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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

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TO : NEA:NE - Mr. Strong

DATE: February 1, 1963

FROM : SCI - Charles W. Thomas *CWT*

sci - I believe will handle.

To AE

SUBJECT: Inspections of Dimona Reactor

After our conversation on January 30 I arranged for a meeting on January 31 with Mr. Charles Reichardt of AEC Security and Mr. Myron Kratzer of the Division of International Affairs, AEC, to discuss the problem of continuing inspections of the Dimona Reactor. I told them that in our view the best method of assuring that we can have regular inspections of the Dimona Reactor without going through the difficulty of high level negotiations with the Israelis every few months would be to approach them at the present time and get their approval of a system under which the regular AEC safeguards inspectors will visit Dimona in conjunction with their normal visit to the U. S. reactor in Israel about every six months. I went on to say that this not only had the merit of settling the problem once and for all but that it would probably be more acceptable to the Israelis than any other method because it would make inspections of the Dimona reactor routine rather than special occasions and thus de-emphasize them.

Mr. Reichardt considered this and said that from his point of view he thought this solution might be quite satisfactory. Mr. Kratzer had certain misgivings because of the taint that such inspections might place upon the AEC safeguards inspectors. He mentioned that AEC regards it as highly important that the AEC safeguards inspectors not be regarded as having any covert mission. He recognized that if these people are invited by the Israeli Government and their visits are accepted as routine matters, the danger which he fears would probably not materialize. He did say that if the routine visits were arranged he would like several things clearly understood:

1. That they would have full access to the Dimona Reactor site for any reasonable period of time that a full inspection would require during each visit.

2. They would like the intelligence community to be aware that their reports on this site would not be fully equivalent to their normal inspections both because they would not be as frequent as would routine visits to a reactor the size of the one at Dimona and because they would not be receiving full interim reports on the materials delivered and the burn-up rate.

3. The AEC would like the Embassy in Tel Aviv to be fully briefed on the visits and to have these visits handled by the Embassy in precisely the same way as are the visits to the U. S. reactor in Israel.

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It was pointed out that these visits would be somewhat different from others in that the reports would necessarily be classified whereas the other inspection reports are not. Mr. Reichardt suggested that any reports resulting from these visits should be made available to the British in the future as have the reports on the two preceding visits.

While neither Mr. Reichardt nor Mr. Kratzer could give approval on these visits at this time, they both shared our view that it is urgently important to make some long term arrangements as soon as possible. They have agreed to take this up with their General Manager and ultimately with the Commission so as to have an answer in our hands not later than February 8. If they accept this proposal it would be hoped that your office could make the necessary arrangements with the Israeli Government so that the next safe-guards visit to Israel which is scheduled for late March, 1963, will also include an inspection of Dimona.

SCI:CWThomas:em:2/1/63

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