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# Memorandum

TO : NEA - Mr. Talbot

DATE: January 14, 1965

FROM : NE - Rodger P. Davies *RPD*

SUBJECT: Briefing of Dimona Inspection Team, January 15, 3:30 p.m.

## Discussion:

The members of the U.S. team scheduled to inspect the Dimona reactor January 29 and 30 are calling on you for background briefing and guidance:

The team is composed of:

Ulysses M. Staebler, Senior Associate Director, Division of Reactor Development, USAEC. He has participated in the last two inspections of Dimona.

Floyd Culler, Jr., Assistant Director of Reactor Technology at Oakridge National Laboratories.

Clyde L. McClelland, nuclear physicist, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. He participated in the last inspection of Dimona.

Messrs. Spain (INR), Brown (INR), Thomas (SCI), Reichardt and another representative of AEC, Russell (NE), a representative of CIA and I will also attend the briefing.

## Recommendation:

That you stress:

1. We remain concerned about escalation of the Arab-Israel arms race. To avoid stimulating a pre-emptive Arab attack, we must be in a position to assure the Arabs that Israel's nuclear activities are strictly peaceful.

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2. We are increasingly concerned about possible Israeli development of nuclear weapons. Since the last inspection in January 1964, the following developments have occurred:

a. We understand the Dimona facility has been secretly expanded since our last inspection.

b. French technicians, whose presence provided a measure of restraint, are believed to have left Dimona.

c. Israel has purchased 80 tons of "yellow cake" uranium oxide from Argentina and has purchased or sought to purchase uranium materials from other sources without safeguards.

d. On October 23, 1964, Deputy Defense Minister Peres told U.S. officials the U.A.R. had decided to go for nuclear weapons. The U.A.R. has no prospect of developing an indigenous weapons capability without outside help. Therefore, we conclude that Peres' statement is designed to free Israel's hand to go nuclear.

e. In conversations with U.S. officials, various high-level Israeli Defense officials have discussed Israeli strategy toward the U.A.R. in terms that suggest inevitable development of a nuclear weapon.

f. Unknown activities in a crater named Hamakhtesh Haqatan southeast of Dimona reportedly relate to work at the reactor.

3. In October 1964 Prime Minister Eshkol, pleading domestic political difficulties, requested postponement of the already overdue semi-annual inspection of Dimona until after the November 1965 parliamentary elections. At presidential insistence, Eshkol agreed to a January 29-30 visit and we agreed to suspend semi-annual inspections until after the elections provided the team's findings warrant such a delay.

4. In arranging for the coming inspection we insisted and Israel agreed that the team be allowed whatever time was necessary to permit complete observations at the reactor site and at any other related facilities elsewhere. (See Tab A for telegraphic exchange.) Should the time provided from noon January 29 to late evening January 30 prove insufficient, the team should stay on to arrange additional visits to appropriate facilities.

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5. As before, Israeli agreement to the visit was predicated upon keeping it secret. Public mention of the visit must be avoided and even discussion within the U.S. Government and Embassy Tel Aviv strictly limited. Any breach of security would provide a pretext for terminating future visits.

6. Explain and pass out attached press guidance (Tab B).

Attachments:

- Tab A - Telegraphic Exchange with Tel Aviv  
re inspection requirements, timing, etc.
- Tab B - Copies of press guidance.

<sup>1/14/65</sup>  
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January 1965

SUGGESTED PRESS GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS OF INSPECTION TEAM

1. No information regarding the purpose of the mission should be volunteered.
  
2. In answer to specific inquiries about the purpose of the mission, team members should say they are visiting Israel to discuss progress on research in the field of peaceful uses of atomic energy.
  
3. In answer to queries as to whether the visit will include Dimona, team members should say they are in Israel at the invitation of the Israel Government and are prepared to visit any installations the Government considers appropriate.
  
4. If, after the visit is completed, the question is posed whether the visit included Dimona, team members should say Dimona was one of several installations visited.

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**Duplicity, Deception, and Self-Deception: Israel, the United States, and the Dimona Inspections, 1964-65**

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