March 14, 1969
Memorandum from Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard, 'Computers for Israel'

Citation:

Summary:
This memo from Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard concerns Israeli efforts to acquire high speed computers for use in a weapons program, and recommends that the United States should oppose these efforts.

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MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY OF STATE
SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

SUBJECT: Computers for Israel

Last June and October export licenses were granted by your departments for two CDC 6400 computers and one IBM 360/65 computer [for Israel]. One CDC 6400 and the 360/65 were for [the Ministry of Defense] and one CDC 6400 for [the Hebrew University]. These are very powerful computers of major strategic significance. The CDC 6400 in particular is a critical tool in the development of nuclear weapons [OSD 3.3(b)(4)(S)].

We have strong intelligence indications that computers for which licenses have been granted — two of which have already been shipped — will aid them materially in this endeavor. It is, of course, the policy of the U.S. Government to oppose Israel’s developing nuclear weapons and it is my recommendation that the unshipped CDC 6400s and peripherals for it not be released [to Israel] [OSD 3.3(b)(4)(S)].

I urge we jointly review the present procedures to make sure that Defense and the ASC do in fact have the opportunity for prior consultation on such matters [OSD 3.3(b)(4)(S)].

Rewritten and retyped in ODepSec/JBW/13 Mar 69

DAVID PACKARD