

1991**Memo Concerning the Question of Giving Technical Assistance to Iran in the Design of a Tactical Missile System****Citation:**

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Summary:

This document, most likely from 1990-91, discusses Iran's request to the Soviet Union for assistance in the design of Tactical Missile System. The writer expresses the opinion that assistance should not be provided in the interest of preventing further escalation between Iran and Israel.

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MEMO

concerning the question of giving technical assistance to Iran in the design of a tactical missile system

A draft CPSU CC decree about the next steps in terms of military technical cooperation with Iran (the draft was signed by Cdes. D. T. Yazov and K. F. Katushev) has been examined in the Department. The document basically does not generate objections, however at the same time it prescribes "...giving agreement in principle to furnishing technical assistance to the Iranian Side in the design of a tactical missile system with a range of no more than 300 km and a throw weight of no more than 500 kg, intending that the Iranian Side independently organizes the production of this missile system.

In the event of an insistent request by the Iranian Side agree to provide it with consultations and a demonstration of the R-17Eh tactical missile system".

The proposal to give Iran this sort of assistance contradicts the Soviet position adopted by the CPSU CC on the question of the non-proliferation of missile technology: the 11 August 1989 CPSU CC decree (P164/84) approved instructions to the Soviet delegation at the consultations with the US (December of this year) to propose to the Americans to prohibit the transfer of missiles with a range over 100 km and a throw weight of over 200 kg.

This position of ours has already been expressed in the process of contacts on military political questions with US, British, French, and FRG representatives.

The question of assistance to Iran in the design of a missile system was considered in an interdepartmental working group on 26 October of this year. It was found necessary to refrain from such a step.

In connection with what has been presented it would be advisable to exclude a proposal about giving Iran technical assistance in the design of a tactical missile system and a demonstration of the R-17Eh system from the materials submitted.

The comments of the CPSU CC Defense and International Departments have been sent to the VPK [Military Industrial Commission] with such proposals.

In addition it might be noted that in the opinion of specialists the creation of a missile with a range of 300 km is not a goal in itself of the Islamic fundamentalists. The main goal is having the methodology of designing missiles and creating a missile similar to the medium-range missile which has appeared in Israel. Besides possible political damage this will in no way be in accord with our security interests in the South. (Up to now we have declined such requests of Iraq).

[We] consider it advisable to build our relations with Iran with consideration for this and consider the question of the possibility of cooperation with Iran in the design of a missile system separately after additional consideration.