

**FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES
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**Department of State
Washington, DC**

293. Telegram From the Embassy in Israel to the Department of State/1/

Tel Aviv, May 24, 1966, 1137Z.

/1/Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, DEF 12 UAR. Secret; Exdis. Repeated to Cairo, London, and Paris.

1229. Israeli strategic missiles. CA-11071, May 10, 66./2/

/2/Circular airgram CA-11071, May 10, instructed Barbour to renew the U.S.-Israeli missile discussions of April 1964 with Eshkol, in particular to try to halt any delivery to Israel of missiles falling under the initial French-Israel contract for 25 missiles mentioned to Feldman by Eshkol. (Ibid.) For Feldman's reports of his discussions of this subject with Eshkol, see Documents 36 and 37.

1. I had almost an hour with Eshkol morning 24th on missile question. I had given him prior knowledge of subject, and he was well prepared. Following is brief summary of highlights.

2. After I made pitch pursuant ref CA, and subsequent preliminary exchange, PM assured me a) there are no strategic missiles in Israel now; b) there will be no such missiles in Israel at least for two more years from now, perhaps three; c) he sincerely hopes within that period of time UAR will abandon its missile program, in which event Israel will do likewise. In any event Eshkol indicated that GOI not contemplating purchase of more than "two dozen, maybe one dozen more or less." He implied they were having development problems, and finding costs nearly prohibitive.

3. In view importance today's exchange and in order provide full flavor of Eshkol's sensible attitude towards missile question we preparing detailed memcon to be sent priority airgram./3/

/3/Barbour transmitted the memorandum of conversation with airgram A-1000, May 27. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1964-66, DEF 12 UAR)

4. PM gave me paper and map summarizing current Israeli appraisal UAR missile program. Paper states, inter alia, guidance problems apparently still not overcome, but if gyro on which Egyptians now working proves successful, UAR might have about 60 operational SSM's by middle or end of 1967. Israeli appraisal also being pouched.

5. *Comment:* Noteworthy that Eshkol did not take issue with my point that in present circumstances, presence of SSM's in Israel would constitute Israeli introduction of new weapons into area. PM impressed us as fervently desirous avoiding further qualitative escalation in area arms.

Barbour