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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

EXCISE
884w.1901/12-160
12 E

Memorandum of Conversation

DEPARTMENT OF STATE: A/CDC/MR.

DATE: December 1, 1960

REVIEWED by EG Kovach DATE 3/13/91

() RELEASE (X) DECLASSIFY
(X) EXCISE () DECLASSIFY IN PART
() DENY () Non-responsive info.
FOI, EO or PA exemptions (b)(6)

SUBJECT:

PARTICIPANTS:

James Meem, ICA
Philip J. Farley, S/AE

December 7 1960

COPIES TO:

S/S-2¹⁻²
G-3
NEA - Mr. Jones
NE - S
NE - Mr. McBride

INR - Mr. Flowerree
S/P - Mr. Smith
RA - Mr. Fessenden - 7
Embassy Paris - Mr. Isenberg
Embassy Tel Aviv - 18
S/AE - (cc 1) 3 - 19 - 20

(23)

11 copies of this
part of the file

[] came in at Mr. Farley's request to discuss his recent visit to Israel. Mr. Farley said that the Department had received messages indicating that [] had made observations concerning sensitive information which he wished to communicate concerning the Israeli project.

[] said that the Israeli had been constructing a large installation in the Negeb south of Beersheba and referred to it as a large agricultural experimental station. He was convinced that this was actually a Marcoule-type reactor being constructed with French technical assistance. He gave a number of reasons for this conviction:

1. He was shown a photograph of the installation in our Embassy at Tel Aviv which apparently included a steel containment sphere which would be usable only for a nuclear power reactor. The general characteristics of the installation were those of the Marcoule reactor.
2. In his visit to the Technion at Haifa he had found that it was not practical for him to discuss Israeli personnel

FILED

Handwritten initials

In the absence of a positive mandate to inspect with all that word implies, the team has felt constrained to accept the ground rules made evident by their host, leading to the present situation in which a "visit" is conducted rather than an "inspection." The team therefore did not make an issue of the fact that the program drawn up by Israel shifted timing and focus in important ways which limited their access to key facilities. Nor did they take issue with their host's obvious pushing and hurrying past points at which they indicated a desire for a closer look. The fact that the team avoided creating issues can give rise to the semantic interpretation that what went on satisfied them, which is in essence what the Israelis replied to the Embassy. There is no doubt whatever in the mind of the chief of the team but that his hosts effectively tailored the occasion as a "visit" to suit their own purposes: they took great care to emphasize at the outset that it was a visit and nothing more, and obviously relied on the good manners and restraint of the team members to avoid challenges of substance.

COMMENT

It is clear to me from the discussion that visits conducted under these approaches may even be counter-productive, leaving Israel in the position of pointing them out as evidence of "cooperation" or "US satisfaction" at some key juncture in the future. It also seems to me that we have within our own purview the ability to make the occasions more meaningful by instructing the team to take a positive approach to inspection, asking for all the access and information they deem required, and leaving it to the Israelis either to accede or make positive denials of what is requested. At the least, that course would place responsibility where it must rest rather than avoiding the real issues in a manner which prejudices our interests.

cc: NEA - Mr. Davies
INR - Mr. Hughes
AEC - Dr. Reichardt