

Arab Perceptions of Israel's Nuclear Posture, 1960-1967

INTRODUCTION

THE SHADOW OF THE ISRAELI nuclear program has been hovering over the strategic scene of the Middle East for many years. In the course of this period it has attracted considerable Arab attention, and has been the focus of extensive media coverage as well as public debate in academic and elite circles. This public debate has focused on three main facets of the issue:

1. The capabilities that Israel is developing in the nuclear domain, and the likely motivation that is guiding its activities in this realm;
2. The immediate, as well as long-term, ramifications of the Israeli nuclear program, especially its implications on and for the Middle East, the Arab world, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and specific Arab players, most notably Egypt and the Palestinians;
3. How the Arabs as a whole and individual Arab players should respond to this challenge.

The origins of this public debate go back some thirty-five years, to the early 1960s. More precisely, it was the middle of December 1960 that news of the Israeli construction, with French assistance, of a sizable heavy water nuclear research reactor near Dimona first broke out in the Western media. These revelations, which were confirmed by senior U.S. government officials who also referred to their possible implications (i.e., plutonium production that could be used for the construction of nuclear weapons), immediately triggered the first wave of Arab public reaction to the issue. This debate continued, with varying degrees of intensity, until 1967 and beyond. In fact, it has continued unabated, although it has undergone a fundamental, if gradual, change as a result of two complimentary developments: the decisive Israeli victory in the Six Day War with the use of conventional weaponry; and, the emergence of an assessment and belief among Arab elites, following that war, that Israel's nuclear program must

have crossed the point of no return and become for all practical purposes a *fait accompli*.

This article focuses on the formative years in the public Arab response to Israel's nuclear activity. It begins by placing the Arab debate during this 1960-1967 period into a broader historical perspective by reviewing, albeit briefly, the major stages from 1960 to the present time in the evolution of Arab public discussion of the issue. This review is based on a comprehensive data-base of pertinent public Arab statements (including cartoons) on the Israeli nuclear program which has been assembled at the Tel-Aviv University Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies over the past five years.

Here we must acknowledge a fairly obvious, but nevertheless meaningful, limitation of our study. In drawing on this data-base to portray the Arab reaction to the Israeli nuclear program, we inevitably run into constraints imposed by the nature of data derived from the media in general, and from Arab media in particular. If media coverage may be said to be an imperfect gauge of perceptions, whether of the general public or the elites, this is especially true for the media in non-democratic countries. The Arab media have been, and to a large extent still are, subject to heavy government censorship. Moreover, virtually all of the Arab regimes employ part or all of the local media as propaganda tools for both internal as well as external consumption. Consequently, media reporting, as well as public statements on any issue of some importance to Arab regimes, as is the case here, may not accurately reflect official thinking, but rather a deliberately biased, if not altogether misleading, view of the issue.

This constraint is real enough. For the purposes of this study, however, we have not found its impact to be truly debilitating for several reasons:

1. The nature of the public debate, or its absence, on a certain prominent issue has considerable political significance in and for every type of regime. In fact, it may be persuasively argued that this holds especially true for authoritarian regimes such as those reviewed in this article. These regimes attach utmost importance to the media as a tool for legitimizing their hold on power and mobilizing public support. Hence, analysis of the media coverage of a prominent issue is even more telling than would otherwise be the case.
2. Long-term trends in media coverage rather than specific events as such were examined. This focus makes it easier to identify short-term biases, as well as false representations in media coverage from different areas. Furthermore, it is, after all, rather difficult to maintain deliberate and

totally false representations over extended periods of time, even in situations of absolute censorship.

3. Public statements on the issue have been correlated with declassified diplomatic communications, as well as other declassified material, relating to relevant actions and perceptions.
4. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we have made a conscious effort to identify and explain consistent biases in the public Arab discussion of the Israeli nuclear program. These, after all, constitute a significant part of our research interest.

As a concluding introductory note let us add that the relevance of this review transcends its contribution to the understanding of the specific historic period in two different contexts. First, it adds original material to the growing academic literature on the impact of adversary nuclear perceptions on interstate rivalries and arms races. Second, it provides a useful background—some of which draws heavily on the reasoning and arguments of President Nasser and his disciples in the early 1960s—against which to evaluate the contemporary nuclear controversy between Egypt and Israel.

GENERAL TRENDS IN ISRAEL'S NUCLEAR IMAGE

In our larger study on Israel's nuclear image in Arab eyes, we identified four distinct time periods in the public Arab attitude to Israel's nuclear posture and activity. A brief overview of the major foci of discussion in each time period follows:

1960–1967. The initial Arab reaction to Israel's nuclear activity surfaced in response to reports in the Western press in December 1960 regarding a deal between France and Israel to establish a nuclear center in Dimona. Egypt clearly took the lead in dealing with the nuclear issue in this early period, beginning with Nasser's speech at Port Said (December 23, 1960) and continuing through to a series of statements in 1965–67 on the possibility of "preventive war" against Israel in order to thwart the realization of its perceived nuclear option. Egypt was the lead spokesman in the Arab world on the nuclear issue, not in the least as an extension of its stand in inter-Arab dynamics in the first half of the 1960s. We examined the possible connection between Nasser's statements regarding preventive war, and the developments leading to the Six Day War. The public Arab discussion of this issue in this initial period clearly reflected the Arab assessment that Israel might well have been developing, but had not yet attained, nuclear weapons.

1967-1973/76. This period was marked by a sharp decline in the extent and volume of Arab public discussion of Israel's nuclear potential following the Six Day War. A relatively limited amount of attention was devoted, at least in public, to the perceived Israeli nuclear threat in the period between the Six Day War (1967) and the Yom Kippur War (1973). Israel's perceived nuclear option may, however, have nonetheless played a role in shaping the Arab (essentially Egyptian) planning of the Yom Kippur War. Following the conclusion of the Yom Kippur War, there was renewed public Arab discussion of the nuclear issue, prompted mainly by a number of reports in the West that purported to expose the stage of development of Israel's nuclear weapon potential.

1977-1986. This period was characterized by the emergence of a high degree of certainty within the Arab world regarding the existence of nuclear weapons in Israel and a widespread belief that Israel might resort to using such weapons in a case of last resort. The Arab media and official statements of this period suggest that Israel was purposely eroding its posture of nuclear ambiguity, as well as adopting a more hawkish approach, partially in the context of increased strategic cooperation with the U.S. Two options for dealing with the perceived Israeli nuclear threat were debated publicly by Arab elites: diplomatic activity aimed at pressuring Israel to become a signatory to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), and efforts (or expressed support for such efforts) to create a strategic balance between the Arab countries and Israel through Arab cooperation and rearmament, including in the nuclear domain.

1986-Present. This period began with the impact of the Va'anunu affair on Arab assessments of Israel's nuclear posture and capabilities, in light of Va'anunu's highly detailed account of Israel's nuclear potential that appeared in the *Sunday Times* report of September 1986. The Arab assessment to emerge following this episode was that it amounted to a further attempt on the part of Israel to disclose information on its nuclear capability in order to strengthen its overall deterrence posture. Nevertheless, this affair also led to a significant qualitative and quantitative upgrade in Arab assessments regarding the nuclear arsenal attributed to Israel.

Arab debate on the Israeli nuclear posture was further influenced during this time period by Saddam Hussein's speech of April 2, 1990, and the Second Gulf War, both of which raised the possibility of a shift in Israel's nuclear doctrine. Following the war, the dominant theme of Arab public statements became the need for effective and comprehensive arms control agreements in the Middle East which would include Israel and lead to the eventual elimination of its qualitative edge in general, and weapons in particular.

This theme has further continued over the past several years, with Egypt taking the lead in the Arab campaign in this area. In fact, the period beginning in the wake of the Second Gulf War (1991) and leading up to the present may well constitute a distinct time period for analysis, since the emphasis in the Arab discussion of the nuclear issue is predominantly directed toward arms control efforts, especially in the context of regional peace.

ISRAEL'S NUCLEAR IMAGE IN THE FORMATIVE YEARS

Having provided an overview of general trends in each of the periods defined, we now shift attention back to the early period (1960–1967), which is the focus of the present article. This is an especially interesting period for detailed analysis, since it marks the beginning of the public debate over the nuclear issue in the Middle East, triggered by a belief that Israel was embarking on a nuclear effort, but had not yet crossed the nuclear threshold. In fact, the fear expressed by Arab sources at this time was that Israel could and would reach this stage toward the end of the decade. It provoked an Arab attempt to come to grips with this “ominous prospect,” especially in terms of its implications for the future of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Arab spokesmen and commentators emphasized the need to obstruct or neutralize the impact of this highly adverse development by: (a) bringing to bear massive diplomatic pressure on Israel to cease its nuclear program and on France to abandon its nuclear cooperation with Israel; (b) developing an offsetting parallel Arab nuclear option; or (c) taking military action against Israel to forcibly stop its nuclear program. As we will demonstrate below, the dynamics of the role played by Egypt in this overall Arab reaction makes this period highly relevant to the understanding of the present Arab debate over Israel's nuclear option.

A convenient point of departure is to review the general nature of perceptions of Israel's nuclear option as reflected in public statements and commentaries up until the Six Day War, with specific focus on Egypt, which took the Arab lead in confronting the Israeli nuclear challenge in these early years. Here we shall present our analysis of the motivation underlying Egypt's reaction to Israel's evolving nuclear potential. Finally, we will look more closely at the relationship between Israel's nuclear image in Arab eyes and the Arab-Israeli conflict. We will first consider the possible impact that Israel's nuclear image may have had on the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict in the developments leading up to the Six Day War. We will then proceed to

a discussion of the reverse; namely the impact that the nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict may have had on Israel's nuclear image, as projected in public statements by various Arab sources.

Seeking to find the earliest Arab statements and commentaries regarding Israel's assumed nuclear potential, we were able to trace the onset of the Arab public reaction to the issue of Israel's possible acquisition of nuclear arms to December 1960. These occurred in the wake of publicity in the Western media, originating in leaks by American officials, revealing a deal between Israel and France for the construction of a nuclear center in the Israeli south, near Dimona.¹ This publicity triggered a wave of reaction from both the media and statesmen in the Arab world generally, and in Egypt in particular.² The most notable of these was the dramatic speech given by Egyptian President Nasser in Port Said on 23 December 1960, which dealt extensively with Israel's attempt to acquire nuclear weapons and its implications for the Arab world (see Appendix).³ Nasser's speech, in turn, elicited extensive reaction in other parts of the Arab world as well, which continued throughout 1961 in the media, as well as in diplomatic contacts, both among senior Arab officials, and between them and the great powers.

In Egypt, various suggestions appeared in the media early on about how to deal with what was perceived as an emerging threat, although there was still much uncertainty as to Israel's nuclear capability and intentions. The harshest of these commentaries predated Nasser's Port Said speech, appearing in *Al-Akram* on 20 December 1960 in an article by Muhammed Hasanyin Haykal, who served as the spokesman for President Nasser. Haykal warned that the manufacture of nuclear weapons by Israel was a matter of life and death for the Arabs; if Israel were indeed to obtain an atomic bomb, the Arabs would acquire a parallel bomb, under any condition and at any price.⁴ Nasser himself then addressed the matter a few days later.

One part of Nasser's message, directed primarily to the internal Arab front, appeared to play down the gravity of the problem. One need not be overly impressed (or frightened) by the degree of influence that nuclear arms have—either inherently, or as a result of possible development by Israel, he said. In evidence, Nasser cited Britain's failure in the 1956 war (the "Suez Campaign") to exploit nuclear armament to coerce Egypt. The other part of the message in Nasser's speech was directed primarily toward the foreign audience, and it contained a sharp message of warning: if the reports that Israel was manufacturing an atomic bomb were to be proven correct, then Egypt would have to respond with a preventive war and, moreover, must acquire its own nuclear bomb at any price.

The same duality in the Egyptian public messages, reflecting varying needs and different audiences, continued after the Port Said speech. A soothing message appeared in another *Al-Ahram* article at the end of December 1960. It stated that all of the reports concerning Israeli nuclear development were only intended to frighten, and that Israel may have invented the story of manufacturing an atomic bomb so as to conceal its impotence and weakness in face of the Arab forces.⁵ Certain other commentaries in the media, however, responding to Nasser's more alarming message, accused him of insufficient aggressiveness toward Israel—of practically accepting the situation, so long as Israel refrained from attacking Egypt.⁶ Haykal responded to this criticism in an article on the destiny of Egypt's policy of "positive neutrality."⁷ In the course of an attempt to prove that this policy was well-rooted in the Egyptian nation, Haykal also cast doubt on the future of the policy, should it be proven that Israel was, indeed, advancing in the direction of manufacturing an atomic bomb.

Turning to more general Arab attitudes, despite the uncertain reliability of the initial Western reports, the stated public attitude of the Arab officials and media was in fact a determined one. It stated that, in response to the Israeli nuclear challenge, they needed to manufacture or to acquire an atomic device of their own.⁸ An interesting source of reactions from this period was that of the Lebanese press, which not only reflected the positions of official figures in Lebanon (e.g., the Foreign Minister, the Information Minister),⁹ but also served as a convenient platform for other Arabs to express themselves on the subject, especially in a pan-Arab context. During January 1961, in anticipation of the conference of Arab Foreign Ministers to be held in Baghdad at the beginning of February, a series of statements were published in the Lebanese press to the effect that the nuclear issue would be discussed in the framework of the conference.¹⁰ The subject was indeed addressed there; it was decided to raise the issue of French nuclear assistance to Israel in the UN, and request the International Atomic Energy Agency to conduct an inspection visit to the Israeli reactor.¹¹

Between 1962 and 1964, there were fewer public references to the nuclear issue. These were the years during which Egypt was engaged in intensive activity in an attempt to develop ballistic missiles and radiological, chemical, and nuclear weapons with the massive help of German scientists. While the first scientists had evidently already been active in Egyptian defense industrial programs since 1959, Egypt's missile and nonconventional weapon program only began to gather momentum in 1961, following the announcements in Israel and in the West concerning the launching of an

Israeli space missile (Shavit II).²³ The Egyptian program was intensely pursued between 1961-67, even though, by the beginning of 1965, the pressure that had been applied upon the German scientists to cease their activity (by Israel and ultimately also by the Federal German government), as well as internal problems in Egypt, had already succeeded in slowing down the rate of development, and ultimately undermined the program. This was the last year in which missiles were displayed on parade in Egypt.²⁴

A hint to the nature of the activity of the German scientists appears in two interesting Egyptian articles from the years 1962-64, which were published in reaction to Israel's accusations concerning the activity of the scientists, and which maintained that Israel had the capability to manufacture atomic bombs.²⁵ Muhammed Hasany Haykal confirmed this in an article from a later period, in which he specifically noted Egypt's failure during this period to acquire or to develop on its own a nuclear response to Israel's nuclear capability.²⁶

Side-by-side with its indigenous development of ballistic missiles and NBC weapons, Egypt also conducted secret diplomatic contacts during the first half of the 1960s in an attempt to halt Israel's nuclear program. During the presidency of John F. Kennedy, the U.S. administration indeed applied much pressure on Israel to halt its nuclear program, and attempted thereafter to persuade both Egypt and Israel to abandon the ballistic missile race. These attempts, which continued, albeit with lesser intensity, in the Johnson administration, did not appear successful, to the dismay of Egypt.

In his book on Nasser, Muhammed Hasany Haykal describes the personal disappointment of the Egyptian president in the wake of a letter sent to him by President Johnson in March 1965, in which Johnson referred to United States policy regarding the sale of arms to the Middle East and its attempt to prevent one side or another from gaining a military advantage. Together with this, the American president expressed Israel's concern about statements by some Arab leaders that it was their intention to "wipe out Israel," and he pointed out to Nasser that these pressures were likely to lead Israel to the conclusion that they needed to convert their planned nuclear program from peaceful purposes to the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Haykal suggests that the Johnson letter went on to say that whereas the United States was attempting to maintain a certain balance between the two sides in its armament sales, the Soviet Union was not; hence, the United States was forced to redress the balance by selling arms to Israel. According to Haykal, Nasser read into this presidential letter that the United States was hinting that Israel was developing nuclear weaponry, that the United

States would supply her with advanced weapons systems, and that, if Egypt objected to this, the United States would supply Israel with even more weapons systems.¹⁶

Egypt, however, did not confine its diplomatic campaign to the U.S. It also attempted to bring pressure to bear upon France, and, in October 1965, Egyptian Defense Minister Abdul Hakim 'Amr visited Paris. He asked French president Charles De Gaulle to redress France's past errors by halting its technical support of Israel's atomic program and assisting Cairo in the development of its own nuclear research.¹⁷

There was again extensive discussion of the issue of Israel's nuclear capability during 1965-66. This time Egypt was the source of most of the statements, first and foremost on the part of President Nasser and his disciple, journalist Muhammed Hasanyin Haykal, of *Al-Ahram*. Both noted the danger posed by Israel's continued nuclear development and the urgent need to prevent Israel from acquiring nuclear weapons in any way possible. The Arab public reactions from this period echoed the Arab assessment that Israel was between two and three years away from developing an atomic bomb—that it would have a bomb around 1968.¹⁸ Nasser stressed the gravity of the threat and its impact upon the future of the Arab-Israel conflict, and emphasized that, in the absence of any other practical alternative, preventive war against Israel to stop her from acquiring nuclear capability, had become inevitable.

At this time, Egypt's missile and nuclear program was disintegrating, while widespread assessments circulating in Egypt suggested that (with the commissioning of the Dimona reactor) Israel was drawing very close to achieving the capability to manufacture an atomic bomb. Those in Egypt who expressed themselves on this issue disagreed as to the extent to which an atomic bomb, once manufactured, would give Israel military superiority over the Arab countries. Various assessments were also articulated in Egypt regarding Israel's motivations for acting in the nuclear area. Among the motivations mentioned were psychological warfare against the Arabs; an attempt to force the Soviet Union and the United States to reach an agreement regarding a uniform policy in the Middle East; and the wish to boost morale in Israel and to improve Israel's standing in the world.¹⁹ Either way, the quest for a response to the perceived threat posed by Israeli development of a nuclear capability was highly prominent in all the expressions made by Egyptian officials—especially those of President Nasser.

In contrast to the number and character of statements on the issue by Nasser—primarily during the course of 1965-66 and at the beginning of 1967—reaction to Israel's nuclear developments on the part of other Arab

officials, both within and outside the framework of the Pan-Arab conferences, was sparse and divided.

While the renewed interest on the official level in Egypt evidently came about in response to their assessment that they had failed in their efforts to halt Israel's nuclear program, it is nevertheless interesting to note that this subject was not at all discussed at the second Arab Summit Conference (September 1964, Alexandria). There is some evidence to suggest that it did come up in the third Arab Summit (September 1965, Casablanca), but public references to this effect were found predominantly in Jordanian sources.²⁰ The Israeli nuclear issue was evidently raised at the Conference of Arab Prime Ministers held in Cairo between March 14-17, 1966 or, at least, in the framework of the preparatory meeting to this conference, likewise conducted in Cairo (March 12, 1966) with the participation of the Arab foreign ministers.²¹ At that time, an Egyptian statement relating to the fact that the subject would be raised during the course of the Conference of Foreign Ministers stressed that the discussion would be "based upon the assumption that the only response to this was a preventive war, and that it is incumbent upon all Arab countries to destroy immediately anything that might enable Israel to manufacture an atomic bomb."²² In addition, Nasser's personal representative at the Conference of Arab Prime Ministers, Hasan Sabri Al-Khuli, explained in an interview to a reporter for the Egyptian weekly *Al-Musawwar* that, "a preventive war is one that is generally intended to prevent the enemy from enjoying the use of weapons that are dangerous to us, like an inoculation given before the illness comes." Among possible preventive actions, he mentioned the destruction of the atomic reactor used for the manufacture of atomic bombs.²³ Thus, even when the subject was diplomatically discussed within a Pan-Arab framework, the Egyptian line reiterated Nasser's public position—namely, the absolute need for preventive war.

It would appear that the explanation for the manner in which the nuclear subject was treated on the inter-Arab level was closely related to the nature of inter-Arab relations during the period in question. These were characterized by the division between "progressive" and "reactionary" camps. The progressives (Egypt, Syria, Algeria) advocated direct struggle against Israel and were opposed to the renewal of summit meetings of the Arab League. On the other hand, the reactionaries (Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia), who were accused by the progressives of advancing their own interests and joining the triangle that included the "Zionists" and the "imperialists," called for the continuation of summit conferences.²⁴ Nasser appears to have utilized the nuclear issue as a tool by which to convey a

certain powerful message to the entire Arab world; namely, that the only viable means of dealing with Israel was by military confrontation—specifically by preventive war. He attempted, unsuccessfully as it turned out, to convince the other Arab leaders of the necessity of preventive war within the framework of the Conference of Foreign Ministers held in March 1966. Having failed, he boycotted the fourth Summit Conference, which was to have taken place on September 3, 1966, but which was ultimately canceled due to the split between the two Arab camps.

Interestingly enough, both Arab camps explained their attitude toward the summit mechanism in terms of the Israeli nuclear challenge. On the one hand, the progressives refused to compromise their militant stand for the sake of Arab solidarity; on the other, the reactionaries argued for Arab solidarity to stand up to the challenge. One should consider in this light a Syrian article, written in the wake of the March 1966 Prime Ministers' Conference in Cairo, which focused upon the question of Arab solidarity in the context of these relationships within the Arab world. The author of the article emphasized that Syria refused to allow solidarity to become an excuse for erasing the differences between progressives and reactionaries. Rather, Syria understood solidarity as an opportunity for the Arab nation to marshal forces so as to attain its primary goals. Against the background of these tense relations, one may also understand an interesting Jordanian response (from the beginning of 1967), according to which the Arab summit conferences are essential so as to stand united against Israel before it attained nuclear weapons.³¹

Turning back to Egypt (which will be the focus of attention in the following section) we can conclude that, in the years 1965–66, Egyptian statements dealt at length with two options for meeting the perceived nuclear threat. These were, in fact, both attempted during the first half of the 1960s: the development of an Egyptian nuclear response, and a preventive war. The former course of action was discussed, for example, in an article by Hasanyn Haykal published in August 1965, in which he repeatedly warned against the danger of manufacture of an atomic bomb by Israel, enumerated the reasons which, in his opinion, motivated Israel to be interested in a nuclear bomb (psychological mood, Israel's security, the nature of the ruling group in Israel, Israel's status in the world), and expressed his assessment that, from both a scientific and a material viewpoint, Israel was capable of manufacturing an atomic bomb and that, in practice, it would be close to realizing this capability within two to three years. The conclusion he reached was that, due to the "facts of life," Egypt needed to be prepared to acquire a nuclear weapon capability for itself, notwithstanding its prefer-

ence not to do so.²⁶ Nasser reiterated this rationale in an interview he granted to the BBC in May 1966, in which he claimed that Egypt now believed that it must act in the nuclear realm, so long as Israel did so.²⁷ This was the essence of the first course of action. In the following section, we look more closely at the second in the framework of its possible impact on developments leading to the Six Day War.

EVENTS LEADING TO THE SIX DAY WAR (1967)

The thrust of the second, and more conspicuous aspect of Egypt's public response to the Israeli nuclear program, was a blunt message pertaining to a preventive war. It suggested that the launching of an Arab war to destroy Israel's nuclear infrastructure and put an end to its nuclear program had become a necessity. The idea of a preventive war was first articulated by the Egyptian elite as early as 1960, but when it resurfaced in the course of 1965-66, it was cast in much more definite terms. This is especially evident in a Hasanyin Haykal article of mid-October 1965. In this seminal piece, Haykal stated that the main pressure affecting the "Arab situation" was Israel's nuclear potential and the need to be adequately prepared to deal with it.

Haykal reasoned that the gravity of the nuclear threat was such that one could not sit idly by waiting for the decisive moment to come (which, it was estimated, would arrive in another three years or so), but must prepare oneself to act. While Haykal believed that the entire Arab world needed to prepare for action against Israel, he emphasized the particular obligation of Egypt to lead the way. Egypt, by virtue of being the Arab country possessing the greatest scientific, economic, and military capabilities, could not refrain from a preventive strike if Israel became a nuclear power.²⁸ Haykal's message was reinforced by Nasser himself in 1966, following reports in the foreign press suggesting a ballistic missile deal between France and Israel and claiming that Israel possessed the ability to produce nuclear missile warheads.²⁹ Nasser reaffirmed the message that the Arabs, and primarily Egypt, would have no choice but to launch a preventive war should Israel manufacture an atomic bomb, or even demonstrate clear indications that it was moving in this direction. Nasser's warning was reinforced by several articles in the Egyptian press all of which pointed to the same course of action.³⁰

How is one to understand the strong emphasis on such extreme courses of action that characterized the public discussion of the issue in Egypt in the course of 1965 and 1966? The evidence we have uncovered suggests that the explanation may lie in three complementary developments: first, mounting

concern in Egypt that Israel's nuclear program was likely to mature, or at least to irreversibly cross a critical threshold, within several years of the commissioning of the Dimona reactor, possibly as early as 1967 or 1968; second, the collapse of the Egyptian effort to develop an indigenous missile/chemical/nuclear weapon capability in response to Israel; and third, growing recognition by the Egyptian leadership of the futility of its efforts to thwart the Israeli program by means of quiet diplomacy aimed both at mobilizing intra-Arab support for Egypt's position and generating Western and Soviet pressure against Israel.²⁷

It seems clear that by 1966 President Nasser had apparently reached the conclusion that he must deal with the Israeli nuclear challenge through two parallel but complementary courses of action: threaten severe retaliation if Israel approached the nuclear threshold, in order to dissuade Israel from proceeding along this path and to motivate the major powers to force Israel to abandon its presumed nuclear weapon ambitions; and, having failed to develop nuclear weapons indigenously, simultaneously seek to acquire them outright from either the Soviet Union or China.²⁸ One should note, in this context, a *New York Times* report of February 1966 suggesting that the Soviet Union had declined at the time to sell Egypt nuclear weapons, offering it instead "nuclear guarantees" against Israel should these prove necessary. Nasser, however, was evidently not content with this promise, hoping instead to neutralize Israel's nuclear threat in a more definitive manner before it became a *fait accompli*. Alongside both of these strategies, Nasser may have also begun contemplating a preventive attack on Israel's nuclear installations, should his other options be exhausted. It is to this last course of action that we now turn.

In assessing the impact of the nuclear issue on events leading to the Six Day War (June 5-10, 1967) we must first make clear that the option of a preventive war against Israel continued to be discussed publicly by Arab, primarily Egyptian, sources until early 1967, but not during the months immediately preceding the outbreak of hostilities. We have not been able to uncover any public Arab reference to the desirability of a preventive strike on Israel's nuclear infrastructure in May or June 1967. Furthermore, we have also not found any statements by Arab officials explicitly connecting their political and military moves preceding (and precipitating) the outbreak of the war to continuing Israeli nuclear activity. It is, nevertheless, interesting to explore the correlation between these moves and the explicit Arab (first and foremost Egyptian) discussion of and statements on preventive war to thwart Israel's nuclear program, which appeared during 1965, 1966, and early 1967. And it is here that it proves useful to consider circum-

stantial evidence that sheds some additional light on the possible connection between the events of May 1967 and Nasser's earlier statements on preventive war.

First, in recent years some hard evidence has surfaced to confirm that during this period President Nasser had indeed been preoccupied by the nuclear issue; so much so, in fact, that he may well have come close to launching a preventive strike against Israel's Dimona nuclear facility. In a recently declassified letter written to President Johnson on 3 January 1964, John S. Badeau, United States Ambassador in Cairo, conjectured that the only case in which Egypt would undertake direct and open military action against Israel was if they were convinced that Israel had begun to manufacture nuclear devices. In this case, he reasoned, Egypt would attempt to deliver a pre-emptory blow.³³ In addition, according to a *New York Times* article that appeared at the end of 1966, the United States was considering a program that would help Israel and Egypt set up nuclear powered desalination plants in exchange for a promise by both sides to allow inspections of their overall nuclear activity by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Supporters of the plan in the U.S. administration cited Nasser's February 1966 statements concerning the possibility of a preventive war as proof of the emerging danger for nuclear triggered confrontation between the two states.³⁴ Thus, it seems that at least some senior officials in the U.S. administration were at the time taking Nasser's threats seriously. Moreover, there is every reason to believe that the subject was even raised in the course of secret talks conducted between the U.S. and Egypt, but information on these talks remains classified to this day.

Another source of information suggesting a possible connection between Egypt's declarations and its political and military moves in May of 1967 concerns the practical preparations undertaken by Egypt, between March and May 1967, for an air strike against the Dimona nuclear reactor.³⁵ As part of these preparations, Egypt conducted two unprecedented and exceptionally daring photographic reconnaissance flights over Dimona on May 17 and May 26, 1967. The highly unusual characteristics of these missions suggest that their most likely objective was to gather operational intelligence on a target for attack. The government of Israel evidently immediately interpreted the purpose of these flights in that light, and treated them with due severity. Israeli cabinet discussions held in the aftermath of flights considered the possibility of an Egyptian attack directed specifically against the "most sensitive security site," what requirements were needed to protect this site, and what Israel's response should be in the event that such an attack should occur.³⁶

The question, to what extent Israel's perceived development of a nuclear weapon capability may have actually served as a motivation for Egypt to deploy its military in the Sinai in May of 1967, has become even more intriguing in recent years. This is so because of the gradual refutation of most of the commonly-offered explanations for Egypt's decision to pull its troops back from Yemen, concentrate its military in the Sinai peninsula while preparing it for war, close the Straits of Tiran, and request the removal of the UN peacekeeping troops stationed along its border with Israel. The Egyptian forces that were rapidly evacuated from the Yemen civil war and relocated in the Sinai in a rather disorganized fashion, were clearly not prepared at the time for a war against Israel.¹⁷ They were neither ready for an offensive action, nor did they seem to have explicit instructions to wage one. Furthermore, Nasser's strategic doctrine called for the attainment of decisive military supremacy before the Arabs would embark on an additional, hopefully decisive, military campaign against Israel.

Today, the logic guiding Egypt's moves of the time seems even less clear than ever before. For it is becoming increasingly apparent that the Egyptian leadership had actually come to know with reasonable certainty by the end of May 1967 that, contrary to some reports, Israel was not mobilizing troops and deploying them on the Syrian front.¹⁸ Thus, for the present, this historical chapter remains something of a mystery. It is in this context that we ought to consider the possible role of the nuclear factor.

We have been able to establish that the Egyptian leadership assumed, on the eve of the Six Day War, that Israel was getting dangerously close to acquiring a nuclear weapon capability, or, at least, rapidly approaching the point in which it would produce in Dimona sufficient quantities of fissile material to manufacture nuclear weapons should it elect to do so. They seemed to have been operating at the time on the belief that, while Israel had still not attained an operative nuclear capability, it could (and would?) reach that point within a year or so. Finally, at least President Nasser may have reached the conclusion that all other means for stopping the Israeli nuclear program had failed, while the consequences of its development of a nuclear arsenal would be truly dire for the Arab struggle against Israel, and, by implication, also of special detriment to Egypt as the champion of this struggle and the leader of the Arab world.

It is thus plausible to speculate that part of the logic guiding Nasser's actions in May of 1967 may well have been his determination to use the tense political atmosphere prevailing at the time to stop the Israeli nuclear program by using political-military and, if need be, even strictly military means. Viewed in this light, his deployment of troops in the Sinai may have thus

been designed, at least in part, as a prudent precautionary move in anticipation of a decisive Israeli military response to an Egyptian air strike on Dimona.

THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISRAEL'S NUCLEAR IMAGE AND THE ARAB APPROACH TO THE CONFLICT

This discussion naturally leads to the broader question of how Israel's nuclear image in Arab eyes may have affected their overall approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and, in turn, may have been affected by it. On this issue there are two primary schools of thought. One school, whose most prominent spokesman is Shlomo Aronson, asserts that the Israeli nuclear issue has had a major impact on at least three major turning points in the Arab-Israeli conflict, namely the Six Day War, the Yom Kippur War, and Sadat's peace initiative of 1977.³⁹ The second school, whose leading advocate is Yair Evron, holds that the nuclear image of Israel has never had any substantial impact upon the Arabs, either upon their overall approach to the conflict, or on their behavior in any major event.⁴⁰

The conclusions of our research regarding the impact of the nuclear question on developments leading to the Six Day War place us somewhere between these two approaches. We have come to the conclusion that Israel's nuclear image probably had a significant impact on President Nasser's calculations on the eve of the Six Day War. But the body of evidence presently available to us does not conclusively support the assertion that it was actually the decisive factor in triggering the events that ultimately led to the war.

We now wish to address a broader question; namely, the impact that attitudes toward, and developments within, the Arab-Israeli conflict may have had on the public Arab discussion of Israel's nuclear potential. Not unexpectedly, we identified two basic attitudes expressed in Arab sources regarding the perceived threat emanating from Israel's nuclear activity: the first is one of dismissal—employing various arguments to explain why Israel's nuclear option did not really pose any serious threat to the Arabs, or otherwise significantly limit them; the second attitude is one that considers the threat in grave seriousness, especially in light of what were viewed as Israel's "aggressive tendencies." Sometimes both approaches coexist among the same Arab circle, and are even used simultaneously by the same spokesmen. Recall that, when reviewing the initial Egyptian reactions (in 1960) to

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Israel's nuclear program, we have already drawn attention to this duality, which we hypothesized as stemming from an attempt to communicate simultaneously two distinct messages to two different audiences.

In our original study we found evidence of a correlation between these two attitudes, and the overall approach of the Arab regimes and leaders toward the Arab-Israeli conflict. This took the form of an intentional "playing up" or "playing down" of the degree of severity attributed to the Israeli potential. In other words, we identified a systematic bias in the public Arab discussion of the severity of the nuclear threat that appears to be correlated with the overall attitude of Arab sources to the conflict. The bias is evident in the actual gap between assessments regarding the *existence* of a nuclear option and its size, and assessments of the *meaning* and severity attributed to these facts (i.e. whether the potential in fact constitutes a threat).

In the period between 1960 and 1967 we were able to identify signs of such a systematic bias in the public discussion of the Israeli nuclear issue, in three distinct time periods:

1. 1960—the initial reports in Western media regarding Israel's activity in Dimona elicited an especially severe reaction to the emerging threat in order to arouse international interest and pressure on Israel. It was hoped that such reaction would put a halt to the program in its initial stage.
2. 1961–1964—this period was characterized by an intentional effort to ignore the subject and dismiss its implications, as part of the larger attempt to mobilize broad Arab support for the continued struggle against Israel, while at the same time, to divert attention from their own efforts (mainly Egyptian) to deal with the threat by developing a response in kind. One factor that may have made it easier for Egypt to play down the nuclear issue in this period was the policy of the Kennedy administration which applied increasingly heavy and sustained pressure on Israel to accept regular inspections of the Dimona reactor which would enable the U.S. to keep an eye on the activities carried out there.⁴¹ Thus, there was no perceived urgency for Egypt to publicly arouse international concern, since the U.S. was clearly concerned, and already pressuring Israel.
3. 1965–1967—this period was characterized by a renewed Arab effort to play up the nuclear issue and emphasize the severity of the nuclear threat, in order to build up international pressure on Israel to stop the nuclear program before it would be too late (according to Egyptian assessments, Israel was expected to cross the nuclear threshold around 1968). As mentioned above, this change may be attributed, in part, to

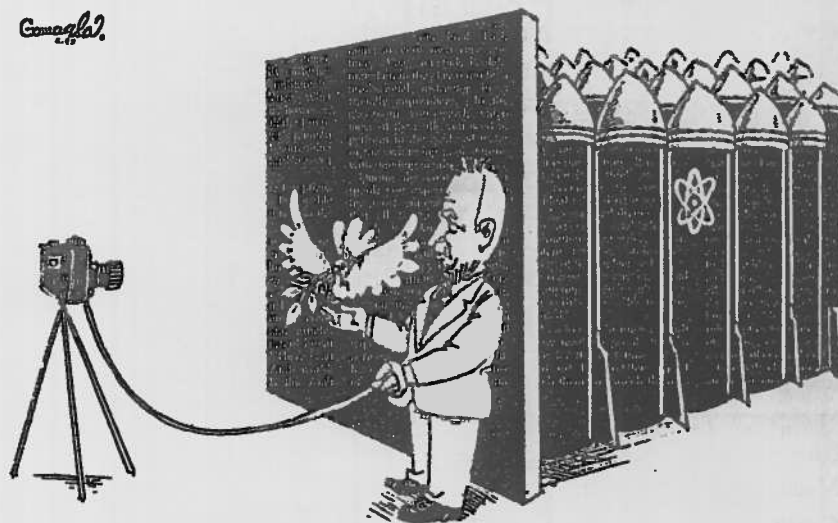
the failure of the Egyptian missile program, which seems to have been due to internal difficulties exacerbated by Israeli efforts to undermine the program.⁴² An additional factor which may have motivated Egypt in particular to step up the public rhetoric on this issue was the attitude of the Johnson administration, which was perceived by Nasser as being more tolerant of Israel's nuclear activity than its predecessor.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

We wish to end this review by alluding to its broader historical relevance. As was already noted, the Arab, especially Egyptian, discussion of Israel's nuclear program in the early 1960s clearly reflected a perception that the completion of Israel's nuclear program would usher in a new era into the Middle East in general, and the Arab-Israeli conflict in particular. This perception was especially acute among the Egyptian elite of the time, which aspired to regional dominance and, therefore, felt most immediately and directly threatened by Israel's nuclear program. Its efforts to undermine the Israeli program, or at least come up with an appropriate response, were consequently marked by remarkable intensity as well as a sense of urgency.

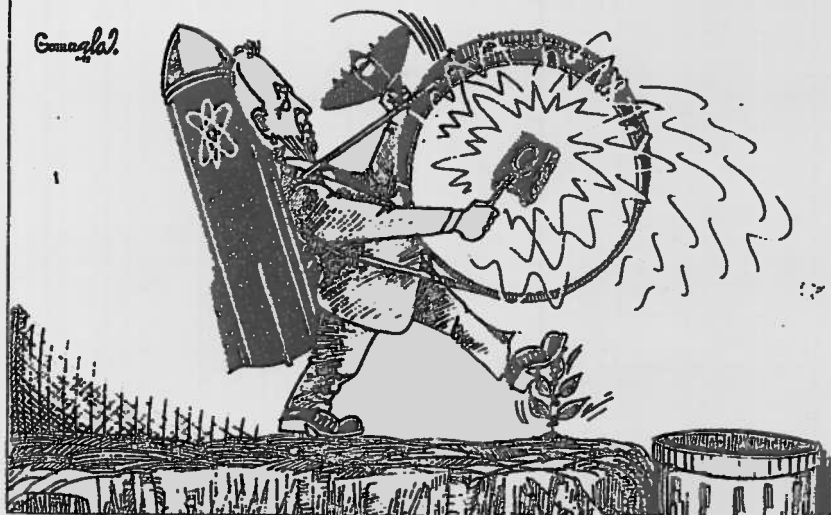
A rather similar calculation and rationale, albeit in a different setting, appears to be guiding the Egyptian foreign policy in the first half of the 1990s. The Iraqi and Iranian nuclear efforts, coupled with the onset of the Madrid Peace process, are apparently perceived by the Egyptian elite to present them with both an acute challenge and a golden, if brief, opportunity to deal with the nuclear balance in the Middle East. Their statements and conduct reflect a chilling Egyptian assessment to the effect that further nuclearization of the Middle East, or Israeli entry into the "New Middle East" as a nuclear superpower, pose an acute challenge to the Egyptian hegemony in the region. Given that, at the present time, nuclear rearmament for Egypt does not appear to the Egyptian elite as an especially appealing option (just as it proved elusive in the early 1960s), Egypt is now, as then, pinning much hope on confronting the Israeli challenge to regional leadership by pressing hard for immediate nuclear disarmament in the region. Failing that, Egypt is at least hoping to exploit the nuclear issue diplomatically (along with several others) in order to stop, or at least slow down, the comprehensive normalization process between the Arab world and Israel that it perceives to be so threatening to its traditional hegemony in the region.

Gomagla?

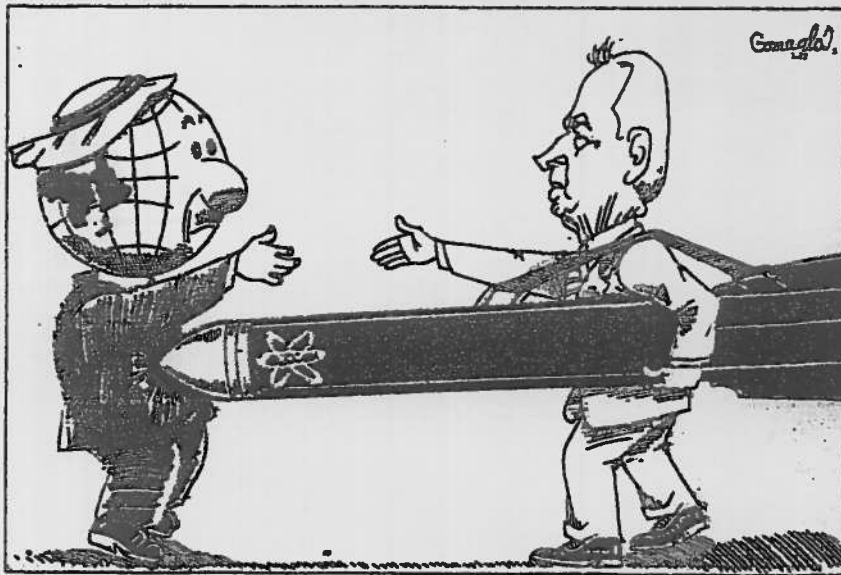


Al-Ahram Weekly, 23.2 - 1.3.95

Gomagla?



Al-Ahram Weekly, 19 - 25.1.95



Al-Ahram Weekly, 30.3 - 5.4.95

APPENDIX

Excerpts from Important Statements and Commentary

1. From President Nasser's Port Said Speech, 23 December 1960 (*SWB, ME/524/A/1-A/11*)

—“They say that Israel is making an atom bomb. Did we become afraid? Of course we did not. Why? For a simple reason. On 30th October 1956 England presented an ultimatum that we should surrender Port Said, Ismailia and Suez within 12 hours or else face invasion. Naturally I did not even consider this ultimatum or discuss what the reply should be . . . When we rejected Britain's and France's ultimatum in 1956, we did so although we knew that Britain had atom bombs, missiles, fleets, and aircraft carriers.”

—“Our atom bomb is our unity and our faith in our country. They say that Israel is making an atom bomb. Our reply to this is that such talk increases Arab determination to adhere to Arab nationalism and Arab unity. If Israel can make an atom bomb, we can also make an atom bomb . . . We will under no circumstances permit Israel to be our superior. We will always be superior to Israel, no matter what the cost and the sacrifices involved.

If we are sure that Israel is making an atom bomb, it will mean the beginning of war between us and Israel, because we cannot permit Israel to manufacture an atom bomb. It is inevitable that we should attack the base of aggression even if we have to mobilize four million to destroy it.”

—“We then come to think of the other possibility. If this propaganda indicates anything at all, it indicates that the imperialist states are preparing the atmosphere to arm Israel with atomic weapons and then say that Israel itself has produced atomic weapons . . . I do not think it unlikely that these states will collude with Israel and give it secret weapons. Of course it is a battle against imperialism and another against Zionism while there is an alliance between the two. But at such a time, we will obtain an atom bomb and atomic weapons at any price.”

2. From an Interview with President Nasser by Iraqi Newsmen, 20 February 1966 (*FBIS*, 21 February 1966)

—“ . . . if Israel produces the atomic bomb then I believe that the only answer to such action would be preventive war. The Arab states will have to take immediate action and liquidate everything that would enable Israel to produce the atomic bomb.”

3. President Nasser as quoted in an interview to NBC, 17 April 1966 (*New York Times*, 18 April 1966)

—“They have a reactor, 24 megawatts, and they have the plutonium. What would be the result? The result would be to produce atomic weapons.”

[Nasser said during the interview that the UAR would start a “preventive war” against Israel if it obtained conclusive proof that Israel was developing nuclear weapons.]

4. *Al-Ahram* Comments on Nasser's Statements to NBC (*FBIS*, 19 April 1966)

—“This is not the first time the president has spoken in candid and unequivocal terms about preventive war to counter Israel's possible possession of atomic weapons . . . The Arabs could not stand idly by or simply adopt a wait-and-see attitude in the face of such a possibility or they would be risking their very existence.”

—“Since the UAR in principle and application is most concerned about its national independence and sovereignty and its freedom of action, it most categorically refuses to seek safety guarantees from any nuclear power for protection from any possible Israeli atomic attack. Therefore, there is no objective, accessible, and necessary alternative other than preventive war, for by so doing the UAR would be exercising a lawful act of self-defense and self-preservation.”

5. From an Interview with President Nasser by BBC, 8 May 1966 (*FBIS*, May 9, 1966)

[On the question of nuclear weapons in the Middle East]:

—“We are now thinking that we must begin to work in this field as long as Israel is working in it.”

6. From an Interview with President Nasser by the British *Observer*, 5 February 1967 (*FBIS*, 9 February 1967)

—“We declared that we will sign the nuclear weapons nonproliferation agreement in Vienna. Israel refused to sign. Actually, we were not disturbed. If the Israelis proceed with the production of an atomic bomb, the final solution would be a preventive war to avert and eliminate this danger.”

NOTES

* This article was adapted from a larger study published in Hebrew: Ariel B. Levité and Emily B. Landau, *Israel's Nuclear Image: Arab Perceptions of Israel's Nuclear Future* (Tel-Aviv: Papyrus Publishing House, 1994). The authors wish to express their gratitude to Prof. S. Ilan Troen, editor of *Israel Studies*, for his helpful comments and extensive assistance in bringing this article to print. They also wish to acknowledge the helpful input provided by Dr. Zaki Shalom.

1. *New York Times*, 19 December 1960; *Ibid.*, 20 December 1960. In his 1992 book, Hasanyn Haykal relates that, in practice, it was already known in Egypt in 1957 that Israel was engaged in efforts to acquire an atom bomb: "In 1957, knowing that Israel was trying to build an atom bomb, Cairo set up a nuclear research programme, but later abandoned it." — Mohamed Heikal, *Illusions of a Triumph: An Arab View of the Gulf War* (London, 1992), 72.

2. See *Middle East Record* 1 (1960): 287–288.

3. Cairo Home Service, 1645 GMT, 23 December 1960 (live), in *SWB*, ME/524, A/1-A/10.

4. Report of *Al-Ahram* article on *MENA* in Arabic, 730 GMT, 20 December 1960 (in *SWB*, ME/520/A/1).

5. *Al-Ahram*, Egypt, 29 December 1960 (*Hatzav*, 13 Jan. 1961, 1058/586.011).

6. See, for example, the Jordanian reference to it in *Hawl Al-Alam*, Jordan, 19 January 1961 (*Hatzav*, 24 January 1961, 1067/586.011).

7. "Hasanyn Haykal on Positive Neutrality" [Arabic], Cairo Home Service, 600 GMT, 27 January 1961 (in *SWB*, ME/551/A/1, 27 Jan. 1961).

8. See, for example, Damascus Home Service, 0615 GMT (press review), 22 December 1960; Baghdad Home Service, 0600 GMT (press review), 22 December 1960, in *SWB*, ME/522/A/5, 22 Dec. 1960; the remarks of the Jordanian Foreign Minister, Mousa Nasser, *Palastin*, Jordan, 23 December 1960 (*Hatzav*, daily compilation, 25 Dec. 1960, 1041/586.011); *Al-Akhbar*, Egypt, 25 December 1960 (*Hatzav*, daily compilation, 1042/586.011, 26 Dec. 1960).

9. See, comments of the Information Minister, *Al-Hayat*, Lebanon, 22 December 1960 (*Hatzav*, daily compilation, 25 Dec. 1960, 1041/586.011); *Al-Hayat*, Lebanon, 5 January 1961 (*Hatzav*, 9 Jan. 1961, 1054/586.011); comments of the Foreign Minister, *Al-Hayat*, Lebanon, 10 March 1961 (*Hatzav*, 13 Mar. 1961, 1108/586.011).

10. *Al-Hayat*, Lebanon, 6 January 1961 (*Hatzav*, 9 Jan. 1961, 1054/586.011); *Al-Shar'b*, Lebanon, 9 January 1961 (*SWB*, ME/537/A/5); *Kul-Sbi*, Lebanon, 14 January 1961 (*Hatzav*, 17 Jan. 1961, 1061/586.001); *Al-Anwar*, Lebanon, 18 January 1961 (*Hatzav*, 25 Jan. 1961, 1068/586.001).

11. *Akhbar al-Yawm*, 18 March 1961 (*Hatzav*, 27 Mar. 1961, 1120/586.110).

12. Lewis A. Frank, "Nasser's Missile Program," *Orbis*, 2(3) (Fall 1967): 750.

13. *Ibid.*, 752–755; cf. Joseph S. Bermudez, Jr., "Ballistic Missiles in the Third World: Egypt and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War," *Jane's Intelligence Review* (December 1991): 531.

14. See *The New York Times*, 25 April 1963, the remarks of Mahmud Riyad, in wake of Israel's objections to the German scientists in Egypt; the article by Hasanyn Haykal, *Al-Ahram*, 12 June 1964 (*Hatsav*, 13 June 1964, 2396/586.176).

15. "The Bomb," *Al-Ahram*, 23 November 1973 (*Hatsav*, 24 Nov. 1973, 32/11).

16. Mohamed Heikal, *Nasser: The Cairo Documents* (London, 1972), 207-209.

17. See Oded Brosh, "Understandings of the Nuclear Dimension in Multi-Lateral Regional Conflicts and Stances Concerning Them," Doctoral Dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Jerusalem, 1990), 102-103 [Hebrew].

18. Hasanyn Haykal, *Al-Ahram*, 20 August 1965 (*Hatsav*, 22 Aug. 1965, 2354/586.176); *Al-Ahram*, 8 January 1966 (*Hatsav*, 10 Jan. 1966, 4/586.176); "Haykal on Arab Strategy," Cairo Home Service in Arabic, 1530 GMT, 15 October 1965 (in *SWB*, ME/1988/A/1).

19. Hasanyn Haykal, *Al-Ahram*, 20 August 1965 (*Hatsav*, 22 Aug. 1965, 2354/586.176); cf. *Akhbar Sa'a*, 13 October 1965 (*Hatsav*, 25 Oct. 1965, 48/586.176); *Al-Thalath*, Egypt, May 1966 (*Hatsav*, 20 June 1966, 60/586.176).

20. See Brosh, 102. For later references of King Hussein to the same matter, see Amman Domestic Service in Arabic, 1200 GMT, 14 February 1967 (in *FBIS*, 15 Feb. 1967).

21. In a report concerning the agenda of the Conference of Arab Prime Ministers, the nuclear issue is not mentioned (*Al-Nabaw*, Lebanon, 12 March 1966; *Hatsav*, no. 109), but in an Egyptian report concerning the preliminary meeting on the level of Foreign Ministers, it is emphasized that the issue of the nuclear threat presented by Israel would be raised during the course of the discussions; see *Al-Jumhuriyya*, Egypt, 12 March 1966 (*Hatsav*, 18 Mar. 1966, 112/586.011).

22. *Al-Jumhuriyya*, *idem*.

23. *Al-Musawwar*, Egypt—special supplement entitled "We the Arabs" (*Hatsav*, 4 April 1966, 135/586.011).

24. *Middle East Record* 3 (1967) (Jerusalem, 1971), 107-113.

25. See the report of the *Al-Ba'ith* article, Damascus Home Service in Arabic, 0615 GMT, 17 March 1966 (in *SWB*, ME/2175/A/2); Jordan Radio, 1900 GMT, 3 February 1967 (in *SWB*, ME/2384/A/6).

26. *Al-Ahram*, 20 August 1965, (*Hatsav*, 22 Aug. 1965, 2354/586.176).

27. Cairo *MENA* in Arabic, 2030 GMT, 8 May 1966 (in *FBIS*, 9 May 1966, p. B16).

28. "Haykal on Arab Strategy" [Arabic], Cairo Home Service in Arabic, 1530 GMT; and Voice of the Arabs, 1850 GMT, 15 October 1965 (in *SWB*, ME/1988/A/1).

29. For the original report on the secret missile deal between Israel and France, see the article by John W. Finney published in *The New York Times*, 7 January 1966.

1. See also, "Initial Reactions of the Egyptian Press to the Missile Deal between Israel and France" (in *Hatsav*, 10 Jan. 1966, 4/586.176).

30. For Nasser's expressions, see, Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic, 0400 GMT, 20 February 1966 (in *FBIS*, 21 Feb. 1966, p. B6); Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic, 1633 GMT, 22 February 1966 (in *FBIS*, 23 Feb. 1966, p. B2); Cairo Domestic

Service in Arabic, 0600 GMT, 19 April 1966 (in *FBIS*, 19 Apr. 1966, p. B1); Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic, 1230 GMT, 6 February 1967 (in *FBIS*, 9 Feb. 1967). For further articles on the subject, see, *Al-Tali'a*, Egypt, May 1966, (*Hatsav*, 20 June 1966, 60/586.176); Cairo Home Service in Arabic, 1730 GMT, 9 September 1966 (in *SWB*, ME/2262/A/1, 9 Sept. 1966); Cairo Home Service in Arabic, 1830 GMT, 9 December 1966 (in *SWB*, ME/2340/A/6, 9 Dec. 1966).

31. See primarily his article, "The Bomb," *Al-Akram*, 23 November 1973 (*Hatsav*, 24 Nov. 1973; 32/11), and an extensive article which he wrote on the subject in 1976, which appeared in *Al-Ra'y*, Jordan, January 1976 (*Hatsav*, 16 Feb. 1976, 843/0019).

See also in this context, Fuad Amin Jabber, *The Politics of Arms Transfer and Controls: The Case of the Middle East*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 1974 (Ann Arbor, MI, University Microfilms), 78-79; Yair Evron, "The Arab Position in the Nuclear Field: A Study of Policies up to 1967," *Cooperation and Conflict* 8(1) (1973): 20-21.

32. See note 24, above. Concerning the promises of the Soviet Union to Egypt, see *The New York Times*, 4 February 1966, 1.

33. See Oded Brosh, "Understandings," 112.

34. *The New York Times*, 28 February 1966, p. 1.

35. An item in *Ha'Aretz*, 22 June 1967, reported that, according to operational maps found by the IDF in the airfields in El-Arish and El-Sir, the Egyptian Air Force had planned to attack Israel's two nuclear facilities in Dimona and Nahal Sorek, and thereby exploit the factor of surprise at the beginning of their planned campaign against Israel. See also the article by General 'Abd al-Hamid al-Daghaydi, "25 Years after the June 1967 War," *Al-Wafiq*, 5 June 1992 [Arabic].

36. See, Yitzhak Rabin, *Pinkas Sherut, I* (Tel-Aviv, 1979), 136-137, 163-166; Eitan Haber, *Today War Will Break Out: Memoirs of Brigadier-General Israel Lior* (Tel-Aviv, 1987), 161-163, 186-187, 205-208 [Hebrew]; Ahuf Ben, "The First Nuclear War," *Ha'Aretz*, 11 June 1993 [Hebrew].

37. See the comments of Aharon Yariv and Matti Peled on the level of preparedness of the Egyptian Army, quoted in Haber, *Today War Will Break Out*, 209, 211.

38. Shimon Shamir, "Sources of the Six-Day War" [Hebrew], and Aharon Yariv, "The Place of the Six-Day War in the Series of Israel-Arab Wars" [Hebrew] — lectures given at the annual seminar of the Dayan Center for Mid-East Studies on the topic "20 Years after the Six-Day War: 1987-88."

39. See, Shlomo Aronson, "The Nuclear Dimension of the Arab-Israeli Conflict: The Case of the Yom Kippur War," *Jerusalem Journal of International Relations* 7(1-2) (1984): 107-141; Shlomo Aronson and Oded Brosh, *The Politics and Strategy of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East: Opacity, Theory and Reality, 1960-1991: An Israeli Perspective* (Albany, NY, 1992), 107-111, 133-137, 139-145, 162-163.

40. See, Yair Evron, "The Arab Position in the Nuclear Field: A Study of Policies up to 1967," *Cooperation and Conflict* 8(1) (1973): 19-31; "The Relevance and Irrelevance of Nuclear Options in Conventional Wars: The 1973 October War," *Jerusa-*

Israel Journal of International Relations 7(1-2) (1984): 14-176; *Israel's Nuclear Dilemma* (Tel-Aviv, 1987) [Hebrew].

41. See Zaki Shalom's "From a 'Low Profile' to the 'Crushing Strategy'—The Kennedy Administration and Its Attitude Toward Israel's Nuclear Activity: 1962-1963" [Hebrew], *Iyumin Bi'Thumat Yisrael*, 5, 1993, 122-160. Shalom's analysis is congruent with the description presented by Yuval Ne'eman (a leading figure in Israel's nuclear establishment) in a lecture delivered at a one-day conference on "Defense and Foreign Policy Making in the Early 1960s," The Ben-Gurion Research Center, Sede Boker, Israel, 22 November 1993.

42. The full scope of Israeli efforts to undermine the program with the collaboration of Germany was revealed in a lecture by Meir Amit at a one-day conference on "Defense and Foreign Policy Making in the Early 1960s," The Ben-Gurion Research Center, Sede Boker, Israel, 22 November 1993.