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Participants: Mr. Henry A. Kissinger,

Mr. William N. Dale, Deouty Chief of Mission

Mr. Stephen E. Palmer, Jr., Chief, POL

Mr. George B. Lambrakis, POL Officer

Mr. Kissingmas visited the TACC base at Hatsor, details about which are reported separately.

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## A. Political

- Outstanding impression that nobody takes U.S. guarantees seriously. This contrasts with Mr. Kissinger's last visit, in 1962, when Ben-Gurion questioned him at length on U.S. guarantees, making it obvious, Kissinger thought, that Israel then interested in guarantees, but not now.
- 2. In this connection, Kissinger detected cynicism and disbelief in "tiresome" lectures given by U.S. military on various problems. Israelis had been given extensive lectures and briefings in the U.S., but they still refused to subscribe to U.S. theories, such as (a case in point) the argument that bombers are as effective as missiles for Israel. The Israelis read U.S. military journals and see the U.S. replacing bombers with missiles; how can they believe such arguments?
- 3. Levavi and Eshkol referred to some sort of USG commitment to GOI that the USG would view Arab water diversion projects with displeasure. Here, again, however, they dismissed my implication that the U.S. would act. Eshkol appeared to "have been well brisfed" on capabilities of the U.S. Sixth Fleet, but he pointed out another order would have to be given

before the fleet's power would come into play, and it could be three days before the fleetwould intervene. U.S. inactivity in regard to its guarantees in Cyprus situation (Comments presumably to Turkey), and the Congo situation were frequently cited as examples.

h. Among developments that <u>Israel would go to war rather than permit</u>,

Mr. Kissinger could recollect two that were usually cited; a) <u>Arab diversion</u>

of the Jordan water sources, and b) stationing of troops from any/major

Arab country in Jordan. The military (Rabin, Bar Lev) also stressed that

Israel would do its best to prevent the operation of the UAC, since that

would build bed habits in the <u>Arab states</u>. However, this factor was not

given as a "casus belli," and was not even mentioned by Peres.

of whether and at what point Israel would not against the water diversion projects. Toughest was Levavi (who said Israel would move before the principle of diversion of the waters has become established among the Arab and construction of diversion works begin Governments concerned). Next was Eshkel (who "would not mind fighting", Kissinger felt, and who said bombing of the works was not effective and would not be the method used. Eshkel dwelt on the diversion problem much and apparently felt very deeply about it). longer than on other matters. Then came Bar Lev and Rabin; then Perce (who was quite moderate, and argued that it would be foolish for Israel to get involved in a fight with conventional weepone now since in a few

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years an absolute deterrent, in nuclear form, would become available).

Most moderate was Eban (who, Kissinger thought, would not want to fight only at all. Eban said Israel would/fight after it were established that the Arabs were withdrawing more than their just share of the Jordan waters).

- 6. Kissinger found Enkol adament on the Palestine Arab refugees.

  Eshkel said he would not permit the return of any Arabs under any conditions, since he did not want to create a Cypriot problem here. Israel would be willing to contribute to the resettlement of the refugees elsewhere.

  Eshkel also said Israel would not code any territory: "Land is our dream, and we will not give up our dreams." Eshkel then claimed that Israel only occupies 25% of what was Palestine, implying it should be the one to raise further claims.
- 7. The Israeli leaders were uniformly impressed by the may in which President Johnson had treated Eshkol during the latter's visit to the U.S. Peres and Eban, in particular, made it clear they had not trusted Prosident Tennedy. The group had also not especially taken to the McNamara part of the visit though they had been pleased by the military briefing. They were engry at a scolding recently from McGeorge Bundy.
- 8. Before Kissinger left, Peres invited him to come back and said he would show him the IDF's operational plans, as background for articles.

  Kissinger was unsure about what prompted that suggestion and thought he probably should not accept.

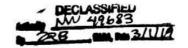
- B. NUCLEAR
- 9. In contrast to the way he ranked on the question of a fight in the near future, Peres was ranked by Kissinger as by far and a way the strongest champion of muclear weapon development, as an absolute deterrent.

  Eban, too, who did not want to fight now, favored the development of nuclear capabilities.
- muclear weapons were treated by the GOI, compared to 1962. Then they seemed that such weapons were necessary and that they knew how to make them, pussled and indefinite; now they were very certain. This was also true about the scientists with whom he talked at the Weismann Institute and in Beersheba.

  Whereas in the U.S. a major segment of the scientific community was against nuclear weapons, here there was no question even among the scientists about Israel's need to develop them, only calculations as to how close they could come to developing them without being the first to detonate one in the Middle East.
- Il. Kissinger felt it was considered important that Israel not appear
  to introduce such weapons to the area. However, even this was not a controlling factor. Scientists argued the need to develop weapons both on the
  basis (a) that the Egyptians might also develop them and (b) on Israel's inability
  to depend indefinitely on a superiority in conventional methods of warfare --she would eventually need nuclear. This led Kissinger to conclude that

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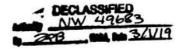
nothing short of an ironclad U.S. security guarantee would dissuade Israel

from developing nuclear weapons.

- 12. The Israelis said they did not know if the Egyptians were working weapons on nuclear descriptions, but they thought the Indians were, and they suspected that the Indians and Egyptians had some kind of secret cooperative working arrangements.
- 13. In reply to some Kissinger arguments about the need for an invulnerable base for nuclear deterrents, and the need to protect the population centers,

  Peres said Israel would base its deterrent at sea.
- that the Arab Governments know they feel this way, would provide credibility for Israel's use of any nuclear deterrent if possessed.

  When asked directly, Kissinger said he had a strong belief that
  Israel is already embarked on a nuclear weapons construction program.
- assembly areas. He was shown what was described as a U.S. 106 recoilless
  rifle which the Israelis said they were disassembling for reproduction;
  it was a hard job, due to the delicate pieces used in it. They were producing
  90 in each series of these. U.S. Sherman tanks were refitted inside and
  out and armed with 105s. They are making h-inch morter s. There is much
  work on pyrotechnic bombs. A two-stage solid-fuel rocket was being
  and progress was being made toward a solid propellant fuel,
  developed outside Tel Aviy, he was told. The Israelis are cooperating with



The Israelis expect to have this ready by the time the Egyptians have perfected guidance on their rockets.in 5 to 6 years. The Egyptian rockets at present have a CEP from 15 to 20 miles. Kissinger saw many Swiss machines and automated workshops at military industries.

military strategy: to hold on all but one front, and attack on that one.

An Egyptian attack by land would be contained and counter-attack launched.

The IDF had practiced and was capable of laying extensive minefields (on the Egyptian front) within the first 2h hours. The troops practiced facing in one direction and attacking in another. The air force was pretty sure it could gain the upper hand even it was attacked first. It was positive it could win if it attacked first, and that would be what it would endeavor to do. (In this regard, Kissinger had been told by the base commander at Hatsor TACC that 85% of the planes were kept in a state of readiness at all times.) Israel can mobilize h00,000 troops within h8 hours.

## D. BIOGGRAPHIC

17. Peres was disparaging of most world leaders except DeGaulle. He admired DeGaulle for a policy of strength which had done him no harm in the Arab world. Peres disliked all Germans-especially Shroeder — but seemed to dislike Stranss and Ehler least of all. Eshkol felt Erhard is a weakling.

All thought ill of Wilson; they believed Healy to be a playboy, liked Crossman best of all the Labor Party people, and did not know Stewart. American leadership did not generally rank high either.



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