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Documents 149-205

Six Days of War, June 5-10, 1967

149. Memorandum for the Record/1/

/1/Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Histories, Middle East Crisis, Vol. 3. Top Secret; [codeword not declassified].

Washington, November 17, 1968.

SUBJECT

Walt Rostow's Recollections of June 5, 1967

The following is a transcript of a tape recorded talk with Walt Rostow on November 17, 1968:

This is Walt Rostow. I have in front of me Hal Saunders' reconstruction of the log for Monday, June 5, 1967./2/ I shall make some observations on what I remember of that morning. I should preface everything that I am about to say with an acute awareness of the inadequacy of memory, as one looks back on fast-moving events in a single day.

/2/Reference is to a "Chronology: To 5 June 1200 GMT" that Saunders put together summarizing the reports that were received that morning. A version with Saunders' handwritten insertions is *ibid.* The final typed version is *ibid.*, Country File, Middle East Crisis, Vol. III.

I recall, as the log verifies, that I received about 2:50 a.m. from the Sit Room a report that there were press accounts coming in over the ticker of the opening of hostilities in the Middle East. I told our people to check NMCC and others for official confirmation and then call me back. At 2:55 a.m., I received confirmation and told them I would come in. I dressed and arrived in, I should think, about 3:20 a.m.

I immediately called Secretary Rusk who I believe had already been informed. I do not believe he was yet in his office. One of the questions raised with Secretary Rusk was whether I should inform the President immediately. He suggested that we wait perhaps an hour before informing the President so that we could have a clearer picture of what it was all about and would be in a position to give the President some facts on the situation. Hal Saunders came in very shortly after I did, and he went to work—I believe Art McCafferty also came in early—putting into some kind of order the flow of facts from ticker and intelligence sources of all kinds.

When I called the President at 4:35 a.m./3/ I remember I simply gave him a straight factual report which he took in with very few questions and no comment. If I am not mistaken, he ended up as he often does any factual report by simply saying, "Thank you." I have in front of me a piece of paper from which I first called the President on Monday, June 5./4/ There are some notes at the top, which would suggest that perhaps I called Evron in the morning to see if he knew anything. I don't think there is any record of that call. I have a note saying that we expect the matter to go quickly to the Security Council. I have a UAR statement which probably reflects some Tel Aviv or Jerusalem ticker, saying that the UAR opened an offensive and Israel was containing that offensive. That was the earlier Israel report. But what I have then is reports by Middle East time: 8:00 a.m.—Cairo—

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Egyptian airfields in the Sinai were not operational. He added that he would put more weight on the Israeli claim that there had been a large number of Egyptian aircraft headed for Israel from the sea, but he thought it was too early to say. He continued, "My instincts tell me that the Israelis probably kicked this off, but I just don't know yet. And I don't think we ought to make a preliminary judgment on that because it's just hard to say." Johnson asked if the Israelis were saying the Egyptians "kicked it off." Rusk replied that each side was claiming publicly that the other started it but that no direct message had been received from Eshkol or Eban. He thought the Israeli claim of a tank advance looked "just a little thin on the surface" but he thought they would soon have more information. He stated that the Department had asked U.S. representative on the NATO Council Harlan Cleveland to keep a group of permanent members available for consultation, and he noted that the Security Council would meet and would probably call on both sides for an immediate cease-fire. He repeated, "My guess is the Israelis kicked this off." He suggested that they might want to arrange a meeting of the Congressional leadership to bring them up to date on the situation. Johnson agreed, and the conversation concluded. (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of a telephone conversation between Johnson and Rusk, June 5, 1967, 5:09 a.m., Tape F67.11, Side B, PNO 1) According to the Johnson Library, the dictabelt, with a June 7 note stating that it might have been made the previous day, was found with post-Presidential material. The date and time were taken from the President's Daily Diary. (Ibid.)

151. President's Daily Brief/1/

Washington, June 5, 1967.

/1/Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Histories, Middle East Crisis, Vol. 6, Appendix A. Top Secret; [codeword not declassified]. This information, which has been excerpted from a Presidential Daily Brief ("PDB"), was improperly declassified and released. The declassification and release of this information in no way impacts or controls the declassification status of the remainder of this PDB, other PDBs, or the PDB as a series.

Arab States-Israel

Hostilities began early this morning. Both sides report heavy fighting in the air and between armored forces along the Israeli border with Egypt. Israeli planes raided airfields in Cairo and other areas beginning at about 8:00 AM local time (2:00 AM Washington time).

Cairo has just been informed that at least five of its airfields in Sinai and the Canal area have suddenly become "unserviceable." Israel's war plans had put high priority on quick action against the Egyptian Air Force because of the threat to its own more vulnerable airfields and vital centers.

Reports are still fragmentary, but the signs point to this as an Israeli initiative. Over the weekend it became apparent that Israeli leaders were becoming increasingly convinced that time was running against them. The new Israeli cabinet was meeting late yesterday with Ambassador Harmel present, and reconvened early today.

Cairo radio is calling on Egypt's Arab allies to attack Israel. [2 lines of source text not declassified]

2. Libya

The big US Wheelus base is becoming more and more exposed to nationalist pressures as the Arab war fever sweeps over this desert kingdom. Cairo is going all out to intensify the pressures, and responsible Libyans are worried; they see no way they can convincingly refute the propaganda that the base is being used to support the Israelis.

The Libyan foreign minister has been in Cairo this weekend, and Wheelus surely must have been discussed during his talks with Nasir.

3. Soviet Union

[1 paragraph (7 lines of source text) not declassified]

[1 paragraph (5-1/2 lines of source text) not declassified]

[Omitted here is a section on an unrelated subject.]

LATE ITEMS

Libya

The US Embassy in Benghazi flashed word at 4:30 AM EDT that it was being attacked by a large mob. It is burning its papers.

Syria

Damascus radio announces that Syrian planes are bombing Israeli cities and that "we have joined the battle."

152. Editorial Note

At 6:15 a.m. on June 5, 1967, Walt Rostow telephoned President Johnson and read to him a draft Presidential statement Rusk sent to the White House, expressing distress at the outbreak of fighting in the Middle East, noting that each side had accused the other of aggression, stating that the facts were not clear, and calling on all parties to support the UN Security Council in bringing about an immediate cease-fire. Rostow said he had read the statement to McNamara, who approved. The President agreed that the statement was all right. Rostow said that the evidence on who had started the fighting was not definitive, but that there was an interesting report from Cairo of indications of unusual activities in the UAR forces before the first Israeli strike at 9 a.m. Cairo time, including a report that a large number of pilots in uniform had been seen at the Cairo airport at 4:30 a.m. Rostow commented that this was "not much but it's something, the only evidence that this is a UAR put-up job." He added that McNamara was inclined to feel the same way because of the reports, and because he thought a UAR public announcement of the plan to send UAR Vice President Mohieddin to visit the United States would be a "good cover." Rostow reported that Foreign Minister Eban said the Israelis had been attacked and he then gave orders to counter-attack. Rostow said that according to Eban, the Israelis were drafting a message to Johnson that would state Israel had no intention of taking advantage of the situation to enlarge its territory and hoped that peace could be restored within its present boundaries and that the conflict could be localized; in this regard, the message would ask U.S. help in restraining any Soviet initiative.

Rostow returned to the subject of the press statement. The President told him to send it to George Christian, and he would talk to Christian about when to release it. He suggested that McNamara and Rusk go to Capitol Hill and brief the leadership there rather than having them come to the White House. He also suggested "we might ask some of our good friends that might be helpful to come in from the outside and give us some help here." He told Rostow he thought that "just for public appearance's sake" they should ask former Secretary of State Dean Acheson. He wanted Rostow to ask Rusk and McNamara what they thought of this idea "just on your own without [it] coming from me." In addition to Acheson, Johnson suggested asking former Under Secretary of State George Ball, Chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board Clark Clifford, and former Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs McGeorge Bundy. He definitely wanted Bundy to come. He wanted Rostow to call Bundy and tell him the President would like to talk to him about this and other matters and "I wish he'd come down here and be prepared to stay as long as he can." (Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of a telephone conversation between Johnson and Rusk, June 5, 1967, 5:09 a.m. Tape F67.11, Side B, PNO 1) This conversation was on the dictabelt with the earlier Rusk conversation. (See Document 150.) The date and time were taken from the President's Daily Diary.

The press statement, with minor changes and an additional paragraph stating that the President would meet with Rusk, McNamara, Walt Rostow, and George Christian at 8:30 a.m. and that Rusk and McNamara would brief Senate and House leaders, was issued by Christian shortly after 7 a.m. For text, see Department of State Bulletin, June 26, 1967, page 949. The report from Cairo to which Rostow referred was transmitted in telegram 8504 from Cairo, June 5. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 27 ARAB-ISR) The report of Ambassador Barbour's conversation with Eban is in telegram 3928 from Tel Aviv, June 5; *ibid.*

153. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Jordan/1/

Washington, June 5, 1967, 6:22 a.m.

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171. Telegram From the Department of State to the Mission to the United Nations/1/

Washington, June 6, 1967, 4:06 a.m.

/1/Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 27 ARAB-ISR. Unclassified; Flash. Drafted by Houghton, and approved by Davies. Also sent Flash to Damascus, Rabat, Khartoum, Tunis, Baghdad, London, Kuwait, Tripoli, Jidda, Algiers, Paris, Beirut, Moscow, Amman, Jerusalem, and Cairo.

208426. 1. Cairo radio has made false charge US aircraft provided fighter cover over Israel during raids by Israeli aircraft on UAR June 5, and played role against Jordanian forces./2/ Charges are absolutely false. No US aircraft carriers have been in or near area of hostilities nor have US aircraft./3/

/2/See footnote 4, Document 170, and Document 153 and footnotes 2 and 3 thereto.

/3/Telegram 208427 to USUN, June 6, states that at 3:45 a.m. the Department had denied the charges and protested vigorously to Ambassador Kamel, requesting immediate action to terminate the broadcasts. (National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 27 ARAB-ISR) Nolte had already telephoned the Foreign Minister to give him a categorical denial that U.S. planes or ships were involved in any way in the fighting, and Political Counselor Richard B. Parker had given a categorical denial to Abdul Aziz in Mohieddin's office. (Telegrams 8567 and 8569 from Cairo, both dated June 6; both *ibid.*)

2. You should categorically deny charge at highest level and issue public denial. Both State and Defense Departments have already issued denials./4/

/4/A press release issued by the Department of Defense on June 5 stated that reports that Sixth Fleet aircraft had flown to Israeli airfields or had participated in the conflict were erroneous; all Sixth Fleet aircraft had been and remained several hundred miles from the area of conflict. (Telegram 208283 to Amman, June 5; *ibid.*) Secretary Rusk stated at the White House at 9:05 a.m. on June 6 that the charges were "utterly and wholly false." He also stated, "We know that they and some of their friends know where some of our carriers are. We can only conclude that this was a malicious charge, known to be false, and, therefore, obviously was invented for some purpose not fully disclosed." (Circular telegram 208457, June 6; *ibid.*; Department of State *Bulletin*, June 26, 1967, pp. 950-951)

Rusk

172. President's Daily Brief/1/

Washington, June 6, 1967.

/1/Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Histories, Middle East Crisis, Vol. 6, Appendix A. Top Secret; [codeword not declassified]. Regarding the release of this PDB, see footnote 1, Document 151.

1. Arab States-Israel

Cairo may be prepared to launch a campaign urging strikes against US interests in the Arab world. Both Egyptian and Syrian domestic broadcasts this morning called on the "Arab masses" to destroy all US and "imperialist" interests in the "Arab homeland." Last night Cairo radio claimed it had proof of US and British participation in the "aggression."

Demonstrations have now taken place against US embassies and installations all over the Arab world.

Arab oil-producing countries, meeting in Baghdad, say they will stop selling oil to any country which takes part in or supports Israel in the fighting. Baghdad radio said this morning that the pumping of Iraqi oil has been stopped "because of US and UK attitudes."

In the fighting, Israel has gained an early and perhaps overwhelming victory in the air, but the progress of the war on the ground is unclear. If Israeli claims regarding damage to Arab combat aircraft are valid, they have destroyed the entire Jordanian inventory of 21, two thirds of the Syrian inventory of 69, and 250 of some 430 Egyptian planes.

Arab counterclaims of 158 Israeli planes destroyed seem grossly exaggerated, but actual losses to the Israeli force of about 270 aircraft are not known.

Firm information on ground action remains sparse. The Israelis claim they have captured the "outer positions" of Kuntilla in southeastern Sinai and reached the outskirts of al-Arish in northern Sinai.

In Jordan, King Husayn said this morning that Israel is pushing ahead in a "punitive fashion." He ended with a plea that the US intercede.

173. Message From Premier Kosygin to President Johnson/1/

Moscow, June 6, 1967, 5:34 a.m.

/1/Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Head of State Correspondence, USSR, Washington-Moscow "Hot-Line" Exchange, 6/5-10/67. No classification marking. The source text is labeled "Translation," with a typed notation indicating a sight translation was made at 5:50 a.m.; the message was received by the President at 5:50 a.m.; a rough translation was made at 5:54 a.m.; and a final, official translation was provided at 6:23 a.m. A typed notation on a copy of the message in Russian states that it was transmitted by Soviet Molink at 5:34 a.m. and received by U.S. Molink at 5:43 a.m. (Ibid.)

Dear Mr. President,

Military activities in the Near East continue, moreover their scope is spreading.

The Soviet Government is convinced that a decisive demand for an immediate cease-fire and the withdrawal of troops behind the armistice line would be in the interests of re-establishing peace. We express the hope that the Government of the United States will support the stated demand in the Security Council. We are supporting it.

Everything possible should be done so that positive decision be taken today on this matter by the Security Council.

Respectfully,

A. Kosygin

174. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Israel/1/

Washington, June 6, 1967, 8:55 a.m.

/1/Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 27 ARAB-ISR. Secret; Flash; Exdis. Drafted by Under Secretary of State Katzenbach and approved for transmission by Deputy Executive Secretary Herbert B. Thompson. Repeated Flash to Amman.

208438. Amman's 4095./2/ You should inform GOI of Jordanian desire for immediate cease-fire and urge GOI that it would be in their interest to make necessary arrangements immediately and directly rather than through UN. This would split Jordan off from other Arab states. It may be preferable that cease-fire remain secret temporarily if King is to maintain control./3/

/2/Telegram 4095 from Amman, June 6, reported that King Hussein had asked the British, French, U.S., and

186. President's Daily Brief/1/

Washington, June 7, 1967.

/1/Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Histories, Middle East Crisis, Vol. 6, Appendix A. Top Secret; [codeword not declassified]. Regarding the release of this PDB, see footnote 1, Document 151.

1. Arab States-Israel (As of 5:30 AM EDT)

At this point, the shooting continues despite the UN ceasefire resolution. Early this morning Israeli planes were hammering Jordanian positions outside Jerusalem. There also was some firing in the city last night.

The Israelis appear to hold substantial portions of the Sinai Peninsula, and Cairo is ordering the Egyptian force at Sharm ash-Shaykh on the Straits of Tiran to withdraw. In fact, there are strong indications that the Egyptians may be withdrawing most, if not all, of their forces from the Sinai.

Although the Soviets are airlifting in some spare parts for Egyptian tanks and aircraft, there are no indications of any major Soviet military moves.

[6 lines of source text not declassified]

In last night's Security Council meeting, Fedorenko demanded withdrawal of forces after a ceasefire, but this performance seems intended to put the best face possible on the retreat. [6 lines of source text not declassified]

The US Embassy in Cairo was not set on fire as reported in this morning's *Washington Post*.

187. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Jordan/1/

Washington, June 7, 1967, 7:46 a.m.

/1/Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 27 ARAB-ISR. Secret; Flash. Drafted and approved by Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs Stuart W. Rockwell and cleared by Rusk. Repeated Flash to Tel Aviv.

208800. 1. FYI. In response our urgings they cease fire Israelis have answered to effect JAA still fighting all along the line. Most importantly, shelling of Jerusalem from Mar Ilias has not stopped, and heavy fighting going on Nablus-Toubas area. Israelis believe either King or Government no longer in control or are deliberately following tactic of deception. Latter conclusion Israelis believe supported by fact Hussein still apparently talking about secret rather than open cease-fire./2/ End FYI. You should inform Hussein we strongly urging Israelis cease-fire but they state JAA still fighting, and that shelling of Jerusalem from Mar Ilias continuing. If true we urge JAA cease fire totally and especially that attacks on Jerusalem be stopped in order reinforce our efforts, which being undermined by continuing JAA firing.

/2/Barbour reported this Israeli response in telegram 3976 from Tel Aviv, June 7. He reported that Eshkol's views on Jordan were along the same lines as Rusk's and that Eshkol would lay Rusk's position before the Cabinet when it met that day, but that Israeli information did not jibe with that reflected in recent telegrams from Amman. He commented that if the Jordanians were serious in wanting a cease-fire and if the King and the government were able to make the cease-fire stick, the most effective thing they could do would be to stop shelling Jerusalem, which was especially important to the Israelis and where damage had been great. (Ibid.) Telegram 4119 from Amman, June 7, reported that the Jordanian Foreign Minister had told the British, French, and Soviet Ambassadors that although Jordan had ordered its army to cease firing as of 2400Z, the Israeli army was continuing to attack Jordanian locations on the West Bank; he appealed to the four powers to exert every influence with Israel to end the attacks. (Ibid.) Telegram 4121 from Amman, June 7, reported a similar appeal from King Hussein. (Ibid.)

/3/Barbour reported in telegram 4002 from Tel Aviv, June 8, that on the basis of Amman's telegram 4134, he had urged the Foreign Office to check with the Israeli command, which replied the report was not correct; there was no Israeli force on the East Bank, the Israelis had no intention of putting forces there or advancing from their West Bank positions, and no Israeli shelling was going on. (Ibid.)

Rusk

202. President's Daily Brief/1/

Washington, June 8, 1967.

/1/Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Histories, Middle East Crisis, Vol. 6, Appendix A. Top Secret; [codeword not declassified]. Regarding the release of this PDB, see footnote 1, Document 151.

Arab States-Israel (As of 5:00 AM EDT)

The UN's ceasefire order is being disregarded. Egypt has officially announced it will not comply, and Nasir has personally so informed most other Arab governments. The Israelis may have broken their ceasefire agreement with Jordan.

Early this morning the Jordanian prime minister told our embassy that Israeli tanks were moving into northwestern Jordan. The ultimate aim of such a movement might be to attack Syria. The embassy also says fighting on the Israeli-Jordanian front picked up during the night. [3 lines of source text not declassified]

On the Sinai Peninsula, the Israelis have apparently accomplished most of their military objectives. Yesterday the Israelis approached the Suez Canal so rapidly that they probably cut off the major portion of the retreating Egyptians.

Embassy Cairo believes that public realization of the Arab defeat has generated strong feeling against Nasir, and foreign diplomats in Cairo consider the Egyptians are in a state of panic over the military debacle. [3 lines of source text not declassified] Senior Iraqi officials in New York are said to believe Nasir is desperate and might do almost anything to maintain his position.

Mobs in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, have damaged US installations, and our consulate in Aleppo has been attacked and burned. As the extent of the defeat sinks into the Arab countries, danger to US citizens still there may increase. Refugees from the fighting in Jordan's West Bank are already streaming into Amman, where they could cause disorder directed at Americans.

LATE ITEM

Arab States-Israel (As of 5:30 AM EDT)

The Israelis have just announced (according to the press) that Egyptian armored forces have counterattacked "in force" in an effort to fight their way out of the Sinai Peninsula. This could refer to Egyptian troops trapped in the rapid Israeli advance.

203. Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in Israel/1/

Washington, June 8, 1967, 6:31 a.m.

/1/Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 27 ARAB-ISR. Secret; Flash. Drafted and approved by Brewer and cleared by Katzenbach. Repeated Priority to Amman, Athens, Beirut, Damascus, Jerusalem, London, USUN, and CINCSTRIKE.

209182. Ref: Jerusalem 1053./2/

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Tel Aviv, June 9, 1967, 0810Z.

/1/Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 27 ARAB-ISR. Limited Official Use; Immediate. Received at 5:14 a.m. Passed to the White House, DOD, CIA, USIA, NSA, COMAC for POLAD, CINCSTRIKE, and USUN at 5:35 a.m.

4024. 1. Prime Minister Eshkol asks that the following message be transmitted to the President:

2. "Dear Mr. President: I was deeply grieved by the tragic loss of life on the U.S. Naval ship *Liberty*. Please accept my deep condolences and convey my sympathy to all the bereaved families./2/

/2/Telegram 4028 from Tel Aviv, June 9, reported that Eshkol had asked the Embassy to inform the U.S. Government that the Israeli Government was "willing to make retribution to the families of the victims of the *Liberty* naval incident" and inquired whether such retribution would be acceptable. (Ibid.) Letters of condolence from Eban and Harman to President Johnson and Secretary Rusk, June 8, are in the Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Histories, Middle East Crisis, Vol. 3, and the National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 27 ARAB-ISR.

3. May all bloodshed come to an end and may our God grant us peace evermore. Sincerely, Levi Eshkol."

Barbour

230. President's Daily Brief/1/

Washington, June 9, 1967.

/1/Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, NSC Histories, Middle East Crisis, Vol. 6, Appendix A. Top Secret; [codeword not declassified]. Regarding the release of this PDB, see footnote 1, Document 151.

1. Arab States-Israel

The ceasefire was observed on all fronts during the night. Further Israeli action is still possible against Iraqi forces in Jordan, however, since Baghdad has yet to accept the ceasefire.

The Israeli commander in Sinai reported that his forces were camping on the banks of the Suez Canal and the Red Sea.

Tel Aviv is beginning to discuss the terms it hopes to achieve in a permanent settlement with the Arab states. These include the establishment of an autonomous province of Jordan on the West Bank in which all Arab refugees could hopefully be settled.

The Israelis also intend to insist on the demilitarization of the Gaza strip and the Sinai border, guaranteed access to the Gulf of Aqaba, and an as yet undefined "new status" for a unified Jerusalem. The latter would guarantee people of all religions access to the holy places.

As for the Arab side, attention is now turning to what can be salvaged in post-ceasefire negotiations. Nasir, after earlier proposing an Arab summit as a means of preserving Arab unity, is now proposing the publication of a ten-point joint resolution to be signed by all Arab chiefs of state. The proposed statement trots out all of Nasir's propaganda attacks on the US and other "colonialist forces supporting Israel." On balance, it looks like a rather feeble effort to save face.

Signs are growing that Egypt's defeat has badly damaged Nasir's prestige in the Arab world. He will have trouble getting many other chiefs of state to adhere to his "joint resolution."

2. Arab States

Arab resentment against the West continues to threaten US facilities. Libya appears to be a particularly

dangerous spot at the moment.

3. *Soviet Union.*

The Soviets are finding it hard to conceal their shock over the rapid Egyptian military collapse. A Soviet [2-1/2 lines of source text not declassified] could not understand "how our intelligence could have been so wrong." He asked despairingly, "How could we have gotten into such a mess?" Comments from other Soviets, while more restrained, reflect a similar state of mind.

[Omitted here are sections on unrelated subjects.]

LATE ITEM

Arab States-Israel

Israeli spokesmen told the press this morning that Egyptian troops had launched an attack on Israeli troops near the Canal, thus violating the ceasefire.

231. Telegram From the Embassy in Israel to the Department of State/1/

Tel Aviv, June 9, 1967, 1505Z.

/1/Source: National Archives and Records Administration, RG 59, Central Files 1967-69, POL 27 ARAB-ISR. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. The date-time group on the telegram, 071505Z, is in error. Received on June 9 at 11:47 a.m. and passed to the White House at 12:10 p.m.

4039. Ref: Tel Aviv 4026./2/

/2/Telegram 4026 from Tel Aviv, June 9, sent at 1014Z, reported that the Syrians had shelled Israeli settlements near the border and that Israeli forces were taking action to silence the guns, which they expected to complete in an hour or so. (Ibid.)

1. It is difficult to obtain information on how fighting along Syrian border is going. Best we can get is statement by Argov as of 1630 local time that it was "necessary to weed out the people who had been shelling our settlements for the last two years. This effort is now under way and is proceeding satisfactorily. However, Haon is still being constantly hammered by Syrian artillery fire."

2. The operation may indeed be progressing "satisfactorily" but it is obviously taking longer than had been anticipated and Syrians are still able to fight. DATT estimates IDF AF making maximum air support effort.

Barbour

232. Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant (Rostow) to President Johnson/1/

Washington, June 9, 1967, 12:55 p.m.

/1/Source: Johnson Library, National Security File, Country File, Middle East Crisis, Vol. V. Confidential. A copy was sent to McGeorge Bundy. A handwritten notation on the memorandum states that it was received at 1:30 p.m., and a handwritten "L" indicates the President saw it.

Mr. President:

After reading the UPI 080A ticker,/2/ Evron asked to come in. He said that he and Harman were as deeply troubled as you must be and as I clearly was, by what he called "this nonsense." He said that

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