The Arab-Israeli crisis
1967-1973
War of Attrition and the Yom Kippur War
The Khartoum Resolution 1967

• Arab league met to discuss what to do next with Israel.
• They had been badly beaten in the Six Day War.
• The Palestinian issue was still unresolved.
• They decided to have:
  – No recognition of the State of Israel.
  – No peace with Israel.
  – No negotiations with Israel.
Egyptian forces.

• Most powerful of all the Arab forces
  – Suffered humiliating defeat.

• Small raids to keep the tension high between themselves and the Israeli forces.
The Israeli Navy Ship ‘Eliat’

Sunk by Egyptian missile boats 1968.

An attempt to provoke a larger conflict.
The War of Attrition 1969.

- Gamal Nasser/Egyptian tactics
  - Create a united Arab (pan-Arab) front with himself as leader.
  - Wearing down (‘attrition’) of Israel with constant pressure on her Southern borders
  - ‘Defense in depth’: keeping troops at and many miles from the border
  - Shelling Israeli positions

- In the North Jordan and Syria continued with supporting terrorist raids into Israel, but the main action took place over the Suez canal where the border of Israel and Egypt met.
Egyptian military build up and defense in depth.

Irritating raids by Palestinians from Jordan and Syria.

Israeli defenses – the ‘Bar Lev’ line
A bus bombing in Israel. This was typical of Arab terror raids on Israeli territory.
- Soviet Support of Egypt
  - 10,000 ‘advisors’
  - Anti-aircraft weaponry
    - neutralize the effect of the superior Israeli air force
    - SAM (Surface to Air) missile systems from the USSR.
An Egyptian air force Mig 21 jet.

An Egyptian air force Mig 21 being shot down (from an Israeli jet’s gun camera). The white dots are tracer bullets.

• The Egyptian air force flew its MIG-21 fighters over the Canal Zone to provoke the Israelis.
• Israeli Response
  – daring helicopter raids deep into Egyptian territory; stripped down helicopters fly at night to destroy communication, and transportation centers

• US Support of Israel
  – To counter the USSR’s support of Egypt.
  – US weaponry was superior to USSR weaponry
    • A4 Skyhawk, and the F4 ‘Phantom’
Daring Israeli helicopter raids.
New US planes for the IAF:
the A4 Skyhawk (above), and the F4 Phantom (left).

The American F4 Phantom would dominate the skies for 20 years.
• Asymmetric response; Tactic in which a country responds to an action with an attack far out of proportion to the initial attack. EX: Egypt destroys a supply depot in Negev, Israel bombs 10 Egyptian airstrips near cairo
  – Overwhelming Israeli retaliation for even the slightest sign of Egyptian aggression.
  – As a result Egypt lost more men and materiel than Israel in the war.
• Rogers Plan
  – The UN resolution 242 not operative
  – Secretary of State Rogers sent to broker a new deal.
    • Aug 1970 Israel, Egypt and Jordan would have a ceasefire
    • Immediately broken by the Egyptians
  – King Hussein of Jordan and Nasser, by signing the plan, are seen as breaking Khartoum Resolution
• Nasser dies; September 1970
  – Seen as a fighter for Arab dignity and freedom.
  – Gave many Arab people a sense of identity.
  – Many reforms enhanced Egypt
    • the Aswan dam.
Gamal Nasser’s funeral 1970, Cairo, Egypt.

Such was Nasser’s popularity- despite the lost wars- that huge crowds attended his burial. Estimated at 5 million people- it was one of the largest funerals in history. News casters cried openly on television, and women wept in the streets.

The crowds in fact hijacked his funeral and people insisted on carrying the coffin themselves.

This shows his true legacy- the restoration of Arab pride in themselves.
• Results of Nasser’s Death
  – Egyptian aggression faltered at this point.
• Anwar Sadat, Nasser’s successor, considered the war of attrition to be a waste of time.
• Sadat publicly planned diplomacy and privately planned military action against Israel.
Results of the War of Attrition

- Israel 1,500 soldiers killed.
- Egypt 10,000 soldiers killed.
- Israel 15 aircraft lost
- Egypt 101 aircraft lost.

 Territory
Not a yard was lost, or gained. The border remained at the Suez Canal.
The Palestinian Liberation Organisation ‘PLO’

Crest of the PLO. Notice the map of Palestine all one colour.

- Formed in 1964
- Refugees in Jordan
- Gains following and influence after 1967 War.
- ‘Umbrella’ name for many Palestinian political groups
• **Intifada**: Arabic word stands for shaking off or shivering because of fear or illness.
Intifada

• It also means abrupt and sudden waking up from sleep or unconcerned status. Politically; The word came to symbolize the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation. The word also stands for the weakness of the Palestinian people and their suffering under the Israeli occupation.
The Munich Massacre 1972

- **Black September Movement** targeted the Israeli sportsmen who attended the Olympic Games in Munich, Germany, 1972.
- Killed 12 of the Israeli Olympic team and successfully put Western attention back onto the Arab-Israeli conflict.

**Importance**

- The image of the **International Terrorist** became widely recognized for the first time.
Yom Kippur War 1973

- The **Yom Kippur War**, or **October War** also known as the **1973 Arab-Israeli War**, was fought from **October 6** to **October 26, 1973**, between **Israel** and a coalition of Arab states led by **Egypt** and **Syria**.
Egypt

• Anwar Sadat
  – building up to war in 1972
  – Wanted sharp blow against Israel
  – Wanted Egyptian led Arab world.
• New weapons were delivered by Soviets
• Old defeated generals were replaced.
Older style Soviet tank - the T 55

RPG 7. The ‘Rocket propelled grenade’. This was so effective as a weapon that it would become the weapon of choice for many Palestinian fighters.
T 62
Modern Soviet battle tank
SAM (Surface to air missiles)
MIG 21 fighters.
• Building up militarily with Soviet assistance
• President Assad, led Syria to become a serious challenger to Egypt’s authority over the Arab world.

President Assad of Syria.
British built Hawker Hunter fighter bombers.

Iraq lent some of these planes to Egypt for the war. An action symbolic of Arab unity.
Israel

• Israel heavily fortified its borders
  – Suez area
  – Golan heights
• Greatest assets
  – air force
  – Motivation of her soldiers

Israeli trenches on the Bar Lev line.
The War begins…

Egyptian soldiers cross the canal by boat

A tremendous feat of military engineering. The Egyptians bridged the canal and cut through the sand wall fortification, (with water cannons), in 5 hours. The Israelis were taken by surprise as they crosse the Bar Lev Line.
Egyptian troops crossing the Israeli Bar Lev line of defense.

RPG 7 held by the soldier in the middle.
But Israel did not panic. They respond by getting behind the attacking Egyptian force to cut them off from their supplies.
The Egyptian army

The UAR flag (Egypt) raised in victory. But it was too soon to celebrate.

The battle was won, but the war wasn’t finished.
Major fighting in the Sinai Desert.

Israeli 'Phantoms' patrol as Israeli Centurion tanks move past wounded soldiers.

There were massive tank battles - as many as 1,000 tanks at one time.
Massive tank battles.
The Golan Heights.

- With Egyptian ‘success’, Syria invaded Israel from the North, over the Golan Heights.
The Golan Heights.
Syria invaded Israel.
- Iraqi air force support
- Jordan supplied artillery.

Syrian advance.
Israeli artillery was waiting.

The Israeli reserves moved fast, and the Israeli air force perfected quick refueling and resupply techniques to keep them in the air longer.
Israeli artillery pound Syrian positions.
Once again Israeli air superiority was crucial. Here Syrian tanks lie destroyed by the IAF.
IAF planes flying over Syria’s ‘SAM’ belt.
Israel counter attacks.

• Israeli Forces
  – Pushed across the Suez canal into Egypt.
  – Advanced on Cairo- and stopped 65 miles short.
    • These advancing troops are led by General Ariel Sharon.
  – In the North, Israeli troops Re-conque the Golan Heights the Israelis pressed on into Syria, within 35 miles of Damascus.
An Israeli tank back on the Bar Lev.
• The USA had already been flying in large amounts of guns, tanks and spare parts to Israel.

• The Soviet Union had been supplying Egypt and Syria with just as much.

• Neither superpower wanted war therefore they cooperated in the United Nations.
• The United Nations organized a ceasefire. Resolution 338.
• This was to the Arabs’ advantage because:
  – Israeli forces were close to both Egypt’s and Syria’s capitals
  – They had one entire Egyptian army cut off in the Sinai desert
  – Occupied large pieces of Arab territory.
• The UN sent in peacekeepers to the Suez region, and the Golan heights. All forces began to withdraw.
The End of the War.
green marks Israeli gains
Casualties

• Israel 2,688 dead.

• Egypt 7,700 dead.

• Syria 3,500 dead.
Results

• Arab armies did much better than in the Six-Day War and managed to inflict some surprises on the Israelis.
  – Arab nations gain confidence from this
• Israelis learned from the experience not to be complacent about Arab threats, or lax in defense.
• Both sides, consequently, continued updating their weapons, and planned for the next war.
Dr. Kissinger and the Sadat Initiative.

- United states sent Dr. Kissinger to organize a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt.
  - ‘interim’ agreement was signed September 1975
- November 1977 President Sadat proposed the ‘Sadat initiative’.
  - He would visit Jerusalem and speak to the Israeli Parliament to resolve all difficulties.
Dr. Kissinger US Diplomat and National Security Advisor. The peace broker.
Camp David Accords

• Under the guidance of US President Jimmy Carter, President Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Menachim Begin of Israel met at Camp David to discuss the future of the Middle East.

• They both won the Nobel Peace Prize when a Camp David peace agreement was signed 1978. It promised peace at last!
Presidents Sadat (Egypt), Carter (USA), and Begin (Israel) sign
• The Palestinians, the PLO and most Arab states were furious!
  – An Arab nation had broken with the Khartoum Resolution and recognized Israel as an independent state (and therefore dismissed Palestinian Arab claims to their own lands).
• 1981 President Sadat was assassinated by Arabs who saw Israel as an occupying force, and refused to recognize or negotiate with them
Assassination of President Sadat of Egypt 1981

The president and foreign visitors hide under their chairs.

The crowds run to safety.

Egyptian ‘jihadi’ extremists.
• Arabs and Israelis continue to prepare for further conflict in a state of heightened tension and suspicion.