AIRFIELDS RAKED
By THOMAS P. RONAN Special to The New York Times.
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AIRFIELDS RAKED

Warships Move From North and South— Carriers in Attack

By THOMAS P. RONAN
Special to The New York Times.

LONDON, Friday, Nov. 2—British and French warships were closing in on the Suez Canal last night after an all-day pounding of Egyptian airfields by planes of the two nations.

The French Defense Ministry said the Allied naval forces were approaching the canal from the north or Mediterranean side and from the south in the Gulf of Suez. It gave no hint of their size, but the belief was they were prepared to land troops in the canal zone. There was no indication when the landing could be expected. [No further report had been received up to 5 A. M. New York time.]

It seemed obvious the British and French were hoping to discourage the Egyptians from resisting or to win a quick victory with a minimum of fighting.

Planes on Ground Hit

After a brief overnight interval, Cyprus and Malta-based bombers were joined for the first time yesterday morning by planes from British and French aircraft carriers in an intensified assault on the airfields. The object was to destroy as many planes as possible on the ground and neutralize the fields in advance of the landing.

British-French headquarters in Cyprus said more than fifty Egyptian planes on the ground were believed destroyed and at least forty seriously damaged. It also reported that French naval aircraft had attacked and set on fire an Egyptian destroyer of the Soviet Skoryi class off Alexandria this morning.

The communiqué added that no Allied losses had been reported. It said Egyptian interceptor aircraft had been sighted but had failed to engage the raiding planes. The Cairo radio said six British aircraft had been shot down.

The operation was to implement the ultimatum Tuesday by Britain and France that they would occupy the key positions of Port Said, Ismailia and Suez if the Egyptians and Israelis did not cease hostilities and withdraw their forces ten miles from the zone.

The British Ministry of Defense said a blockship prepared by the Egyptians for sinking in the canal to stop traffic had been sunk in Lake Timsah, about halfway down the canal.

Allied Strength Cited

Early reports still to be confirmed by aerial reconnaissance said the ship had gone down in the lake outside the canal, the Ministry said. But Egyptian General Headquarters in Cairo described the ship as an Egyptian naval frigate and said all transit through the waterway had been stopped as a result of the sinking.

Antony Head, Minister of Defense, told the House of Commons yesterday that the operations so far carried out were aimed solely at one purpose, "to induce the Egyptian Government to accept the requirement put forward."

In Cyprus, Gen. Sir Charles Keightley, Commander in Chief of the joint operation, said the attacking forces were sufficiently strong "to deal severe blows." "Our only hope is that we shall not need to use them," he added.

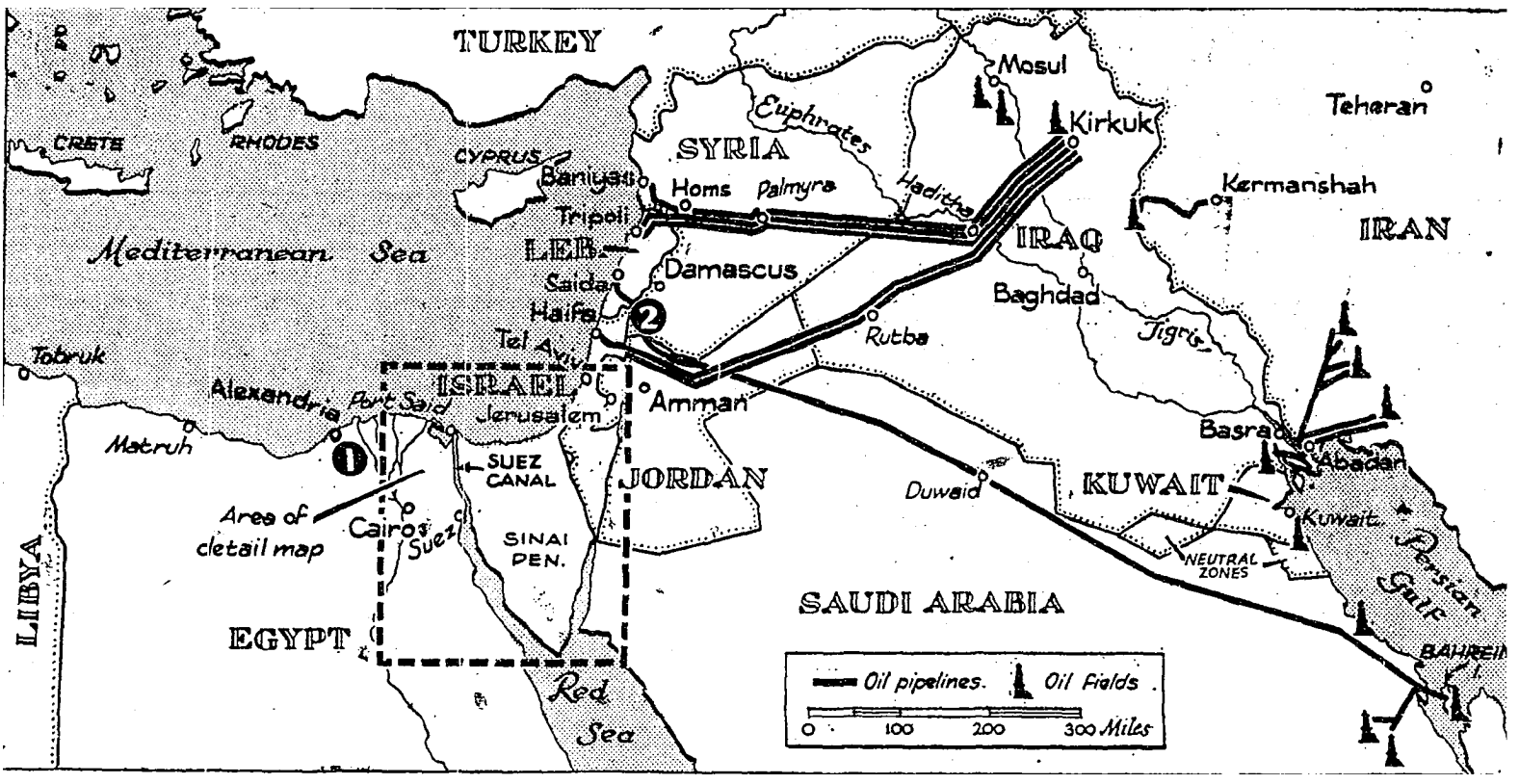
How swiftly the operation would end would depend on how quickly Egypt agrees to the British-French demands, the general said.

"Purely as a military commander I must say that the sooner Egypt sees reason and

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Pace of the Fighting Increases as British and French Move on Egypt



Air raids were staged in the Alexandria area (1) as Syria reported fighting with forces of Israel along their border (2). Cairo was reported trying to persuade Iraqis and Syrians to destroy oil pipelines. The pipe across Israel is not in use.

ALLIED WARSHIPS CLOSE IN ON SUEZ

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agrees to temporary international control of the Suez Canal, the less lives will be lost," he declared.

That there might be stubborn fighting was indicated by President Gamal Abdel Nasser when he told his people in a radio broadcast that arms were available for every citizen "to defend his country against usurpation and aggression."

"We shall fight from village to village, from place to place," he said.

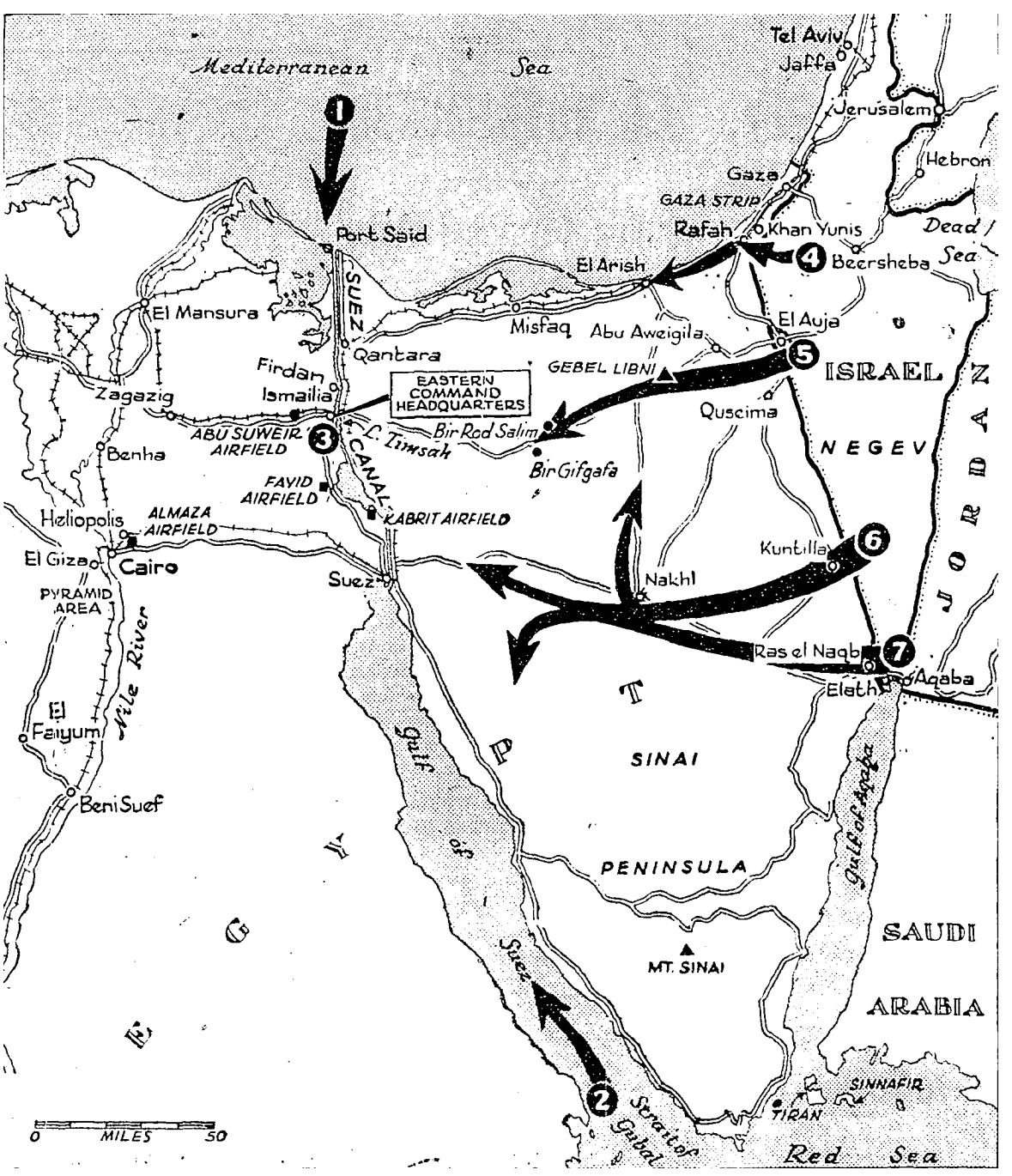
Mr. Head also told the Commons of reports that Egyptian armored units deployed west of Cairo had begun moving eastward Wednesday toward Suez and Ismailia.

The force included an armored brigade, armored regiments equipped with light and heavy anti-aircraft weapons and infantry in armored personnel carriers, he said.

While the victories that Israel is reported to have scored in the northern Sinai Peninsula may soften the Egyptian opposition, Britain has flatly denied that she is concerting military action with Israel.

A Foreign Office spokesman said that suggestions to this effect were entirely false. He was commenting on an Israeli Government demand to Egyptian forces in the Sinai area to lay down their arms because their air force was about to be put out of action by "Anglo-French-Israeli bombing."

The military aims of Britain and France are as stated Tuesday and therefore are quite distinct from the aims of Israel, the spokesman said.



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Amphibious forces neared Suez Canal from the north (1) and the Gulf of Suez (2). A ship was sunk near the canal channel (3). Israeli columns drove to the coast (4), cutting off the Egyptian-held Gaza strip. Other units smashed deep into the Sinai Peninsula from starting points near Quseima (5), Kuntilla (6), vicinity of Elath (7) at southernmost part of Negev.

Jordan, Libya Reassured

The Foreign Office also announced that Jordan and Libya had been assured British bases in their territory would not be used for operations against Egypt.

In yesterday's air attacks, nine Egyptian Air Force fields were bombed and strafed. These included Almaza and Inchass near Cairo and Abu Suweir and Kabrit, former Royal Air Force stations in the Suez zone, which were hit yesterday.

The others were Fayid, Kasfareet, a former Royal Air Force maintenance station, Kabul, Cairo West and one other not yet named. All five were in the delta and canal zone.

The medium-level bombing raids Wednesday night were followed from dawn to dusk by low-level attacks by fighter-bombers armed with rocket-projectiles and cannon. The pilots reported that in addition to aircraft, runways, hangars and servicing buildings were badly damaged.

The British said unusual precautions were taken to avoid casualties among civilians and others. In some cases, delayed action bombs were dropped to give personnel a chance to get away, it was said.

Meanwhile, the British are continuing to marshal their military forces. The aircraft carrier Ark Royal, the Navy's largest operational ship, was recommissioned at Devonport yesterday.

With a displacement of 36,800 tons, the vessel carried fifty aircraft in peacetime, but her wartime striking power can be much greater.

The transport Empire Fowey sailed yesterday for the Mediterranean loaded with troops. The troopships Asturias and Dilwara and the liner New Australia, chartered for troop-carrying, are to sail today.

Under an order signed by Queen Elizabeth II, the Government obtained power to impose gasoline rationing. But a spokesman for the Ministry of Fuel and Power said that it was precautionary measure and that no decision had been made to reintroduce the wartime rationing.

Sir Walter Monckton, the Paymaster-General and former Minister of Defense, was named by the Government to coordinate all its information services during the operations in Egypt. He was Director General of the Ministry of Information from 1939 to 1940 and Director General of the British Propaganda and Information Services at Cairo in 1941 and 1942.

There was no confirmation from Government sources of reported mention by a Labor member of Commons today that anti-aircraft measures had been taken at some civil airports here.

The Foreign Office said that it had received a report from its embassy in Cairo that three employes of British contracting concerns in the canal zone had been arrested but that the charge was not known. The contractors' employes had been instructed Tuesday to leave the zone, the Foreign Office said.

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