happen.

The sudden evacuation of Soviet officials was because they knew war would break out.

This was an exercise to dull the alertness of Israeli intelligence. By successfully deceiving Israel, Egypt was therefore able to transfer large amounts of soldiers to the Canal.

From the end of the War of Attrition Egypt left five divisions at the Canal. Therefore moving soldiers there is part of military drills and not preparation for war.

Disconfirmation Bias: This manifests itself by dismissing evidence that contradicts one's beliefs. This manifested itself by the Israeli leadership dismissing evidence that contradicted their assumptions as mistaken. As it was with dismissing the military activities on the Canal.

**Israel relied on the “special means”
and not on Marwan.**

**The leaders were afraid to launch a preemptive
strike because they were afraid of America’s
response and they were confident that the standing
army could withstand any attack.**

**Eli Zeira continued to claim that the probability of
war was low and any moves on the part of Israel
might inadvertently cause war.**

**Without this self-confidence it is possible that the
decisions would have been different.**

**The information Ashraf
Marwan conveyed was
correct and led Golda to
authorize the mobilization
of the reserves.**

**Overconfidence Bias. Israel was
confident that they would receive a
war warning through the “special
means” and therefore did not
respond properly to Marwan’s
warning. They also were confident
that the standing army could deal
with any attack.**