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Memorandum of Conversation

Approved in S 11/30/60

~~DATE~~ 9.5
DATE: November 25, 1960

SUBJECT: Safeguards for Reactors

PARTICIPANTS: The Secretary of State
Sir Harold Caccia, British Ambassador
The Viscount Hood, Minister, British Embassy
Mr. Russell Fessenden, Director, EUR/RA

SPECIAL ASSISTANT
TO THE SECRETARY
S/AE
noted, file
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The Secretary, in the course of a conversation on various subjects, raised with Ambassador Caccia the question of atomic energy safeguards, particularly with respect to the nuclear reactor for India. The Secretary said that a new factor had entered the situation which emphasized the importance of providing adequate atomic energy safeguards. This was the fact that we have reports, not yet confirmed, indicating that a plutonium-producing reactor may be being built in Israel with French aid. The implication of this is that the French will give the Israelis the know-how on building crude atomic bombs as well. This naturally is a development which, if confirmed, should give us concern from the point of view of proliferation of nuclear weapons. A country possessing nuclear weapons in the Near East creates a potentially very dangerous situation.

There are also indications that there may be another French nuclear explosion in the very near future. There have been indications that the French have been waiting for the end of the UN General Assembly before exploding their next bomb. Now that it appears that the UNGA will go on into next year, the French explosion may come off sooner.

Ambassador Caccia expressed appreciation for receiving this information.

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