

March 17, 1969

**Memorandum from Secretary of Defense Laird to
Secretary of State, 'Stopping the Introduction of
Nuclear Weapons into the Middle East'**

Citation:

"Memorandum from Secretary of Defense Laird to Secretary of State, 'Stopping the Introduction of Nuclear Weapons into the Middle East'", March 17, 1969, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Mandatory declassification review request. Originally published in Avner Cohen and William Burr, eds., National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book #485 (September 12, 2014).

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Summary:

Colonel Robert P. Pursley, discussed the Israeli nuclear issue with other senior officials at the Pentagon, and drafted a memorandum that the Defense Secretary sent to Rogers, Kissinger, and Helms on 14 March 1969. Believing it is necessary to convey "a sense of urgency," the memorandum restated the earlier [Warnke's] points about the need for a meeting and included new intelligence about Israeli efforts to acquire high speed computers for use in a weapons program.

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English

Contents:

Original Scan

INCOMING AIRGRAM

Department of State

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FROM: AmEmbassy PARIS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Date Sent

November 22, 1960

TO: SecState WASHINGTON

REVIEWED by EG Kennedy

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Washington please pass A. A. Wells, AEC. Reference CA 3636, October 19, 1960. In response to referenced despatch, the following information is supplied.

The subject of French participation in the alleged construction of a nuclear power plant in Beersheba, Israel, was discussed frankly with an appropriate member of the French Atomic Energy Commission. This individual stated flatly that the French CEA is not collaborating with the Israeli Government in the construction of a nuclear power reactor. Furthermore he said that no French company is working with the Israelis on a power reactor since prior permission from the CEA would be required and such permission has neither been requested nor granted.

Regarding the French-Israeli agreement, this does not extend to assistance in the field of power reactors. The agreement relates to (1) collaboration in the field of heavy water production (there is also U. K. participation on this matter), and (2) production of uranium from phosphate deposits. The Franco-Israeli agreement is not a Government-to-Government agreement, but rather an agreement between the two Atomic Energy Commissions. Accordingly, the agreement is considered as an "internal document" and copies of the agreement are not available.

Additional information was received from an American representative of a U. S. concern which designs and builds nuclear reactors. He returned from Israel about 2 1/2 months ago. This individual states that the Israeli Government is not now constructing a power reactor in Israel. He added, however, that Dr. Bergmann of the Israeli AEC is interested in working out an arrangement with an American concern in the joint development of a power reactor project.

HOUGHTON

Drafted by:
AEC/P:JKRouless, 11/22/60

Authenticated by:
POL:RAKidder, 11/22/60

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