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February 8, 1961

Memorandum, Secretary of State Rusk for the President, 'Israeli Reactor'

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Summary:

Rusk informs President Kennedy about the outcome of Assistant Secretary of State G. Lewis Jones's meeting with Israeli Ambassador Harman.

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

February 8, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Israeli Reactor

Pursuant to your suggestion last week, Assistant Secretary Lewis Jones on February 3 raised with Ambassador Harman the subject of the new Israeli reactor and pressed for an early visit to that installation by a qualified American observer. In response the Ambassador stressed that Israel has given us categoric assurances that the reactor is solely for peaceful purposes and it is difficult for his government to understand the urgency of a visit. Furthermore, Ben-Gurion and all of Israel are so thoroughly preoccupied with the current domestic political crisis that getting Israeli leadership to focus on our request is highly unlikely.

Assistant Secretary Jones pointed out our awareness of these problems, but noted that the new administration is very much interested in this matter. He expressed the hope that the Ambassador might be able to obtain some sort of governmental response by the time the Ambassador makes his courtesy call on me within the next ten days or so. We shall, of course, continue to give attention to this matter. A full memorandum of the Jones-Harman conversation is enclosed.

Dean Rusk

Dean Rusk

Enclosure:

Jones-Harman memorandum of conversation.

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E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.5(b)
Department of State Guidelines
By mnk NARA, Date 5/12/97