

Secrets About Suspected Israeli Theft of U.S. Weapons-Grade Nuclear Material Declassified

By [Global Research News](#)

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On March 18, 2014 ISCAP, the highest declassification authority in the U.S., released [84 pages](#) (PDF) of formerly secret information about investigations into the illegal diversion of weapons-grade nuclear material from a Pennsylvania plant into the clandestine Israeli nuclear weapons program. Files now available to the public from IRmep's ISCAP process include:

[4/2/1968 Letter from the Director of the CIA alerting the Attorney General](#) (PDF) about a huge loss of material from Pennsylvania's Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corporation (NUMEC). "It is critical for us to establish whether or not the Israelis now have the capability for fabricating nuclear weapons which might be employed in the Near East."

[03/09/1972 FBI memorandum](#) (PDF) "On the basis of the foregoing it must be assumed for the purpose of U.S. national security that diversion of special nuclear materials to Israel by Dr. [Zalman] Shapiro and his [NUMEC] associates is a distinct possibility."

[07/28/1977 Notes of a briefing from CIA's Associate Deputy Director for Operations Theodore Shackley to the Carter administration National Security Council](#) (PDF) "I also asked Shackley to get us a rundown on the political aspects—e.g. when were the President and Congressional officials briefed on the Israeli weapons program, on the NUMEC connection, and what were their reactions. In December, Carter was briefed on the NUMEC problem as President-elect by Bush in Georgia...I do not think the President has plausible deniability. The CIA case is persuasive..."

[08/02/1977 Memo to Carter from Zbigniew Brzezinski](#) "So far as we know however, (and we have made serious effort to discover it) there is nothing to indicate active CIA participation in the alleged theft...There is a tremendous amount of interest in this issue in Congress...We face tough sledding in the next few weeks in trying to keep attention focused on ERDA's technical [overall U.S. nuclear material loss] arguments..on the FBI investigations, and away from the CIA's information."

[All released CIA evidence](#) and former Tel Aviv Station Chief John Hadden suggest the severely [undercapitalized NUMEC was "an Israeli \[smuggling\] operation from the beginning.](#)" Multiple health-related lawsuits have been filed targeting companies that later assumed NUMEC ownership. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers currently estimates its toxic cleanup of NUMEC will cost \$500 million. No damage claims have yet been filed against the Israeli government.

[IRmep](#) is a Washington-DC based nonprofit researching U.S. Middle East policy formulation.

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