

June 17, 1961

State Department Circular Telegram 2047 to US Embassy Jordan [et al.]

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Summary:

Circular telegram for Middle East embassies regarding US visit to Dimona reactor.

Credits:

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Original Language:

English

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Original Scan

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GRAM

Foreign Service of the United States of America

RECEIVED
US MISSION TO IAEA



VI 19 N61
VIENNA, AUSTRIA

INCOMING ANEMBASSY VIENNA

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Control: 7475

Recd: JUNE 18, 1961
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FROM : DEPARTMENT
NO : CIRCULAR 2047, JUNE 17/1700

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ACTION AMMAN BAGHDAD BEIRUT JIDDA OSLO AND OTHERS FOR INFO.

AWARE DEEP CONCERN AMONG ARAB AND OTHER GOVERNMENTS AT POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS ISRAEL'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM AND PURSUANT TO US BASIC INTEREST IN PREVENTING PROLIFERATION NUCLEAR WEAPONS, USG RECENTLY ARRANGED FOR TWO HIGHLY QUALIFIED AMERICAN SCIENTISTS VISIT ISRAELI REACTOR SITE AT DIMONA. ISRAELIS DEMONSTRATED COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE. ACCORDING TO OBSERVATIONS OF US SCIENTISTS DIMONA PROJECT WHICH WILL NOT BE COMPLETED FOR TWO OR THREE YEARS IS OF TYPE AND MAGNITUDE AS DESCRIBED PUBLICLY BY ISRAELI LEADERS, E.G. RESEARCH REACTOR WITH 24 MEGAWATT CAPACITY. PURPOSE OF DIMONA PROJECT IS TO PROVIDE ISRAELI SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL PERSONNEL EXPERIENCE IN PROBLEMS OF POWER REACTOR DEVELOPMENT. IN COMMON WITH OTHER STATES, ISRAEL SHORT OF POWER AND REGARDS THIS PROJECT AS AN ESSENTIAL STEP TOWARD ATTAINMENT ECONOMIC ATOMIC POWER. WHILE REACTOR WILL PRODUCE SMALL QUANTITIES PLUTONIUM AS DO OTHERS COMPARABLE SIZE AND CHARACTER, OUR EXPERTS FOUND NO EVIDENCE ISRAELIS PREPARING PRODUCE WEAPONS. THUS OBSERVATIONS OF US SCIENTISTS TEND SUPPORT PUBLIC AND PRIVATE GOI ASSURANCES RE PEACEFUL INTENT OF DIMONA PROJECT.

AE Developments - ISRAEL

DURING THEIR RECENT MEETING IN NY PRESIDENT KENNEDY STRESSED TO PRIMIN BEN-GURION CONTINUING CONCERN OF USG REGARDING ENLARGEMENT NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION CAPABILITIES. MR. BEN-GURION ASSURED PRESIDENT REACTOR'S BASIC PURPOSE TO DEVELOP CHEAP SOURCE INDUSTRIAL POWER AND WEAPONS PRODUCTION NOT CONTEMPLATED.

SUBJECT TO FINAL DECISION BY CHIEFS OF MISSION, DEPARTMENT DESIRES ACTION ADDRESSEES ORALLY CONVEY FOREGOING PROMPTLY AND IN CONFIDENCE TO HOST GOVERNMENTS AT LEVEL DEEMED APPROPRIATE THOUGH WE WOULD WISH BE ASSURED THAT INFORMATION WILL BECOME KNOWN AT HIGHEST LEVELS OF INTERESTED GOVERNMENTS. MISSIONS SHOULD REPORT ACTION TAKEN AND REACTIONS NOTED.

DEPARTMENT INTENDS INITIATE NO PUBLICITY WITH REGARD VISIT TWO SCIENTISTS. IF ANY LEAKS OCCUR, US SPOKESMAN WILL SAY THAT TWO US SCIENTISTS RECENTLY IN ISRAEL IN CONNECTION WITH THE US-ISRAEL ATOMS FOR PEACE AGREEMENT VISITED THE DIMONA INSTALLATION WHICH THEY OBSERVED TO BE OF NATURE AND SCOPE PUBLICLY DISCLOSED BY ISRAEL GOVERNMENT.

DEPARTMENT SUGGESTS ADDRESSEES TAKE SIMILAR LINE IN RESPONSE POSSIBLE PRESS QUERIES. CAIRO BEING INSTRUCTED SEPARATELY RE APPROACH GUAR.

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EMBASSIES KHARTOUM TRIPOLI TUNIS RABAT ROME PARIS BONN AND CAIRO MAY USE FOREGOING IN DISCUSSIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT IF IT SEEMS DESIRABLE AND USEFUL TO DO SO.

FOR FARLEY IN VIENNA: HARMAN HAS EXPRESSED TO DEPARTMENT STRONG PREFERENCE NO PUBLIC OR OFFICIAL DISCLOSURES RE VISIT BE MADE AT IAEA FORUM. GOI OBVIOUSLY DOES NOT WISH IAEA INTERFERENCE, PARTICULARLY UNTIL OTHER NATIONS AGREE TO IAEA INSPECTIONS. HOWEVER, SINCE WE WITH HARMAN'S CONCURRENCE ARE INFORMING ARAB GOVERNMENTS IN CONFIDENCE RE VISIT, WE SEE NO OBJECTION YOU MENTIONING VISIT IN CONFIDENCE TO ANY ARAB REPS AT IAEA CONFERENCE SHOULD YOU FIND IT WORTHWHILE TO DO SO. RE VISITS IN FUTURE BY "NEUTRAL" SCIENTISTS, HARMAN STRONGLY PREFERS DISCUSSION BE CENTERED HERE IN WASHINGTON FOLLOWING YOUR RETURN.

RUSK

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