



Department of State
SITUATION ROOM

WA
TELEGRAM
//

SECRET PM 8:50

311615Z JUL 69 ZFF-4
1 AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
0 SECSTATE WASHDC 6786

E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 2941

7 6 9 6 Q

1969 JUL 31 PM 1 49

NODIS

SUBJ: DIMONA VISIT

REF: STATE 124641

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR JULY 31 TOLD PRIME MINISTER MEIR THAT US TEAM WHICH VISITED DIMONA EARLY JULY HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO MAKE FULL EXAMINATION AND REQUESTED FURTHER ONE-DAY VISIT NEXT MONTH. MRS. MEIR REPLIED THIS IMPOSSIBLE, SINCE ANY DEPARTURE FROM ESTABLISHED ROUTINE WOULD REQUIRE ACTION BY CABINET AND FORECGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF KNESSET, WHICH WAS OUT OF QUESTION IN PERIOD BEFORE ELECTIONS.

1. IN ORDER PRESENT SUBSTANCE OF REFTEL, AMBASSADOR SOUGHT APPOINTMENT WITH PRIME MINISTER MEIR EARLY THIS WEEK. PRIME MINISTER COULD NOT ARRANGE TIME UNTIL JULY 31 AND MEETING WAS HELD THIS AFTERNOON. DCM ACCOMPANIED AMBASSADOR AND DIRGEN PM'S OFFICE YAAKOV HERZOG AND ASST DIRGEN MFA BITAN ALSO PRESENT. CONVERSATION TOOK ABOUT ONE HOUR.
2. AMB BEGAN BY READING FROM REFTEL AT LENGTH. HE NOTED ESPECIALLY THAT HE HAD BEEN CONNECTED WITH VISITS FOR SOME YEARS, KNEW GOI PROBLEMS, BUT FEL THAT FACT VISITS HAD BECOME ROUTINE, PERHAPS TOO ROUTINE, AND INTERFERED WITH FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSE FOR WHICH THEY HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED. HE ALSO POINTED OUT MATTER WAS ONE OF SUBSTANCE, NOT HOSPITALITY, AND TEAM HAD PLEASED WITH CORDIAL PERSONAL RECEPTION. MRS. MEIR SAID ISRAELIS HAD ALSO BEEN WELL IMPRESSED BY US TEAM.
3. IN REPLY TO AMB'S PRESENTATION, MRS. MEIR SAID SHE HAD BEEN IN ON THIS MATTER FROM BEGINNING. SHE HAD BEEN AT BEN GURION'S HOUSE FIRST TIME HE HAD TO MAKE DECISION TO AGREE TO VISIT, AND SHE KNEW HOW DIFFICULT IT HAD BEEN FOR HIM, FIRST SEVERAL VISITS HAD BEEN MADE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE REST OF CABINET, UNTIL PRESS LEAK IN NEW YORK TIMES (AMB INTERJECTED THIS AND BEEN FROM ISRAELI SIDE) BROUGHT MATTER OUT AND IT HAD TO BE TAKEN UP IN CABINET AND KNESSET FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, MUCH TO DISCOMFITURE OF THEN PRIME MINISTER, ESHKOL. SINCE THEN CABINET AND FORAFF COMITE HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN ABOUT VISITS. SHE COULD NOT SAY THAT EVERYONE HAD BEEN EXTREMELY HAPPY ABOUT VISITS, BUT WHAT HAD ENABLED THEM TO GO ON WAS FACT THAT GOVT ACTION WOULD HAVE HAD TO BE TAKEN TO STOP THEM, AND IT HAD BEEN POSSIBLE TO AVOID THIS. THIS YEAR, US HAD SUGGESTED THAT VISIT BE SOMEWHAT EARLIER, IN VIEW OF COMING ELECTIONS, ETC., BUT SHE HAD SAID NO, LET IT GO ON ON SCHEDULE, SO THAT THERE WILL BE NO VARIANCE FROM ESTABLISHED PROCEDURE AND SO NO OPPORTUNITY FOR BASIC DECISION TO BE CALLED IN QUESTION.

SECRET

SECRET

2- TEL AVIV 2941, 311615Z JUL, SECTION 1 OF 2, (NODIS)

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E.O. 12958

By VRS

NARA Date 1/4/02

. NOW, MRS. MEIR WENT ON, THREE MONTHS BEFORE ELECTIONS, SHE WAS ASKED TO GO BEFORE CABINET AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMITE AND RAISE THIS MATTER AGAIN. THERE HAVE ALREADY BEEN EIGHT VISITS, SINCE 1961. US NATURALLY HAS SENT WHOM IT CHOSE, THEY HAVE LOOKED, AND NOTHING HAS BEEN FVTD. IS PROBLEM THAT THEY DID NOT SEE SOMETHING THAT WAS NOT HERE? IT WOULD BE ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE TO GO TO CABINET ON THIS NOW, TO CALL IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMITE, ON EVE OF ELECTIONS. IT WAS NOT REASONABLE TO ASK THIS.

5. AMB REPLIED HE KNEW THESE DOMESTIC PROBLEMS WERE SERIOUS BUT HE WAS NOT SURE THAT GOI REALIZED HOW SERIOUSLY USG REGARDS WHOLE NUCLEAR QUESTION, NOT ONLY WITH ISRAEL BUT WITH WHOLE WORLD. BECAUSE OF GRAVE DANGERS, THERE ARE THOSE IN US WHO FEEL WE MUST BE PREPARED TO BELIEVE THE WORST, IN ABSENCE OF CONTRARY INFO, NOT ONLY OF ISRAEL BUT OF ANYONE. PROBLEM BOILS DOWN TO WHETHER ISRAEL FEELS IT IMPORTANT TO DISABUSE DOUBTERS IN THIS RESPECT. AS TO PREVIOUS VISITS, WE HAD IN EACH CASE ACCEPTED GOI GROUND RULES BUT AS RECORD WOULD SHOW HE HAD ALSO BEEN INSTRUCTED EACH TIME TO STATE THAT VISIT HAD NOT GONE AS WELL AS HAD BEEN HOPED. PRIME MINISTER ESHKOL HAD BEEN ASKED BY PRESIDENT KENNEDY FOR TWO-DAY VISITS EVERY SIX MONTHS; ESHKOL HAD NOT GIVEN WRITTEN ACCEPTANCE BUT HAD SAID ORALLY THAT PRESIDENT'S WISHES WERE ACCEPTABLE, AND THIS HAD BEEN TAKEN AS GOI AGREEMENT. NOW VISITS HAVE BECOME SO RUSHED THAT IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR TEAM TO MAKE REPORT WHICH WOULD BE IN INTERESTS OF GOI AND USG TO ALLAY DOUBTS.

6. MRS. MEIR SAID THAT SHE UNDERSTOOD, BUT THAT IT MADE HEGNMAD. A FEW WEEKS AGO, USG HAD ASKED HER TO COOPERATE ON QUESTION OF JORDAN, AND SHE HAD GONE ALONG. SHE HAD BEEN ANXIOUS TO GO ALONG, AND SHE DID SO. SINCE THEN, DURING JULY THERE HAD BEEN 98 SHELLING INCIDENTS FROM ACROSS JORDAN BORDER, SOME BY JORDANIAN ARMY BUT MOST BY FATAH. KING HAD PROMISED THERE WOULD BE NO SHOOTING, INCLUDING BY FATAH. NOW SYRIANS HAVE MOVED IN SIX RUSSIAN 130 MM GUNS AT SAFI (JUST SOUTH OF DEAD SEA) WITH A 27 KM RANGE. ISRAEL IS SURROUNDED ON SOUTH, EAST AND NORTH. IRAQIS AND SAUDI ARABIANS ALREADY IN JORDAN, AND NOW SYRIANS HAVE MOVED IN. SHE DID NOT KNOW WHAT IMPORTANCE TO ACCORD EASTERN COMMAND, BUT FACT WAS SYRIANS WERE NOW THERE. THEN THERE HAD BEEN NASSER'S SPEECH, AND BRESHNEV HAD SENT HIM MESSAGE SAYING USSR WOULD SUPPLY UAR WITH EVERYTHING NEEDED TO FIGHT ISRAELIS. BUT U IS WE (UNDERLINE) WHO ARE THE SUSPECTS IN US EYES. THIS MADE HER TERRIBLY SAD.

7. AMB REJOINED HE UNDERSTOOD HER POSITION BUT IN NUCLEAR EQUATION WE WERE TALKING ABOUT ANOTHER WORLD, COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FACTORS. IT WAS NOT SAME THING. POTENTIAL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS WAS SUCH THAT WE CANNOT FAIL TO REGARD THEM AS SEPARATE BUSINESS. THIS DID NOT MEAN WE DID NOT UNDERSTAND ISRAEL'S NEED FOR CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS. HOWEVER, NUCLEAR WEAPONS WERE SOMETHING ELSE, AND THIS IS WHY WE NEGOTIATED NPT AND HOPE OUR FRIENDS WILL SIGN IT, AS SOME HAVE. (MRS. MEIR INTERJECTED AT LEAST ISRAEL WAS IN GOOD COMPANY, BUT AMB JDZORTED NOT IN SUCH GOOD COMPANY EL THOSE WHO SIGNED.)

BT

SECRET

Department of State

TELEGRAM

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E.O. 12958

By VRS NARA Datic 1/9/02



11615Z JUL 69 ZFF-4
 AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
 SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6787

Control: 76990
 Recd : July 31, 1969
 2:33 p.m.

C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 2941

NODIS

8. PRIME MINISTER WENT ON THAT EVERYONE WITH ANY IMAGINATION COULD SEE HORROR OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS, WHETHER AS USER OR TARGET OF THEM. ISRAEL'S PROBLEM, HOWEVER, WAS HOW TO KEEP ALIVE IN FACE OF CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS, TO WHICH EVERY OUNCE OF HER ENERGY AND KNOWHOW WAS DEVOTED. SHE DID NOT SAY THAT US WAS NOT JUSTIFIED IN DOING ALL IT COULD TO SEE THAT THESE HORRIBLE WEAPONS SHOULD NOT BE SPREAD AROUND WORLD, BUT WHY ISRAEL WAS UNDER SUSPICION WAS HARD FOR HER TO UNDERSTAND.

9. AMB REPLIED HE DID NOT SAY ANY SUSPICION OF ISRAEL WAS JUSTIFIED BUT FACT WAS THAT IT EXISTED AND IT WAS IN INTERESTS US AND ISRAEL TO REMOVE IT. MRS. MEIR THEN SAID SHE DID NOT UNDERSTAND REFERENCE TO STATEMENT US DESIRED ANOTHER VISIT TO DIMONA TO TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO HER VISIT TO WASHINGTON. HAD KING HUSSEIN BEEN TOLD HE SHOULD STOP SHOOTING ACROSS BORDER BEFORE COMING TO SEE PRESIDENT? AMB REPLIED WE HAD NEVER SAID WE WHOUGHT HE COULD DO THIS COMPLETELY BUT WE WELCOMED HIS EFFORTS TO DO IT. PRIME MINISTER REJOINED IF HE CANNOT KEEP SYRIANS OUT OF HIS COUNTRY THEN HE IS NOT RULER AND THERE IS NO REASON TO ACCEPT HIS WORD ON ANYTHING. HE HAS BEEN INVADED BY THREE ARAB COUNTRIES AND DOES NOTHING ABOUT IT. BUT HE IS THE BEST THERE IS IN JORDAN, AMB INTERJECTED. SHE DIDN'T CARE WHO WAS THERE, MRS. MEIR SAID, IF HE CAN'T KEEP OTHERS OUT. SHE HAD NOTING AGAINST HIM PERSONALLY, BUT EITHER THERE WAS SOMEONE IN CONTROL WHO COULD BE DEPENDED UPON OR THERE WAS NOTHING. JORDAN WAS NOT ISRAEL, AMB REPLIED, AND SHE WAS APPLYING ISRAELI STANDARDS TO IT. THERE WERE MANY COUNTRIES IN WORLD WEAK AND SHAKY LIKE JORDAN.

10. HERZOG THEN BROKE IN THAT THERE HAD BEEN TWO SPECIFIC MESSAGES FROM KING THAT HE WOULD INSURE THAT THERE WAS NO FIRING. AMB REBUTTED WE KNEW THAT WOULD NOT WORK COMPLETELY, THAT HE COULD NOT CARRY THAT OUT. CAN'T HE KEEP SYRIANS OUT, MRS. MEIR ASKED? EITHER THEY HAVE COME IN AGAINST HIS WILL, AND HE SHOULD DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, OR WITH HIS PERMISSION. NEXT HE WILL HAVE EGYPTIANS IN JORDAN. HERZOG said this was first time SYRIANS HAD MANAGED TO MOVE IN ON JORDAN, AND FIRST TIME SINCE SIX DAYS WAR THAT THEY HAD EVEN TRIED. LEBANON CAN KEEP SYRIANS OUT, MRS. MEIR CONTINUED, BUT JORDAN CAN'T. SHE COULD UNDERSTAND IT WAS MORE CONVENIENT FOR KING HUSSEIN TO KEEP AT PEACE

SECRET

SECRET

Tel Aviv 2941, Section 2 of 2, July 31, 1969 Control 7699Q

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E.O. 12958

By VRS

NARA Date: 4/10/03

H SYRIANS, BUT NOT AT ISRAEL'S EXPENSE. EARLY THIS YEAR, HERZOG
) , IN ESHKOL-HUSSEIN EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES, THERE HAD BEEN CLEAR
ICATION THAT AREA AT SOUTH END DEAD SEA AND AQABA-EILAT WERE OUT
OUNDS. SAFI (WHERE SYRIANS GUNS ALLEGED TO BE) IS CENTRAL TO
TARY CONTROL OF WHOLE DEAD SEA AREA. HUSSEIN HAD SHOWN HE
D CONTROL THEM NOW. DEAD SEA INSTALLATIONS AT SDOM,
E MINISTER WENT ON, REPRESENTED INVESTMENT 400 MILLION ISRAELI
DS. (AND BIG US INVESTMENT, TOO, AMB NOTED) ONE SHOT AT ONE OF
RAL VITAL POINTS COULD PUT WHOLE BUSINESS OUT OF OPERATION FOR
, LONG TIME, YET THERE THEY ARE AT SAFI. US OUGHT TO HAVE MORE
THINGS TO DO AT SUCH A TIME THAN SEARCH ISRAEL FOR ATOMIC BOMBS.

11. AMB SAID MATTER HAD TO BE LOOKED AT ON BROADER SCALE. GOI WAS
MAKING PROBLEM BY QBEING MYSTERIOUG. VISITS HAD BEEN SET UP FOR A
PURPOSE AND HAD BECOME SO RESTRICTED THAT PURPOSE NOT BEING ACCOM-
PLISHED.

12. DCM THEN SAID PRIME MINISTER'S FEELING THAT ISRAEL WAS OBJECT OF
SOME UNIQUE SUSPICION ON PART OF USG WAS NOT JUSTIFIED. MOST FREE
WORLD COUNTRIES ACTIVE IN NUCLEAR RESEARCH FIELD HAD REACTORS, FUEL
OR OTHER NUCLEAR CONNECTIONS WITH US AND IN ALL SUCH INSTANCES US
INSISTED ON COMPLETE AND CONTINUOUS SAFEGUARDS THAT GO FAR BEYOND
ONE-DAY-ONCE-A-YEAR VISIT TO DIMONA. MRS. MEIR COUNTERED THAT DIMONA
HAD NOT BEEN BOUGHT FROM US AND NOT FUELED BY US, SO US HAD NO REASON
TO TALK ABOUT SAFEGUARDS ON IT. DCM REPLIED HE WAS NOT TALKING ABOUT
APPLYING SAFEGUARDS TO DIMONA, BUT ILLUSTRATING THAT SUSPECION WAS
NOT UNIQUE AGAINST ISRAEL BUT RATHER THAT THERE WAS NO ALLY OR FRIEND
SO CLOSE BUT WHAT US APPLIES SAFEGUARDS WHENEVER IT DEALS WITH THEM IN
NUCLEAR FIELD.

12. HERZOG SAID THAT WHEN ESHKOL FIRST WENT TO CABINET AND TOLD
THEM ABOUT DIMONA VISITS, HE BASED HIS DECISION TO CARRY ON WITH
VISITS ON FACT THAT COMMITMENT HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE BY BEN GURION.
MRS. MEIR SAID THAT IF MATTER WERE NOW COMING UP FOR FIRST TIME, SHE
COULD NOT EVEN CONSIDER ASKING CABINET TO CONCURNEN US VISITS TO DIMONA.
SHE WAS ABLE TO CARRY ON ONLY BECAUSE ESHKOL HAD DONE IT, AND ESHKOL
HAD BEEN ABLE ONLY BECAUSE HE COULD PUT IT ON BEN GURION. IF SHE HAD
TO GO TO CABINET AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMITE ON MATTER, THERE WOULD BE
NO CHANGE.

13. AMB SAID HE UNDERSTOOD PRIME MINISTER'S PROBLEMS BUT FOR FINAL
TIME HE WOULD SAY THAT RATHER THAN CONSIDER PROBLEMS SHE SHOULD CONSIDER

OBJECTIVE. OBJECTIVE IS TO BE ABLE TO HAVE TEAM PRODUCE AIRTIGHT
REPORT THAT WILL LEAVE NO GROUND FOR DOUBT. IF THIS IS NOT DONE,
DOUBTS WILL REMAIN. PRIME MINISTER MEIR REPLIED SHE WAS TERRIBLY SORRY
IF THINGS HAD TO TURN OUT THAT WAY, BUT IS WAS ABSOLUTELY UNTHINK-
ABLE, JUST IMPOSSIBLE.

SECRET

SECRET

el Aviv 2941, Section 2 of 2, July 31, 1969

Control 7699Q

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E.O. 12958

By VRS

NARA Date 4/10/02

MENT: I PUSHED PRIME MINISTER AS HARD AS POSSIBLE ON THIS, LLY ON THEME, WHICH SEEMS TO ME HEART OF MATTER, THAT OF VISITS IS TO ESTABLISH TO US SATISFACTION THAT NUCLEAR MATERIAL NOT BEING PRODUCED AT DIMONA AND THAT THERE IS ISRAELI INTEREST IN SEEING TO IT THAT THIS SATISFACTION IS OBTAINED. DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS WHICH SHE ADDUCES ARE REAL, AND I IMAGINE SHE IS RIGHT IN SAYING THAT THIS PROGRAM CONTINUES ONLY BECAUSE, IN FINELY BALANCED ISRAELI CABINET, ON ONE HAS ABILITY TO GET MAJORITY DECISION TO STOP IT. I WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO SEPARATE OUT, IN THIS MESSAGE, PARTS DEALING WITH JORDANIAN CEASEFIRE AND KING HUSSEIN, BUT THEY HAVE TO STAY IN BACAUSE DIMONA PROBLEM MUST BEEN SEEN BY US IN CONTEXT OF OVERALL SITUATION HERE. THOSE IN CABINET WHO OPPOSED MRS. MEIR ON GIVING GOJ CHANCE TO CONTROL FEDAYEEN (AND THERE CERTAINLY MUST HAVE BEEN SOME) ARE SAME ONEW WHO WOULD OPPOSE RELAXATION ON DIMONA VISITS AND MAKE POLITICAL CAPITAL IN ELECTION CAMPAIGN OUT OF ANY DISCUSSION OF THIS IN CABINET OR COMMITTEE. I THEREFORE RELUCTANTLY CONCLUDE THAT WE HAVE DONE ALL WE CAN AT THIS TIME, AND THAT THERE IS NO REALISTIC POSSIBILITY OF ANOTHER DIMONA VISIT BEFORE MRS. MEIR'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON OR ISRAELI ELECTIONS IN LATE OCTOBER. GP-1.

BARBOUR

SECRET