

MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

6/18/69
5:45 p.m.

Col. H --

Capt. Wilson of the Deputy's office personally delivered the attached. He indicated that this copy, and the copy which the Deputy's office has, are the only copies at this level. ISA felt the paper should be handled without control, and held close, per Capt. W.

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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

June 5, 1969

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MEMORANDUM FOR:

Under Secretary of State Richardson
Deputy Secretary of Defense Packard
Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Wheeler
Director of Central Intelligence Helms

SUBJECT: Meeting of Ad Hoc Committee on NSSM 40

There will be a meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Review Group on NSSM 40 at 4:45 p. m., June 20, in the White House Situation Room to consider the paper distributed by the Department of State on May 30.

JW Davis
Jeanne W. Davis
Secretariat

ISRAEL 47161

5 June 69

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TALKING PAPER FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND THE CHAIRMAN, JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF (Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the NSC Review Group, 20 June 1969)

SUBJECT: NSM 40 - Israeli Nuclear Weapons Program

ISSUE: Adequacy of study concerning what steps, if any, the U.S. should take to stop Israel's strategic missile and nuclear weapons programs

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION: The President directed the preparation of a policy study on the Israeli nuclear weapons program. To carry out this directive, Mr. Kissinger created two new groups: an Ad Hoc (Working) Group chaired by Assistant Secretary of State Sisco (NEA), and including representatives of ISA, the Joint Staff, State, CIA and the NSC Staff; and an Ad Hoc Committee of the NSC Review Group, chaired by Mr. Kissinger and including Mr. Richardson, Mr. Packard, General Wheeler and Mr. Helms. A copy of the President's Directive (NSM No. 40) is at Tab A.

The Working Group has completed its study. Its report, for consideration by the Ad Hoc Committee, is at Tab B. The Israeli nuclear weapons program is the most vital issue affecting US interests in the Middle East. We recommend, particularly because of State's reluctance to accept it, that the Ad Hoc Committee be given a full briefing on the pertinent intelligence as the first order of business.

The Working Group agreed generally on a number of points: that Israel is making rapid progress on its missile and nuclear programs; that nuclear weapons would not be a real deterrent for Israel; that the USSR would be forced to play a more protective role vis-a-vis the Arabs and to offset, in one way or another, Israel's nuclear "advantage;" that the introduction of nuclear weapons by Israel would adversely affect U.S. interests, and would pose greater risks to the security of the U.S.; and that a major U.S. effort to induce Israel not to produce nuclear weapons is justified. It was also agreed that without such a major effort Israel would not stop its present programs.

It is important to note also an acknowledged disagreement between the U.S. and Israeli Governments as to the meaning of Israel's repeated pledge not to be the first Middle East Power "to introduce nuclear weapons into the area." Ambassador Rabin, in discussions last fall, defined "introduction" to require both public announcement and testing. This clearly is an unacceptable definition, and as part of the F-4 agreement (Tab C) we made clear that our definition applies, i.e. physical possession constitutes "introduction".

There is disagreement between State and Defense (ISA/JCS) on a number of points. These differences are adequately presented in the study and the covering memo. Briefly they are:

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1. What if Israel already has nuclear devices? State believes Israel would be reluctant to push its nuclear weapons program to the point of actual production because Israel fears the effects in the U.S. The evidence is strongly to the contrary.

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Defense believes that the US objective should be to stop Israel from obtaining nuclear weapons if possible but, in any case, to prevent missiles and nuclear weapons from becoming part of Israel's military inventory.

2. Should we try to stop missile production also? Defense believes we should. State is doubtful. The Defense position is based on the following arguments: (a) Israel intends to arm at least some missiles with chemical (probably nerve gas) and nuclear warheads. (b) Stopping strategic missile production and deployment is intimately connected with stopping the nuclear weapons program. The U.S. can more easily monitor Israeli missile progress and, by stopping missile development, can have greater assurance that Israel is not secretly proceeding to produce nuclear weapons. (c) The missiles are not militarily cost-effective with conventional warheads (they have a CEP of about one-half mile); continued Israeli production of missiles would suggest Israeli intention to use non-conventional warheads. (d) Once the missiles are deployed it will be widely believed that the missiles do in fact have nuclear warheads, and the political results may be the same whether or not the nuclear warheads actually exist.

3. Relationship between the present U.S. efforts to get peace talks underway and the missile/nuclear weapons problem. State (NEA) is heavily committed to the bilateral (US-USSR) and 4 Power talks aimed at reaching agreement on the terms of a peace settlement. NEA does not want to do anything to interfere with this effort. Defense believes, given the odds against any immediate "peace" and the rapidity with which Israel is moving toward nuclear weapons and missile deployment, that the nuclear issue is overriding, and that serious discussions with Israel cannot await conclusion of the peace talks.

4. How to approach Israel? State recommends Ambassadorial-level discussions here and in Israel. Talks at this level have been undertaken for many years now without success, and there is no reason to believe they would be more successful now. Israel surely will not stop either its missile or nuclear weapons programs unless this Government seriously demands it do so. Defense recommends that the President, or the Secretaries of State and Defense together, call in Israeli Ambassador Rabin and convey to him the seriousness with which the United States views Israel's actions and the assurances the U.S. requires from Israel that it will stop missile and nuclear production. Although not mentioned in the Report, Defense believes we should offer and agree, in the course of negotiations with Israel, to assure Israel of adequate conventional arms supply if the U.S. demands are accepted.

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The report by the Working Group is considered an adequate presentation of the issues, the threat to U.S. security interests, and the alternatives available to the U.S. in meeting that threat. The differing Departmental views are fairly and adequately presented. The Defense position reflects the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on this issue.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That you urge an early meeting at the highest level with Ambassador Rabin, to put before the Government of Israel certain demands concerning their nuclear and missile programs.
2. That these demands include: (a) Israel's signature of the NPT and (b) private assurances from Israel that it will cease and desist from further development or acquisition of both nuclear explosive devices and strategic missiles.
3. That we make clear in our request for assurances that failure to comply will affect our ability to continue the present U.S. relationship with Israel, and particularly the delivery of combat aircraft.
4. That you recommend the Working Group Report be forwarded, in its present form, for consideration by the Special Committee of the NSC and that you advocate the Defense/JCS position as the preferred course for the President.

APPROVED:


Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA)

APPROVED:


Director, Joint Staff

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