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June 1964

Re your May 5 discussion with Ben-Gurion, your statement to PriMin correctly reflects intensity of Presidential concern for promptest affirmative GOI reply to our proposal for semi-annual Dimona visits, with first visit this month. This is a matter USG views as vital to peace and stability in Near East which PriMin has written must be matter of critical concern for both Israel and USG. It appears here he may now be attempting throw question of Dimona inspections into arena of bargaining for things Israel wants from us, such as security guarantee. As President made clear to Mrs. Meir in December, this is matter of global responsibility for USG transcending what we expect to be reciprocal give and take in our day-to-day bilateral relations. You should, therefore, press this with PriMin and Mrs. Meir with great urgency, particularly with former in event you sense his reference in May 5 conversation to her leaving hospital shortly is tactic to delay early affirmative reply. In further conversations, you may refer to foregoing as you deem useful as indication of USG concern and also to:

1. In his May 1961 conversation with Ben-Gurion, President did not

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Drafted by: *wcc* NEA:NE:WRCrawford:ebb
5/8/63

Telegraphic transmission and classification approved by: *[Signature]* NEA:XXXXXXXXXXXX

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repeat not suggest substitution of neutrals for Americans to observe DIMONA.

President asked whether it would not be helpful to let neutrals also repeat also observe reactor. (Ben-Gurion said he would have no objection and President expressed satisfaction at PriMin's reply.)

2. On December 27, 1962, in context of discussion on our need to be fully informed of developments re Israel's reactor development, Mrs. Meir told President there would not be any difficulty between us.

3. On April 2, President also spoke to Israel DEPMINDEF Peres re our concern. ~~XXX~~ Peres ~~XXXXX~~ gave unequivocal assurance re Israel's present actions in that field.

4. In conversation with you April 2 Ben-Gurion "did not demur" when you broached proposal for semi-annual visits.

5. USG is Israel's friend and there is close identification of interest between us, but we do not think any nation regards Israel as USG satellite. Nor, as GOI aware, has our handling of Dimona visits been source of public or private embarrassment to Israel. On contrary, it has been most helpful in giving quiet international support to Israel's statements of peaceful intention and thus damping down dangers of precipitate, ill-conceived reactions by Israel's neighbors. Our intention would be handle info from future visits in same, quietly useful manner.

~~XXXXX~~

6. In answer to the Israeli charge ~~XXXXXX~~ that we are not insisting on inspection in the Arab countries, you should say that we have a good line on any Arab nuclear efforts and that these do not amount to a serious program. Therefore, we consider this argument not to be a valid ~~one~~ **RUSK** one from the standpoint of the advanced Israeli program. **RUSK**

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