

158-106-6

0 2567 15  
File

# OUTGOING TELEGRAM Department of State

PRECED. ( )  
CLASS. ( )

~~SECRET~~  
CLASSIFICATION  
VEHICULAR TEXT

TO: ACTION: Embassy TEL. #737 13 PRIORITY: JUL 4 3 00 PM '63

EYES ONLY

EYES ONLY

FOR AMBASSADOR

~~SECRET~~

EXTELS 93, 98

Following letter from President should be conveyed Prime Minister Eshkol, preferably at your initial meeting with him.

"Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

"It gives me great personal pleasure to extend congratulations as you assume your responsibilities as Prime Minister of Israel. You have our friendship and best wishes in your new tasks. It is on one of these that I am writing you at this time.

"You are aware, I am sure, of the exchange which I had with Prime Minister Ben-Gurion concerning American visits to Israel's nuclear facility at Dimona. Most recently, the Prime Minister wrote to me on May 27. His words reflected a most intense personal consideration of a problem that I know is not easy for your Government, as it is not for mine. We welcomed the former Prime Minister's strong reaffirmation that Dimona will be devoted exclusively to peaceful purposes and the reaffirmation also of Israel's willingness to permit periodic visits to Dimona.

Classified by: 888-345/200/200 7/3/83  
Declassify on: 888-345/200/200

Control: 888-345/200/200 888-345/200/200 888-345/200/200 888-345/200/200

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.2  
DATE 11-17-84

REPRODUCTION FROM THIS COPY IS PROHIBITED UNLESS "OFFICIAL USE ONLY" OR "ENCLOSURE"

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

"I regret having to add to your burdens so soon after your assumption of office, but I feel the crucial importance of this problem necessitates my talking up with you at this early date certain further considerations, arising out of Mr. Ben-Gurion's May 27 letter, as to the nature and scheduling of such visits.

"I am sure you will agree that these visits should be as nearly as possible in accord with international standards, thereby resolving all doubts as to the peaceful intent of the Dimona project. <sup>As I wrote Mr. Ben-Gurion, this</sup> ~~THE~~ Government's commitment to and support of Israel could be seriously jeopardized if it should be thought that we were unable to obtain reliable information on a subject as vital to peace as the question of Israel's effort in the nuclear field.

"Therefore, I asked our scientists to review the alternative schedules of visits we and you had proposed. If Israel's purposes are to be clear ~~undeniable~~ beyond reasonable doubt, I believe that the schedule which would best serve our common purposes would be a visit early this summer, another visit in June 1954, and thereafter at intervals of six months. I am sure that such a schedule should not cause you any more difficulty than that which Mr. Ben-Gurion proposed in his May 27 letter. It would be essential, and I understand that Mr. Ben-Gurion's letter was in accord with this, that our scientists have access to all areas of the Dimona site and to any related part of the complex, such as fuel fabrication facilities or plutonium separation plant, and that sufficient time be allotted for a thorough examination.

"Knowing that you fully appreciate the truly vital significance of this matter to the future well-being of Israel, to the United States, and internationally, I am sure

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

our carefully considered request will have your most sympathetic attention.

"Sincerely,

"John F. Kennedy"

In conveying foregoing, you should stress that exhaustive examination by the most competent USG authorities has established scheduling schedule in President's letter as minimum to achieve a purpose we see as vital to Israel and to our mutual interests. Scientific reasons for this are that (a) only a visit before criticality can fully establish features of a reactor--this is reason for requested early summer visit which we hope could be this month or next at latest; (b) it is widely known and accepted by knowledgeable international scientific community that, if intended for ultimate production of weapons grade plutonium, a reactor of this size would be operated to burn a single fuel load approximately every six months, whereas for peaceful purposes optimum burn-up time would be about two years--this is what makes it essential that after mid-1964 visits be scheduled semi-annually.

GP-3.

END

RUSK

~~SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

**NATIONAL  
SECURITY  
ARCHIVE**

This document is from the holdings of:

The National Security Archive

Suite 701, Gelman Library, The George Washington University

2130 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20037

Phone: 202/994-7000, Fax: 202/994-7005, [nsarchiv@gwu.edu](mailto:nsarchiv@gwu.edu)