

U.S. Builds \$25-Million Military Base for Israel's Anti Missile System, to Counter Iran

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Last December, Walter Pincus [reported](#) in the Washington Post that the U.S. government was building a new base for the IDF. A highly-placed Israeli source [informed me](#) that the location of the secret base was Sdot Micha (also known as Tal Shahar), which already houses Israel's Jericho 3 nuclear missiles. It is located near Beit Shemesh, 15 miles from Jerusalem. The source also informed me that the new facility was to be hardened and underground to withstand a nuclear attack. This means that Israel expects the site to be attacked by Iranian missiles once that country has nuclear capability.

Now, the defense publication Jane's Defense Weekly says that the new base will house Israeli's most advanced anti-missile system, the Arrow 3, which has a 1,500 mile range. It is an anti-ballistic missile (ABM) which is designed to intercept any Iranian missiles that might attack Israel. The article notes there will be four new launchers each containing six "interceptors." Meaning Israel could launch up to 24 Arrow 3's and use its Arrow 2 arsenal to hit any targets that were missed.



Jane's article reveals Sdot Micha as new Arrow 3 base

Building this base presumes a development that has, by all accounts, not happened and may never happen: that Iran is developing not just a nuclear weapon, but a delivery system for it that would allow it to attack Israel.



Arrow 3 missile launch

The plan is for the Army Corps of Engineer project to be completed by 2014. The Jane's article says Israel plans to have the Arrow 3 operational by 2015, which would mean that Israel may believe Iran could have such a missile and weapon by then. That, of course, is a dubious proposition. But many Israeli military calculations are built on such dubious assumptions.

The Israeli military is [livid](#) that these plans have been published (in truth, they were published last December, so I'm not sure why anyone is stewing now). In Israel, they would be considered state secrets and kept under lock and key. Israelis don't understand that in America, when you plan to spend \$100-million, unless you're the CIA or NSA, you have to do so in a transparent way. You can't build ABM bases without anyone knowing. That's the difference between a national security state and a real democracy.

Jane's says the U.S. is anticipating the project will cost up to \$25-million. But Pincus wrote last December the expense would be \$100-million. So either they scaled down this project or this is but one stage of it and more development is expected. My bet is on the latter and that Israel plans a far more extensive Arrow 3 presence than just this facility.

Today's [Haaretz story](#) (Hebrew [here](#)) falsely says the project was hitherto unknown (the English version of the story says that it was never revealed by Israel, which is more accurate). That ignores Walter Pincus' reporting on it and mine. Unfortunately, neither Jane's nor Haaretz spent any time focussing on the fascinating requirements in the development specs that detail what type of mezzuzah is required including the religious criteria to make it kosher. Apparently, the IDF doesn't trust in technology alone to save Israel, but wishes to commend itself to God as well for protection.

The Hebrew (but not English) version of the story notes also that the [tender website](#) censored, post-facto, sensitive information found there after the Jane's story was published.

None of the media stories except mine remarked upon the strangeness of the U.S. government building highly-sensitive military facilities for Israel that could exacerbate

regional tensions and conflict. No doubt, building this facility was part of some deal offered by Obama to get Bibi to agree not to attack Iran. But the truth is that after Arrow 3 is operational Israel might be more emboldened to attack if it believed any Iranian response could be met by its ABM fleet. Which would mean Obama's best intentions got us into a worse conflict than he ever could have imagined. The best that can be hoped is that both sides adopt a MAD (mutually-assured destruction) policy which presumes an attack on one will destroy both. Frankly, I don't believe the Israelis feel this way even now and they certainly will feel less so after 2015.

NOTE: Sheera Frenkel's article linked above believes there is a distinction between the \$100-million project outlined by Pincus and this \$25-million project. She says the project exposed last December is a new air base near Tel Aviv. If that's the case, it may mean my own source confused the two projects, though he got the substance of this project correct when he revealed it last December.

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