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OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
The Senior Military Assistant

11 OCT 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR: DR. WILLIAM LUTI, DASD / NESA / ISA

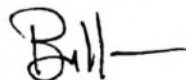
SUBJECT: MemCon DSD - DirGen Yaron

Bill:

The Deputy read through the meeting notes and asked that you make the changes shown as the "Record for Memorandum of Conversation".

Please provide an updated copy once completed.

Very respectfully,,



William B. Caldwell, IV  
Brigadier General, USA  
Senior Military Assistant to the  
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Attachment:  
as stated

Copy to: Mr. Feith

Suspense: COB, Tuesday, 15 October 2002

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3 October 2002  
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**Memorandum of Conversation**  
**DSD Wolfowitz-Director General Yaron**  
**1030--1130, 3 October 2002**

**Summary:** DSD Wolfowitz met with Director General of the Israeli Minister of Defense Amos Yaron on 3 October 2002. The key points the Deputy conveyed to Yaron were: 1) Israeli involvement in a US war against Iraq would be harmful to both US and Israeli interests, and 2) unlike 1991, in the event of war, the US is well prepared to defend Israel. Yaron told Wolfowitz that Israel: 1) did not want to be a part of the war, 2) would not automatically retaliate against an Iraqi attack, and 3) needed "to be convinced" the US was doing its best to ensure Israel would not be attacked and would not be compelled to retaliate.

**Different From 1991:** The Deputy told Yaron that the situation in 2002 is completely different from 1991. The difference, according to the Deputy, is that ~~this will be the first time~~ the US will have to "occupy" an Arab country. It would be detrimental to the success of this project, he said, ~~to~~ be seen as doing this partnered with Israel. *might sustain a long-term military control over it*

The Deputy warned Yaron against retaliation, saying we should be careful not to allow Saddam to "suck Israel in" to the conflict. He pointed out to Yaron that Israel had an even bigger stake now than in 1991. "If we succeed in restructuring the map," he said, "it will be a major benefit to Israel."

**Israeli Policy:** Yaron told the Deputy that Israel had "no intention" to be a part of the war. But he said it was important to talk more on an operational level. The US, he said "has to give Israel the confidence that this is the right policy." Yaron cited western Iraq and SCUD-hunting as an example of where Israel could work more closely with the US, fostering more confidence.

If Israel is attacked by Iraq, Yaron said, "we understand the US position." But Yaron expressed concern that in the event of a US-Iraq war, Israel might find itself under attack from the North (i.e., Hizbollah and Syria). He told the Deputy that Israel "knows what we will do" if this happens. Yaron asked that the US relate this message to the Syrians.

**CBW:** Yaron did not, however, rule out the possibility of Israeli retaliation under certain circumstances. He cited a ballistic missile with a chemical warhead as case in point. "It's a complicated matter," he said, adding, "we have to have an understanding about this."

~~Classified by: William J. Lati~~  
~~Reason: 1.5 (a) (d)~~  
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Date: 11SEP2024

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Yaron said there were different "levels" of CBW attack, different warheads, and differing responses. He told the Deputy "we need to be prepared" on how we will respond to these attacks.



Eiland made one last point regarding the need to rehabilitate Israeli deterrence. He asked how Arab countries would perceive a lack of Israeli response to a WMD attack against Israel. "Israel will be perceived as too weak to attack," noting this could be very dangerous.

USD(P) Feith asked Eiland why Israel would retaliate against Iraq if Saddam was dead and a new and better Iraqi government was incoming. What would be the effect of devastating Israeli retaliation at that point, Feith asked. Eiland acknowledged this was an important point that required further discussion.

USD(P) told Yaron that the US and Israel should continue these discussions at this and higher-level channels. Feith assured Yaron it was the intention of the USG to take actions against Saddam's threats against Israel and other allied regional states as part of our plan.

Yaron asked USD(P) whether the campaign would start "before the end of the year," before Christmas. USD(P) told Yaron that the President had not yet made a decision regarding whether the US will go to war. In any event, Feith pointed out that the US does not control the timing. Saddam may think he made a mistake allowing the US a six-month buildup in 1991, Feith said. This time, he may decide to preempt us.

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**Participants**

**US**

DSD Wolfowitz  
USD(P) Feith  
J-5 Casey  
ACJCS Metzger  
DASD Luti  
Country Director Schenker

**Israel**

Director General Yaron  
Deputy DG Mor  
J-5 Eiland  
Air Attaché Falk

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