

2959: State Lot files

Lot 57D488

Box 417

21.50 CF: ISK, a. agreements 1955-60 & 62

250: 50/30/5-250: 50/51/4/7

Part 182

CONFIDENTIAL

18 August 1955

MEMORANDUM of Conversation

Present: Prof. Dr. Ernst David Bergmann (Israel)  
Prof. Dr. Israel Dostrowsky  
Dr. Amos de Shalit

Ambassador Patterson  
Bernard G. Bechhoefer

Time: 16 August 1955

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY

AUG 10 1955

Dr. Bergmann said that Israel wanted to go forward immediately towards the development of atomic power because of the desperate need for power in Israel due to the impossibility of securing oil from the Middle East.

He stated that the Israeli universities had most adequate courses in physics, had made a start in chemistry, were far behind in engineering, and their system of education in metallurgy was nonexistent. He stated that Israel was now producing uranium from phosphates and was producing heavy water, both in small quantities.

They had devised what they thought was an original reactor which utilized a core of enriched material and a blanket of natural uranium, plus heavy water. At the Conference they had discovered that basically their reactor was the same as the U.S. design for the Shippingport reactor. Their reactor, of course, was not intended to produce power and was intended merely for research and for training. He recognized that this reactor would produce a small amount of plutonium. He wondered whether the bilateral agreement signed by Israel would permit their constructing a reactor of this type and whether they would be required to turn over the plutonium produced from the blanket circuit to the U.S. for reprocessing. Mr. Patterson stated that he had no idea what the answer would be to these questions. The research reactor program was intended merely to start the process of education which would ultimately lead to power. He suggested that those questions should be taken up with Mr. John Hall who would undoubtedly consult with Mr. Kenneth Davis. Mr. Bergmann said that he would get in touch with Mr. Hall immediately.

Mr. Patterson wondered whether the Israelis had considered the political impact on the Arab world of the Israelis producing plutonium. Mr. Bergmann said that the amount was so small it could not possibly have military implications.