

Israel Nuclear Chronology

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Last update: April 2008

**As of April 2008, this chronology is no longer being updated.
For current developments, please see the [India Biological Overview](#).**

This annotated chronology is based on the data sources that follow each entry. Public sources often provide conflicting information on classified military programs. In some cases we are unable to resolve these discrepancies, in others we have deliberately refrained from doing so to highlight the potential influence of false or misleading information as it appeared over time. In many cases, we are unable to independently verify claims. Hence in reviewing this chronology, readers should take into account the credibility of the sources employed here.

Inclusion in this chronology does not necessarily indicate that a particular development is of direct or indirect proliferation significance. Some entries provide international or domestic context for technological development and national policymaking. Moreover, some entries may refer to developments with positive consequences for nonproliferation.

2009-2007

26 February 2009

Following Iran's announcement of the completion of its first nuclear power plant at Bushehr, outgoing Israeli Prime Minister Olmert reiterates Israel's ability "...to defend itself in all situations, against all threats, [and] against all enemies." Although the Prime Minister did not mention Iran by name, his statement was widely interpreted to have been directed at Iran.

—Borzou Daragahi, "Iran, Russia test joint nuclear reactor in Bushehr," *Los Angeles Times*, 26 February, 2009; "We are very strong, Israel Warns Iran," *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 February 2009; Behrouz Mehri, "Olmert warns Iran over nuclear plant," Agence France-Presse, 26 February 2009.

12 February 2009

Mohammed Naji Mohammed of the United Iraqi Alliance coalition is pursuing a parliamentary resolution to seek at least one billion dollars from Israel for its 1981 air strike on the Osirak reactor [Note: See NTI Israel and Iraq Nuclear Chronologies 7 June 1981]. Mohammed is using UN Security Council Resolution 487 as justification for the claim, which "considers that Iraq is entitled to redress for the destruction it has suffered, responsibility for which has been acknowledged by Israel."

—"Iraq MPs seek reparation for 1981 Israeli attack on nuclear reactor," Haaretz, 12 February 2009.

8 February 2009

Outgoing Prime Minister Ehud Olmert says no Israeli government will allow Iran to produce a nuclear weapon. Olmert's statements come on the eve of a new Israeli government, more than likely led by Benjamin Netanyahu,

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who has hinted of a military solution to prevent Iran from producing a nuclear weapon. The consensus of Israeli officials is that a nuclear Iran is not in Israel's interests. However, debate continues over what means should be used to stop Iran from producing a weapon. Israel has used military force in the past to preempt neighbors' suspected nuclear programs, including the 1981 air strike on Iraq's Osirak reactor, and the more recent September 2007 air strike on the alleged Syrian reactor Al-Kibar.

—Dan Williams, "Olmert says no Israeli government would let Iran get nukes," Reuters, 8 February 2009; Jason Koutsoukis, "Israel ready to strike Iran: ex-envoy," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 February 2009; Alon Ben-David, "Iran will be major concern for new Israeli leadership," *Jane's Defense Weekly*, 12 February 2009.

13 January 2009

Israeli officials reject Syrian accusations that traces of uranium detected at the Al-Kibar site are from Israeli munitions. Israel claims the site, bombed in September 2007, was home to a reactor designed to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons, while Syria denies such allegations. Israeli officials have never formally confirmed or denied Israel's role in the bombing. [Note: For additional details on Al-Kibar, see NTI Syria nuclear chronology].

—"Israel denies Syria claim it left traces of uranium at nuclear site bombed by IAF," Reuters, 13 January 2009; Borzou Daragahi, "Speculation grows over Syria site," *Los Angeles Times*, 20 November 2008.

10 January 2009

According to unnamed senior American and foreign officials, President Bush denied a secret Israeli request last year for bunker-busting bombs for an attack on Natanz. The Bush administration was particularly alarmed by an Israeli request to fly over U.S. controlled Iraqi airspace. The White House denied the request and reportedly agreed to step up intelligence sharing and brief Israeli officials on new American efforts to subtly sabotage Iran's nuclear infrastructure. Knowledge of American efforts to sabotage Iran's nuclear program has been closely held, but some Bush administration officials are skeptical about their success. Other officials disagree, arguing that the Israelis would not have been deterred from attacking Iran if they believed American efforts to be ineffective.

—David Sanger, "U.S. Rejected Israeli Bid for Aid to Strike Iran," *The New York Times*, 11 January 2009; "U.S. Rejected Aid for Israeli Raid on Nuclear Site," *The Jerusalem Post*, 11 January 2009.

5 January 2009

Recent Hamas rocket attacks have renewed Israeli concerns that adversaries could target the Dimona nuclear reactor. Israeli defense officials were initially concerned by Iranian capabilities and intentions, spurring them to place two radar antennae near the reactor. However, Israeli officials believe the frequency and sophistication of Hamas rocket attacks reflect the militant group's growing capabilities. For example, Hamas's Iranian Fajr-3 artillery rockets are longer-range and more sophisticated than previous rocket systems in its arsenal.

—James Hider, "Gaza rockets put Israel's nuclear plant in battle zone," London Times Online, 2 January 2009; "Israel to install radar antennae near nuclear site: report," Agence France-Presse/Space War, 3 October 2008.

10 December 2008

A new Israeli government sponsored history of Israel's intelligence services, by former Shin Bet internal security service officer Barak Ben-Zur, asserts that the United States routinely collects information about Israel's nuclear capabilities. Titled, *Masterpiece: An Inside Look at Sixty Years of Israeli Intelligence*, the account states that the

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United States spies on Israel using "methodical intelligence gathering," including eavesdropping technology and trained staff from the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv. In a Reuters interview, Ben-Zur "described such efforts as largely benign given the closeness of defense ties between Israel and the Bush administration."

—Dan Williams, "U.S. spies on Israel's nukes, gov't: official history," Reuters, 10 December 2008; "U.S. spies on Israel to gain info on its atomic capabilities," *Jerusalem Post*, 12 December 2008.

23 September 2008

Israeli courts shorten nuclear whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu's jail sentence from six to three months in consideration of his poor health. Vanunu was released from prison after serving 18 years for revealing Israel's secret nuclear weapons program, but was sentenced to serve six months as a result of contact with foreigners, which violated the terms of his release. He appeared in Israeli courts in July to appeal the sentence.

—"Court Reduces Vanunu's Prison Time from 6 to 3 Months Due to Health," *The Jerusalem Post*, 23 September 2008; "Jerusalem Court Reduces Vanunu Sentence," *Yedi'ot Aharonot*, 23 September 2008.

30 May 2008

An ongoing lawsuit in Israeli courts involving former Dimona reactor employees who contracted cancer reveals that the tests performed between 1988 and 1993 on workers and their possible exposure to radioactive materials were faulty. The tests from that period of time showed that workers were not exposed to radioactive materials, while in actuality the detection threshold used by the testing equipment was set too high. The case is currently under review in Israeli courts.

—Yoram Yarqoni, "Israel: Dimona Nuclear Reactor's Tests for Workers' Uranium Exposure Were Flawed," *Yedi'ot Aharonot*, 30 May 2008.

27 May 2008

In Wales, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter discusses how a future U.S. President should deal with Iran's nuclear program. He contextualizes the issue by observing: "The U.S. has more than 12,000 nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union has about the same [Note: Carter is presumably referring to Russia], Great Britain, and France have several hundred, and Israel has 150 or more. We have a phalanx of enormous weaponry..." This is the first public declaration by a U.S. President that Israel possesses nuclear weapons. Asked to respond to Carter's statement, Israel's Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Arye Mekeel says, "we never discuss the issue."

—"Israel Has '150 or More' Nuclear Weapons, Carter Says," *The Boston Globe*, 27 May 2008; Re'uven Pedatzur, "Pundit: Carters Remarks on Israel's Nuclear Status to Strengthen Deterrence Image," *Ha'aretz*, 28 May 2008; "Israel refuses to Respond to Carter's Remarks on Nuclear Capability," *Xinhua*, 27 May 2008.

19 May 2008

Israel approves a new Director of the Dimona Nuclear Research Center Negev, Colonel Udi Adam. He will replace Yitzhak Gurevich, who was with the Center for forty years.

—Yosi Melman, "Israel: Res. Colonel Adam Appointed New Director of Nuclear Research Center Negev," *Ha'aretz*, 19 May 2008.

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14 April 2008

Israel and the United States sign a nuclear cooperation agreement giving the Israel Atomic Energy Commission access to "nuclear safety data, procedures and technology available in the U.S." This new agreement is an update on previous agreements between the two countries which has been limited to cooperation on only nuclear safety issues.

—Yossi Melman, "Israel and U.S. Sign Nuclear Cooperation Agreement," *Ha'aretz*, 14 April 2008.

21 March 2008

Germany and Israel announce an effort to try and initiate an international conference aimed at stopping Iran's nuclear program. At a meeting with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, discussed steps to continue the international pressure on Iran that has developed following the third round of sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council. Furthermore, both leaders discussed enlisting the international community to support their effort.

—Barak Ravid, "Israel, Germany plan int'l summit to stop Iran nuke program," *Haaretz*, 21 March 2008.

21 February 2008

Recently made public documents reveal that British officials ordered a negative comment about Israel's nuclear arsenal to be removed from the now-discredited dossier on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. The comment originally appeared against a claim "that no other country (apart from Iraq) has flouted the United Nations' authority so brazenly in pursuit of weapons of mass destruction."

—Richard Norton-Taylor. "How Labour Used the Law to Keep Criticism of Israel Secret," *Guardian*, 21 Feb 2008; "Report: UK Erased Mention of Israeli Nuke Arsenal," *Yedi'ot Aharonot*, 21 Feb 2008.

21 January 2008

Israel launches an advanced spy satellite. The TECSAR satellite fabricated by Israel Aerospace Industries is equipped with a SAR (Synthetic Aperture Radar) payload that gives it the ability to see through clouds and carry out day and night all weather imaging and reconnaissance.

—"PSLV successfully launches Israeli Satellite," *ISRO Press Release*, 21 January 2008, www.isro.org; "Israel launches spy satellite, can view Iran through clouds and at night," *Associated Press*, 21 January 2008.

23 January 2008

The Israel Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC), along with the Israel Port Company and the U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration, announce the upcoming installation of radiation detection equipment at the Port of Haifa. The Port of Haifa is one of Israel's busiest seaports, and the radiation detection equipment will "help to detect smuggled or illicit shipments of nuclear and other radioactive materials that might move through this port." The project will be useful in providing information to both Israel and the United States on the best way to detect nuclear and radiological materials.

—"Israel Begins Radiation Detection Efforts at Haifa Port," *NNSA Press Release*, 23 January 2008, www.nnsa.gov.

26 February 2008

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert met with Japanese Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba this week during a visit to Tokyo

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and discussed "the need to counter the threat of nuclear and missile proliferation from countries such as Iran and North Korea."

—"Japan, Israel Agree on Need to Counter Nuclear Proliferation," BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, 26 Feb 2008.

18 November 2007

Syrian news sources allege that a plan has recently been implemented by Israel to set up "a winding nuclear strip in spiral caves of nuclear silos and scores of missiles fitted with nuclear warheads and planted mines in the Golan borders along the ceasefire line separating Syria and Israel."

—"Israel Reportedly Plants 'Tactical Nuclear Mines' Along Syrian Border in Golan," *Syria News*, in OSC document GMP20071118625001, 18 Nov 07.

30 November 2007

A set of documents released this week from the Nixon Presidential Library included memorandums from the late 1960s between Nixon and Henry Kissinger expressing concern about Israel's nuclear weapons program. Specifically, the documents indicated that the United States wavered over whether it should try to persuade Israel to freeze its program and whether it should announce to the world that Israel indeed possessed nuclear weapons. —David Stout, "A Mideast Nuclear Crisis, in 1969: Declassified Papers Show Nixon's bind over Israeli Program," *International Herald Tribune*, 30 November 07.

30 September 2007

Israel recently submitted a proposal to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). The proposal urges the NSG to "adopt new guidelines allowing the international transfer of nuclear technology to states that have not signed on to nonproliferation rules." Because Israel has not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), it is prohibited from trading in nuclear technology internationally. However, Israel's proposal offers a criteria-based approach, including allowing a state to engage in nuclear trade if it applies protection measures to all nuclear weapons, facilities and material in its territory. The timing of this proposal is meant to coincide with the impending deal between the United States and India, another non-signatory to the NPT, which would allow India to import nuclear fuel from the United States.

—Glenn Kessler, "Israel Submits Nuclear Trade Plan; Move May Complicate Efforts to Win Exemption for India," *Washington Post*, 30 September 07.

27 August 2007

Construction on the new National Command Center, which is where Israeli leaders would be rushed should Israel suffer a nuclear attack, is progressing and should be completed in 2011. Carved into one of Jerusalem's mountains, the bunker cost \$240 million and is designed to withstand a nuclear bomb.

—Ofer Petersburg, "National Command Bunker Being Built," *Ynet News*, in OSC document GMP20070827738006, 27 September 07.

23 August 2007

Elhanan Abramov, Deputy CEO of the Negev Nuclear Research Center, affirmed the safety of the Dimona nuclear reactor. This statement is likely in response to the increasing opposition to the Dimona reactor and calls to shut it

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down because of health concerns. Abramov confirmed that the reactor is "safe according to Western standards and that every few years, work is halted for a comprehensive renovation."

—Yuval Azoulay, "Nuclear Center exec avows safety of Dimona reactor," *Ha'aretz*, 23 August 07.

22 September 2007

Arab nations pushed through an IAEA resolution this week calling on all Middle East nations to give up nuclear weapons, "targeting Israel's undeclared nuclear arsenal." Egypt introduced the resolution and the vote was 53-2, with 47 abstentions by Western nations.

—Reuters, "Arab Challenge to Israel," *The New Zealand Herald*, 22 September 07.

16 August 2007

Israeli National Infrastructure Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer recently announced that the ministry is renewing plans to build a new nuclear plant. The nuclear plant would be built along Israel's southern border with Egypt, in a town called Shivta. The Ministry reports the reason behind building a new nuclear plant as diversifying energy sources for the country. Ben-Eliezer has stated that "Israel would agree to put the power reactor under IAEA safeguards but would not extend IAEA safeguards to other facilities in Israel." There have been mixed reactions in the Knesset over the proposed nuclear plant. However, one issue that received almost universal agreement is the fact that Israel is in need of alternative energy sources.

—Neal Sandler, Mark Hibbs, and Daniel Horner, "Israel Counting on US-India Deal to Further Power Reactor Project," *Nucleonics Week*, 16 August 07; Amir Ben-David, "For the First Time: Israel to Agree to Nuclear Inspection," *Yedi'ot Aharonot*, in OSC document GMP20070802741005, 02 August 07.

6 August 2007

The Israeli Committee for a Middle East Free from Atomic, Biological and Chemical Weapons is publicly calling for "Israel to open the Dimona nuclear facility to international inspectors." The Committee is demanding that Israel's nuclear facilities be held to the same standards as Iran's.

—Rory Kress, "Israeli Nuclear Activists warn of Potential Disaster," *Jerusalem Post*, 06 August 07.

2 July 2007

Mordechai Vanunu, Israel's infamous "nuclear whistleblower," has been sentenced to six more months in jail for violating the terms of his parole. After spending 18 years in prison for giving details of Israel's nuclear program to a British newspaper, Vanunu was banned from leaving the country and talking to foreigners. However, two months ago, he was convicted of parole violations, which included contacts with journalists and attempts to leave Israel.

—Nir Hason, "Vanunu to Return to Prison for Violating the Terms of His Parole," *Ha'aretz*, in OSC document GMP20070702735002, 02 July 07.

24 May 2007

Hans Blix, Chairman of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission at the United Nations, is calling for Israel to "cease its nuclear fuel cycle and stop enriching uranium." At the Conference on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe held in Luxembourg, Blix called on Israel to cease enriching uranium and considered it a step toward a "nuclear

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free Middle East."

—Ya'aqov Lappin,, " 'Stop Dimona,' Says Blix," *Ynetnews*, in OSC document GMP20070524739010, 24 May 07.

15 April 2007

Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed ElBaradei calls for a Middle East nuclear-arms-free zone, which would include Iran and Israel. He is quoted as saying, "This is the last chance to build security in the Middle East based on trust and cooperation rather than on the possession of nuclear arms." He went on to say, "When a just and comprehensive peace is established between the Arab states and Israel, it should be forged in parallel with a security order based on wiping out all weapons of mass destruction."

—"ElBaradei calls for nuclear-arms-free Mideast," *Xinhua*, 15 April 2007.

4 April 2007

Yonatan Leibowitz, Greenpeace Mediterranean communications director releases a report detailing the potential threats posed by Israeli nuclear facilities. Leibowitz was quoted as saying, "Israelis have the right to know where these facilities are and the right to be informed about the serious risks to health and the environment posed by these installations."

—Tal Rabinovsky, "Greenpeace slams Israel's nuclear program," *Ynet News*, 4 April 2007.

20 March 2007

A new biography about Shimon Peres reveals new information about a secret nuclear agreement between Israel and France. The book claims that in 1957, then director-general of Israel's Defense Ministry Shimon Peres, persuaded the French Prime Minister Maurice Bourges-Maunoury to backdate the final nuclear cooperation pact that was the framework for the Dimona deal. The government of Bourges-Maunoury had actually fallen the day before which would have annulled the deal had it been known at the time.

—"Author says Shimon Peres persuaded France to backdate nuclear deal with Israel in 1957," *International Herald Tribune*, 20 March, 2007.

13 March 2007

Israeli Vice Premier Shimon Peres makes a statement which seemingly represents another breach of Israel's policy of nuclear ambiguity. In response to a question regarding Israel's possession of nuclear weapons Peres was quoted as saying, "Israel would not be the first to present nuclear weapons in the Middle East. But unlike other countries, we are not threatening to use them."

—"Peres: Israel 'Not Threatening To Use' Nuclear Weapons, 'Unlike Other Countries,'" *Jerusalem Post*, In OSC Document GMP20070313735001, 13 March 2007.

28 February 2007

The Lebanese Atomic Energy Commission has ruled that no radioactive materials were found in areas bombed by Israel during the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, contrary to accusations following the fighting. The ruling was based on laboratory tests whose findings were presented during a scientific symposium held in Lebanon.

—Roe Nahmias, "Lebanon acquits Israel of using radioactive materials," *Ynet News*, 28 February 2007.

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February 2007

According to the Director General of the Israel Electric Corp Uri Bin-Nun the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission is considering the construction of a nuclear power plant in Israel for electricity generation. This plan was proposed several years ago, and in fact there has already been a site designated in the south of Israel near Shivta for its construction. The reported cost of constructing a nuclear power plant in Israel is estimated at \$1.5 billion, and the expected output of the power station would be over 1,000 megawatts of electricity.

—Sharon Qedmi, "Electricity Corporation: Israel Considering Building Nuclear Power Station," *Ha'aretz*, In OSC Document GMP20070211736003, 11 February 2007; Amir Ben David, "Israel Plans to Build Nuclear Power Plant, Officials Say," *Ynet News*, 12 February 2007.

24 January 2007

Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Abul Gheit urges Israel to join the Nonproliferation Treaty and put its nuclear facilities under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

—"Egypt's FM urges Israel to join the NPT," *Xinhua*, 24 January 2004.

22 January 2007

Dr. Ariel Levite, deputy director-general of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission, reportedly grouped Israel with other nuclear "threshold states," namely India and Pakistan, at the Herzliya Conference. When questioned by the *Jerusalem Post* after the conference regarding his statements Dr. Levite denied that he had made any such statement, saying rather that he had, "left Israel to other speakers."

—Anshel Pfeffer, "Israel is nuclear threshold state," *Jerusalem Post*, 22 January 2007.

2 January 2007

Israel is set to test for the United Nations an underground installation designed to monitor any attempt by Iran to test nuclear devices. To conduct the test Israel will set off three strong explosions using 15 tons of liquid explosives in the northern Negev desert in order to monitor how those explosions register on equipment at the underground site. Recent nuclear tests conducted in India and Pakistan recorded well at the Negev site. A similar testing site is located near Mount Meron in Upper Galilee.

—"Israel to Initiate Controlled Explosions in Nuclear Activity Detector Test," *Agence-France Presse*, In OSC Document GMP20070102331001, 2 January 2007.

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2006

28 December 2006

Israel signs the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. The convention deals with the unlawful possession of nuclear devices by non-state actors, and calls for states to investigate alleged offenses, and to arrest, prosecute or extradite offenders. The convention also places emphasis on international cooperation with nuclear terrorism investigations and prosecutions through information-sharing and extradition of detainees.

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—"Israel Signs UN Convention Against Nuclear Terrorism," *Jerusalem: Ministry of Foreign Affairs E-mail Text*, In OSC Document GMP20061228739006, 28 December 2006.

12 December 2006

In an interview with a German television station Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert violates Israel's longstanding policy of nuclear ambiguity. He said, "Iran openly, explicitly and publicly threatens to wipe Israel off the map. Can you say that this is the same level, when you are aspiring to have nuclear weapons as America, France, Israel, Russia?" The apparent breach of Israel's policy of nuclear ambiguity has led to widespread criticism by political opponents. In response to the criticism Miri Eisin, Olmert's spokeswoman, said that the prime minister had not been listing nuclear states, but rather "responsible nations." Olmert himself has responded by reiterating that Israel will not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East.

—Matti Friedman, "Nuclear slip by Olmert sets off domestic political crisis," *Associated Press*, 12 December 2006.

7 December 2006

US Defense Secretary-designate Robert Gates declares that Israel has nuclear weapons. The statement was made in reference to Iran's desire to obtain nuclear weapons for deterrence purposes because it is surrounded by countries that possess nuclear arms; Pakistan, India, Russia, Israel and US troops in the Persian Gulf. In response, Israel's Vice Premier Shimon Peres stated that Israel has never confirmed its possession of nuclear weapons, relying instead on the ambiguity of its nuclear weapons program to create deterrence.

—"Ministers Say Israel Should Uphold Nuclear 'Ambiguity' Despite Gates' Disclosure," *Voice of Israel Network B*, In OSC Document GMP200612077380001, 07 December 2006.

21 October 2006

In statements made to the UN First Committee of Disarmament and International Security, the UAE calls on the United Nations to put pressure on Israel to make it cooperate with the IAEA and open up its nuclear weapons arsenals in an effort to reduce the tensions felt throughout the Middle East.

—"Israel must open its nuclear programme for IAEA inspection: UAE," *Emirates News Agency*, 21 October 2006.

27 September 2006

The United States Government Accountability Office's Natural Resource and Environment Director Gene Aloise said in a testimony given to a House Government Reform subcommittee that there are several weaknesses that face the IAEA. Among these weaknesses is the fact that the IAEA "has poor access to India, Israel, North Korea, and Pakistan, all nations that are outside the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty regime while believed to possess nuclear weapons."

—"Nonproliferation Regime Needs Help, GAO Finds," *Global Security Newswire*, 27 September 2006.

24 September 2006

The IAEA rejects a resolution calling for Israel to join the NPT. The resolution was proposed by the Arab states, Iran and Indonesia, but failed to pass amid opposition from Western states. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Mohammad-Ali Hosseini stated that "the move encouraged disregard for the principles and regulations of nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty."

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—"Spokesman Regrets Disapproval of Resolution on 'Zionist Regime's Nuclear Threats," *Islamic Republic News Agency*, in FBIS Document IAP20060924950033, 24 September 2006.

September 2006

The IAEA passes a resolution requesting the establishment of a nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Middle East. Israel and the United States were the only countries that voted against the resolution; however, three other countries did abstain from voting. There was also a motion proposed calling on Israel to dismantle its nuclear arsenal that was not passed.

—"US following pro-Israel policy," *BBC*, 23 September 2006; "Israel-Nuclear-Iran," *United Press International*, 24 September 2006.

30 August 2006

An Israeli study reveals that cancer morbidity rate among employees at the Nuclear Research Center (NRC) is no higher than among the general population. Professor Manfred Green, a member of Tel Aviv University's Faculty of Medicine, was quoted as saying, "The results of the study do not indicate a connection between cancer morbidity among the workers at the nuclear reactor and their workplace." Professor Green headed the study which was conducted by the Israeli Health Ministry's National Center for Disease Control.

—Dorit Gabay, "Working at Reactor Does not Increase Cancer Risk," *Ma'ariv*, in FBIS Document GMP20060830741002, 30 August 2006.

30 August 2006

Egyptian newspaper *Al-Misriyun* alleges that Israeli physicist William Cliff disclosed that the Nahal Zureg nuclear reactor had a leak 20 days ago. Allegedly the leak was temporarily stopped by the efforts of the reactor's staff.

—Husayn Awdah, "Israel has kept a secret the leak at the Nahal Surik nuclear reactor 20 days ago," *Al-Misriyun*, in FBIS Document GMP20060830035002, 30 August 2006.

August 2006

The German defense ministry confirms the sale of two Dolphin-class submarines manufactured by ThyssenKrupp AG subsidiary to Israel. The defense ministry claims that these submarines are not equipped to carry nuclear weapons. However, *Jane's Defense Weekly* asserts that they do have the capability to launch cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads, which would provide Israel with crucial second-strike capabilities. The new Dolphin-class submarines also have a range of 4500 kilometers, which exceeds that of all other submarines currently in the Israeli fleet.

—"Israeli Navy Buys Two Nuclear-Capable Submarines From Germany," *Jerusalem Post*, in FBIS Document GMP20060823738004, 23 August 2006; Ramit Plushnick-Masti, "Israel buys 2 nuclear-capable submarines," *Associated Press*, 25 August 2006; "Germany confirms sale of two ThyssenKrupp submarines to Israel," *AFX News*, 25 August 2006.

1 June 2006

Hans Blix, the head of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, states that Israel is "assumed to have 200 nuclear weapons." He also says a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East could be created if countries in the

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area gave up their nuclear weapons programs.

—J.T. Nguyen, "Roundup: Blix Says Israel 'Assumed' to Have 200 Nuclear Weapons," Deutsche Press- Agentur, 1 June 2006.

June 2006

A new article by William Burr and Avner Cohen, an expert on the Israeli nuclear program, is published in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. The article, titled "Israel Crosses the Threshold," examines the National Security Study Memorandum 40 (NSSM 40), which was initiated to provide President Nixon with policy options and information regarding Israel's budding nuclear weapons program in 1969. The authors discuss the evolution of policy stances in Nixon's administration, particularly the early position that Israel's possession of nuclear weapons would "not be in the United States' interests and should, if at all possible, be stopped." Also addressed is the development of the Nixon-Meir agreement, allowing Israel to retain its nuclear program as long as it remained fully concealed from the international community. Surprisingly, President Nixon did not reveal the contents of his meeting with Prime Minister Golda Meir to his National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger.

—Avner Cohen and William Burr, "Israel Crosses the Threshold," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, May/June 2006, p. 22-30.

23 May 2006

France's nuclear laboratory (GANIL) and Israel sign a memorandum of understanding regarding collaboration in the field of nuclear research and the building of a new accelerator at the Soreq Nuclear Research Center in Israel.

—"Israeli Nuclear Research Center, French GANIL Sign Accelerator Construction MOU," Israel Atomic Energy Commission, 7 June 2006 in Open Source Center Document GMP20060607614007.

19 May 2006

The Israeli government opposes a new treaty put forth by the United States at the UN Disarmament Commission that would halt the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons. Israeli officials have worried that it could threaten their opaque nuclear policy.

—Aluf Ben, "Israel, US 'At Odds' on Nuke Treaty Proposal; Olmert Asked Not to Raise Issue," *Ha'aretz*, 19 May 2006, in Open Source Document GMP20060519613004.

3 May 2006

A report of a classified Israeli document claims that if Iran succeeds in creating a nuclear weapon, it could cause a domino effect with other Middle Eastern countries following suit.

—Alon Ben David, "Israel Outlines Defence Doctrine," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 3 May 2006.

28 April 2006

The United Nations Disarmament Commission elects Israel as vice-chair alongside Belarus, Poland, and Austria.

—"Disarmament Commission Integral Part of Global Disarmament Efforts, Says New Chairman at 2006 Organizational Session Substantive Session at Headquarters 10-28 April," United Nations General Assembly, 10 April 2006; Edith M. Lederer, "Iran Denounces Israel Election to UN Panel," Associated Press, 28 April 2006.

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27 April 2006

Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni meets with a delegation from the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to discuss export controls on nuclear materials and the strengthening of ties between the NSG and the Israeli government. Also included in the talks are the Israeli Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor, and the Israel Atomic Energy Commission.

—"Livni Tells Visiting NSG Group Israel 'Reliable' Counterproliferation Partner," Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 27 April 2006, in Open Source Center Document GMP20060428614002.

21 April 2006

Israeli authorities extend the international travel ban an additional year for whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu. Vanunu had hoped that new Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert would reconsider the travel ban restricting him from traveling outside of Israel. He also believes that "European governments could do more to persuade Israel to allow him to leave. Israel maintains, however, that Vanunu still possesses sensitive security related information." Vanunu is also scheduled to appear in court on May 1 on charges that he spoke to foreign media and violated the terms of his release from prison in April 2004.

—"Vanunu Travel Ban Extended by One Year," *Global Security Newswire*, 21 April 2006.

19 April 2006

In the second Saudi-British conference, "Two Kingdoms: Friendship and Partnership" in Riyadh, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal speaks about the two nations' desire that the Middle East be a region free of weapons of mass destruction. Prince Saud Al-Faisal also stated that, "If the international community is attempting to convince Iran not to develop nuclear arms, this should apply to Israel as well." He went on to say, "we are in agreement as to the right of any nation to seek nuclear technology for civilian use under customary international supervision. Under all circumstances, we believe in this country that the current crisis should be resolved through peaceful negotiations."

—"Saudi, British foreign Ministers Open 'Two Kingdoms' Conference," *Saudi Press Agency*, in FBIS Document GMP20060419706002, 19 April 2006.

12 April 2006

The World Muslim Congress calls on the West to adopt a more equitable approach to Iran and other countries' nuclear programs. World Muslim Congress Secretary-General Mohammed Raja Zafarul Haq pointed out that "Not a single voice has been raised about Israel's nuclear arms stockpile while on the other hand continuous pressure is being exerted on the Islamic republic of Iran." He also stated that a "Selective approach has always led to complications. Therefore, the West should follow an even-handed policy to make the world peaceful." The Congress' Secretary-General went on to make it clear that in his opinion Israel's policies and weapons pose a constant threat to the Middle East.

—"IRNA: World Muslim Congress Chief Urges 'Even-handed' Approach on Nuclear Issue," *Islamic Republic News Agency*, in FBIS Document IAP20060412011034, 12 April 2006.

30 March 2006

The Arab League Summit Council calls for a region free from weapons of mass destruction. As part of the final

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statement at the 18th regular session of the Arab League Summit Council Arab leaders called on "the international community to declare the Middle East a region free from weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, in order to boost international peace and security." They also urged "the international community to require Israel to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and bring its entire program within the scope of IAEA safeguards."

—"Sudan: Khartoum Arab Summit Final Statement," *Al-Quds Al-'Arabi*, in FBIS Document GMP20060330735001, 30 March 2006.

12 March 2006

Syrian authorities call for a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. Syrian Foreign Minister Waleed al-Mualeem told journalists, "We call on all Middle East nations, among them Israel, to join NPT [Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons]. We insist on 'double standards' being renounced. We propose creating a zone in the Middle East that would be free of nuclear, biological and other kinds of weapons." However, according to the FM, Syria continues to support the existence of peaceful nuclear programs in the region.

—"Syria Calls on Middle East Countries, Including Israel, to Join Non-Proliferation Treaty," *Moscow Interfax*, in FBIS Document CEP20060312002002, 12 March 2006.

1 March 2006

Syria accuses Israel of dumping nuclear waste on the Golan Heights. Syrian ambassador Bashar Ja'afari stated that, "Israel, which has unambiguous support from major nuclear weapon states, continues to reject the will of the international community and dumps its nuclear waste in the Syrian Golan Heights." In response, the Israeli representative Itzhak Levanon called the information, "repetitive [and] inaccurate." He went on the say, "This issue was raised by the Syrians during the Commission on Human Rights and I refuted it completely, and I am refuting it now."

—"Syria Accuses Israel of Nuclear Dumping," *ISN Security Watch*, 1 March 2006.

March 2006

Newly declassified documents reveal how Britain aided Israel in its development of nuclear weapons. In addition to the 20 tons of heavy water that were recently revealed to have been sold by Britain to Israel in 1959 and 1960, it is now clear that Britain also supplied Israel with a number of other vital materials during the 1950s and 1960s that sped up the process allowing it to develop nuclear weapons. Some of these materials include uranium-235, beryllium and lithium-6, which are used in making atom and even hydrogen bombs. It appears from the declassified documents that neither then Prime Minister Harold Wilson nor technology minister in 1966 Tony Benn had any knowledge of the sales. Upon learning of the secret deals Tony Benn said, "I'm not only surprised, I'm shocked. It never occurred to me that [civil servants] would authorize something so against the policy of the government." It is also reported that Michael Israel Michaels, a senior official at the science ministry during this period, played a key role in pushing through some of these sales. Despite intelligence to the contrary, Michaels continued to protest Israel's innocence regarding its nuclear weapons program. Mr. Michaels was Britain's representative at the IAEA, and was invited to Israel to inspect their nuclear facilities in 1961. It seems that Michaels' trip was part of a disinformation campaign to give the impression that everything was "above board" in Israel. In 1966, the Ministry of Defense strongly objected to a request by the UK atomic energy authority to export

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10 milligrams of plutonium to Israel, arguing that the sale might have "significant military value." It is reported that Mr. Michaels disagreed and eventually pushed the sale through, despite clear indications that he was aware that such a sale could save Israel months in developing nuclear weapons.

—Meirion Jones, "Secret Sale of UK plutonium to Israel," *BBC*, 10 March 2006; Meirion Jones, "Britain's dirty secret," *New Statesman*, 13 March 2006.

30 January 2006

The Arab Nuclear Energy Organization releases a report detailing alleged possible hazards facing Israel and neighboring Arab states because of Israel's nuclear power plants. Of major concern are allegations that nuclear waste may be being buried, seriously polluting air, water and soil. According to the report, subterranean water reserves are particularly susceptible to pollution, and could cause a major problem as they provide most of the potable water for the region.

—"Nuclear-Israel-Report," *Islamic Republic News Agency*, 30 January 2006.

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2005

7 December 2005

Israel agrees to participate in the U.S. National Nuclear Security Agency's (NNSA) Megaports Initiative which installs radiation detection equipment and trains law enforcement officials at seaports throughout the world. Israel's Foreign Ministry Director General "Ron Prosor" said of the project, "This initiative provides an important defensive element to protect Israeli ports and ensures that exports from Israel to the U.S. are screened to prevent the threat of radiological terror. I know that our joint efforts under this project will directly contribute to our mutual nonproliferation objectives and to the safety and security of our two nations and the global maritime system."

—"US Israel Sign Deal to Help End Smuggling of Nuclear Material," *Jerusalem Post*, 8 December 2005.

4 December 2005

Germany approves the sale of two Dolphin-class submarines to Israel. The two submarines, which will be added to a fleet of three similar-class submarines, will have improved capabilities that will allow them to remain submerged for weeks at a time. The Dolphin-class submarine is also equipped with torpedo tubes reportedly capable of launching cruise missiles carrying nuclear warheads, which would strengthen Israel's second-strike capability. The new submarines will likely be delivered sometime in the next decade.

—Efraim Inbar, "Deterring the Iranian Nuclear Threat," *Jerusalem Post*, 4 December 2005.

1 December 2005

Mordechai Vanunu, the Israeli nuclear whistleblower, speaks with Iranian press about Israel's nuclear weapons program. According to Vanunu, in 1986 Israel had an arsenal of more than 200 nuclear bombs. Vanunu also states that "in 1986 the Israelis began producing...the hydrogen bomb." Vanunu goes on to say that "[Israel] was capable of producing 40 kilograms of plutonium a year. That is a quantity sufficient for manufacturing 10 nuclear bombs.

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That means that from 1986 until now it could have built 200 more warheads."

—"Iranian radio interviews Israeli Nuclear Whistleblower Vanunu," *BBC*, 2 December 2005.

December 2005

Two recently aired documentaries indicate that Britain was instrumental in supplying Israel with heavy water for nuclear reactors in 1959. One documentary, aired by BBC Newsnight, suggests that Britain knew that the final destination of the 20 tons of heavy water it sold to Norway was Israel, and that it was to be part of a nuclear weapons program. A second documentary, aired in Norway by Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK), cites documents declassified by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicating that Norway also suspected that the Israeli purchase of heavy water was meant for the purpose of starting a nuclear weapons program.

—Robinson Freytag, "Film Sheds Light on How Israel got Heavy Water from Norway," *Jerusalem Post*, 7 December 2005; "UK Role in Israel's Nuclear Program Seen as 'Double Standard,'" *BBC*, 12 December 2005.

16 November 2005

Previously secret papers from Richard Nixon's presidency, released by the National Archives show U.S. alarm over Israeli nuclear capability in the late 1960s. A 1969 memo reporting intelligence findings by then assistant secretary of state, Joseph J. Sisco to Secretary of State William Rogers reveals Israel's rapidly developing capability to produce and deploy nuclear weapons, despite promises it would not introduce nuclear arms to the region.

—Cal Woodward, "Nixon papers show U.S. alarm over Israel's nuclear program," *Associated Press*, 16 November 2005.

3 October 2005

A resolution passes unanimously at the general conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency which calls for a nuclear weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

—"IAEA Calls for Nuclear Weapon-Free Middle East," *Global Security Newswire*, 3 October 2005.

2 October 2005

The IAEA at its recently concluded General Conference approves a draft submitted by Egypt calling to subject all nuclear installations in the Middle East to the system of IAEA guarantees and to establish an area free of nuclear weapons. The Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit, highlighting the dangers of the Israeli nuclear capability and the challenges facing the NPT, pushed for the international community and the IAEA to assume their responsibilities and start taking practical and serious steps to implement decisions and avoid the policies of double standards in dealing with certain states.

—"Egypt Urges Nuclear Weapons-Free MidEast at IAEA Session," *BBC*, 2 October 2005.

26 August 2005

Tzvi Kamil, the chairman of the Committee for Nuclear Safety, in a first interview, comments on Israel's nuclear reactor safety standards and radioactive waste control. The Committee for Nuclear Safety (CNS) is one of Israel's most secretive bodies, acting only in an advisory capacity to the Prime Minister. It acts as the watchdog for the Israel Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC), which runs Israel's two reactors.

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—"Israeli Nuclear Official Comments on Reactors' Safety, Radioactive Waste Control," *Ha'aretz*, 26 August 2005, in FBIS Document GMP20050826618002.

5 August 2005

Asher Karni, an Israeli businessman living in South Africa and apprehended while vacationing in Colorado, is sentenced by a U.S. federal judge to three years in prison for the sale of U.S. origin dual-use components to companies in Pakistan and India. This includes the sale of 200 triggered spark gaps [note: triggered spark gaps can be utilized as triggers for nuclear weapons]. According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Jay I. Bratt, Karni made at least 17 of these illegal transactions. Karni and his partner, Humayun Khan, had prior knowledge that the U.S. forbids the sale of triggered spark gaps to Pakistan and India because of their dual-use capability and therefore attempted to conceal the final recipient of the goods. The Pakistani government denies purchasing any illegal components for their nuclear program.

— Josh Meyer, "Man Gets 3 Years for Sales Linked to Nuclear Arms," *Los Angeles Times*, 5 August 2005; Josh Meyer, "Case Reveals Nuts and Bolts of Nuclear Network, Officials Say," *Los Angeles Times*, 24 May 2004.

3 August 2005

Documents from the British National Archive reveal that Britain sold heavy water [necessary for the production of plutonium] to Israel in 1959 and 1960, providing a substantial push for the Israeli nuclear program at Dimona. The United States had previously refused the same sale. In 1956 Britain purchased 20 tons of heavy water from Norway. Noratom, a Norwegian company, was then formed to purchase the heavy water and ship it to Israel. The heavy water came in two-10 ton shipments, the first in June 1959 and the second in 1960. The export license was through Norway, yet the shipments were shipped from a British port on Israeli ships. British officials never asked for an Israeli guarantee that the heavy water was intended for peaceful purposes. In 1961, Israel approached Britain again for five tons of heavy water and was refused.

— Michael Crick, "How Britain Helped Israel Get the Bomb," BBC, 3 August 2005; Ben Fenton, "Britain Secretly Sent Vital Nuclear Bomb Ingredient to Israel," *Daily Telegraph*, 4 August 2005.

August 2005

Yuval Steinitz, chairman of the Israeli Knesset Foreign and Defense Committee, tells interviewers that "once it will be clear that Israel...[is] secured...then Israel will be ready to discuss an arms control regime or arrangement in the Middle East." Israeli officials maintain that they will keep a nuclear deterrent until there is a guarantee of peace in the region, and are unwilling to compromise it in international negotiations.

— Miles Pomper, "Israeli Officials See Few Prospects for Arms Control," *Arms Control Today*, August 2005.

8 July 2005

According to the Islamic Republic News Agency of Iran, the G8 leaders in Gleneagles, Scotland are indirectly pushing for Israel to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. A G8 statement reads, "We call on all states not party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty...to accede without delay."

— "G8 Urge Israel to Sign NPT 'Immediately'," IRNA, 8 July 2005.

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16 June 2005

Israeli Professor Avner Cohen provides several revelations about the origins of the Israeli nuclear program in his new book, *The Last Taboo*. He identifies Professor Yisra'el Dostrovsky as the man responsible for the creation of the structure of Israel's nuclear program and as the "first chief nuclear commissioner." Cohen cites the structure of the program as being based on the "dual subjectivity principle," as Dostrovsky and his successors have served as both Israel Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) director general under the Israeli prime minister and as chief of the Practical Science Administration under the Israeli defense department. According to Cohen, this affords them a "double personal mandate."

— "Author Avner Cohen Warned Following New Disclosures on Israeli Nuclear Program," *Yedi'ot Aharonot*, 17 June 2005; in FBIS Document GMP20050617616015.

13 June 2005

At the same time the International Atomic Energy Agency requests to perform inspections in Riyadh, the Saudi Arabian Council of Ministers replies that "Israel must sign the NPT and all its nuclear facilities must be subject to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency and this must be made a basic condition for any future security arrangement."

— "Saudis Demand Israel Sign NPT, Call Seen as an Attempt to Deflect IAEA Pressure," *Jerusalem Post*, 15 June 2005; "UPI Hears...," United Press International, 15 June 2005.

10 June 2005

In response to accusations by the director general of Gal-At company that secret nuclear information had been stolen from the company, the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) announces, "The Gal-At company has not been involved in any nuclear reactor project and no classified information is held by this company. A quick and exhaustive check indicated that nothing of the sort has ever occurred. The check revealed that the only contact with this company was the purchase of a filter for a water-cooler system located at the nuclear reactor's offices."

— "Israeli Watchdog Denies Water Company Held Secret Data on Nuclear Reactor," *Financial Times*, 10 June 2005.

9 June 2005

Israeli investigators are looking into the possible theft of instructions on the production of heavy water stolen from Gal-At, an Israeli water company. This "Trojan Horse" investigation is now expanding beyond Israel into the United States and the United Kingdom.

— "Israeli Police Look into Possible Theft of Heavy Water Production Information," Global Security Newswire, 9 June 2005.

9 June 2005

Reports indicate nuclear secrets for the reactor in Dimona were stolen as part of business espionage. Since May of 2005, several arrests have been made during an investigation where a Trojan Horse program was used to steal business secrets from rival companies. Water company Gal-At says technical information describing how to produce and separate heavy water in a nuclear reactor was stolen. Israeli police have found files on computer servers in England and Germany which "could be used to help produce a hydrogen bomb," says Gal-At CEO Baruch Zisser.

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— Buki Na'ed and Dudi Nissim, "Nuke Secrets May Have Been Stolen," *Yediot Aharonot*, 9 June 2005; "Israeli Nuclear Secret Caught Up in Computer Hacking Scandal," Agence France Presse, 9 June 2005; Avi Cohen, "Scandal Shocks Business World," *Yediot Aharonot*, 29 May 2005.

2 June 2005

A recently declassified U.S. national intelligence assessment from 1961 indicates that Washington knew Israel was pursuing a nuclear weapons path. The document estimated Israel would be capable of producing a nuclear bomb by 1965-66 and had the capability to deliver the weapon to a range of 550 miles (~885km) via a bomber.

—Avner Cohen, "U.S. Knew About Nuke Plans," *Yediot Aharonot*, 2 June 2005.

28 May 2005

Egypt's request that Israel be sanctioned for not signing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and possessing nuclear weapons is rejected at the NPT review conference in New York.

—"Nations Unable to Agree on New Steps Against Nuclear Proliferation," *Financial Times*, 28 May 2005.

25 May 2005

Israeli whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu tells author Dr. Yo'el Cohen that "Today Israel evidently has about 200 warheads... I have also revealed new information on a hydrogen bomb and a neutron bomb. The Israeli public may support the possession of a simple nuclear bomb, but it does not support the possession of a hydrogen bomb."

[Passage omitted on hydrogen bomb's qualities]

—"Israel: Nuclear 'Whistleblower' Vanunu Says Israel Has Hydrogen, Neutron Bomb," *Hatzofe*, 25 May 2005, in FBIS Document GMP20050531614088.

17 May 2005

Palestinian public health minister, Zhodi el-Wiheidi accuses Israel of burying 80 tons of nuclear and chemical trash near Nablus in the West Bank.

—"Israel Accused of Burying Nuclear Trash Near Territories," Xinhua, 17 May 2005.

3 May 2005

At the 7th U.N. Nuclear Disarmament Conference, the United Arab Emirates calls on the international community and specifically Israel to take all necessary steps to completely dismantle its nuclear programs to create a nuclear free world. U.A.E. Permanent Ambassador to the UN, Abdul Aziz bin Nasir Al Shamsi, indicates several nuclear states continue to develop their nuclear programs under the auspice of deterrent security measures.

—"UAE Calls for a Nuclear-Free World," Bahrain News Agency, 4 May 2005.

22 April 2005

Israel's interior minister, Ofir Pines-Paz, extends Israeli nuclear whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu's travel ban for another year.

—"Vanunu Travel Ban Extended," *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 22 April 2005, Vol. 172, No.18, pg. 11.

19 April 2005

Israeli ministry spokesman Gilan Heiman states that Mordechai Vanunu cannot leave Israel before 19 April 2006.

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His travel ban has been extended for another year because he still poses a security threat to national security.

—"Israel extends Vanunu travel ban," BBC, 19 April 2005.

12 April 2005

Prior to the opening of his trial in Jerusalem, Israeli nuclear whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu tells reporters that Israel possesses 200 atomic neutron and hydrogen bombs and produces 40 kilograms of plutonium each year. Mr. Vanunu says charges brought against him by Yehiel Horev, head of security for the Ministry of Defense, proves his statements about Israel's nuclear program are true.

—Dan Izenberg, "Vanunu: Israel has 200 Nuclear Bombs," *Jerusalem Post*, 13 April 2005.

8 April 2005

American Federal Prosecutors investigating nuclear technology smuggling reveal that Asher Karni, a Hungarian-born Israeli businessman who lives in South Africa, pleaded guilty to such charges last September and has been cooperating with investigators. Mr. Karni was arrested on New Year's Day 2004 for selling triggered spark gaps and violating the Export Administration Act. Triggered spark gaps are dual-use items. One use is in hospital protocol to power lithotripters. When installed into an enriched uranium casing, however, a triggered spark gap can ignite a nuclear explosion. Karni was the seller of about 200 of these devices to Humayun Khan, an Islamabad businessman from Pakistan.

—Mark Schapiro, "The Middleman: A Special Investigation," *Mother Jones*, 30 March 2005; "U.S. Says Banned Technology Went to Pakistan and India," *New York Times*, 9 April 2005.

7 April 2005

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter states that the United States fails to acknowledge how Israel's nuclear program encourages countries such as Syria, Iran, and Egypt to pursue nuclear weapons.

—"Saving Non-Proliferation," *Windsor Star*, 7 April 2005.

April 2005

Jackie Wolcott Sanders, the American ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament and special representative of the President for the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and Mark Fitzpatrick, another State Department official, indirectly call Israel a nuclear power by suggesting that it start planning on canceling its nuclear weapons programs. "The United States continues to support the goals of the Middle East resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, including the achievement of a Middle East Free of Weapons of Mass Destruction," said Jackie Wolcott Sanders.

—Angelique van Engelen, "Israel Termed A 'Nuclear Power' By US Officials," *Journal of Turkish Weekly*, 11 April 2005.

17 March 2005

An Israeli court charges Mordechai Vanunu with violating the terms of his release from jail last year. Israel's ministry has charged Vanunu with twenty-one counts of violating the restrictions. Vanunu was initially charged with disclosing secrets about the Israeli Dimona reactor and passing on classified information about the country's

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nuclear program.

—"Vanunu charged for media contacts," BBC, 22 March 2005.

March 2005

Mohamad ElBaradei, head of the IAEA, says that the creation of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone will be pushed again at the Treaty on Non-Proliferation Review Conference that will be held in May 2005. ElBaradei says that Middle East security will be part of the Arab-Israeli peace process as it has in past years. Israeli officials argue that their nuclear weapons do not present a threat to other nations, only a deterrent to protect their country from invasion by larger neighbors.

—"Push for Nuclear-Free Middle East Resurfaces," *Washington Post*, 6 March 2005.

February 2005

In an interview between a Hungarian reporter and Iranian Foreign Minister Kharrazi, the Iranian leader reaffirms the necessity for the Middle East to have a nuclear weapon free zone that includes Israel.

—"Hungary: Iran's Foreign Minister Urges Middle East Nuclear Arms Free Zone," *Budapest Magyar Nemzet*, 16 February 2005, in FBIS Document EUP20050216000391.

February 2005

Jordanian official Asma Khadir states that Jordan is worried about Israeli nuclear activities and the dangers posed by the Dimona Nuclear reactor. She also says that from recent information, Israel has decided to operate a new nuclear reactor near Dimona in the Negev desert. The new reactor will be operational in 2009.

—"Government Spokeswoman Expresses Worry about Israel's 'Nuclear Activities,'" *Al-Ghadd*, 7 February 2005, in FBIS Document GMP20050208000124.

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2004-2000

22 November 2004

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon states that Israel's nuclear reactor near the town of Dimona is "relatively small and safe." There are claims that the Dimona reactor is more than 40 years old and needs maintenance.

—"Israeli Parliamentary team to survey nuclear reactor," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, 22 November 2004.

9 November 2004

Iran states that it can mass produce Shahab-3 missiles that are capable of reaching Israel or U.S. forces in the Middle East. The United States and Israel have developed the Arrow anti-ballistic missile system in response to the Shahab-3.

—"Iran says it can make nuke rocket to hit Israel," *Toronto Star*, 10 November 2004.

8 November 2004

IAEA Director Mohammed ElBaradei says that Israel's nuclear weapons are an obstacle to peace in the Middle East

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and that the Israeli arsenal should go as part of a peace settlement with Palestinians. "This is not really sustainable that you have Israel sitting with nuclear weapons capability there while everyone else is part of the non-proliferation regime," he said.

—"Israel's nukes blocking Mideast peace, ElBaradei says," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, 8 November 2004.

October 2004

The United Arab Emirates calls upon Israel to sign the NPT in order to make the region more secure. It also demands that Israel cooperate with the IAEA on matters relating to its nuclear program, to stop processing fissionable material, to refrain from building facilities to produce WMD, to cease nuclear experiments, and to dismantle its nuclear weapons.

—"UAE Seeks Global Pressure on Israel to Sign NPT," *Financial Times*, 24 October 2004.

23 August 2004

Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi warns that if Israel targets its nuclear facilities, Iran will retaliate by attacking Israel's Dimona nuclear complex. Kamal says, "If they do that, we would react... We have our defense capability and that certainly keeps others from exercising such a threat. They know what is our capability and how... we react."

—"Iran Again Warns Israel Against Attacking Nuclear Facilities," *Associated Press*, 23 August 2004.

8 August 2004

Israeli officials begin distributing iodine anti-radiation tables to residents living near the Dimona nuclear complex. The tables are to be distributed in the towns of Yeroham, Dimona, and Aruar, as well as to Bedouins living in the Negev desert. Government officials deny that this measure is a response to safety concerns.

—"Israel Distributes Radiation Pills to Residents Near Nuclear Reactor," *Agence France Presse*, 8 August 2004.

26 May 2004

British journalist Peter Hounam is arrested in Jerusalem by Israel's internal security services. Police suspect that Hounam may have been in contact with Mordechai Vanunu, which would violate restrictions placed on Vanunu after his release from prison for divulging secrets about Israel's nuclear weapons program. While working for the *Sunday Times*, Hounam authored the story of Vanunu's exposé in 1986.

—"Israel Detains British Journalist Who Broke Nuclear Whistleblower's Story," *Agence France Presse*, 27 May 2004.

29 July 2004

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon implies that the United States supports Israel's nuclear weapons program, stating that Israel "has received here a clear American position that says in other words that Israel must not be touched when it comes to its deterrent capability".

—"Sharon: U.S. Recognizes Israel's Need for Weapons of Deterrence, Implying Nuclear Arms," *Associated Press*, 30 July 2004.

18 July 2004

Amid mounting reports about Iran's secret efforts to develop nuclear weapons, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon calls Iran's nuclear program "the biggest threat to the existence of Israel" and that "Israel will not allow Iran to be

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equipped with a nuclear weapon".

—"Israel Targets Iran Nuclear Plant," *Sunday Times (London)*, 18 July 2004.

6-8 July 2004

El Baradei three-day visit to Israel was a series of cordial meeting with various Israeli officials and scholars. In a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister, El Baradei and Ariel Sharon discussed the establishment of a nuclear free zone. According to the IAEA Chief, "the Prime Minister this morning affirmed to me that Israel's policy [is] that in the context of peace, establishment of peace in the Middle East, Israel will be looking for establishment of a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East."

—"Hope' for nuclear-free mid-East." BBC, July 8, 2004.

7 July 2004

At a press conference regarding International Atomic Energy Agency director Mohamed ElBaradei's visit to Israel, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon comments on comments on the success of Israel's doctrine of nuclear ambiguity. "Israel has to hold in its hand all the elements of power necessary to protect itself by itself... Our policy of ambiguity on nuclear arms has proved its worth, and it will continue." Israeli officials tell ElBaradei that they will not discuss nuclear issues until there is an overall Middle Eastern peace agreement.

—"Israel Tells of Iran Nuclear Fear," *BBC*, 7 July 2004; "Israel Will Not Discuss Nuclear Issue Until Overall Peace Secured—IAEA Head," *BBC*, 7 July 2004.

6 July 2004

Former senior Mossad official Uzi Arad says that Israel's "vision for the long term is to turn the Middle East into a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction" but that to "pave the way towards that vision one needs to conclude peace agreements with all countries in the region, to have peaceful relations, good neighborliness, and to have durable such conditions".

—"IAEA Visit May Test Israel on Nukes," *CNN*, 6 July 2004.

6 July 2004

Implying that Israel will continue its policy of nuclear opacity, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon indirectly references the nuclear weapons program. When asked about an upcoming visit by International Atomic Energy Agency director Mohamed ElBaradei, Sharon responds by saying, "I don't know what he is coming here to see. Israel has to hold in its hand all the elements of power necessary to protect itself by itself."

—"Sharon Says Israel to Stick to Nuclear Ambiguity Policy," *Xinhua*, 6 July 2004.

4 July 2004

International Atomic Energy Agency officials state that Dr. El Baradei's will visit Israel on July 6, and that visit was partly a routine visit, and that IAEA Director intends to meet with the Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and other Israeli officials "to promote the concept of a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East."

—Louis Charbonneau, "El Baradei Wants Israel to Discuss Scrapping Nukes." *Reuters*, July 4, 2004.

4 July 2004

The Israeli Atomic Energy Commission launches an official website, which does not mention any nuclear weapons

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program. This website provides a general and limited account of the facilities and history of Israel nuclear program, and has some community related information.

—"Israel's Secretive Nuclear Commission Launches Web Site," *Associated Press*, 4 July 2004; Israel Atomic Energy Commission Official Website, as viewed on July 2004, www.iaec.gov.il.

23 April 2004

In an interview for Israeli television Prime Minister Ariel Sharon alludes to Israel's nuclear program. Commenting on the potential threat posed by Iranian nuclear weapons, he says the United States recognizes Israel's right to defend itself from such threats. "But the recognition of Israel's right—and of the importance of Israel's ability—to defend itself, by itself, these things are clearly understood." He also used foreign press reports as a means of indirectly referencing the nuclear program, saying, "If you read the foreign press you will see that they talk about a whole complex of defensive tools, which Israel needs in its hands."

—"Sharon Hints at Israel's Nuclear Deterrent," *Associated Press*, 24 April 2004.

21 April 2004

After having spent 18 years in prison for divulging sensitive information on the Israeli nuclear program, Mordechai Vanunu is released from custody. Upon release, Vanunu immediately defies the restrictions the Israeli government has place on him by speaking with the international media. He calls for Israel to open its nuclear program to international inspections.

—"Defiant Vanunu Freed After 18-Year Prison Term for Revealing Israel's Nuclear Secrets," *Associated Press*, 21 April 2004.

16 March 2004

The Knesset debates a bill proposed by Arab MP Issam Makhul calling for the closure of Israel's nuclear reactor at Dimona because it has become an environmental hazard.

—"Arab Israeli MP Proposes Bill to Close Dimona Nuclear Reactor," *Agence France Presse*, 16 March 2004.

16 March 2004

The Knesset debates a bill proposed by Arab MP Issam Makhul calling for the closure of Israel's nuclear reactor at Dimona because it has become an environmental hazard.

—"Arab Israeli MP Proposes Bill to Close Dimona Nuclear Reactor," *Agence France Presse*, 16 March 2004.

25 February 2004

In an interview with Al Arabiya television, IAEA Director Mohamed El Baradei says about Israel's nuclear weapons program: "I can't give a precise opinion on it because we don't do any inspections in Israel...I know it's a developed program, and Israel does not deny that it has nuclear capability, but the size of the program, the extent of its development, really I can't know...It's enough for me to know that it has nuclear capability, there is a conviction that it has a nuclear weapon."

—"Israeli Nuclear Arsenal a Mystery to UN Watchdog," *Reuters*, 25 February 2004.

24 February 2004

In a discussion involving Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, the defense minister, the justice minister, the attorney

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general, the state attorney and defense officials that soon-to-be-released nuclear spy Mordechai Vanunu will not be placed under administrative detention after his release. He is to be placed under close government supervision, using technical means to monitor his movement. He may never be allowed to leave Israel again.

—"Isreal: Nuclear 'Spy' Vanunu May Face Indefinite Travel Ban," *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, 25 February 2004.

22 February 2004

A Defense Intelligence Agency report cited in a new book about Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld states that Israel has 82 nuclear weapons. The book, *Rumsfeld's War*, also makes estimates at the nuclear arsenals of other states of concern.

—"Report: Israel has 82 Nuclear Weapons," *United Press International*, 22 February 2004.

8 February 2004

Former Mossad agent Shabtai Shavit states in an interview that the agency considered killing Mordechai Vanunu when he was taken into custody.

—"Syp Boss Reveals Mossad Considered Killing Vanunu," *Sunday Times (London)*, 8 February 2004.

2 February 2004

As the discharge of convicted nuclear spy Mordechai Vanunu approaches, the Israeli government considers restricting his activities once released. Israeli officials fear he will continue to disclose information about the nuclear weapons program. The government is considering restricting his movements, preventing him from leaving the country by disqualifying him from obtaining a passport, censoring his writing, and barring him from giving interviews to the media.

—"Israel Plans to Restrict Nuclear Spy Vanunu after Release: Report," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, 2 February 2004.

2 January 2004

Israeli citizen Asher Karni is arrested at Denver International Airport while on a skiing vacation and charged with falsifying export invoices to smuggle nuclear "triggered spark gap" detonators to Pakistan.

—"Israeli Nuclear Suspect Awaits Fate," *Al-Jazeera*, 15 January 2004.

October 2003

Speaking on condition of anonymity, two Bush administration insiders and one Israeli official confirm that Israel has modified American-supplied Harpoon cruise missiles to carry nuclear warheads. This report confirms Israel's ability to launch a nuclear strike from land, air, or sea, as well as its second-strike capability.

—"Israel Adds Fuel to Nuclear Dispute," *Los Angeles Times*, 12 October 2003.

4 March 2003

The news agency *Deutsche Presse-Agentur* reports that Patriot missile batteries, including two received from Germany, are to be deployed near Dimona.

—"US Teams Deploy Patriot Missiles in Tel Aviv Area," *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*, 4 March 2003.

Related content is available on the website for the Nuclear Threat Initiative, www.nti.org.



19 January 2003

The Arab newspaper *Al-Bawaba* reports that workers shut down Israel's Nuclear Research Facility at Dimona in protest against plans to cut down the workforce. Employees suspend work for several hours in order to bring plant management to the negotiating table. The article estimates the total number of employees at Dimona to be approximately 2,700 scientists, technicians, and administrative staff.

—"Workers Shut Down Israel's Nuclear Facility in Dimona," *Comtex News Network*, 19 January 2003.

5 January 2003

Israel successfully test-fires Arrow anti-missile defense systems in a rehearsal for potential Scud attacks by Iraq in preparation for an American-led invasion of Iraq. Israel is also preparing for an attack on the Dimona reactor complex via Iraqi warplanes.

—"Israelis Test Defense Missiles in Preparation for War on Iraq," *The Independent (UK)*, 6 January 2003.

27 November 2002

The Arab newspaper *Al-Bawaba* reports that Israel plans to build another nuclear reactor for generating electric power in southern Israel. The project is estimated to be completed by 2020 and would be for "civilian purposes." An additional reactor might enhance Israel's nuclear weapons capability.

—"Israel Plans to Build a Second Nuclear Reactor," *Comtex News Network*, 27 November 2002.

November 2002

The United States offers Israel a new generation of Patriot anti-missile batteries in anticipation of a war with Iraq. The new Patriot missiles are specially designed to intercept Scud in flight and would be placed under the control of US troops deployed in Israel.

—"US Offers to Deploy New Patriot Missiles in Israel: Report," *Agence France Presse*, 26 November 2002.

27 October 2002

Avigdor Feldman, defense attorney for convicted nuclear spy Mordechai Vanunu, alleges that Foreign Minister Shimon Peres of overstepping the limits of disclosure concerning Israel's secret nuclear weapons program. Peres is subpoenaed to testify at Vanunu's parole tribunal. Feldman's intention is to show that because Peres has disclosed intimate details of the nuclear program in an interview of the previous year, Vanunu should not be considered capable of further harming national security.

—"Peres Summoned to Testify at Vanunu Parole Hearing," *Sunday Times (London)*, 27 October 2002.

24 October 2002

In response to a proposal put forward by Palestinian Minister of Environment Yousef Abu Safiyya, the Council of Arab Ministers of Environment address the importance of design a cooperation mechanism in the event of nuclear radiation exposure in the region. Safiyya alleged that there were indications of radiation leakage from Israel's Dimona nuclear reactor.

—"Egypt: Arab Ministers of Environment Discuss Dealing with Nuclear Radiation," *Financial Times Information*, 24 October 2002.

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6 October 2002

Israeli officials say that Israel's Arrow anti-missile batteries would destroy 90 percent of incoming missiles in the event of an Iraqi attack. Israel also still has Patriot missile batteries that are used as a second line of defense.

—"Israel Says it Could Destroy 'More Than 90 Percent' of Incoming Missiles from Iraq," *Associated Press*, 6 October 2002.

June 2002

Former State Department and Pentagon officials state that Israel has acquired three diesel submarines that it is arming with newly designed cruise missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads, potentially giving Israel a triad of land-, sea-, and air-based nuclear weapons.

—"Israel Has Sub-Based Atomic Arms Capability," *The Washington Post*, 15 June 2002.

14 May 2002

Retired Brigadier General Yitzhak Yaakov is convicted of passing sensitive information to an unauthorized person. Yaakov headed the Israeli Defense Forces weapons development authority until 1973.

—"Ex-General Convicted of Passing Secrets," *United Press International*, May 14 2002.

February 2002

Members of Jordan's Green Party ask United Nations Secretary General Kofi Anan to demand that Israel's nuclear reactor at Dimona be subject to international inspections and monitoring because of the potential dangers it poses to the environment and people of the Middle East. They say that American satellite images show large cracks in the wall of the reactor that may be leaking radioactivity that can harm the plant's workers and Jordanians.

—"Jordan Week: An Unconventional Report on Jordanian News and Views, *The Star*," *World Sources Inc.*, 9 February 2002.

14 January 2002

Former Israeli cabinet minister and physics professor Yuval Neeman states that during Israel's wars the government has shut down the nuclear reactor at Dimona. He tells a symposium at Tel Aviv University that reactor shut down was "one of the first things done in war time."

—"Israeli Experts Ponder Nuclear Issues," *United Press International*, 14 January 2002.

2002

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace estimates that Israel possesses between 98 and 172 nuclear weapons.

— Cirincione, Joseph with Wolfsthal, Jon B. and Rajkumar, Miriam, *Deadly Arsenals, Tracking Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Washington DC, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2002), 221, 224.

December 2001

A television documentary made by Israel's leading documentary team in which Shimon Peres discloses details of Israel's nuclear program is broadcast in the Arab world. The film shows testimony by former French officials about how France was complicit in developing Israel's nuclear weapons program. Shown in Israel the month before, it is broadcast by Qatar-based satellite channel Al-Jazeera and other Arab networks. There is speculation that the

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broadcast of explicit information about Israel's nuclear capability throughout the Arab world is intended to send a deliberate warning at a time of heightened tensions in the region.

—"Israel Reveals Secrets of How it Gained Bomb, Peres Gives Details of How France Helped with Development of Nuclear Programme," *Sunday Telegraph (London)*, 23 December 2001.

7 September 2001

Former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu publicly urges Israel to discontinue its official policy of nuclear ambiguity in light of changing conditions, namely the progression of Iran's nuclear program.

—"Netanyahu Wants Veil on Israeli Nuclear Secrets Lifted: Report," *Agence France Presse*, 7 September 2001.

10 May 2001

Representatives from Israel's State Archives enter the home of Miriam Eshkol, widow of former Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, while she out of the country to confiscate documents relating to state nuclear secrets. *Ha'aretz* reports that Defense Ministry, alarmed by persistent leaks of nuclear secrets to the media, ordered the seizure.

—"Report: Israeli Defense Ministry Confiscates Nuclear Papers from Premier's Widow," *Associated Press*, 11 May 2001.

3 May 2001

The Israeli Atomic Energy Commission denies allegations by Egypt and Jordan that radiation from the Dimona reactor has been seeping into their land. Israel officials say that the allegations are politically motivated.

—"Israel: Atomic Energy Body Denies Radioactivity Seeping into Egypt, Jordan," *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, 3 May 2001.

21 April 2001

Israeli officials detain a former military scientist for passing sensitive information to a Russian woman. Retired Brigadier General Itzhak Yaakov played an important role in Israel's nuclear weapons program and holds joint American-Israeli citizenship.

—"Israel Holds Nuclear Scientist in Spy Scare: Sunday Times," *Agence France Presse*, 21 April 2001.

14 March 2001

Avner Cohen, author of the book *Israel and the Bomb*, returns to Israel for the first time since its publication. He is questioned by Israeli authorities, but not arrested. Cohen published his book in the United States to avoid Israeli government censorship and has been working as a senior researcher at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

—"Israeli Author Returns Home, challenging Israel's Nuclear Policy," *Associated Press*, 14 March 2001.

13 March 2001

Israel's *Ha'aretz* reports that newly-elected Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has no intention of modifying Israel's policy of nuclear ambiguity. It states that Sharon is also expected to renew the American-Israeli "nuclear understanding," which dictates that Israel will not conduct any public nuclear tests and not declare that it possesses nuclear weapons.

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—"Sharon to Maintain Israel's "Ambiguity" on Nuclear Weapons: Report," *Argence France Presse*, 13 March 2001, "Sharon to Remain Mum on Nukes," *Ha'aretz*, 13 March 2001.

1 November 2000

Environmental ministers from Arab League states begin a two-day meeting on the effects of Israeli policies on the Palestinian ecology. They allege that the "outdated technology" of the nuclear reactor at Dimona is an environmental threat and call for its closure.

—"Arab Ministers Meet on Israeli "Damage" to Palestinian Environment," *Argence France Presse*, 1 November 2000.

August 2000

The Federation of American Scientists (FAS) posts on its website images of the Dimona nuclear complex taken by Space Imaging Corporation's Ikonos satellite. The accompanying FAS report states that the pictures "indicate that no new cooling towers were constructed in the years between 1971 and 2000. ...This strongly suggests that the reactor's power level has not been increased significantly during this period. This would suggest an annual production rate of plutonium of about 20kg." The report estimates Israel's nuclear stockpile at 100 to 200 weapons.

—"Israel 'May Have Nuclear Weapons,'" *BBC News*, 23 August 2000, <http://news.bbc.co.uk>, "Politics-Egypt/Israel: Satellite Sheds Light on Israeli Nukes," *Inter Press Service*, 12 September 2000.

July 2000

Israel completes reception an order for three Dolphin-class diesel submarines from the German firm of Thyssen-Nordseewerke. The submarines are reportedly able to launch nuclear-capable cruise missiles, an essential component of Israel's intended second-strike capacity.

—"Navy Gets New German Sub," *Ha'aretz*, 26 July 2000 as cited in Cirincione, Joseph with Wolfsthal, Jon B. and Rajkumar, Miriam, *Deadly Arsenals, Tracking Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Washington DC, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2002), 222-223.

18 June 2000

London's *Sunday Times* reports that Israel Defense Forces claim to have tested a submarine-launched cruise missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. The test is said to have hit its target 900 miles away. This test demonstrates Israel's three-pillared second strike capability.

—"Israel Makes Nuclear Waves with Submarine Missile Test," *Sunday Times (London)*, 18 June 2000.

12 June 2000

Avner Cohen, author of the controversial book *Israel and the Bomb*, appeals for a chance to present his case to the Knesset. Cohen has not been to Israel since the publication of his book for fear of arrest by Israeli authorities.

—"'"Exiled' Israeli Academic Seeks Knesset Hearing on Book About Nuclear History," *The Jerusalem Post*, 13 June 2000.

30 April 2000

Shimon Peres openly discusses with the Foreign Press Association the benefits of a policy of nuclear ambiguity and

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cites Iran and Iraq as the chief threats to Israel's security. He postulates that, "As long as the suspicion is clear enough to deter, why should we go clearer than that? We don't want to threaten anybody, we want to deter. ...Iraq and Iran signed the NPT. So what? They are building in full daylight a nuclear capacity. There is no one to stop them. ...Our problem is not Egypt. Our problem is not Jordan (nor) many of the Arab countries. Our problem is basically Iran and Iraq, two irresponsible governments that are clearly building a nuclear capacity and there is nobody in the world (to stop them)."

—"Peres Defends Israel's Nuclear Ambiguity," *United Press International*, 30 April 2000.

26 March 2000

Israeli Deputy Defense Minister Ephraim Sneh denies the report in *The Sunday Times of London* that Israel plans to lay landmines in the Golan Heights in order to prevent Syrian attack after Israeli forces withdraw. Sneh tells *The Jerusalem Post* that, "*The Sunday Times* is ignoring the fact that Purim has passed and it's not yet April Fool's Day. 'David's Sling' is a pretty name for plans and operations, but this report is truly stupid."

—"Sneh Denies report Israel Will Seed Golan with Neutron Mines," *The Jerusalem Post*, 27 March 2000.

26 March 2000

London's *Sunday Times* reports that the Israeli government is considering planting small nuclear landmines near the Golan Heights which could be detonated to halt a Syrian tank invasion. The plan, reportedly called "David's Sling," involves deploying neutron bombs in the manner of landmines to thwart any tank advance after the mountain region is handed back to Syria as a result of peace talks between Damascus and Tel Aviv. The paper also alleges that a neutron artillery shell has already been tested and laser-guided rockets with neutron warheads are ready for use.

—"Israeli Plan for Golan Heights Nuclear Shield," *Sunday Times (London)*, 26 March 2000.

22 February 2000

Israel and the United States sign an agreement giving Israeli scientists access to monitoring technologies to be used for verifying nuclear nonproliferation. U.S. Secretary of Energy tells a news conference that, "It is a signal that Israel is a friendly country. It is not treated in a similar fashion as others on our list of sensitive countries."

—"United States to Allow Israeli Scientists Access to Nuclear Technology," *Associated Press*, 22 February 2000.

3 February 2000

The Knesset holds its first public discussion of Israel's nuclear program in more than 35 years. Israeli Arab MP Issam Makul petitioned the Supreme Court to request the debate. Representing the Israeli government, cabinet member Chaim Ramon reiterates what he says are Israel's guiding nuclear principles: that Israel will not be the first country in the Middle East to introduce nuclear weapons, that Israel supports in principle preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, and that Israel supports the creation of a region free of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles once there is a "proven peace over a sustained period of time." The debate lasts only 52 minutes.

—"Israeli Lawmakers Hold Quick Debate on Nuclear Arms," *The New York Times*, 3 February 2000; "Arab MP Forces Knesset Debate on Nuclear Policy," *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 16 February 2000.

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1999-1990

25 November 1999

After it petitioned a court to allow publication, Israeli daily *Yediot Achronot* publishes excerpts of the released portions of the trial of Mordechai Vanunu. In the published transcripts are allegations by Vanunu that he was beaten and kicked by Israeli interrogators after his abduction in Rome in 1986.

—"Vanunu Trial Details Released," *The Times (London)*, 25 November 1999.

25 November 1999

Israeli prison officials deny a newspaper report that Mordechai Vanunu passed bomb-making information to Palestinian security prisoners during walks in the prison yard.

—"Officials Deny Nuclear Informer Gave Bomb Formulas to Palestinian Inmates," *Associated Press*, 25 November 1999.

24 November 1999

Israel releases 1,200 pages of testimony from the trial of Mordechai Vanunu, the nuclear technician serving an 18-year sentence for reveal details of Israel's nuclear program. The documents give an account of Vanunu's stated motives for his actions. Shimon Peres criticizes the release of the transcripts.

—"Vanunu Trial Extracts Published," *BBC News*, 24 November 1999, <http://news.bb.co.uk>.

October 1999

A secret document written by the U.S. Department of Energy claims that Israel possesses 300 to 500 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium, enough to produce at least 250 warheads. This information was disclosed in the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* and on the front page of the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz*.

—"Israel Ranked Sixth Nuclear Power by US," *The Times (London)*, 9 October 1999.

October 1998

Because of military censorship rules in Israel, Avner Cohen publishes his book *Israel and the Bomb* in the United States. The book gives detailed accounts of the development of Israel's nuclear program and doctrine of nuclear ambiguity. While Cohen insists that he has done nothing to harm Israel's security, he asserts that Israel armed two nuclear bombs on the eve of the 1967 war, that U.S. President Eisenhower turned a blind eye to the French-aided construction of Israel's nuclear reactor, and that the only U.S. president to try to stop Israel's proliferation was John F. Kennedy.

—"World: Middle East Book Breaks Israel's Nuclear Taboo," *BBC News*, 21 October 1998, <http://news.bbc.co.uk>.

11 August 1998

The Israeli daily *Ma'ariv* reports that Israel will sign the treaty, which will include control and supervision mechanisms enabling international inspectors to visit the Dimona nuclear reactor. This decision was made by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu after consulting with senior Defense and Foreign Ministry officials.

—"Paper: Israel Ready for Conditional Acceptance of Nuclear Supervision Treaty," *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 13 August 1998.

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11 August 1998

Although it does not commit to open the Dimona nuclear complex to international inspections, Israel opts not to veto motions to begin discussing a treaty to stop production of fissile material at the United Nations Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, according to *The Jerusalem Post*.

—"UN Nuclear Parley Begins After Israel Drops Veto," *The Jerusalem Post*, 12 August 1998.

14 July 1998

The website of *The Jordan Times* reports that former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres acknowledges Israel's nuclear weapons program. He is reported to have told an audience of academics and the media in Amman that, "We built a nuclear option, not in order to have a Hiroshima, but to have an Oslo."

—"Israeli Labor Party's Peres Acknowledges Israel Possesses Nuclear Weapons," *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, 14 July 1998.

17 June 1998

Israeli Deputy Defense Minister Silvan Shalom tells the Knesset that rumors of Israel having tested a nuclear device a month earlier are "absolutely without foundation." Two members of the Knesset had claimed that the alleged test may have triggered an earthquake in the region.

—"Israel Denies Conducting Nuclear Test in May," *Agence France Presse*, 17 June 1998.

5 June 1998

Shimon Peres makes remarks alluding to Israel's nuclear capability in a televised interview. On Israel TV's Channel Two, Peres said that, "No one made a bomb to use it. Instead, we wanted a veiled nuclear option in order to prevent war."

—"Peres Edges Close to Acknowledging Israel's Nuclear Capability," *Associated Press*, 5 June 1998.

1 June 1998

Egypt's MENA news agency reports that Pakistan's ambassador to Egypt, Tayyab Siddiqui, alleges that Israel has cooperated in India's nuclear weapons program. He states that "neutral" sources inside Israel confirm this, but does not reveal those sources.

—"Envoy to Egypt Says Reports 'Confirmed' India-Israel Cooperation," *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 3 June 1998.

11 May 1998

Israeli authorities reveal that they have been holding an Arab Israeli for eight years on charges of spying for Iraq. Munir Fathi Said is to be released early from his 13-year jail term for passing information on Israel's nuclear program to Iraqi agents.

—"Israel Reveals It Has Been Holding Spy for Iraq Eight Years," *Agence France Presse*, 11 May 1998.

13 March 1998

Mordechai Vanunu, convicted of revealing details of Israel's nuclear program in 1986, is allowed to leave solitary confinement for the first time in 12 years, but remains in prison serving an 18-year sentence.

—"Israel End 12 -Year Solitary," *BBC News*, 13 March 1998, <http://news.bb.co.uk>.

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19 February 1998

The Israeli newspaper *Ma'ariv* reports that Israeli scientists, in response to the U.S. ban on the export of supercomputers to the Israeli Nuclear Research Centre, have developed a "virtual supercomputer" to perform the same functions. Scientists at Israel's Technion computer science department have clustered personal computers linked by a network to carry out supercomputer tasks.

—"Virtual Supercomputer' Developed to Overcome US Ban," *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 24 February 1998.

3 February 1998

Israel deploys four batteries of American Patriot anti-missile missiles on a hill in the southern Negev Desert near Dimona in response to public anxiety about Israeli preparedness for Iraqi-launched Scud missile biological weapons attacks.

—"Missiles Readied as Fears of Germ Attack Increase," *The Times*, 3 February 1998.

1997-1998

In a review of Israel nuclear strategy involving Prime Minister Netanyahu's Office, the Ministry of Defense, and the Foreign Ministry, it is decided that Israel should keep its weapons of mass destruction and missiles secret, strengthen its missile defense, and reduce the vulnerability of its nuclear force.

—Cordesman, Anthony, *Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 15 April 2003.

12 October 1997

An Israeli court awards compensation to a former Dimona plant worker suffering from cancer due to radiation exposure.

—"Court: Nuke Reactor Work Caused Cancer," *United Press International*, 12 October 1997.

30 July 1997

British-based *Jane's Intelligence Review* publishes images indicating that Israeli missile facilities are susceptible to destruction by nuclear attack. The photos show that the Zachariah base southeast of Tel Aviv shows no sign of missile storage silos that can withstand a nuclear blast. These missiles are stored in limestone caves, which cannot be reinforced to provide adequate protection.

—"Jane's: Photos Show Israel's Nuclear Missile Base Vulnerable to Attack," *Associated Press*, 30 July 1997.

June 1997

Prompted by allegations that an Israeli university collaborates in the Israeli nuclear weapons program, the United States bars American firms from having business ties with Ben Gurion University. The university allegedly used a U.S. supercomputer for nuclear arms research.

—"US Orders Boycott of Israeli University Over Alleged Nuclear Arms Link," *Agence France Presse*, 12 June 1997.

20 April 1997

The Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* reports that Former South African Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad confirms that the South African and Israeli governments helped each other develop nuclear weapons in the early 1980s. The article

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also quotes South African General Constand Viljoen as saying, "We wanted to get nuclear knowledge from whoever we could, also from Israel."

—"Report: Israel Helped South Africa Develop Nuclear Weapons," *Associated Press*, 20 April 1997.

25 February 1997

An Iraqi official confirms that Iraq targeted the Dimona nuclear complex with Scud missiles during the 1991 Gulf War. General Abderrazzak Al-Ayubi tells the Iraqi newspaper *Al-Jumhuriyah* that "ten Iraqi missiles were fired at hostile targets in Haifa, 28 on other targets in Tel Aviv, and five at Dimona."

—"Iraq Tried to Hit Israeli Nuclear Plant During Gulf War," *Agence France Presse*, 25 February 1997.

25 July 1996

An article published in the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* reveals two important aspects of the Israeli nuclear program. The piece reports that expenses for the Nuclear Research Centre in Dimona are paid for out of the defense budget and that Israel Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers serve in Dimona installations. The facts were revealed during a disagreement over the defense budget and salaries of IDF career personnel.

—"Budget Dispute Said to Reveal Defense Funding for Dimona Nuclear Centre," *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 26 July 1996.

25 June 1996

Israel's most widely circulated daily newspaper, *Yediot Ahronot*, publishes aerial photos of the Dimona reactor complex obtained via the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. The images, acquired through loosened American information laws, are printed on the front page of the paper.

—"Secret Nuclear Reactor Photos Published," *United Press International*, 25 June 1996.

7 April 1996

Syrian Ba'ath Party Assistant Secretary-General Abdallah al-Ahmar calls for Israeli nuclear facilities to be placed under international supervision.

—"Syria Wants Action on Israel Nuclear Power," *United Press International*, 7 April 1996.

24 March 1996

The Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* reports that Israel is seeking public recognition by the United States government of its need for nuclear weapons. Such an acknowledgement would represent a drastic change in American policy.

—"Israel Wants U.S. Recognition of Need for Nuclear Weapons," *Associated Press*, 24 March 1996.

23 December 1995

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres says, "Give me peace and we'll give up the nuclear program. That's the whole story."

—"Peres Says Israel, with Regional Pact, Would End Atom Effort," *The New York Times*, 23 December 1995.

31 March 1995

Shimon Peres states that Israel is ready to propose a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and missiles as soon as

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regional peace is assured.

—"Father' of Israeli Atom Programme Proposes Nuclear-Free Middle East," *The Times*, 31 March 1995.

26 February 1995

A Saudi newspaper reports that Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres refuses to grant the Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mussa access to the Dimona complex after prolonged Egyptian pressure to do so.

—"Peres Refuses Mussa Trip to Israeli Nuclear Plant: Report," *Agence France Presse*, 26 February 1995.

24 February 1995

A *New York Times* article reports on deteriorating relations between Israel and Egypt over recent Egyptian pressure on Israel to sign the NPT.

—"Dispute over Nuclear Treaty Is Souring Relations Between Israel and Egypt," *The New York Times*, 24 February 1995.

November 1994

Jane's Intelligence Review estimates in its November issue that Israel has 7 nuclear facilities and as many as 200 nuclear weapons in a detailed review based on satellite images of Israel. The report also indicates that Nachal Soreq is the installation where Israel conducts research on nuclear weapons design and claims that nuclear weapons are assembled at a facility in Yodefat.

—"Jane's: Israel Has 7 Nuclear Facilities, Up to 200 Nuclear Weapons," *Associated Press*, 18 November 1994; Cirincione, Joseph with Wolfsthal, Jon B. and Rajkumar, Miriam, *Deadly Arsenals, Tracking Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Washington DC, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2002), 224-225.

27 January 1994

Israel invites Egyptian scientists to visit Dimona to verify that there is no basis to rumors about environmental damage caused by the reactor. Israeli officials accuse the Egyptian government of spreading rumors of radiation leaks for political reasons.

—"Israel Invites Egypt to Check Radioactivity at Dimona Reactor," *Agence France Presse*, 27 January 1994.

26 January 1994

Former Soviet KGB agent Yuri Linov reveals that he had penetrated Israel's top secret nuclear laboratories He claims that he entered Israel disguised as a Jewish immigrant from Austria in 1968. For five years he operated a ring of agents, including informants working at the reactors at Dimona and Nachal Soreq, but discovered, he believes, "nothing new."

—"Ex-KGB Spy Says He Penetrated Israel's Top Secret Nuclear Facilities," *Associated Press*, 26 January 1994; "KGB Nuclear Spy Details Add to Israel Security Fears," *The Times*, 27 January 1994.

9 June 1993

Israeli authorities take a group of journalists and environmentalists on a tour of the site adjacent to the Dimona facility to quell rumors that it is leaking contaminants into the surrounding environment.

—"Tour Given in Area of Usually Off-Limits Nuclear Reactor," *Associated Press*, 9 June 1993.

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5 January 1993

The Egyptian *Al-Sha'b* newspaper alleges that Israel is increasing the capacity of the Dimona reactor in order to increase the yield of plutonium separation units.

—"Egyptian Paper Claims Israel Increasing Capacity of Dimona Nuclear Reactor," *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 8 January 1993.

December 1991

Israel returns 10.5 tons of heavy water to Norway, exactly half the amount if purchased in 1959 and 1971. Israeli officials say that the remaining 10.5 tons have been lost through waste and evaporation over the years.

—"Israeli Heavy Water Returned to Norway," *Agence France Presse*, 3 December 1991, Stanghelle, Harold, "Israel to Sell Back 10.5 Tons." *Arbeiderbladet*, Oslo, Norway, 28 June 1990 in: Center for Nonproliferation Studies, "Nuclear Developments," 28 June 1990, 34-35; online, Internet 22 November 1998, <http://cns.miis.edu>.

24 October 1991

The New York-based journal *Nucleonics Week* reports that a fire broke out in at the Dimona reactor. Israeli officials deny the charge.

—"Americans Cry 'Fire'," *The Jerusalem Post*, 24 October 1991.

29 May 1991

American President George Bush proposes an initiative to create a nuclear weapons free zone in the Middle East. The proposed initiative, involving all permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, would also discontinue the sale of all non-conventional weapons to Middle Eastern states and would subject all nuclear facilities to International Atomic Energy Agency inspections.

—"Bush Wages War on Arms Race," *The Times*, 30 May 1991.

25 February 1991

Iraq fires two SCUS missiles at Israel, one of them landing in the Negev desert region. Israeli officials report that the missiles caused no damage.

—"Iraq Lobs Two Scuds at Israel," *United Press International*, 25 February 1991, "The Week That Was," *The Jerusalem Post*, 28 February 1991.

17 February 1991

Iraq claims to have carried out "destructive strikes" against the town of Dimona with three missiles. Israeli officials report that one missile landed in the Negev desert, but refuse to say if the Dimona reactor is the target.

—"Iraq Says It Aimed Missiles at Israeli Reactor; Says Allies Face Defeat," *Associated Press*, 17 February 1991; "The Gulf War: Nuclear Plant is Targeted by Iraq," *The Guardian* (London), 18 February 1991.

January 1991

Israel goes on nuclear alert once during operation Desert Storm. Hundreds of nuclear warheads are armed in response to Iraqi Scud missile attacks against Israel.

—"Persian Gulf war: The revised version of the 'mother of all battles' was a dud. So, it turns out, was the

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coverage," *Toronto Star*, 26 February 1994; see also Hersh, Seymour, *The Sampson Option* (New York: Random House, 1991).

26 February 1990

In a question and answer session with members of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Deputy Foreign Minister Shimon Peres makes a public remark about Israel's nuclear program, referring to it as strategic asset. He says: "We have everything that a small nation can have. Tell me, are there any other countries that produce a plane of our own, a missile of our own, and tank of our own, a missile boat of our own?" He adds that, "we have something in Dimona which is called textile industry."

—"Peres Makes Rare Reference to Israeli Nuclear Program," *Associated Press*, 26 February 1990.

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1989-1970

May 1989

The Director of U.S. Central Intelligence indicates that Israel may be seeking to construct a thermonuclear weapon.
—Cordesman, Anthony, *Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 15 April 2003.

4 April 1989

Israel and Norway agree to reopen talk on the 20 tons of heavy water Norway sold to Israel in 1959. The Norwegian government is still seeking permission to inspect the heavy water.

—"Israel Agrees to Reopen Talks on Norwegian Heavy Water," *The Jerusalem Post*, 4 April 1989.

27 March 1988

Former Israeli nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu is sentenced to 18 year in prison by an Israeli court for espionage.

—"Vanunu Sentenced to 18 Years in Prison," *United Press International*, 27 March 1988.

12 February 1988

Egyptian semi-official newspaper *Al Ahram* alleges that Israel detonated a nuclear device in a test near the South Pole in 1979 and has exploded two more nuclear devices in Antarctica since then. The report also states that Norway, South Africa, and France were involved in the Antarctic nuclear tests.

—"Egyptian Newspaper Says Israel Test Nuclear Device," *United Press International*, 12 February 1988.

6 January 1988

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres testifies under subpoena against accused spy Mordechai Vanunu. Peres has been issued a restraining order limiting the scope of his testimony for the trial so as to avoid damage to Israel's policy of nuclear opacity.

—"Peres Testifies Israeli Security Hurt by Published Report," *United Press International*, 6 January 1988.

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1 May 1987

Israel denies a request by Norway to inspect the 20 tons of heavy water it sold to Israel in 1959.

—"Israel Balking at Norway Request to Inspect Heavy Water," *Associated Press*, 1 May 1987.

12 October 1986

In an interview with the *Sunday Times*, former-head of the French Atomic Energy Commission Francis Perrin acknowledges that during the 1950's France provided Israel with the Dimona reactor, a plutonium extraction plant, and other technology relating to the design and development of nuclear weapons.

—"France Admits It Gave Israel A-Bomb," *Sunday Times* (London), 12 October 1986.

5 October 1986

The story of Mordechai Vanunu, an ex-technician at the Dimona reactor, is printed in the *London Sunday Times*, in which Vanunu reveals his knowledge of Israel's nuclear weapons program. The exposé alleges that Israel possesses more than 200 nuclear bombs, neutron bombs, F-16 deliverable warheads, and Jericho warheads. After the story's publication, Vanunu is kidnapped by Israeli agents, tried, and imprisoned.

—"Revealed: The Secrets of Israel's Nuclear Arsenal" (London) *Sunday Times* No. 8,461, 5 October 1986, 1, 4-5.

12 July 1985

A BBC report alleges that Israel armed nuclear missiles and that the Soviet Union deployed nuclear weapons to Egypt during the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

—"Nuclear Weapons Reported Deployed in 1973 Middle East War," *Associated Press*, 12 July 1985.

14 April 1985

French plans for the sale of a 900-megawatt nuclear power reactor to Israel are progressing, according to the *Manchester Guardian Weekly*. The deal, initiated in 1982 during a visit by French President François Mitterrand to Israel, is reported to be worth between \$2 and \$3 billion.

—"Risky Nuclear Deal with Israel," *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, 14 April 1985.

12 December 1984

An unidentified Reagan administration official states that the United States is opposed in principal to French plans to sell a nuclear reactor to Israel. The Administration is concerned with the financial burden such a sale would impose on Israel. American reactor manufacturers also oppose the reactor sale, estimated at \$1 billion.

—"TV: The United States Opposed to French Reactor Sale to Israel," *Associated Press*, 12 December 1984.

7 June 1981

Using US satellite imagery, Israeli forces attack the Iraqi nuclear reactor at Osiraq in order to maintain its nuclear monopoly in the Middle East. It is the first military strike in history against a nuclear reactor.

—"Israeli Jets Destroy Iraqi Atomic Reactor; Attack Condemned by U.S. and Arab Nations," *New York Times*, 9 June 1981; Hersh, Seymour, *The Sampson Option* (New York: Random House, 1991), 216.

1 March 1980

The Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union alleges that reported nuclear test of September of the previous year was

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a joint effort by the Israeli and South African governments. The test is said to be the manifestation of a longstanding cooperative relationship on nuclear weapons matters.

—"South Africa 'Working Hand in Glove' with Israel to Develop Nuclear Weapons," *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, 1 March 1980.

22 February 1980

Israeli Defense Minister Ezer Weizman denies a report that Israel tested a nuclear bomb the previous year in cooperation with South Africa.

—"Israel Denies It Tested Nuclear Bomb," *Associated Press*, 22 February 1980.

22 September 1979

American satellites observe a bright flash in the south Indian Ocean that is speculated to be a joint South African-Israeli nuclear test.

—"A Flash of Light," *Newsweek*, 5 November 1979.

1979

The United States Defense Intelligence Agency concludes in a study that a cooperative nuclear relationship between Israel and South Africa exists and that its aim is to manufacture nuclear weapons.

—Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 36.

1 June 1978

Iraqi United Nations representative Saadun Amadi denounces the alleged cooperative nuclear arrangement between Israel and South Africa, saying, "The Zionists provide the racists with nuclear technology and receive from them uranium in exchange."

—Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 36.

June 1977

On 30 May *Time Magazine* alleges that 200 tons of uranium lost on the high seas were part of an elaborate scheme to smuggle fissile material into Israel for the production of nuclear bombs.

—"Uranium 'Loss' Said Israeli Plot," *Facts on File World News Digest*, 4 June 1977.

May 1977

At a fringe nuclear conference in Salzburg, Paul Leventhal, a former adviser to an American senate Committee on the spread of nuclear weapons, alleges that in 1968 Israel smuggled 200 tons of uranium from Antwerp to Israel via the high seas disappearance of a West German freighter bound for Genoa.

—"The Mystery of the Missing Uranium," *The Economist*, 7 May 1977.

1977

Perhaps with Israeli complicity, South Africa prepares to conduct a nuclear test in the Kalahari Desert, but is prevented from doing so by U.S. and Soviet intervention.

—Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 37.

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1976

In a secret briefing to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Central Intelligence Agency expresses the opinion that Israel is somehow separating Dimona plutonium to produce bomb-quality material.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 26.

July 1975

Former *New York Times* writer Tad Szulc alleges that "the United States government, or elements of it in the Central Intelligence Agency acting independently, had given assistance to the Israeli nuclear program...in the wake of the 1956 Suez War." He charges that "U.S. aid had been given...as a quid pro quo for Israel's territorial withdrawals after the 1956 victory and its future cooperation."

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 9.

Mid 1970s

Rumors circulate about nuclear weapons cooperation between Israel and Iran. The reports are never substantiated.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 35.

1974

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency estimates that Israel has between ten and twenty nuclear weapons. This estimate is based on the assumption that has been able to separate enough plutonium for at least six bombs since 1970, in addition to those made with stolen uranium.

— Cordesman, Anthony, *Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 15 April 2003.

18 October 1973

A Soviet ship allegedly carrying nuclear weapons arrives in Alexandria, Egypt. The shipment of nuclear weapons to Egypt is intended to counterbalance Israel's nuclear capability in the context of the Yom Kippur War. This action may indicate a security guarantee between the Soviet Union and Egypt. United States President Richard Nixon puts the military on worldwide nuclear alert, prompting Israel to go on nuclear alert as well. Israel eventually agrees to a ceasefire and the Russian ship remains docked and unloaded until its departure in November.

— "Officials Suspect Russians Sent Arms to Egypt," *New York Times*, 22 November 1973, "Israel Reported to Have A-Bomb," *Facts on File World Digest News*, 10 April 1976, O'Balance, Edgar, *No Victor, No Vanquished. The Yom Kippur War* (San Rafael, California: Presidio Press, 1978), 234-235, and Aronson, Shlomo, *Israel's Nuclear Options, ACIS Working Paper No. 7*. Los Angeles, California: University of California Center for Arms Control and International Security, 1977, 15-18, and Hersh, Seymour, *The Sampson Option* (New York: Random House, 1991), 231-235.

8 October 1973

Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir makes the decision to assemble 13 twenty-kiloton atomic bombs in response to Egyptian and Syrian attacks during the Yom Kippur War. Jericho missiles at HIRBAT ZACHARIAH and nuclear strike F-4s at Tel Nof are armed for strikes against Egyptian and Syrian targets. US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger is

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notified of these developments hours later on 9 October.

—"Israel Reported to Have A-Bomb," *Facts on File World Digest News*, 10 April 1976, Hersh, Seymour, *The Sampson Option* (New York: Random House, 1991), 217, 222-226, and Weissman, Steve and Krosney, Herbert, *The Islamic Bomb: the Nuclear Threat to Israel and the Middle East*, (New York, New York: Times Books, 1981), 107, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 31.

1972

Israeli scientists Isaiah Nebenzahl and Menachem Levin develop a quicker, more cost effective uranium enrichment method, which uses a laser beam to separate isotopes. The process is reported to be capable of enriching seven grams of Uranium 235 by sixty percent in a twenty-four hour period.

— Gillette, Robert, "Uranium Enrichment: Rumors of Israeli Progress with Lasers." *Science* 183, no. 4130 (22 March 1974), 1172-1174.

18 July 1970

In a *New York Times* article by Hedrick Smith, it becomes public knowledge that the U.S. government considers Israel to be in possession of an operational nuclear weapons capability. The story is prompted by comments by Senator Stuart Symington of the Armed Forces and Foreign Relations Committees made in response to briefing by Director of Central Intelligence Richard Helms on 7 July, marking the first occasion on which the CIA shares intelligence on Israel's nuclear status with Congress.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 277, 337.

7 July 1970

Director of Central Intelligence Richard Helms testifies before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that Israel has the means to build an atomic bomb.

— Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 29.

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1969-1960

5 September 1969

The U.S. delivers F-4E Phantom jets, equipped with hardware enabling nuclear weapons delivery, to Israel. The State Department's objections to the delivery are overruled by the Whitehouse, which denies the allegations that the delivery took place.

—"U.S. Will Start Delivering F-4 Jets to Israel in 1969," *New York Times*, 28 December 1968 as cited in Green, Stephen, *Living by the Sword: America and Israel in the Middle East, 1968-1987* (London: Faber, 1988), 18-19, Spector, Leonard S., "Foreign-Supplied Combat Aircraft: Will They Drop the Third World Bomb?" *Journal of International Affairs* 40, no. 1 (1986): 145 (n.5).

12 July 1969

American scientists visit the Dimona nuclear complex for the last time and the visitation program set up under

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President Kennedy and Levi Eshkol in 1963 is discontinued in 1970. The inspection team complains in writing that because the Israelis hurried and limited their earlier inspections and did not permit them to move about freely, they cannot guarantee that no weapons-related work is being done at Dimona.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 15, Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 323.

1969

Ernst David Begrmann states in an interview that as early as 1949 or 1950 it was thought "at the highest political level" that France would be the logical source for nuclear assistance to Israel.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 25.

1968 and 1969

In his book *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal*, Peter Pry alleges that Israeli agents in Britain and France make teargas attacks against government trucks carrying uranium in order to secure fuel for the Dimona reactor and nuclear weapons program.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 29.

Early 1968

An intense debate among leading Israeli security policymakers ensues. Nuclear weapons opponents Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, Mapai leader Golda Meir, and Cabinet Defense Committee member Yigal Allon veto the proposed construction of a plutonium separation plant. Shortly afterwards Eshkol discovers that Defense Minister Moshe Dyan has secretly ordered the start of construction on a separation plant. Eshkol and his advisers fail to stop construction already underway and approve the Defense Ministry's project.

—"How Israel Got the Bomb," *Time Magazine*, 12 April 1976.

Early 1968

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency reports that Israel has successfully produced four nuclear weapons. This assumption is based on conversations between Carl Duckett, head of the CIA's Office of Science and Technology, and Edward Teller, father of the hydrogen bomb. Teller said that, based on conversations with friends in the Israeli scientific and defense establishment, he concluded that Israel was capable of building a nuclear weapon. Teller also asserted that Israel would not publicly test a nuclear device.

—Cordesman, Anthony, *Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 15 April 2003.

1968

Having lost its uranium supply from France, Israel is suspected to have executed Operation Plumbat, a clandestine action carried out by the Mossad. Using a West German front company, Israeli operatives secure 200 tons of uranium oxide in Antwerp. Mossad agents conduct a high seas, ship-to-ship transfer of the 560 barrels of uranium to another vessel in the Mediterranean. The secret cargo is then transported to Israel. The drums containing uranium are labeled "plumbat," meaning lead.

—Pringle, Peter, *The Nuclear Barons* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1981), 297; Davenport, Elaine, Eddy,

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Paul, and Gillman, Peter, *The Blumbat Affair* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1978) as cited in James, Raviv, Dan and Melman, Yossi, *Every Spy a Prince: the Complete History of Israel's Intelligence Community*, (Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990), 198-199; Weissman, Steve and Krosney, Herbert, *The Islamic Bomb: the Nuclear Threat to Israel and the Middle East*, (New York, New York: Times Books, 1981), 124-128. See also *Ha'aretz*, 26 June 1978.

14 June 1967

A *New York Times* article alleges that authoritative sources in Tel Aviv report "that Israel's next move may be to make the atom bomb."

—"Israel Said to Plan to Make Atom Bomb," *New York Times*, 14 June 1967.

June 1967

During the Six-Day War, Israel mistakenly shoots down one of its own Mirage jetfighters for flying too close to the Dimona reactor facility. Israeli Prime Minister Levi Eshkol orders that both of the two Israeli nuclear warheads be armed during what becomes the country's first nuclear alert.

—Interview with Israeli scientist quoting the Hebrew-language memoirs of General Israel Lior as cited in Burrows, William E. and Winderm, Robert, *Critical Mass. The Dangerous Race for Superweapons in a Fragmenting World* (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 280.

Pre-June 1967

Israel considers overflights by Egyptian Air Force planes possible reconnaissance for an impending military strike. Such overflights, along with the withdrawal of United Nations peacekeeping forces and the repositioning of Egyptian troops to the Sinai, are reportedly triggers to a possible Israeli preemptive strike.

— Brecher, Michael, *Decision in Crisis. Israel, 1967 and 1973* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1980), 104, 230-231.

17 May 1967

Egyptian aircraft make high-altitude reconnaissance flights over Dimona. The reactors at Nachal Soreq and Dimona become high-priority targets for Egypt in the Six Day War.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 259, 266, 269.

May 1967

Israeli Defense Ministerial Committee member Yigal Allon amends his 1959 list of situations that would justify Israel in launching a preemptive war to include "an aerial attack on nuclear reactors and scientific institutions."

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 270.

May 1967

Israel assembles two nuclear bombs ten days before the outbreak of the Six Day War.

—Interview with former Israeli government official as cited in Hersh, Seymour M., *The Sampson Option* (New York: Random House, 1991), 225 and 236-237 as cited in Burrows, William E. and Winderm, Robert, *Critical Mass. The Dangerous Race for Superweapons in a Fragmenting World* (New York, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 279-280.

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22 April 1967

American scientists visit Dimona, again finding no evidence of weapon-related activities.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 186.

1967

An anonymous French source alleges that Israel sends France 40 tons of Dimona's spent fuel, rich with plutonium, and the French technicians separate and return "about half" or at least enough for "fifteen to twenty bombs."

—Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 15.

1967

France discontinues uranium supplies to Israel collected from the former French colonies Gabon, Niger, and the Central African Republic.

—Cordeman, Anthony, *Perilous Prospects: The Peace Process and the Arab-Israeli Military Balance* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), 120.

1967

An Israeli-Brazilian nuclear agreement concludes.

—Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 24.

2 November 1966

Israel is suspected of performing some type of non-nuclear test as part of its continued pursuit of nuclear capability. It is assumed to have been a zero-yield or implosion test in the Negev desert.

—Cordeman, Anthony, *Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 15 April 2003, Farr, Warner, *The Third Temple's Holy of Holies: Israel's Nuclear Weapons*, September 1999, www.au.af.mil.

November 1966

An accident occurs at the Dimona complex, the cleanup of which lasts until February 1967.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 186.

October 1966

According to some Western sources, Israel conducts an underground nuclear test at Al-Naqab in the Negev desert.

—Nashif, Taysir N., *Nuclear Weapons and the Middle East: Dimensions and Responsibilities* (Princeton, New Jersey: Kingston Press, 1984), 22-244.

18 May 1966

Prime Minister Levi Eshkol tells the Knesset that Israel will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the region. He also states that Israel does not possess nuclear weapons. He tells the Knesset that his government reserves the right to continue research and training at Dimona, but that the atomic bomb development program has been terminated.

—Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 17-6.

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May 1966

Prime Minister Levi Eshkol fires long-time proponent of the nuclear program Ernst Bergman from his position as Chairman of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission. The IAEC is reformed and transferred out of the Ministry of Defense to the Prime Minister's office. Eshkol assumes chairmanship of the IAEC and new commission members are appointed whose background relate primarily to the civilian uses of nuclear energy.

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 175, Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 19.

2 April 1966

American scientists visit Dimona. The visit is disclosed in the *New York Times* three months later, embarrassing Israeli President Levi Eshkol.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 186.

1966

Israel is capable of producing weapons-grade fissile material, weapons design, and the testing of deliver means. According to French CEA official Pierre Pean, "the first plutonium extraction tests took place during the second half of 1965," and by 1966 Israel had enough plutonium to "manufacture the bomb during 1966, or at the latest early 1967."

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 231.

Late 1960s

The United States proposes to give Israel technical assistance and \$40 million for construction of a nuclear desalination plant if Israel agrees to international safeguards on the Dimona complex. Israel refuses.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 15.

10 March 1965

After failing to persuade Israeli officials to accept IAEA safeguards on the Dimona reactor, White House aide Robert Komer compromises with Levi Eshkol, the result of which is a "Memorandum of Understanding" between the two states. The document expresses the United States' "concern for the maintenance of Israel's security" and renews its commitment to the "independence and integrity of Israel." Israel in turn reaffirms its pledge that it "will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Arab-Israel area." The document further solidifies Israel doctrine of nuclear opacity.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 205-7.

28 January 1965

American scientists visit Dimona.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 181.

1965

The U.S. government accuses Zalman Shapiro, president of the Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corporation (NUMEC) in Apollo, Pennsylvania, of "losing" 200 pounds of highly enriched uranium. Investigations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Central Intelligence Agency, and the Atomic Energy Commission are inconclusive. Some

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allege that the misplaced uranium eventually found its way to the Israeli nuclear program. The decommissioning of NUMEC in the early 1980's, however, casts doubt on such allegations when over 100 kilograms of unaccounted for uranium are discovered throughout the facility.

— Interview with a senior technical official of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission as cited in Hersh, Seymour, *The Sampson Option* (New York: Random House, 1991), 257, Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 169-179.

1965

The Egyptian Air Force claims to possess aerial reconnaissance intelligence obtained in overflights of the Negev desert identifying the Dimona complex as a nuclear reactor. Half of the 50 HAWK anti-aircraft missiles provided to Israel by the U.S. are reportedly positioned around the Dimona complex.

— Norden, Lon O., Nicole, David, *Phoenix over the Nile* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), 192-193, O'Balance, Edgar, *The Third Arab-Israeli War* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), 54.

1965

East German President Walter Ulbricht alleges that Israel and West Germany have concluded "joint preparations to produce atomic weapons," but offers no proof of his allegations.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 35.

17-18 January 1964

American scientists visit the Dimona complex and learn that the reactor went critical on 26 December 1963. The visit, totally controlled by the Israeli official hosts, is the continuation of a secret arrangement set up by President Kennedy and Prime Minister Ben Gurion. The American team visits at times and places of the Israeli government's choosing.

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 166, Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 179.

1964 or 1965

The French complete work on an underground plutonium reprocessing plant at the Dimona complex.

— Farr, Warner, *The Third Temple's Holy of Holies: Israel's Nuclear Weapons*, September 1999, www.au.af.mil.

1964

Israeli military officials participate in testing of French nuclear devices in the Saharan Desert.

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 167.

December 1963

The Dimona reactor goes into operation.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 12.

5 August 1963

Israel signs the Partial Test Ban Treaty in Moscow.

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— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 165, Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 161.

17 April 1963

Egypt, Syria, and Iraq sign in Cairo an Arab Federation Proclamation calling for a military union to bring about the liberation of Palestine. The proclamation is a step towards the realization of Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion's greatest fear—a Pan-Arab military alliance bent on Israel's destruction.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 119-23.

2 April 1963

In an informal meeting with President Kennedy at the White House, Shimon Peres states that Israel "will not introduce nuclear weapons to the region, and certainly will not be the first," laying the groundwork for what is to become Israel's doctrine of nuclear opacity for years to come.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 119.

January 1963

Israeli Deputy Defense Minister Shimon Peres declares that the Dimona complex is to play part in the Defense Ministry's plan to desalinate a billion cubic meters of seawater annually for the irrigation of the Negev Desert. Aharon Wiener, director of the Israel Water Company Tahal, calls this statement "unfounded."

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 163.

October 1962

Israeli Foreign Minister Golda Meir addresses the United Nations General Assembly on the subject of Israel's attitude toward nuclear weapons, stating that "Israel watches with special concern the growing nuclear arming and it is our declared policy to support every effort to remove the awful dangers to humanity arising out of the continuation of this process. Israel therefore supports every means that may limit and decrease weapons in the world."

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 163.

26 September 1962

The second visit by American scientists to the Dimona complex takes place.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 112.

1962 to 1969

In response to U.S. pressure, Israel commits to use its nuclear facility for only peaceful purposes and allows American teams to inspect the facility twice a year. The inspection teams, however, do not see much of the facility, especially the underground portions hidden by Israeli agents.

—Hersh, Seymour, *The Sampson Option* (New York: Random House, 1991), 196.

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1962

The Dimona reactor, officially known as the Negev Nuclear Research Center, goes critical.

— Farr, Warner, *The Third Temple's Holy of Holies: Israel's Nuclear Weapons*, September 1999, www.au.af.mil.

1962

Communist and Mapam Knesset members propose a resolution advocating the establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone covering Israel and the Arab states. Prime Minister Ben Gurion responds by recalling that his government backed the Basic Principles approved by the Knesset in 1959 that advocate total regional disarmament, including the abolition of all armed forces, "on condition that constant and unhampered mutual control of this agreement is assured and that the borders and sovereignty of these States are not affected."

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 156.

30 May 1961

President Kennedy and Ben Gurion meet at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York to discuss Dimona.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 105.

20 May 1961

As part of a diplomatic nonproliferation offensive launched by President Kennedy, two AEC scientists visit the Dimona reactor in the Negev desert. The visit, set up by Kennedy and Ben Gurion, is the first by American scientists to the reactor complex.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 105.

January 1961

Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion informs the Knesset that the Dimona complex is not in fact a textile plant or a pumping station (as he had previously stated to foreign leaders), but a "scientific institute for research in problems of arid zones and desert flora and fauna."

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 159.

21 December 1960

In the Prime Minister's only public statement about the Dimona reactor, David Ben Gurion tells the Knesset that no bombs are being built and that the complex "is designed exclusively for peaceful purposes."

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 154, Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 91.

16 December 1960

Precipitated by a *Time* magazine article alleging that a "small power... neither of the communist nor the NATO bloc" was developing a nuclear weapons capability, the London *Daily Express* names Israel as the state, adding that "British and American intelligence authorities believe that the Israelis are well on their way to building their first nuclear bomb." Two days later AEC Chairman Jon McCone appears on the television program "Meet the Press" to confirm that Israel is building a nuclear reactor and that the United States has inquired with the Israeli government

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about it. The following day's *New York Times* also runs a similar exposé on the Israel's secret nuclear program.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 88-9.

8 December 1960

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency issues a report outlining Dimona's implications for nuclear proliferation.

—Cordesman, Anthony, *Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 15 April 2003.

2 December 1960

Before Israel can voluntarily disclose its nuclear program, the U.S. State Department issues a statement revealing Israel's secret nuclear installation.

—Cohen, Avner, "Most Favored Nation," *The Bulletin of American Scientists*, 51, No. 1 (January-February 1995): 44-53.

Mid 1960

The Central Intelligence Agency tells President Eisenhower that what is being constructed in the Negev Desert at Dimona is a large nuclear reactor with the potential for producing fissionable material in quantities sufficient to produce nuclear weapons—about 1.2 per year.

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 153.

16 June 1960

The reactor at Nachal Soreq is activated under safeguards to prevent it from producing weapons-usable material.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 7.

13 February 1960

France tests its first nuclear device. It is believed that collaboration between French and Israeli scientists is so extensive that the test represents the creation of two nuclear powers. Israeli observers are reported to be granted "unrestricted access to French nuclear test explosion data."

—"Post-Mortem on SNE [Special National Intelligence Estimate] 100-8-60; Implications of the Acquisition by Israel of a Nuclear Weapons Capability," Draft, 31 January 1961, Department of State Lot files, Lot No. 57D688, USNA as cited in Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 82-83; Weissman, Steve and Krosney, Herbert, *The Islamic Bomb: the Nuclear Threat to Israel and the Middle East*, (New York, New York: Times Books, 1981), 114-117.

1960 to 1966

The United States provides Israel with 50 kilograms of uranium-235, of 90% purity, to fuel the reactor at Nachal Soreq. This amount of uranium of this purity could be used to manufacture several bombs.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 8.

1960 to 1965

The French government permits the nuclear company Saint-Gobain Nucleaire (SGN) to construct the Dimona

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reactor.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 12.

1960 to 1964

France may have helped Israel design and detonate its own nuclear device at the Reggan or Ekker proving grounds in Algeria.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 16.

1960

France, now under the leadership of Charles De Gaulle, terminates nuclear assistance to Israel before the Dimona reactor is operational. After several months of negotiations, however, France agrees to proceed with construction on the conditions that Israel announces the project and pledges not to pursue a weapons program.

— Farr, Warner, *The Third Temple's Holy of Holies: Israel's Nuclear Weapons*, September 1999, www.au.af.mil, Weissman, Steve and Krosney, Herbert, *The Islamic Bomb: the Nuclear Threat to Israel and the Middle East*, (New York, New York: Times Books, 1981), 113-114.

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1959-1947

1959

Norway sells 20 tons of heavy water to Israel for use in an experimental power reactor. Despite the fact that under the conditions of the transaction Norway retains the right to inspect the heavy water for over 30 years, it does so only once, in April 1961, while it is still in storage drums at the Dimona complex.

— Mihollin, Gary, "Heavy Water Cheaters," *Foreign Policy* (1987-88), 100-119.

15 April 1958

Ernst David Bergmann denies that French-Israeli cooperation goes beyond exchange of information on uranium chemistry and heavy water.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 82.

Early 1958

Ground is broken for the EL-102 reactor at the Dimona complex.

— Farr, Warner, *The Third Temple's Holy of Holies: Israel's Nuclear Weapons*, September 1999, www.au.af.mil.

1958

The United States becomes aware of the existence of the Dimona reactor via U-2 spy-plane overflights, but is not identified as a nuclear site.

—Cordesman, Anthony, *Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East*, Center for Strategic and International Studies, 15 April 2003.

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3 October 1957

A formal agreement for the construction of the Dimona nuclear facility is signed by French officials. Shimon Peres assures French Foreign Minister Christian Peneau that the reactor will be used only for "scientific research."

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 150, Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 58-9, Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 12.

20 March 1957

Israel signs a formal agreement with the United State for the construction of a small swimming-pool research reactor at Nachal Soreq as part of the Atoms for Peace program.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 65.

Early 1957

The EL-102 reactor that France had agreed to supply to Israel before the Suez operation is upgraded to a large plutonium-processing reactor along the same lines as the French G-1 reactor at Marcoule (40-MW thermal power).

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 58.

1957

The Eisenhower administration inquires about the establishment of a strict security zone and heavy construction occurring at Dimona, Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion responds with assurances that the project is a textile plant. Later, the project is called a pumping station.

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 151.

1957

Several West German newspapers report that Israelis and Germans are working together on atomic weapons technology.

—Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 35.

November 1956

Under the direction of President Guy Mollet, the French government agrees to supply Israel with a twenty-four-thermal-megawatt natural uranium reactor. From this point on, French and Israeli scientists collaborate towards the development of their respective nuclear weapons programs.

—Weissman, Steve and Krosney, Herbert, *The Islamic Bomb: the Nuclear Threat to Israel and the Middle East*, (New York, New York: Times Books, 1981), 111-112.

29 October 1956

The Suez operation begins. For the United Kingdom and France, the operation is a failure. Despite Israeli military success, Britton and France cede to a ceasefire in response to pressure from the U.S. and Soviet Union, which issues an implicit threat of nuclear attack if Israel does not withdraw from the Sinai.

—Farr, Warner, *The Third Temple's Holy of Holies: Israel's Nuclear Weapons*, September 1999, www.au.af.mil.

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21 September 1956

Israeli Director-General of the Defense Ministry Shimon Peres meets with French Foreign Minister Maurice Bourges-Maunoury, who agrees to provide Israel with a nuclear reactor. The agreement is reached at a secret meeting held outside Paris where they also finalize the specifics of Israel's role in the Suez Canal operation. Israeli support in the Suez operation is accepted in exchange for French aid to Israel's nuclear efforts.

—Golan, Matti, *Peres* (Tel Aviv: Schocken Books, 1982), 54 as cited in Raviv, Dan and Melman, Yossi, *Every Spy a Prince: the Complete History of Israel's Intelligence Community*, (Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990), 63-69.

Mid-1956

The IAEC submits the information needed for its request for a \$350,000 American grant for a small, pool-type reactor.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 52.

22 June 1956

Precipitated by a Czech-Egyptian arms deal of the previous year that more than doubles Egypt's conventional forces, Israel formalizes a comprehensive security understanding with the French government of Guy Mollet in the city of Verinars.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 48-9.

11 April 1956

A large IAEC delegation visits the AEC headquarters to discuss Israel's nuclear plans.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 51.

1956

Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion writes that "what Einstein, Oppenheimer, and Teller, the three of them are Jews, made for the United States could also be done by scientist in Israel for their own people."

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 12.

12 July 1955

Under the Atoms for Peace program, Israel and the United States sign a general agreement for peaceful nuclear cooperation, including an agreement for the sale of a small research reactor. It is to be a light water or "swimming pool" type, 5-megawatt reactor.

—Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 5, Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 44.

1955 to 1967

Israel spends over \$600 million purchasing weapons from France, including \$75 million for a nuclear reactor.

—Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 150.

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1955 to 1960

Under the auspices of the Atoms for Peace program, 56 Israelis receive training in the United States Atomic Energy Commission research centers at the Argonne National Laboratory and at Oak Ridge.

— Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 6.

20 January 1954

Israeli Defense Minister Pinhas Lavon makes the decision to move the physics department of Machon 4 to the Weizmann Institute. On 1 May of the same year the Department of Nuclear Physics at the Weizmann Institute is founded, with Amos de Shalit as its head.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 38.

Late 1953

Two Israeli scientists, Zvi Lipkin and Israel Pelah, are sent to the French Nuclear Research Centers at Saclay and Chatillon to study reactor physics.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 33.

December 1953

President Dwight Eisenhower launches the Atoms for Peace campaign in an address before the United Nations General Assembly, calling for the establishment of an international uranium stockpile to be controlled and dispensed by a new international atomic energy agency. This program will later lead to the construction of the research reactor at Nachal Soreq.

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 154-6.

1953

In an effort to cultivate a scientific relationship with French officials, Ernst David Bergmann negotiates with CEA officials the sale of two patents (chemical uranium extraction and heavy water production) for possible commercial production. Israel receives 60 million (old) francs for the new technology.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 33.

1953

Technical exchanges between the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) and the French Commissariat of Atomic Energy (CEA) begin and a formal agreement on cooperation between France and Israel in nuclear research is drafted.

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 149.

1953

Israeli scientists perfect the uranium extraction process and develop a new procedure for making heavy water, both essential components of a nuclear weapons program.

—"Israel's nuclear defense history," Los Angeles Times, 12 October 2003.

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June 1952

Israel secretly founds its own Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) under the control of the Israeli Defense Ministry.

—Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 5-6, Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 149.

15 July 1951

David Ben Gurion appoints Ernst David Bergmann his scientific advisor.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 28.

Late 1940s and early 1950s

The U.S. Department of Defense and the National Institutes of Health provide financial support to the Weizmann Institute on defense-related projects.

— Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 177.

1949

Francis Perrin, a member of the French Atomic Energy Commission and nuclear physicist, visits the Weizerman Institute. He invites Israeli scientists to the new French research facility at Saclay and a joint research effort is subsequently set up between the two states.

—"Former Official Says France Helped Build Israel's Dimona Complex," *Nucleonics Week*, 16 October 1986, 6.

1949

The Weizmann Institute establishes a Department of Isotope Research.

—Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides, America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, (New York: William and Morrow Company, 1984), 148.

1949

The newly created Weizmann Institute of Science actively supports nuclear research by funding the postgraduate education of promising young Israeli scientist abroad. These scientists are intended to become the foundation of a nuclear weapons program.

— Interview with Gur, Shlomo by the author, Tel Aviv, 20 July 1992 as cited in Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 26, Jabber, Faud, *Israel and Nuclear Weapons: Present Options and Future Strategies* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1971), 17, Harkavy, Robert E., *Spectre of a Middle East Holocaust: The Strategic and Diplomatic Implications of the Israeli Nuclear Weapons Program* (Denver, CO: University of Denver for Monograph Series in World Affairs, 1977), 5 as cited in Pry, Peter, *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview, 1984), 5-6.

Late 1948

Ben Gurion meets with Jewish, Palestinian-born physicist Moshe Sordin, who is working on construction of the first French nuclear reactor.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 25.

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14 May 1948

Israel declares itself a sovereign state after the British withdraw from Palestine.

April 1948

In a letter to an operative in Europe, Ben Gurion instructs him to recruit Eastern European scientists who can "either increase the capacity to kill masses or cure masses; both things are important."

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 11.

March 1948

The General Staff of Haganah officially recognizes the scientific unit as a staff unit in the operations branch. This unit is responsible for coordinating and assigning tasks to the newly created Ha'il Mada, or Science Corps, commonly know by the Hebrew acronym HEMED.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 11.

1948

Israeli scientist actively explore the Negev Desert for uranium deposits on orders of the Israeli Ministry of Defense. These efforts reveal low-grade deposits near Sidon and Beersheba.

—Cordesman, Anthony, *Perilous Prospects: The Peace Process and the Arab-Israeli Military Balance* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1996), 118.

1948

Israeli scientist Ernst David Bergmann contends that "by developing atomic energy for peaceful uses, you reach the nuclear option. There are no two atomic energies."

—'Israel to Honor Atom Scientist,' *New York Times*, 14 May 1966 as cited in Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 16.

Mid 1947

Chairman of the Jewish Agency David Ben Gurion creates a scientific department at the headquarters of Haganah, the semi-official Jewish defense organization, and allocates it a mandatory annual budget of 10,000 pounds.

—Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1998), 11.

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