Air Force Doctrine
PARAGON
LeMay Center for Doctrine Development & Education
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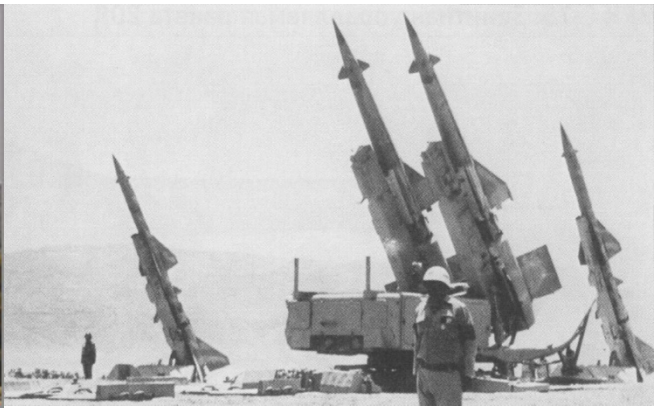
Teammates—This month, the LeMay Center highlights the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UASs) during the 1973 Yom Kippur War in **intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance** (ISR) and **counterair** roles as our doctrine paragon.

On 6 October 1973, Egypt and Syria launched a surprise two-front assault on Israel. As Israel's regular forces stood greatly outnumbered, the Israeli Air Force (IAF) was forced stem the advance of enemy land forces in the teeth of layered air defenses consisting of the most advanced Russian surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) and antiaircraft artillery (AAA)—one of the world's first truly integrated air defense systems (IADS). Israeli losses were horrendous: 80 IAF aircraft lost in the first few days of the war, fully a quarter of their inventory.



Clearly something had to be done quickly to curb the losses and restore the IAF's freedom of action. Israel hit upon an innovative tactic: use jet-powered target drones bought from the US to spoof enemy air defense radars, SAMs, and AAA into revealing themselves, while Israeli signals intelligence units determined locations and signatures. Once this intelligence was processed, the same drones—Ryan Chukars and Firebees—were used to imitate IAF strike packages, bluffing the Egyptian and Syrian IADS into engaging. Manned strike assets waiting out of range or below radar coverage would then enter the fight to destroy or suppress the enemy weapons. Using these tactics, Israeli losses were cut dramatically, freeing the IAF to play a critical role in the decisive Israeli counteroffensive.

This was one of the first and most successful uses of a UAS to execute innovative **ISR** missions and then integrate the intelligence gained into conducting **offensive counterair**—specifically **suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD)**—as part of an integrated manned-UAS team.

Why it matters today: Such uses of UASs are commonplace today and many of the systems employed are far more sophisticated than the Chukars and Firebees of the 1970s. But some are not. We are learning many lessons from the use of inexpensive, off-the-shelf drone technology in the Ukraine. Such lessons will lead to many innovations in doctrine for UASs and man-

machine teaming, not just in **ISR** and **counterair**, but in **targeting**, **strategic attack**, **counterland**, and many other arenas.

Specific doctrine concerning **ISR** can be found Air Force Doctrine Publication (AFDP) 2-0, *Intelligence*, For doctrine on **SEAD, counterair**, and UASs, see AFDPs 3-01, *Counterair Operations*, and 3-52, *Airspace Control*. Please also check out our latest podcast devoted to technological change and artificial intelligence on iTunes, Spotify, Amazon Music, or at www.doctrine.af.mil.

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