

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION 3080

SECRET/NODIS (XGDS)

June 1, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: DR. KISSINGER

FROM: HAROLD H. SAUNDERS *Hal*

SUBJECT: Countering Israeli Reaction to F-4
Sales to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait

You will have read in the daily brief that Ambassador Dinitz has conveyed a strong Israeli action against the US decision to sell F-4 Phantoms to Saudi Arabia. It seems to me that we might save the Administration some trouble by your talking to Dinitz now about this. He is all over town whipping up press opposition to the sale.

The points Dinitz made to Sisco are that the sale would reduce Israel's psychological advantage over the Arabs; would detract from the symbolic value of a weapon heretofore made available in the region only to Iran and Israel (he could have mentioned Turkey and Greece); could set a precedent for eventual US F-4 sales to Jordan and even Egypt; could inhibit progress toward a Middle East settlement by encouraging Arab hopes of being able to pressure Israel; would significantly enhance the military capabilities of Saudi Arabia, a nation "at war" with Israel; would probably lead to Egyptian pressure on the Saudis to take a more aggressive stance toward Israel; and could encourage the Soviets and the French to step up arms transfers to the Arabs. Dinitz also said his government was concerned about the danger that F-4s might be transferred from Saudi Arabia to other Arab states and about the US ability to control the disposition of these airplanes in an unpredictable post-Faisal era in Saudi Arabia. He said Saudi acquisition of the F-4s would oblige Israel "to review its concept of secure borders."

Apart from the fact that any deliveries would be 3-4 years away. The points to be made to Dinitz are:

1. It is essential to US interests in the broader Middle East to strengthen its position in the Arabian Peninsula and in the Persian Gulf areas. Although there is inevitably a relationship between that area and the Arab-Israeli area, it is in the interest

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E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5

NEN 01-26/71 per LHM 8/14/06

By *WFR* Date 03/15/07

[1 of 2]

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XGDS-3

DECLAS-Impossible to Determine Date.

BYAUTH-Dr. Henry A. Kissinger

of both Israel and the United States to keep these issues as separate as possible. It is not in the interest of Israel that the US vulnerability to pressures in the oil areas be increased. It is also not in Israel's interest to object so vociferously to the US strengthening of its position in Saudi Arabia that the Arabs will be encouraged to use that as a pressure point on the US.

2. We have carefully weighed all the considerations which the Israelis have mentioned and have made the judgment that it is in the US interest to make this sale. Therefore, we strongly urge the Israeli government to think twice before it continues its active campaign against the Administration on this issue.

Recommendation: That you call Dinitz in the next day or two with the above line.

[NLW 01-29/71]
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