

Israel Adds Nukes to Subs

While Israel's *Ha'aretz* on Oct. 10 and Germany's *Der Spiegel* on Oct. 11 carried reports that an Israeli military attack on Iran is imminent, the *Los Angeles Times* on Oct. 12 reported that Israel now has an operational, nuclear-armed cruise missile capability. Two unnamed Bush Administration officials have disclosed, according to the *Times*, and an Israeli official confirmed, that Israel has modified U.S.-supplied cruise missiles, and installed them on the three German-built submarines in its navy.

Not only does the new capability strengthen Israel militarily (or, as the *Times* puts it "bolsters Israel's deterrence") but it also complicates efforts to persuade Iran to abandon its suspected nuclear program. Unlike Iran, however, Israel is not a signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

"The presence of a nuclear program in the region that is not under international safeguards gives other countries the spur to develop weapons of mass destruction," said Nabil Fahmy, Egypt's ambassador to the United States.

"Any future conflict becomes more dangerous."

One of the officials who spoke to the *Times* admitted that this is a factor in the dispute over Iran's program. "A big source of contention is Israel," he said. "This is a magnet for other countries to develop nuclear weapons." Joseph Cirincione, the director of the non-proliferation program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, said, "You are never going to be able to address the Iranian nuclear ambitions or the issues of Egypt's chemical weapons and possible biological weapons program, without bringing Israel's nuclear program into the mix."

Israeli officials interviewed by the *Times* did not provide any details beyond confirming the new nuclear capability, but U.S. officials believe the Israelis modified Harpoon missiles to carry the warheads. The Harpoon normally carries a 488-pound high-explosive warhead, so the Israelis would have had to reduce the size of the nuclear device to make it fit, a task well within their engineering capabilities.

The Israeli daily *Yediot Aharonot* on Oct. 12 published a photo of the Dauphin submarine, with graphics explaining how it could "sneak up" toward Iran and fire its nuclear warheads.

—Carl Osgood