

31  
INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

*Orin*

48

SECRET

Action

Classification

Control: 2408

S/S

Rec'd: JANUARY 6, 1961  
1:51 A.M.

Info

FROM: TEL AVIV

**EYES ONLY**

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 626, JANUARY 5, 6 P.M. (SECTION ONE OF FIVE)

NIACT

EYES ONLY SECRETARY

REFERENCE EMBASSY TELEGRAM 615 EYES ONLY SECRETARY.

AT BEN-GURION'S REQUEST I CALLED ON HIM JANUARY 4 IN TEL AVIV AS HE HAD PRIOR ENGAGEMENT JANUARY 3 WHICH PRECLUDED PROVIDING DETAILED ANSWERS EXPECTED REFERENCE TELEGRAM.

FIRST, BEN-GURION INDICATED HE WISHED TO ANSWER THE QUESTION (DEPARTMENT TELEGRAM 502, 6E): "CAN ISRAEL STATE CATEGORICALLY THAT IT HAS NO PLANS FOR PRODUCING NUCLEAR WEAPONS?"

BEN-GURION SAID: "THE REPLY IS A CATEGORICAL YES. I MADE IT PERFECTLY CLEAR IN MY STATEMENT IN THE KNESSET AND OUR AMBASSADOR MADE IT CLEAR TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE."

THEN SAYING HE WAS SORRY, OFFICIALLY AND PERSONALLY, TO HAVE TO SAY SOME ADDITIONAL THINGS -- HE LAUNCHED INTO THE FOLLOWING:

"I KNOW THE GREATNESS OF AMERICA; THAT IT IS THE LAND OF REFUGE FOR TENS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE OF EUROPE; THAT IT MAY BE THE MOST PROSPEROUS COUNTRY; THAT YOUR PEOPLE CONDUCT A BITTER WAR TO ABOLISH AFRICAN SLAVERY; THAT YOU SAVED EUROPE TWICE FROM THE GERMANS. I KNOW YOU ARE THE LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD; THAT ON AMERICA'S GUIDANCE RESTS THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY,

"MORE

SECRET

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Classification

Declassified Case: NW# 42247 Date: 02-07-2019

*03*  
*Tel Aviv 626*  
*884 A: 1901/1-561*  
*7840.5611*  
*XR*

*2*

~~SECRET~~

-2- 626, JANUARY 5, 6 P.M. (SECTION ONE OF FIVE) FROM TEL AVIV

"MORE THAN THIS THE SECOND PRESIDENT OF THE US JOHN ADAMS IN 1818, WROTE A REMARKABLE LETTER TO MAJOR MORDECHAI NOAH SAYING: (A) 'I REALLY WISH THE JEWS (WERE ONCE) AGAIN IN JUDEA AS AN INDEPENDENT NATION. I WISH YOUR NATION TO BE ADMITTED TO ALL THE PRIVILEGES OF NATIONS'.

"I KNOW PRESIDENT WILSON WAS THE CO-CREATOR OF THE BALFOUR DECLARATION -- WITHOUT HIM IT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE, THAT THE AMERICAN CONGRESS TOOK A POSITION FAVORING THE 'JEWISH NATIONAL HOME'. TRUMAN WAS THE FIRST TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL; ONE OR TWO HOURS AFTER THE CREATION OF THE STATE.

"I KNOW YOU ARE A GREAT COUNTRY..

"HOWEVER, WE ARE THE EQUALS OF AMERICA IN TERMS OF MORAL RESPECT. YOU INHERITED MUCH FROM US. YOU SHOULD LOVE TRUTH AND PEACE -- ONE OF THE MOST DEAREST THINGS TO ME AND OUR PEOPLE."

THEN DRAWING HIMSELF UP IN HIS CHAIR, BEN-GURION SAID:  
"WE DIDN'T DESERVE IT AND WE WILL NOT ACCEPT SUCH TREATMENT."

HERE, IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER HE REFERRED TO AMBASSADOR HARMAN'S BEING CALLED IN BY THE SECRETARY ON DECEMBER 9 COINCIDENT MY CABLE ON TALK WITH BERGMANN (EMBASSY TELEGRAM 486); THE STORY APPEARING IN THE DAILY EXPRESS ON DECEMBER 16 IN LONDON WHICH HAD "NEWS WE ARE CREATING THE ATOMIC BOMB"; AND PARTICULARLY TO THE EVENTS OF DECEMBER 18.

RE LATTER, HE SAID "OUR AMBASSADOR APPROACHED ASSISTANT SECRETARY JONES THAT MORNING" REFERRING TO PRESS REPORTS (STATING) "AMERICAN OFFICIALS HAVE LEARNED ISRAEL IS DEVELOPING A REACTOR SECRETLY". "HARMAN CALLED JONES"; NOTED AEC CHAIRMAN "MCCONE WILL SPEAK ON RADIO AT SIX O'CLOCK"; AND URGED THAT MCCONE "NOT ENCOURAGE SPECULATIONS AND FALSE NEWS." BEN-GURION SAID THAT JONES HAD REPLIED TO THE EFFECT THAT HE "HOPES MCCONE" WILL ACT "IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LINE ADOPTED."

CONTINUING, 2

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NW#: 42247

DocId: 612855

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority NND 94956A

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-3- 626, JANUARY 5, 6 P.M. (SECTION ONE OF FIVE) FROM TEL AVIV

CONTINUING, BEN-GURION SAID "BUT MR. MCCONE PUBLICLY DECLARED THE US GOVERNMENT APPROACHED ISRAEL FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -- THAT REACTOR WAS SURPRISE TO THE US." BEN-GURION ADDED "THE DAY AFTER, MONDAY, THE NEW YORK TIMES PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE ON PARTNERSHIP OF ISRAEL AND FRANCE IN THIS MATTER."

BEN-GURION THEN REFERRED TO HIS STATEMENT IN THE KNESSET SAYING "WHEN I MAKE A STATEMENT IN OUR PARLIAMENT THIS (STATEMENT) AS TRUSTWORTHY AS ANY MADE BY HIGHEST OFFICIALS IN YOUR GOVERNMENT. IT CAN BE TREATED ONLY AS SUCH. WHEN I SAY SOMETHING IT IS JUST AS TRUE -- AS MORALLY WE ARE EQUAL.

"WE ARE NOT A SATELLITE OF AMERICA. WE ARE AND WILL NEVER BE A SATELLITE. WE ARE AN INDEPENDENT AND PROUD NATION.

REID

AN:SMD/21.

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NW#: 42247

DocId: 612855

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority NND 949569

**INCOMING TELEGRAM**

*Department of State*

48

~~SECRET~~

Action

*Classification*

Control: 2468

S/S

Rec'd: JANUARY 6, 1961

4:33 A.M.

Info

FROM: TEL AVIV

006

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 626, JANUARY 5, 6 P.M. (SECTION TWO OF FIVE)

NIACT

EYES ONLY SECRETARY

NEXT HE REFERRED TO DEPARTMENT'S STATEMENT OF DECEMBER 22 WHICH HE CALLED "A NICE STATEMENT", AND ONE THAT INDICATED THAT "EVERYTHING SO FAR PUBLISHED NOT A REASON FOR WORRY."

AT THIS POINT, BEN-GURION RETURNED TO THE REMAINING QUESTIONS. HE SAID, "THEY ARE A LITTLE STRANGE BUT I WILL ANSWER THEM." HE REFERRED TO MY CALL ON HIM DECEMBER 24 (EMBASSY TELEGRAM 577) INDICATING THAT HE SAID AT THAT TIME "THERE WILL BE NO PLUTONIUM FOR THREE OR FOUR YEARS -- UNTIL REACTOR MADE ACTIVE."

SPECIFICALLY, WITH REFERENCE TO THE QUESTION (6-A): "WHAT ARE PRESENT ISRAEL PLANS FOR DISPOSING OF PLUTONIUM WHICH WILL BE BRED IN NEW REACTOR?", HE SAID THE FOLLOWING: "I TOLD YOU FROM OUR PHOSPHATES WE CAN PRODUCE URANIUM. BUT NO COUNTRY IS SELLING URANIUM -- ONLY IF IT GETS PLUTONIUM; ONLY IF IT WILL GET IT BACK." BEN-GURION NOTED THAT "AS FAR AS WE KNOW" THIS IS A CONDITION WHEN WE "COME TO PURCHASE IT." AS TO THE PURCHASE DATE OF THIS URANIUM, BEN-GURION NOTED IT WOULD DEPEND ON THE "RATE OF WORK" AT THE REACTOR. HE THEN ADDED "AT LEAST FOR THAT REACTOR, IF I AM NOT MISTAKEN, WE NEED FIFTY TIMES AS MUCH AS WE CAN PRODUCE." HE SAID THIS WAS A LARGE AMOUNT AND MENTIONED, PARTIALLY UNDER HIS

BREATH

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NW#: 42247

DocId: 612855

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Authority NND 94951A

FM 8840.1901/1-571

SECRET

-2- 626, JANUARY 5, 6 P.M. (SECTION TWO OF FIVE) FROM TEL AVIV

BREATH, A FIGURE OF 80 TONS WHICH HE WAS NOT SURE OF. IN RESPONSE TO MY FURTHER QUERY, HE SAID "NO" PLUTONIUM NOW IN ISRAEL.

WITH REFERENCE TO QUESTION 6-B "WILL ISRAEL AGREE TO ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS WITH RESPECT TO PLUTONIUM PRODUCED?" BEN-GURION SAID FLATLY: "I REFUSE; WE DON'T WANT THE RUSSIANS" COMING IN AS PART OF AN INTERNATIONAL BODY. I REFERRED TO SECRETARY HERTER'S STATING THAT THE QUESTION OF DISPOSITION OF PLUTONIUM WAS THE CRUX OF SAFEGUARDS AND AGAIN NOTED THAT ISRAEL HAD VOTED FOR IAEA SAFEGUARDS AT THE GENERAL CONFERENCE IN SEPTEMBER. BEN-GURION SAID: "IF YOU MEAN INTERNATIONAL SAFEGUARDS SAME LAW SHOULD APPLY FOR EVERYBODY." HE SAID THAT THERE WERE NO SAFEGUARDS IN INDIA. I NOTED IT WAS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE INDIAN REACTOR WAS "COMPLETELY IN THE OPEN".

SECOND, I RETURNED TO THE QUESTION OF SAFEGUARDS ASKING WHY IF THE REACTOR AT NAHAL RUBIN UNDER SAFEGUARDS WAS THERE ANY "DIFFERENCE" WITH THE REACTOR AT DIMONA, WHICH HE UNEQUIVOCALLY STATED WAS DESIGNED FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES. MY INQUIRIES WERE WITHOUT RESULT AS EACH TIME BEN-GURION WENT INTO THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE RESEARCH WORK OF THE TWO REACTORS TOUCHING AGAIN ON THE HISTORY AND THE PURPOSE OF THE DIMONA REACTOR. HIS FINAL COMMENT -- WHICH WAS NOT RELEVANT TO THE QUESTION OF SAFEGUARDS -- WAS THAT A "GROUP OF PEOPLE GAVE MONEY TO HELP ESTABLISH THE REACTOR" FOR THE EVENTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF ATOMIC POWER WHICH MAY BE "CHEAPER AND BETTER" THAN POWER RESULTING FROM CONVENTIONAL FUELS. TURNING TO 6-C: "WILL ISRAEL PERMIT QUALIFIED SCIENTISTS FROM IAEA OR OTHER FRIENDLY QUARTERS VISIT NEW REACTOR AND IF SO WHAT WILL BE THE EARLIEST DATE?", BEN-GURION SAID: "WE WILL NOT PERMIT INTERNATIONAL BODIES TO INSPECT REACTOR UNTIL ALL REACTORS ARE TREATED AS EQUALS." TO THE SECOND PART OF THE QUESTION BEN-GURION ANSWERED "FROM FRIENDLY POWER, YES." HE THEN PLACED TWO CONDITIONS ON HIS ANSWER (A) ACCESS TO A FRIENDLY POWER WOULD BE DEPENDENT ON "OUR (GOI'S) SUCCESS IN QUIETING PUBLIC OPINION HERE" AND (B) IF WE HAVE "REASON TO BELIEVE" THAT WHAT MCCONE "HAS DONE" WILL NOT HAPPEN AGAIN. (SEVERAL TIMES THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSION BEN-GURION RETURNED TO MCCONE NOTING THAT PERHAPS MCCONE

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-3- 626, JANUARY 5, 6 P.M. (SECTION TWO OF FIVE) FROM TEL AVIV

HAD "NOT MADE (STATEMENT) PURPOSELY" AND PERHAPS HE DID NOT REALIZE "GREAT HARM" MIGHT BE CAUSED BY THIS STATEMENT. HE ALSO ALLUDED TWO MORE TIMES TO HARMAN - JONES CONVERSATION RE MCCONE INDICATING THAT USG IN EFFECT "GAVE US A PROMISE NOT TO TALK THIS WAY.")

BEN-GURION NOTED THAT AN ADVANCE NOTICE QUESTION HAD BEEN PRESENTED TO HIM BY KNESSET MEMBER, NOT OF HIS PARTY, WHICH HE SAID AIMED AT CREATING IMPRESSION "OF AMERICA AS AN ENEMY". HE SAID HE WOULD DO WHAT HE COULD "TO PREVENT" QUESTION COMING UP BUT THAT HE MIGHT NOT BE SUCCESSFUL. IF ASKED, HE SAID HE WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO DISPEL IMPRESSION THAT "THE LEAKAGE" WAS DONE ON PURPOSE BY THE US TO "PREVENT ASSISTANCE" TO THE REACTOR. BEN-GURION SAID "I DON'T WANT OUR PEOPLE TO ASSUME ANY BAD INTENTIONS ON THE PART OF AMERICA, AND I CAN ASSURE YOU I WILL KEEP THE FAITH OF OUR PEOPLE IN YOUR NATION."

I STRESSED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD SOUGHT PRIVACY AND AS FAR AS I KNEW THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO TRUTH IN SUCH A CHARGE.

I THEN ASKED BEN-GURION WHEN HE WOULD PERMIT A "QUALIFIED" SCIENTIST TO VISIT THE REACTOR AND AFTER SOME DISCUSSION HE FINALLY AGREED TO PERMIT VISIT "AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE" SUBJECT TO TWO CONDITIONS ABOVE.

REID

SMD

~~SECRET~~

NW#: 42247

DocId: 612855

DECLASSIFIED  
Authority NND 949519

**INCOMING TELEGRAM**

*Department of State*

*JMK*

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Action  
S/S

~~SECRET~~  
Classification

Control: 2487  
Rec'd: JANUARY 6, 1961  
5:28 A.M.

Info

FROM: TEL AVIV

**EYES ONLY**

006

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 626, JANUARY 5, 6 P.M. (SECTION THREE OF FIVE)

NI ACT

EYES ONLY SECRETARY

HE MADE POINT OF SAYING THAT HERE HE WAS REALLY REFERRING TO "ONE OF YOUR PEOPLE". I ASKED IF THIS VISIT WOULD BE COMPLETELY "FREE AND OPEN". HE SAID "YES".

DURING DISCUSSION OF THIS GENERAL QUESTION I REFERRED TO NEWSPAPER EXPERIENCE WHICH SUGGESTED THAT EARLY, PROMPT, AND FULL DISCLOSURE OF FACTS ON WHICH THERE WAS ANY SPECULATION WAS THE QUICKEST AND EASIEST WAY TO ALLAY ANY CONCERN. I AGAIN TRIED TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE REACTOR AT NAHAL RUBIN AND DIMONA WITH NO RESULT OTHER THAN HIS PREVIOUS POSITION RE SOVIETS OR SPECIFICALLY, POSSIBILITY OF AMBASSADOR BEDROV ASKING FOR ACCESS.

FINALLY, WITH REFERENCE TO QUESTION 6D: "IS A THIRD REACTOR EITHER IN THE CONSTRUCTION OR PLANNING STAGE?" HE SAID NO AND THAT OUR QUESTION RE "THIRD REACTOR FOR TIME BEING NOT OVERSTATEMENT." BEN-GURION SAID WITH A SMILE IT WOULD TAKE AT LEAST "TEN YEARS TO BUILD AN ATOMIC POWER STATION" BUT THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO MISLEAD IN ANY WAY. WHILE TRUE NOW THAT THERE WAS NOT ANY "CONSTRUCTION OR PLANNING" FOR A THIRD REACTOR, IT WAS NOT TOO BIG A JUMP FROM "HOPING TO PLANNING" AT "A LITTLE DISTANCE".

DURING BALANCE OF DISCUSSION BEN-GURION REFERRED TO "WHAT WAS DONE BY MCCONE" RESULTING IN THE "DETERIORATION OF THE ATMOSPHERE" IN THE MIDDLE EAST; NASSER'S POSSIBLE MOBILIZATION

*FM 8844.1901/1-561*

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Classification

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NW#: 42247

DocId: 612855

**DECLASSIFIED**  
Authority NND 94951A

~~SECRET~~

-2- 626, JANUARY 5, 6 P.M. FROM TEL AVIV (SECTION THREE OF FIVE)

OF FOUR MILLION MEN; (HE DIDN'T "KNOW" WHETHER NASSER WOULD OR NOT) THE "DIFFERENCE IN OUR DEFENSE PROBLEM AND ANY DEFENSE PROBLEM IN THE WORLD". HE PAUSED FOR EMPHASIS AND SAID: "IF NASSER WINS, EVERY JEW WILL BE EXTERMINATED IN THIS COUNTRY." BEN-GURION ADDED: "WE WOULD LIKE YOUR PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND OUR PEOPLE AND WE DONT WANT NASSER TO GET EXCITED."

HE THEN ALLUDED TO A CONVERSATION HE HAD HAD WITH AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL TO THE EFFECT THAT IF "WORST COMES TO WORST AMERICA WILL HELP YOU." TO THIS BEN-GURION BROUGHT UP HIS OFT REPEATED THEME "IT WILL BE TO LATE". STRESSING "OUR ONLY AIM IS TO PREVENT WAR IN MIDDLE EAST", HE RETURNED AGAIN TO HIS CONVERSATION WITH THE SECRETARY RE A CERTAIN "DEFENSIVE WEAPON" AND HIS HAVING "REASON" TO BELIEVE AFTER TALKING WITH SECRETARY THAT ISRAEL "MAY GET IT".

HE ALSO REFERRED TO HIS ADMIRATION FOR THE PRESIDENT AS A MAN OF PEACE; AND TO SPECIAL ENVOY PRESIDENT HAD SENT TO AREA (PRESUMABLY ANDERSON) BUT NOTED THAT SITUATION NOW WAS "WORSE THAN BEFORE".

NEXT HE BROUGHT UP SUBJECT OF "SPYING". HE SAID HE KNEW ISRAEL BEING SPIED ON BY RUSSIANS, RUMANIANS AND HUNGARIANS, BUT HE BELIEVED UNTIL RECENTLY THAT BECAUSE OF THE "RELATIONS" BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE US IT "WAS NOT NECESSARY TO BE SPIED ON BY AMERICANS." HE SAID IF THIS WAS TRUE HE HOPED IT WOULD BE STOPPED. HE VOLUNTEERED: "YOU CAN GET EVERYTHING FROM US."

THEN ADDRESSING MYSELF TO BEN-GURION'S INITIAL COMMENTS, I NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD MADE POINT AT DECEMBER 9 MEETING THAT WE WISHED ONLY FULL AND FRANK DISCUSSIONS ON THIS MATTER IN ACCORDANCE WITH MANNER IN WHICH WE ACCUSTOMED TO DEAL. I EMPHASIZED BOTH PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY DEEPLY BELIEVED IN WORKING WITH OTHER COUNTRIES AS EQUALS AND CONSISTENT WITH CLEAR MORAL PRINCIPLES; THAT ONE OF PRINCIPALE REASONS PRESIDENT EISENHOWER RAN FOR OFFICE IN 1952 WAS HIS CONCERN FOR PEACE-- THAT NO MAN WAS MORE DEDICATED TO PEACE.

I SAID THAT WHAT I WAS ABOUT TO SAY IN ADDITION WAS LARGELY PERSONAL ALTHOUGH I HAD SAID IT PRIVATELY AND IN SOME CASES

PUBLICLY;

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NW#: 42247

DocId: 612855

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Authority NND 94951A



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-3- 626, JANUARY 5, 6 P.M. FROM TEL AVIV (SECTION THREE OF FIVE)

PUBLICLY; NAMELY THAT BOTH OUR COUNTRIES SHARED COMMON BELIEFS IN HUMAN DIGNITY AND THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY.

FURTHER, I HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY THE GREAT PROGRESS IN ISRAEL; THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES WERE IMPORTANT; IT WAS NOT A QUESTION OF SIZE. INDEED, I HAD ADMIRERD THE SPIRIT OF HALUTZIYUT (PIONEERING) IN ISRAEL AND THE SENSE OF HUMANITY WHICH WAS PART OF ISRAEL'S EFFORT TO WORK WITH NEWLY EMERGING NATIONS IN AFRICA AND ASIA TO FURTHER THEIR RISING EXPECTATIONS FOR A BETTER LIFE IN FREEDOM. BG SAID HE VERY APPRECIATIVE MY REMARKS.

HUMANITY WHICH WAS PART OF ISRAEL'S EFFORT TO WORK WITH NEWLY EMERGING NATIONS IN AFRICA AND ASIA TO FURTHER THEIR RISING EXPECTATIONS FOR A BETTER LIFE IN FREEDOM. BG SAID HE VERY APPRECIATIVE MY REMARKS.

REID

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INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

~~SECRET~~

Action  
S/S

Classification

Control:  
Rec'd:

2488  
January 6, 1960  
5:28 a.m.

Info

FROM: Tel Aviv

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 626, January 5, 6 p.m. (SECTION 4 of 5)

NIACT

EYES ONLY SECRETARY

At the end of the conversation we discussed the spying question alone including the activities of Military Attaches and reported overflights of U-2. Re latter I said I had not been officially informed nor had I ever asked whether a U-2 had been over Israel. Ben-Gurion inferred that he thought the pictures the US had in its possession or had shown to Ambassador Harman might be aerial photographs. I said the only photographs I knew of were taken from the public highway--which not prohibited--and in fact, I had not known about them until after they were taken. Further, I said that I took full responsibility for the activities of [redacted] the Attaches. I could assure him there was no spying going on. Indeed, the Attaches, under my instructions, had been scrupulous in contacting the FLO and in reporting matters only as it was appropriate for them to do so.

Ben-Gurion said he fully accepted and placed confidence in what I said and was relieved to hear directly from me on this point. I think this question--at least with Ben-Gurion has been largely or wholly laid to rest.

As Ben-Gurion had questioned some things US had done, I noted that knowledge of Dimona reactor had been in one form or another quite widespread; that the press in other countries not unalert; and finally that on at least seven occasions the FLO office and officials of his government had referred to the installation as a textile or metallurgical plant. Ben-Gurion somewhat lamely said--"well, they did not know". In addition, I told him we had been seriously trying to build a working relationship between our two countries--that a number of our officers were studying

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FM 884. 1901/1-5-61

EO50x1 CIA

NW#: 42247

DocId: 612855

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Authority NND 94951A

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-2- 626, January 5, 6 p.m., (SECTION 4 OF 5), from Tel Aviv-

studying Hebrew--but this climate of understanding had not been helped by the GOI's violation of two agreements one ggsn\* or by the GOI's failure to inform us of the reactor--particularly in light of the economic assistance we had been providing. Re PL-480 I noted that while this unrelated to matter at hand I thought Eshkol and Dayan and the new negotiations committee would make progress on realistic programs for the future--which would be understood from top to bottom of both governments. Ben-Gurion made note of this and I think the other points registered.

Comment: First my apologies over the length of the cable. However, the main points and the sense of the meeting seemed worth reporting completely.

Ben-Gurion feels that he has provided assurances re questions 6A, 6E and 6D and he is well aware that he has answered 6B with a flat negative--at least for the time being--and that on 6C he has agreed to only the second part of question under two conditions. This offer I believe, provides the best hopes for inspection particularly by US scientist--although in earlier discussion Ben-Gurion agreed to inspection by qualified scientist from friendly power. Re timing this visit I believe it can be worked out relatively soon unless Knesset debate flares up and provided Department explains somewhat more fully--as appropriate--circumstances of McCone answer on TV press query--and Jones comment to Harman. Latter seemed clear to me--but somewhat characteristically Ben-Gurion has taken it as promise, as he did Secretary's comments re a defensive weapon; in spite of a caveat at the time and my reference thereto shortly upon his return.

REID

HMR/2

\* As received. Will service upon request.

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

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~~SECRET~~

Action  
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~~Classification~~

Control: 2489

Rec'd: January 6, 1961  
5:28 a.m.

Info

FROM: Tel Aviv

006

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 626, January 5, 6 p.m. (SECTION FIVE OF FIVE)

NIACT

EYES ONLY SECRETARY

The facts on the U-2 should probably be spelled out -- if relevant and to extent appropriate. Finally, I would add Ben-Gurion has been undergoing difficult political and personal experience (Lavon affairs) and Cabinet crisis which has hit him emotionally somewhat harder than one would expect.

I think air at this end with Ben-Gurion is largely cleared.

Re substantive question on a third reactor and/or evaluation of the Dimona reactor -- Ben-Gurion might agree to a private visit US scientist earlier than a public and open one. Given a little time, I think I could raise this with him at Sdebocker.

Having said this equally clear Ben-Gurion has not been wholly candid in recent discussions, nor in this one. He explained this partly by his concern over guarantees to supplies re Arab boycott and particularly by his comment to me, in strict confidence, that he had had to consult with the French Government before replying to Secretary.

I pointed out to Ben-Gurion that at December 9 meeting with Secretary suggestion had been made -- which was all that was proper in the circumstances -- that if at all possible Ambassador Harman report back directly to Jones or Farley

FW 8849.1901/1-5-61

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-2- 626, January 5, 6 p.m. (SECTION FIVE OF FIVE) from Tel Aviv

prior to Secretary's return. (If Department wishes to allude to French cooperation on reactor -- I would appreciate it if Ben-Gurion's comments re his recent consultation this regard -- which he said with a finger alongside his nose -- not be attributed directly or indirectly to his conversation with me.)

As instructed I made point of telling Ben-Gurion, Secretary would welcome a visit by Ambassador Harman -- at earliest possible opportunity -- upon his return to provide personal report and any fuller information re above or other questions.

Ben-Gurion initially was a little irked at my urging Mrs. Meir -- even as a personal suggestion -- that some kind of answer to questions be forwarded soonest even though we understood Harman might want supply additional details. Fact of matter is, however, that GOI has had ample time to ponder answers to questions and suggestions raised on December 9th, 20th, 21st and 24th; and indeed GOI has had to my knowledge at least two recent meetings -- with Prime Minister present -- on reactor question and replies to US.

Also, in conversations with Mrs. Meir (January 3) and during brief chat with Harman (December 31) -- it became increasingly evident GOI had still not taken in -- or chosen not to -- seriousness, gravity and urgency with which USG viewed whole matter. This -- I believe -- is no longer the case.

REID

AMS:RJT

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