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DEA/50134-40

*La direction du Commonwealth et du Moyen-Orient
au sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Commonwealth and Middle East Division
to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs*

SECRET

[Ottawa], February 3, 1956

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE MINISTER AND THE AMBASSADOR OF ISRAEL

At noon today Mr. Comay, at his request, called upon Mr. Pearson.

2. Mr. Comay began the conversation by expressing appreciation for the Minister's forthright statements in the House during the recent debate, which had made clear that Israel would suffer from an embargo on arms shipments to the Middle East. He said that he had just received a cable from Mr. Sharett, in which the Foreign Minister of Israel had commended the Minister's discussion of the Arab-Israeli problem in his speech in the House on January 24. Mr. Comay also said he had heard that the Minister's speech had aroused considerable interest in Washington and New York.

3. Mr. Comay then turned to the matter about which he had visited the Department on January 30 and which was referred to in a memorandum to the Minister on January 31. He said that he had been authorized by Mr. Sharett, with the concurrence of the Israeli Ambassador in the United States, to show Mr. Pearson, on a personal and confidential basis, copies of certain exchanges which had taken place between the Israeli and United States governments on the matter of possible formulae for the solution of the boundary aspects of the Arab-Israeli dispute. This correspondence was accompanied by a personal letter from Mr. Comay containing some observations and explanations. Mr. Comay stressed the personal basis upon which he was leaving the papers with Mr. Pearson, because the matters which they dealt with had not been communicated by the Israeli Government to any government other than that of the United States. He thought that Mr. Pearson would like to know of their contents before his discussions with Sir Anthony Eden and Mr. Lloyd. He was unable to answer the Minister's query whether the British were aware of the substance of the exchanges between Israel and the United States.

4. The Ambassador said that the State Department had been pressing the Israelis to consider the possibility of providing for a link across the Negev between Jordan and Egypt by giving sovereignty to those countries over territorial wedges which would intersect at the apex. At this point there might be a sort of clover-leaf arrangement, which would prevent Israel from being completely cut off from the Red Sea port of Elath. Mr. Comay said that Mr. Sharett does not consider such an arrangement to be practicable, since it would prevent the proper development of full facilities for the seaport of Elath. He reiterated that Israel would be prepared to grant suitable transit rights to the Arab countries.

5. Mr. Comay said that he had just been talking by telephone to the Israeli Ambassador in the United States. Mr. Eban had told him he believed that the article in today's issue of the *New York Times*, reporting on the U.K.-U.S. discussions on the Middle East in Washington, was fairly accurate. Indications were that there was now less interest in such matters as ultimate negotiation of border adjustments and more concern with immediate measures to be taken to prevent a renewal of hostilities. The practical difficulties in the way of an international police force for Palestine were also now being recognized. Mr. Pearson said that he appreciated, of course, the vital necessity of preventing the renewal of hostilities but he did not believe that the necessity for a general settlement should be